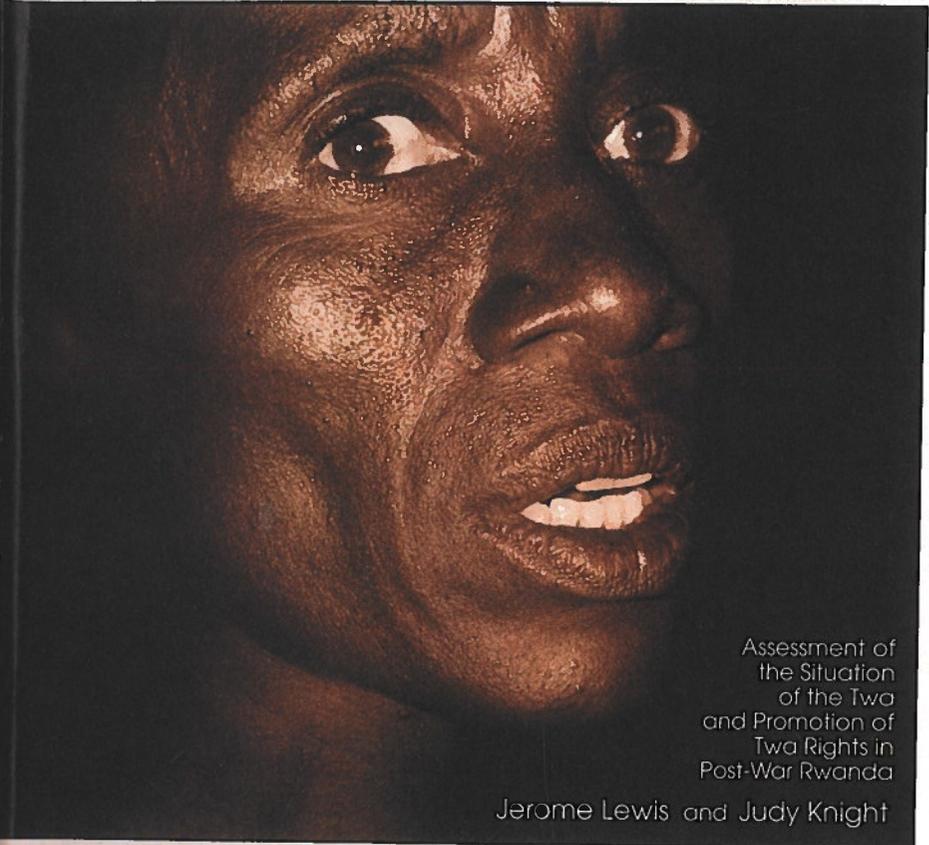


The Twa of Rwanda

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The Twa of Rwanda

DOCUMENT 78



Assessment of
the Situation
of the Twa
and Promotion of
Twa Rights in
Post-War Rwanda

Jerome Lewis and Judy Knight

The genocidal conflict in Rwanda in 1994 caused international media and relief agencies to focus global attention on the struggle between Hutus and Tutsis for political supremacy in this small and impoverished country. In fact, those who have suffered most from the holocaust have been the Twa, a marginalised 'Pygmy' group despised by both majority groups as pariahs outside the boundaries of society.

This detailed report from the World Rainforest Movement highlights the plight of these people, detailing their own views and perspectives and enabling them to express their fears and aspirations in their own voice. The report exposes the cruel dilemmas facing African governments which seek to build national unity while respecting the continent's diverse cultures. Combatting discrimination obliges governments to recognise the inequities between African peoples and allow cultural identities to express themselves.

This report calls on the Government of Rwanda, aid and development agencies and all those involved with the Twa community to recognise the poverty, discrimination and lack of opportunity suffered by the Twa. It makes specific recommendations as to how these injustices could be redressed, so as to enable the Twa to take up their rightful role as full members of Rwandan society.

"This is an important document of an internationally unknown human rights catastrophe."
Espen Wæhle, Member of the Board of IWGIA.



WORLD
RAINFOREST
MOVEMENT



INTERNATIONAL
WORK GROUP FOR
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT and
INTERNATIONAL WORK GROUP FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

The Twa of Rwanda

**Assessment of the Situation of the Twa
And Promotion of Twa Rights in Post-War Rwanda**

Jerome Lewis and Judy Knight

WORLD RAINFOREST MOVEMENT
and
INTERNATIONAL WORK GROUP FOR
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Dedicated to François Munyeshuli

This publication is based on a field study in Rwanda carried out in May

1995, financed by Charity Projects. Additional material is drawn from a previous field study carried out during August and September 1993, with financial support from the Swan Fund and the European Human Rights Foundation.

The success of the studies depended crucially on our Twa project partners and translators, who often had to work long hours in exceptionally difficult and occasionally dangerous situations. We thank the numerous individuals of the Twa communities we visited who provided most of the information in this report, often placing themselves at risk of reprisals in doing so.

We thank the Rwandese Government for facilitating our mission in Rwanda by providing the necessary permissions and letters of approval.

James Woodburn, Virginia Luling, Marcus Colchester and Dorothy Jackson made valuable comments on early drafts of this report. Dorothy Jackson edited and produced the report with help from Marcus Colchester and Louise Henson.

All photographs were taken by Judy Knight.

Cover photo: A Twa woman speaks out about her experiences in the war, June 1995.

Passages from this report may be reproduced providing that the World Rainforest Movement and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs are acknowledged.

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ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in the text:

ADBR	Association for the Global Development of the Batwa of Rwanda
ADIGMAR	Association for the Integrated Development of Marginal Groups in Rwanda
APB	Association for the Promotion of the Batwa
APEDE	Association for the Protection and Support of Abandoned Children in Distress
AREDETWA	Association for the Democratic Restoration of the Twa
CAURWA	Community of Rwandese Autochthons
CDR	Committee for the Defence of the Republic
CLADHO	Collective of Human Rights Leagues and Associations
FRw	Rwandese Franc
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
MRND	National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development
RAF	Rwandese Armed Forces (former Government)
RPF	Rwandese Patriotic Front (present Government)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNHRFOR	United Nations Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
WRM	World Rainforest Movement



PREFACE

Discrimination against indigenous minorities is a serious problem in a number of African countries. Among those who suffer from the most severe types of discrimination in Africa are former hunter-gatherers in countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Zaïre, Congo, Cameroun, the Central African Republic, Tanzania, Burundi, Botswana and Namibia as well as Rwanda discussed here. In almost all instances, these former hunter-gatherers are tiny minorities who are recognised by themselves and by their neighbours as truly indigenous, as descendants of the first inhabitants of the areas in which they live. Typically the discrimination is most severe and most damaging when, as in Rwanda, the hunter-gatherers have lost almost all possibilities of living by hunting and gathering and have, to a large degree, adopted the way of life of their neighbours. The discrimination is much more of a problem in the countryside than in the towns and is practised primarily by local people including local officials.

What form does the discrimination take? Typically these groups have been dispossessed of most of their land and do not enjoy security in their possession of whatever land remains even in those few cases where their ownership has been given some form of legal recognition by local or central government. The low status of these groups, their small numbers and the dispersal of their communities have contributed to their extreme political weakness and the serious difficulties they have had in asserting their rights and resisting arbitrary expropriation and violence. Their traditional egalitarian values stimulate them to reject their own leaders and representatives with the result that all too often they have no representatives or else are politically represented either by outsiders or by members of their own communities who lack public support and who have a disreputable record of collaborating in the denial of their rights.

These groups are widely subject to negative stereotypes. They may be characterised by their neighbours as untrustworthy, immoral, uncultured and undeserving people whose foods and occupations are disgusting. In extreme cases the false and negative stereotyping is so

severe that neighbours will not eat or drink with them or accept them as marital or sexual partners. In less extreme cases the negative stereotypes are paternalist, presenting the former hunter-gatherers as if they were irresponsible children, incapable of sensible decision-making, lacking wisdom and in need of constant guidance, assistance and charity.

The Twa of Rwanda are a classic case of a small population of former hunter-gatherers who have been subject to discrimination of a variety of sorts throughout their known history. Sometimes the discrimination has been severe, sometimes less so, but it has always been present and the evidence suggests that in recent decades it has increased. Unusually, they themselves have succeeded in setting up their own indigenous rights organisations and have sought professional help in the very difficult task of making these effective.

Judy Knight and Jerome Lewis, both trained social anthropologists with knowledge of the appalling history of suffering of other such groups in sub-Saharan Africa and in other parts of the world, were invited by the Twa to assist them first in 1993 and then again in 1995 after the genocidal conflicts in Rwanda in 1994.

This report brings out well the seriousness of the current situation. Negative stereotyping can be lethal as the history of the Jews and Gypsies in Europe so well illustrates. We should not be surprised that in the genocidal conflicts of 1994, Twa were killed by both sides. Evidence from elsewhere strongly suggests that the current situation will not be resolved unless all concerned make much greater efforts to secure for Twa communities effective rights to a fair share of good quality land, effective and fair access to schools and to jobs, and proper protection against violence and expropriation. Above all, they want and need an end to prejudice, discrimination and negative stereotyping, a recognition of their importance in the history of Rwanda and a willingness to allow them to publicise their problems and to press for their resolution.

Both national and international support will be needed if the Twa are to be recognised and treated as the skilled, intelligent and respectable people that they are and are to be accorded the same security, rights and entitlements as other citizens of Rwanda and of the world.

James Woodburn
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INTRODUCTION

This book is about the problems being faced by the Twa people of Rwanda, a so-called 'Pygmy' people whose existence has been largely ignored by the media covering the civil conflict in this war-torn nation. The story we have had to document is a terrible one, for the Twa have suffered disproportionately in the explosion of politically motivated hatreds which have riven the country in the past three years. Historically marginalised and exploited, the Twa have become identified as an untrustworthy pariah group by both Hutu and Tutsi extremist factions and they have suffered as a consequence.

The first contacts between the Twa and the World Rainforest Movement's Forest Peoples Programme occurred in 1990 while we were trying to identify representatives of forest peoples' organisations keen to represent their interests to the international agencies that were developing global forest policies. Our self-appointed task had been to try to help forest peoples engage in direct dialogue with these 'policy-makers' in the UN agencies and multilateral development banks, in order to ensure that their interests were taken into account in global decision-making.

Local aid agencies in Rwanda thus put us in contact with François Munyeshuli, the founder of the *Association pour la Promotion Batwa* (APB), the first legally incorporated 'Pygmy' organisation run by 'Pygmies' themselves in Central Africa. François Munyeshuli, to whom this book is dedicated, had a vision of the Twa emerging from their centuries-old position on the margins of Rwandese society to take their place, as equals, alongside the other peoples of the country. The institutionalised discrimination that the Twa suffered, he realised, could not be overcome through the charitable interventions of others for this would only recreate new dependency on new patrons. Freedom from discrimination could only come about if the Twa organised for themselves and stood up for their rights. The APB was formed with this end in view, but, equally, François realised that the Twa could not achieve their goals without support. They needed to learn the lessons

of other peoples struggling to liberate themselves from oppression and they would need the help of other organisations in this work. They would also need the support of enlightened members of government, other sectors of Rwandese society and the international community.

By means of contacts made through the World Rainforest Movement, the APB thus became a member of the newly founded *International Alliance of the Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests*, a global alliance of forest-dwelling peoples from the tropical forest countries. As members of the Alliance APB representatives travelled to New York, Washington DC and Rio de Janeiro, and learned of the indigenous rights movement, while advocating to World Bankers and UN policy-makers the need for new development approaches which respect indigenous peoples' rights and give them a decisive voice in formulating policies about resource use in their areas. APB also joined the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) based in The Hague as a further means of advocating their cause.

It was on their way back from the Rio Summit, that François Munyeshuli and fellow Twa, Charles Uwiragiye, visited the WRM in London. They requested direct assistance to help the APB develop closer ties with the dispersed Twa communities of the country. Strapped for cash and limited in membership to the more educated Twa living around Kigali, François realised that the first priority for the APB was to develop ties with the rural Twa. Could we not send out a team to train them in survey techniques and help them take stock of their situation?

Together with François and Charles, we consulted James Woodburn, Professor of Social Anthropology at the London School of Economics whose long experience working with the Hadza of Tanzania has given him an unrivalled understanding of the problems confronting marginalized social groups in Africa. He gave generously of his time and advised that we invite two graduate anthropologists, Judy Knight and Jerome Lewis, who were already specialised in the study of 'Pygmy' peoples of Central Africa, to volunteer for the mission. The aim, we all decided, should be to carry out, jointly with the APB and through the use of 'participatory rural appraisal' techniques, a short

term diagnostic study of the Twa situation. What were the Twa communities' own perceptions of their situation? What were their principal problems? For our part, we were particularly eager for knowledge about any Twa who remained in Rwanda's last remaining forest fragments. What was their situation and what were the Government's policies towards them?

The first study was carried out, with modest funds from the European Human Rights Foundation and the Swann Fund, in August and September 1993. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Judy, Jerome and the APB, which had restructured itself after the untimely death of François Munyeshuli, the team travelled widely about the country and generated a unique body of information about the Twa's situation. With this information in hand, the APB was able to strengthen its promotion of Twa interests, as well as define a long term programme for building up its capacity to carry out this task effectively.

However, the tragic events of 1994 undid all this progress. In the harshly polarised political climate preceding the killings, the independent voice of the APB, which had been critical of the role of government and aid agencies alike in perpetuating discrimination against the Twa, was all too readily identified with the Rwandese Patriotic Front by extremist supporters of the Habyarimana Government. Even before the massacres of April 1994, APB staff were targets for vilification, abuse and alleged poisoning. The genocide unleashed by the Interahamwe, forced the APB members to scatter and, as this report documents, led to the flight or murder of the majority of the Twa. The APB was destroyed and Kigali abandoned by all the educated Twa.

After three despondent months of silence we began to get letters from fugitive Twa. Some had fled to the refugee camps in Zaïre while others had gone north to the relief centres in RPA-controlled territory. By means of the aid agencies we were able to get messages to Charles Uwiragiye to attend the 1994 meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples and the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Human Rights Commission, in Geneva. Through Charles' testimony



Fieldwork in Tambwe, Gitarama, 1993. Participatory rural appraisal methods. (Photograph by Judy Knight).

the international community gained a first indication of the tragedy that the Twa had just endured.

Mobilised by Charles' visit, two further initiatives were set in train. UNPO despatched a small team to Rwanda to document the human rights abuses perpetrated against the Twa during the genocide, while the World Rainforest Movement undertook to raise funds for a longer term mission to Rwanda. The aims were to try to study anew, again in close collaboration with surviving members of the APB, the overall Twa situation and compare this information with that obtained two years previously. Thereby we hoped not only to find out exactly what had become of the rural Twa, using participatory research techniques, interviews, surveys and informal questionnaires, but help lay the basis for a revival of the APB as a representative Twa organisation. By this means the APB aimed to promote Twa rights in Rwanda and work for policy changes in Rwanda towards the Twa, as well as strengthening links with other central African forest dwellers organisations.

Judy Knight, who was just preparing to return to Uganda, and Jerome Lewis, by then living with the Ba Benjelle of northern Congo, once more freed themselves from their academic studies to carry out the work. With funding secured from Charity Projects and after protracted negotiations to secure visas and permissions from the new Government, the project finally got underway in May 1995.

Despite central Government support the project was not able to proceed as envisaged. Local officials were openly sceptical of any projects with Rwandese who define themselves in ethnic terms. In sharp contrast to the pre-war era when every Rwandese was forced to carry an identity card which announced his or her ethnic affiliation, in post-war Rwanda the Twa were discouraged from even identifying themselves as such. After an appalling incident, duly reported to UN human rights observers, when a Twa being interviewed by the too-visible joint APB-WRM mission was arrested, interrogated and brutalised by the police, the field study had to be refocussed using more discrete research techniques. Despite these vicissitudes, the mission was able to carry out its task and the determination of the Twa to reconstitute their movement led to the founding of the *Communauté des Autochtones Rwandaises* (CAURWA) which embraces the APB, as well as two other more recent Twa organisations, the *Association pour la Protection et l'Encadrement des Enfants non Accompagnés en Détresse* (APEDE) and the *Association pour le Développement Global des Batwa du Rwanda* (ADBR).

* * * *

Ever since the decolonisation of Africa in the 1950s and 1960s, African governments have struggled to come to terms with the contradictions between cultural traditions which assert identity based on clan, lineage, chieftaincy and kingdom and newly imposed political structures which assert the paramountcy of the nation state and the authority of government bureaucracy. Shortly after their independence, the newly founded nations created the Organisation for African Unity

(OAU) and announced unanimously that, in order to preserve peace between these new nations, that the artificial national frontiers agreed by the colonial authorities from Europe less than a century before should be retained. Yet, at the same time, the OAU has promulgated a strong insistence on the rights of peoples. The *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights* agreed by the OAU in Banjul, 1981, notes in Article 19 "nothing shall justify the domination of a people by another".

Many African rulers since independence have assumed, like their western rulers before them, that traditional African expressions of 'tribe' and custom are 'primitive' and 'backward', obstacles to modernisation and national development. Ethnic affiliations, traditional leadership systems, customary law and 'tribal' identity have been suppressed in favour of assertions of the common task of nation-building and the rights and duties of citizens and *citoyens*. In the name of national integration, some governments have carried out vigorous programmes of forced assimilation to try to weld diverse peoples into a uniform whole. In Tanzania and Ethiopia, for example, programmes of forced resettlement and 'villagization' were expressly undertaken to break traditional ties with the land and uproot customary political institutions. Like white colonials, some African technocrats have asserted that viable modern economies are not possible in Africa without 'cultural adjustment' (Etounga-Manguelle, 1991), - the elimination of old 'tribal' loyalties - while, at the other extreme, white supremacists in South Africa, likewise seeing 'tribal' systems as inappropriate vehicles for national development, imposed a policy of ethnic segregation based on a racist ideology.

Whereas South Africa has learned that African commitments to build nation states are irresistible, many other African countries have learned to their cost that efforts to suppress deeply rooted cultural identities are also misconstrued. Where flourishing ethnic aspirations have been cut back, they have sprung forth anew - and sometimes in terrible and destructive forms. Ethnic chauvinism and civil war have flared up where the rights of communities have been denied. It would be arrogant indeed for anyone to claim that there was a single 'correct'

way of reconciling the conflicting demands of nation-building and respect for cultural tradition and identity, but accommodation, and indeed promotion, of diversity within the state is increasingly recognised by African rulers as essential for stable government.

For exploited minorities within African countries this need is especially acute. Discrimination against minority ethnic groups, such as the Twa and other 'Pygmy' peoples in Equatorial Africa, are based on historical relations between them and neighbouring peoples which go long back into the pre-colonial era. It might seem obvious that the best way to remove such prejudice would be to deny the validity of ethnic identity at all, while asserting the equal rights of all citizens. However, as this study shows, identity - and discrimination based on identity - cannot be extinguished by government decree. Deeply held prejudices continue to be expressed in relief camps, land reform and legal assistance projects alike, ensuring that groups like the Twa are the last to get food, water, medicines, shelter, land and justice. Peoples such as the Twa struggling to overcome this marginalisation need the encouragement of enlightened governments that recognise both their identity and special circumstances, and not empty assurances that discrimination based on identity is against national policy.

The situation of the Rwandese Twa, as a 'Pygmy' people of Central Africa, is in many respects atypical. Most of them have long ago been forced off their lands and have abandoned life in the forests that were once their home. Yet, in other ways, their situation is similar to many other forest-based groups, especially in terms of the discrimination and prejudice which they face in their daily interactions with neighbouring groups. As the tropical forests degrade and the relative economic autonomy of forest-based peoples declines everywhere, these discriminations could also sharpen dramatically, just as they have in Rwanda.

This report on the situation of the Twa in Rwanda is offered as a contribution to the solution of these difficulties. Based on the information assembled by the APB with the help of Judy Knight and Jerome Lewis, it traces the historical roots of the discrimination

against the Twa, presents information on their situation in 1993, recounts the horrors faced by the Twa during 1994 and details their current plight. The report is aimed principally at those now working in Rwanda in the crucial fields of rehabilitation and national reconciliation - government officials and relief agency workers alike. It makes what we hope are practical recommendations on how the Twa's situation may best be addressed.

Marcus Colchester
Director, Forest Peoples Programme
World Rainforest Movement

THE TWA: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction to the Twa

The Twa of Rwanda¹, the third and lowest status ethnic group, class, 'caste' or echelon of Rwandese society, are recognised as being one of the 'Pygmy' peoples of Central Africa. The Twa are Banyarwandans sharing the common language, religions and culture of the Rwandese people as a whole. Twa are recognised on the basis of certain specialist cultural practices, their mode of livelihood, mannerisms, the way they speak and the way they conduct themselves. The Twa are predominantly specialised as potters and hunter-gatherers and are famous for their songs and dances, many of which have been adopted by other Rwandese and today form a major part of Rwanda's renowned National Performance art. In 1958 the Twa were assumed to make up 1% of Rwanda's population. This figure issued by the Belgian administration is very approximate since the Twa preferred not to present themselves to censuses, and they were rarely consulted. Today the Twa probably make up between 0.2 and 0.4% of Rwanda's population.

The current status of the Twa is that of a minority both numerically and politically. The highly conspicuous discrimination suffered by Twa at every level in modern Rwandese society has very deep roots in the history of the area. The history of the Twa is difficult to reconstruct, but a number of salient points may be discerned, with profound implications for the nature of contemporary relationships and the self-perception of the Twa. The way in which modern day Twa conceive of their past is vital to an understanding of the profound sense of injustice they feel concerning their past and present marginalisation.

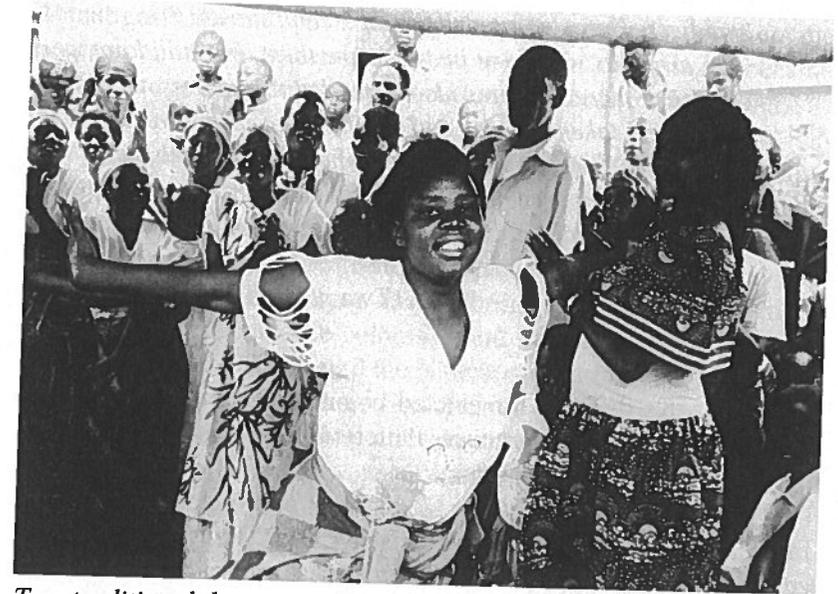
¹ Following British academic conventions, the stem "Twa" is used here in place of Batwa (the plural) and Mutwa (the singular). Twa is a form of the word "Tua" which is the most widespread term in local Bantu languages covering the autochthonous peoples of Central Africa. Tua means hunter-gatherer or former hunter-gatherer autochthonous people.

The following is an historical account of the relationship between the three population groups according to a Twa informant. It is redolent of the Twa sense of utter powerlessness. To most Twa, their relationship with the colonising populations of Hutu, Tutsi and Europeans has been one of ever greater loss of their natural habitat and the integrity of their traditional mode of hunter-gatherer subsistence:

“Our ancestors were the first to occupy this territory when it was totally forested. They depended on hunting and tuber gathering. Their happiness and pleasure in their way of life and the adequacy of resources in their environment were disrupted by the land tillers (Hutu) who came second. They brutally destroyed the natural greenery in their greed for crop planting. They overran the forest and our ancestors were forced to shift from time to time further away from the machete and hoe. By the time the Hamites (Ba-Tutsi) arrived along with their herds of cattle the forest had nearly vanished and the country was becoming semi-arid. Grazing and other man-made activities have made our territory nearly a desert in some regions and areas”.

(C.U., Twa man 48, Kigali 1993)

Up until very recently, some Twa still lived by hunting and gathering in the few remaining forests of Rwanda. But, apparently without exception, all have now been forced out into settlements without being offered adequate alternatives or compensation for the loss of their livelihood. Most of the major expulsions of Twa occurring in the last 35 years have been the direct consequence of ill-informed and short-sighted Western conservationists creating ‘protected areas’. Subsistence hunting and gathering is a legitimate use of wild-life resources and has no serious ecological impact unless other factors come into play. These other factors are often mining or logging activities, commercial farming projects, military exercises or clearing forest for farming and pasture land.



Twa traditional dance, Rwamagana, Rutonde, 1993. This community is renowned for their skilled dancers and musicians, and used to perform regularly for the King. (Photograph by Judy Knight).

An old lady who used to live in the forest around Muhanga described what happened when her group was expelled:

“We stopped bringing tusks during Kayibanda’s reign. We used to go hunting and kill animals including elephants. When the elephants were killed, their tusks were given to King Rudahigwa by Kibirima and his brother Nyampatsi, Pygmies in that forest. If anyone in the Twa family was able to kill any elephants, the tusks were taken to the King and in return, they were given sheep and cows. When President Kayibamba came to power, their forest was taken from them. At that time, Nyampatsi went to ask him why they were stopped from hunting, while they were getting their meat from the hunt. We were helped by other leaders to convince the President about this situation. When Habyarimana took power, he decided to move all these Pygmies from that forest. This involved lots of

soldiers. They surrounded the forest and started firing shots in the air. This was done just to scare them, but it did not work because these Pygmies also defended themselves. In the end they were taken by force and put into houses that were built for them as they were used to living in holes. Some girls were taken to Kigali to marry other people taller than them so that they could have children who are not very short like them. That is how the hunting ended."

(M.A., Twa woman 70, Tambwe 1995)

Life is always difficult for evicted communities once they can no longer depend on forest produce. Pottery, begging and day-labouring become their main occupations.

In 1993 in Mutura Commune, Gisenyi, WRM visited a landless community which had been evicted from Gishwati forest in the 1970's during a wasteful and destructive World Bank-sponsored project. The oldest lady of the group, who was named after Rwanda's largest volcano but was actually very tiny, commented after telling us what the past 20 years were like: "If I was not so small I would have died of starvation long ago."

Land: migration and settlement

In any attempt to reconstruct historical fact, one is faced with the challenge of biased accounts and gaps in the data. In the case of Rwanda, whose past history has been frequently subject to political re-interpretation, such problems are intensified. In particular, the discrimination consistently faced by the Twa has resulted in their omission from historical texts. Nevertheless, oral traditions common to all three major groups concur with Western historians in identifying the Twa as the autochthonous population of the area of forest now called Rwanda. They subsisted by hunting and gathering. Over 500 years ago the ancestors of the Hutu and Tutsi colonised most of the best agricultural land by a policy of gradual and wholesale deforestation.

With the incremental arrival of the pastoral Tutsi, supposedly from the north prior to the fifteenth century, the Twa increasingly became confined to areas of forest considered inhospitable by the farmers.

The historians Rwabukumba and Mudandagizi (1974) describe how the process of deforestation involved both Hutu and Tutsi simultaneously. According to Abdulai (1994) Rwanda was a monarchy from the seventeenth century, and access to land was controlled by the Tutsi king. His authorisation had to be obtained before the forest could be colonised and the colonisers became his dependants. The Hutu cleared the plateaux for farming; the Tutsis the slopes for cattle raising. These first clearers of the forest were then in a position to incorporate new arrivals onto the land, becoming their 'parents'. These relations were probably characterised by exchange but developed over time into various forms of clientage.

This 'feudal' system, although in many ways exploitative, provided some benefits for the people as the ruling class had clear responsibilities towards their underlings. The Tutsi Mwami (king) stood at the apex of a complex stratified society which encompassed three different sets of chieftaincies over land, cattle and the military. It was commonplace for a Hutu to be chief over land and there was a high concentration of Hutu chiefs in the North West.

The definition of what distinguishes a Hutu from a Tutsi is both a complex and a highly sensitive issue. It is clear from historical enquiry that these labels do not represent a static, timeless categorisation of Rwandan social organisation but rather mask an underlying process of continual redefinition of identity.

In pre-colonial times, the Hutu-Tutsi distinction seems to have been largely based on political and economic criteria. The Hutu could rise to the status of Tutsi by acquiring wealth in the form of cattle, through the process known as "Kiwihutura" or "shedding Hutuness". And a Tutsi could sink to the status of Hutu by losing all his cows and being forced into agriculture. There was a well recognised flexibility between the Hutu and Tutsi (De Lacger 1961:60).

This degree of mobility within the structure did not exist for Twa. According to Kagame (1952:117-118), forty Twa achieved the status of sub-chief but only once was a Twa ennobled - Bashyeta, in Cyirima II's reign, and this was in very exceptional circumstances. Bashyeta was rewarded for his services to the King with a significant amount of land. He was given a Tutsi wife and founded the Abashyeti lineage. There are other reports of offspring resulting from sexual relations between the royal lineage and Twa, as a result of the Twas' commendable services to the King. Today, many Twa acknowledge this descendancy. Intermarriage between Twa and other Rwandese occurs in the present day, but is comparatively rare due to the perceived lower status of Twa in society.

Deforestation and alternative sources of livelihood

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Twa found themselves drawn into dependency relationships with ascendant Tutsi rulers and Hutu landlords. Forced into obeisance by the wholesale destruction of their habitat and the futility of resistance, Twa were incorporated into the wider Rwandese society. During this period of Tutsi hegemony, Kinyarwanda became the universal language between the three groups and the Twa appear to have been integrated into wider cultural traditions. Twa belong to the same clans as Hutu and Tutsi and follow the same rules of agnatic affiliation and exogamy. Twa genealogies are like those of Hutu or Tutsi. They practise an identical ancestor cult to that of other Rwandese and share the same oral history (Kagabo and Mudandagizi 1974: 76).

The majority of Twa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were unable to live solely from hunting and gathering because of large scale deforestation. Deprived of hoes and land, pottery became their main occupation (Kagabo and Mudandagizi 1974: 78). Clay products were exchanged with neighbours against goods, but rarely made enough to support a family. Being a potter gave the Twa the right to build a house, but not land-rights, or any acknowledged customary or legal rights to the clay they required. Thus the Twa were forced to live as

impoverished clients or tenants paying with labour and pottery. The occupation of potter became a symbol of low status and poverty.

The Twa also provided many important services at the royal courts, as litter-bearers, secret messengers, dancers, dance choreographers and musicians. Some Twa also acted as assassins and court executioners. Despite the small numbers of Twa who performed this last function, many Hutu, even today, highlight this marginal activity as justification for abusing Twa. Twa able to build this special relationship with the King and his royal relatives were regarded as the King's men and owed no dues to anyone else. If they chose, they could additionally contract themselves as clients but only to the most important chiefs. This special relationship protected many Twa from widespread exploitation.

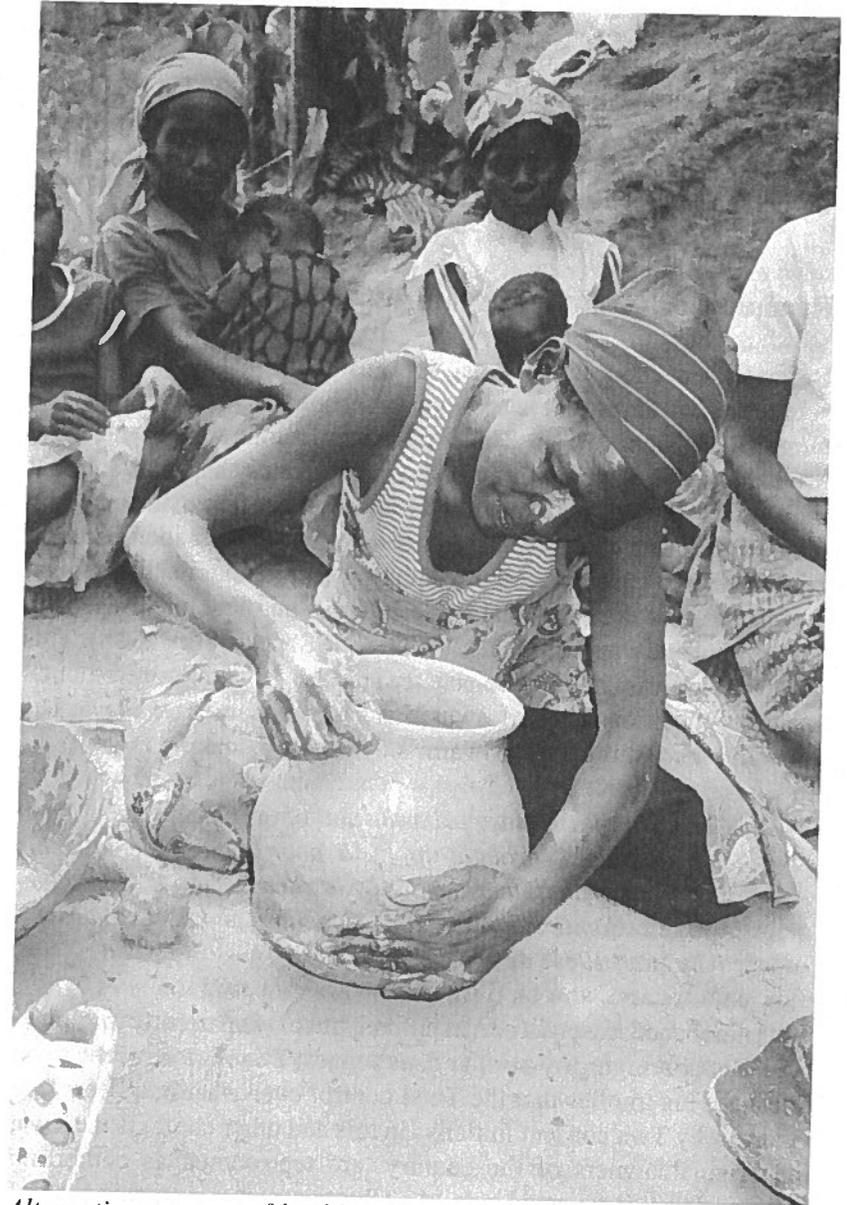
The colonial period began shortly after King Rwabugiri's death in 1895.. The German colonial authorities opted for indirect rule imposing their will through the King. This tended to reinforce the supremacy of the ruling elite, the Tutsi. The Belgian administration which took over Rwanda after the first world war initially continued the policy of indirect rule. However, the paternalistic and bureaucratic attitude of the administration led to a rationalisation of the traditional political and economic structures and to policies for educating and christianising parts of the population and monetising the economy. Among their various effects these policies rigidified the previously more flexible Hutu-Tutsi relationship as it stood after the census of 1935 and weakened a number of social and political equilibriums based on gift exchange. The system became more oppressive and the sense of belonging to an ethnic group more pronounced. However, the Twa were given the right to own agricultural land in this period and some took up farming. Many Twa were still the King's clients or artisans. This was seen as favouritism by Hutu whose life had become considerably harder. Those Twa who were able to take up farming were continuously struggling to keep their land from falling into other peoples' hands.



The Impunyu of Nyungwe Forest, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

During this period the Belgian administrators' incessant demands for labour and revenue meant that the Tutsi patrons increasingly functioned as agents of the colonial state, while their clients served as a lower class. The power of the state undermined kin groups, transformed patron-client ties and created new forms of social organisation, still couched in the earlier terminology of ethnic identity, all of which in turn "helped to create the social preconditions to revolution by contributing to a heightened political consciousness and solidarity among the Hutu" (Newbury 1988:208).

In the late 1950's, fuelled by a climate of "independence", Rwanda began to form political parties. First came the National Union of Rwandese (UNAR). Comprising Hutu and Tutsi, it was anti-Belgian and pro-monarchy in its outlook. Next came the Party for Emancipation of Hutu (Parmehutu) which was pro-Belgian. The stage was set for revolution and the next few years saw a victory to the Parmehutu, the abolition of the monarchy, the proclamation of Rwanda as a republic, and independence.



Alternative sources of livelihood: pottery. A Twa woman making a typical cooking pot or water vessel. Bwakira, Kibuye, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

These events spurred the widespread massacres of the Tutsi by the Hutu, caused internal displacement of populations and resulted in the great exodus of Tutsi. By independence in 1961 120,000 Tutsi had fled the country to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. These incidents have had a great influence on recent events in Rwanda. During this period, many Twa also fled for their lives.

Rwandese culture: the fundamental role of the Twa.

Before independence, the Tutsi Mwami controlled the three main sources of power: the cattle economy, the monarchy and religious life (Vassaal Adams 1994). Their rule was reinforced by an oral mythology which taught that Tutsi were inherently superior and that their dominance was ordained by God. What is often overlooked by historians of Rwanda is the fundamental role that Tutsi identification with the Twa (the autochthons) played in the Tutsi's ideological justification for their mystical authority over, and absolute ownership of, the land and its fertility (e.g. Chretien 1981, Newbury 1988). This relationship was ritually re-enacted in the Mwami's ceremonial hunting expeditions, where he was always accompanied by a Twa. The founding hero of the Tutsi Mwami's dynasty was the:

"bastard of a recluse princess and of a hunter coming from hellish places, brought-up by a poor potter. He kills his maternal grandfather during a shepherds' brawl, and afterwards becomes renowned for his hunting and his conquests."
(Chretien 1981: 420-421)

For a number of reasons it seems unlikely that Twa paternity is implied here. But upbringing by a potter does suggest Twa nurture of the royal lineage. This implies that the Tutsi control over what had been Twa land was by Twa consent initially. In this and other contexts the Twa, the original owners of the country, are represented as conferring legitimacy on Tutsi royal rule. As Chretien points out, this type of description characterises the portraits of many of the founding heroes of Central African kingdoms, such as the founder Ruhinda in the

various Haya or Zinza-speaking states and the founder of the Bito dynasty of Bunyoro.

Vansina (1990) elaborates on this interesting relationship by analysing and comparing oral histories from throughout the Central African Forest region.

"In stories about settlement, Pygmies are the guides who taught the immigrants how to cope with the various habitats within the rainforests..... The stories.... are remarkable because, by the nineteenth century, all surviving bands of Pygmy hunters and gatherers were serfs for the villagers, who held profoundly ambivalent views about them. They were a despised, uncivilised, subhuman race, unfit for sexual congress with any farming woman. Yet they were the fountain of civilisation; the first in the land; the inventors of fire; the teachers about habitats; the wise healers with medicinal plants.... and on occasion the first farmers. The inhabitants of the Kuba kingdom for instance, so intertwined the very notion of untutored nature, its bounty and its dangers, with the notion of Pygmy hunter-gatherers that the image of the nature spirits was modelled after the ideal Pygmy.... and that any claim to mastery of the land had to involve the legitimising presence of a quintessential autochthon, a Pygmy.

Do these paradoxes not contain a dim remembrance of the crucial role of the autochthons during the (Bantu) expansion, when they tutored the new-comers in the ways of the various new habitats they encountered? If so how crucial their role must have been to have survived for millennia in the collective memory, despite their despised place in the social order!"
(Vansina 1990:56)

Discrimination

Throughout Central Africa, Pygmy peoples are despised and considered as an uncivilised and subhuman race by their neighbours. Kagabo and Mudandagizi writing in the mid-1970's argued that the stereotype of the Twa commonly held in Rwanda by the Hutu and Tutsi reflects a racist attitude - the Twa are seen and treated as an inferior race. This contrasts with the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi which was a manifestation of class-consciousness rather than racism or caste-consciousness (see page 26).

Kagabo and Mudandagizi observe:

"In the eyes of Rwandese, the Twa were men endowed with a humanity that was sometimes difficult to distinguish from bestiality: so voracious that they would feed like animals on all types of refuse, whose sexuality was unrestrained by cultural prohibitions, unable to feel shame or a sense of decency, unintelligent and only good for dull and tedious jobs, held in contempt and feared at the same time, identifiable by their attitude and physical appearance. Here we see the familiar assembly of stereotypes implying physiological inequality which characterise racism" (1974:76)

This attitude towards the Twa, which remains widespread in Rwanda even today, can be described as racist.

Kagabo and Mudandagizi report that

"the most pronounced trait, that which is most often referred to with revulsion, concerns the breaking of the prohibition against eating mutton; the Twa are first and foremost eaters of mutton." (1974:76)

The taboo against eating mutton was very strong in Rwanda and the majority continue to respect it today. The proverb "One must not mix sheep and goats" develops this theme and is part of the justification for

the segregation of the Twa from other Rwandese in habitation, matrimony, consumption and commerce. This also leads to the belief that the Twa, who break this prohibition, regularly break many others too. For example, in the 'Kubandwa' initiation, ritual assistants pretend to become Twa. They demonstrate this by breaking important taboos in their obscene incestuous joking, by miming licentious acts and stealing. By becoming shameless they become Twa. The hunting way of life is portrayed in the founding myths of the ritual as symbolising the contradiction between culture and nature. The ritual depicts the hunting way of life as

"... freedom degraded into licentiousness, blissful inactivity become laziness, easy enjoyment of the fruits of nature degenerated into gluttony". (Kagabo and Mudandagizi 1974:78)

This demarcation between Twa and other Rwandese is based on ideological criteria: the supposed defilement caused by consuming a prohibited meat; a shared oral history emphasising the contemptible nature of Twa; ritual representations which demean the Twa's hunting way of life.

Such attitudes have a profound effect on the Twa's status in Rwandese society, as Vansina observes from his data on the Bantu expansion:

"The Bantu's paradoxical stance conveniently denied the hunter-gatherers their rights from first occupation by essentially claiming that they were not fully human" (1990:57)

These beliefs evoked a contempt for the Twa, which manifested itself through other Rwandese refusing to share food with them or to drink with them from the same vessel. It is hard to think of a stronger mark of discrimination since one of the most common expressions of friendship in Rwanda is sharing calabashes of beer.

In many rural areas this prejudiced behaviour still exists. Most Tutsi and Hutu still refuse to sit next to a Twa. When fetching water from the

same place they often force the Twa to move downstream. However, in urban areas these behavioural patterns of communal ostracism have begun to dissolve. Despite this, the reality is that many of the underlying biases against the Twa still lie unchallenged in the minds of other Rwandese.

THE TWA SITUATION 1959-1994

Land

The events of 1959-61 brought down the Tutsi monarchy and left the Twa without support. The political changes made the Twa more vulnerable and left them at the mercy of their farming neighbours. Prior to 1961 the kings had given land to certain Twa. Many Twa still lived in family groups attached to Hutu households as clients and tenants. Only able to rent land in return for labour and goods, these Twa were often abused and exploited as the autobiographical testimonies in Kagabo and Mudandagizi (1974: 79-87) show. Despite their claimed adherence to an ideology of racial equality, the new republics of Rwanda showed no effective desire to alter the exploited and marginalised socio-economic situation of the Twa. During this period the last remaining Impunyu (forest-dwelling hunter-gathering Twa) were successively expelled from their forest lands. In 1993, WRM met some of the last groups to suffer this fate. In Kanzenze, a community of male hunters and women potters had been expelled from their land on the edge of the forest in the early 1970's. They had finally been forced to leave their homes in 1984. Some of the men still made the 80 km journey to the forest to hunt illegally, but risked being shot by wardens. The Impunyu of Nyungwe were expelled in 1988 when their forest was divided into a military training area and national park.

During the late 1970's and early 1980's land pressure steadily increased. The 'Peasant Revolution' in the early 1960's redistributed land amongst the population, but often ignored the Twa. As the children of those given land became old enough to start their own families many peasants recovered their fields from tenants in order for their children to take up farming. Twa tenants were particularly vulnerable to this process, and felt it was unfair. Many refused to leave, provoking conflicts in which the probabilities for success were heavily weighted against them. Even Twa who had legal title to their land were forced out to make way for expanding Hutu families. In 1993 in Kibuye, WRM witnessed the finale of one such conflict.



The APB calling a meeting with Twa during field work in Kanzenze, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

Ntaganira had come with his wife to Bwakira to seek refuge for a week. His father owned land surrounded by Hutu farmers, 25 km from Bwakira. Their neighbours coveted their land. Like many Twa, as well as farming, his family go looking for food in exchange for work or beg from their neighbours. Ntaganira told us that the food was frequently laced with rodent poison. The effects of this poison are cumulative. Over the past few years his neighbours had succeeded in killing his mother, sisters and all but one of his brothers. Ntaganira's father had been so severely poisoned that he lost his mind and was unable to recognise even his own sons. The neighbours had hacked his arms so severely with machetes that the old man could no longer use them.

The situation at home had become so dangerous that Ntaganira, his wife and last surviving brother were forced to flee and abandon their deranged father on their land. They had come to take refuge with the Twa of Bwakira and rest for a while before returning home. They had arrived a few days before us. We asked Ntaganira where his brother was. He explained that on the journey he and his brother were called



A meeting of Twa hunters during field work, Kanzenze, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

into a bar by some drunken Hutu to take a drink. There were many drunk men in the bar and Ntaganira said he immediately became uneasy. As he looked around he realised that they were about to be attacked and so shouted to his brother and made a dash for the door. He was blocked, managed to fight free and get through the door, but was struck with an empty wheelbarrow which caused a serious wound on top of his skull. As he ran away he could hear his brother screaming. He is sure he is dead. Ntaganira and his wife were desperate, they did not know what to do. When we returned to Bwakira a week later they had left to see what had become of their father and to try to stop the Hutu taking their land.

These kinds of discrimination seem to have been wide spread. As a result, many Twa were forced into the most arid areas of their country. Achieving food security became almost impossible due to the periodic food shortages inherent to these areas. Others went to join relatives who lived on land obtained from the kings.

During the 1993 survey of Twa communities, WRM contacted Twa from 37 *cellules*, representing 4553 people. The land situation of these communities reveals a major factor contributing to the appalling situation in which the Twa are forced to subsist. Nine of the *cellules*, with a total population of 604 people (13.3% of the Twa surveyed by WRM) were entirely landless. Twenty-six *cellules* totalling 3,876 people (85.1% of surveyed Twa) had variable but insufficient amounts of land. The vast majority only owned the land their house was on. Only two *cellules* totalling 73 people (1.6% of surveyed Twa) had enough farm land to feed their families adequately .

The Twa's level of dependence on the monarchy, and by comparison, the level of discrimination against them by successive post-independence Hutu governments comes out clearly in examining who the Twa's land was obtained from. Twenty-five *cellules* still lived on land given them by the kings prior to 1959. This totalled 3,837 people or 84.2% of the Twa surveyed by WRM. Only three *cellules* (totalling 112 people or 2.5% of the surveyed Twa) had received land from the Government between 1961 and 1993. In only one case, that of 33 people in Kanama commune, Gisenyi, was the land potentially adequate for their food supplies. But in this case, ADIGMAR and a Belgian missionary, Jean-Pierre Godding, had played vital roles in securing this land for Impunyu Twa of Gishwati forest.

In Bwakira, Kibungo, 37 Twa had only recently been given land. This community of traditional potters had previously lived dispersed in the surrounding area as clients in individual Hutu households. Because of overcrowding the Hutu complained to the local authorities. The commune built the Twa some houses close to the Hutu community. The Hutu again complained, saying there was too much smoke from pot-firing, rubbish and filth. Then the commune gave them the hill side, three kilometres away from the commune, visited by WRM. The land was on an extremely steep slope, at a pitch of almost 60°. The rain would regularly wash their crops away. Despite the hillside being unfarmed by others, the Twa were only allowed to cultivate tiny plots inadequate to feed even one individual for the year. The rest of the land around their plots was used as cow-pasture. As we witnessed several

times during our visits there, the Hutu were unconcerned when their cows wandered into the Twa's forlorn gardens and caused serious damage. As one tough old widower told us "they couldn't find anywhere to bury us, so they gave us this place!"

The third community which had been given land by the Government consisted of 42 people living directly behind the Kabarando Commune Offices in Kibungo. This land was their ancestral land prior to 1959. During the 'Peasant Revolution' the Hutu seized it along with the Tutsis' land. The Twa fled and lived dispersed in neighbouring communes. In 1973 they managed to acquire part of their land back from a sympathetic Burgomaster. However, his sympathetic nature was not appreciated by the Habyarimana regime and he was replaced in 1974 by a new Burgomaster, the incumbent at the time of WRM's visit in 1993. Within six months of his arrival the commune built a large dispensary on the Twa's farmland, destroying their fruit trees and other crops. The Twa were not consulted or compensated despite losing many vital resources.

An elder of the community went to tell the Prefect about the situation. He was advised to stay on what land he had left. A few days later a cemetery was built on most of what remained of their farmland. When asked if they had complained again they answered "How can we accuse the man standing in front of us when it is he who's supposed to give us justice?" We were told that the Burgomaster, along with certain influential officials and local farmers had, since 1974, embarked upon a systematic attempt to expel these Twa from their ancestral lands. Their tactics had been largely successful and only one Twa man still had a reasonable farm. In consequence he was subjected to regular abuse involving violence, robbery and the deliberate destruction of his property.

Three weeks prior to our visit, a Hutu farmer came to this man's house to collect the man's son who had been labouring on the Hutu's rice farm. The son was tending his father's pig at the time. When the Hutu saw the pig he suddenly accused the boy of having killed his pig. "It was untrue, completely untrue" the man's son insisted. The malicious

Hutu returned with some friends, beat up the boy, killed the father's pig and stole it along with their manioc supplies. We heard many tragic tales from this community as they were subjected to ever greater levels of discrimination and victimisation. The Burgomaster planned to move them to an arid and infertile area quite far away. The community was very unhappy about this.

In the commune of Kanzenze, Kigali prefecture, lived a group of 50 Twa. The elders estimated that they had lost two thirds of their land since the 1960's. They still owned the land their houses were on and the land around them was planted with food crops. They explained to us that they used to farm the land but in the past few years the land had become so small that they never had enough food. In the period before harvest the community typically suffered extreme hunger. At this time, Hutu neighbours would come to visit them with a sheep or with some bananas and persuade (very easily since they were starving) the old man to give them use rights over the land around the houses. Thus the Hutu used the cleared fields for their own crops. When we visited in 1993, people often went for between three and five days without a meal. Hunger was so severe that people ate the skins of the bananas they earned doing casual labour. Some parents described how their children deserted them to become beggars in the town because there was nothing to eat at home. Malnutrition leads to disease and there was plenty, especially malaria, stomach disorders, worms, and skin and eye diseases.

We encountered a very similar situation when we visited Mugambazi in Kigali Prefecture. This community of 144 people had originally been given the whole mountain by the King three generations ago. During the events of 1959-61 many Twa thought to be on the Tutsi's side were killed, many also died of hunger as there were no more markets in which to sell pots. Since 1959, this community lost almost 75% of its land to Hutu neighbours.

In the commune of Kayonza, Kibungo prefecture, a small community of 18 people had great difficulty in keeping their land. Since 1959 they also had lost more than half of the land. Sharing the remainder among

their children had made their plots tiny. When we visited in 1993, each family had approximately 20 m² around their houses. Life was getting more and more difficult for this extended family. They often went for two days without eating. As they became poorer they were forced into ever more marginal activities, Surrounded by large banana plantations, hunger would force them to steal a few bananas rather than go begging from people who refused to give them anything. They had always been discriminated against: "because we are Twa and we eat sheep, but some Hutu here also eat sheep but they never share with us".

When we asked if they went to ask the local authorities to return their land, they laughed. One young man explained that recently he had been beaten and stabbed in the arm when he surprised five men stealing his possessions from his house. He showed us his wounds. He knew the men and went to complain to the authorities. But the thieves were Hutu and nothing was done. Whenever they complained nothing was done. "We do talk to the Hutu but we always lie to each other so we rarely get on well together".

The famous community in Rutonde, Kibungo Prefecture also suffered a similar fate. Very popular with the Tutsi kings for their excellent musicians and dancers, members of this community, under the leadership of Mbishibishi, were given a big area of land by the kings. When the monarchy fell, things changed dramatically and since then life has steadily been getting worse. The influx of relatives from other area and inheritance as new generations grew up has divided up the land into ever smaller plots. By 1993, only one family out of 32 families (124 people) had enough land to farm. Living in a developed area, the people found that industrial substitutes made their pottery no longer economically viable, young people and the old could not get any regular salaried employment and the authorities had done nothing to help.

The effect of increasingly severe land shortage has been to force the Twa to seek alternative strategies for generating an income.

Pottery and other survival strategies

We were told that until the 1970's pottery offered a modest but dependable income. After the 1970's industrially produced containers (jerricans, basins, bowls, plates etc) became widely available and popular. The initial consequence for the Twa potters was that they now had competition. The prices for their pots remained static so as to remain attractively cheap. The real income gained from pottery fell as prices for everything else rose. The industrial substitutes took over an ever-increasing portion of the market, significantly reducing the numbers of pots sold. The following Twa song describes their resentment towards these industrial substitutes:

*Ayee.....ayee.....ayee
Clay is hard....ayee,
Clay has no more value.
Clay used to give me meat which I could often eat with other things.
Clay gave me sorghum and I could drink sorghum beer.
Clay gave me beans and I could eat very well with lots of other things....ayeee.
Leave me alone, I am tired of the black value of clay.
The plastic cups and dishes and pans have come.
Ayeeeeee.....
I long for the things I got when I made a clay pot: Urujo, I nkogoto Urbairi,
Igiko.....ayeeeeeeee.
Clay, clay you have no more value.
But those who hate you, let them die far away.
Ayeeee....
Clay, clay, clay.....wéééééééé.
When I see the big pots
When I see a pot
I remember about clay.
When I see tiles
I remember about clay.
Ayeeee.....*

*You people you think clay has no value.
But remember clay.*

*Ayeeeeee.....
You people you think clay has no value.
But remember clay.
Here are the plastic cups
And dishes, aluminium saucepans.
You have given no value to clay.
Ayeeeeee.....*

However, industrial substitutes were not the only problems facing Twa potters. As land pressure increased in the 1980's (due to unequal distribution more than to insufficiency) many Hutu reclaimed the clay marshes for farming. Access to the clay then became difficult for the Twa potters. Often the farmers denied them access altogether forcing the Twa to walk great distances to find clay. Other land-owners charged for the clay, adding further costs to pot production.

The Twa of Kabarondo in Kibungo illustrate the downward spiral caused by the difficulty of access to clay. Once farming adequate plots, this community steadily had all their land seized by the Commune after 1959. Forced to rely more and more on pottery, their livelihood was shattered in 1990 when the Burgomaster gave their clay source to a Hutu to farm. Now access to their clay was either expensive or very dangerous. As a result they rarely made pots. Most of their income came from illegally collecting firewood from the forest. For those not strong enough to make the difficult and dangerous journey to and from the forest, begging and occasional day labouring provided their main income. One youth described how he swept up the dirt near grinding mills to get flour for his porridge. Their poverty and lack of resources led to some occasional petty theft. This had given the community an exaggerated reputation as thieves, a typical component of commonly held stereotypes of the Twa. This has led to them being targeted as scapegoats. A woman told us of her husband's false imprisonment:

"There were some Hutu who had lost their cows. They looked everywhere, then they came to me. That day I had bought some hippopotamus meat at the market. When the Hutu arrived, I was preparing that meat. They assumed it was meat from their cow and put my husband in prison for two years"

(T.C., Twa woman, Kabarondo 1993)

Denying the Twa access to vital resources forces them into ever-increasing marginality. The most common resource denied them by their neighbours is water. In Kanzenze, Kigali prefecture, one woman showed us terrible scarring received when she was caught fetching water from a public well. Quite commonly Twa were denied access to the best water sources in their immediate area. Often children would be sent to fetch water as they were more nimble and less harshly beaten than adults if they were caught.

In general, if pressure on a local resource increases the Twa are the first to be denied access to it. One example is firewood, which is vital for the Twa for cooking and pot-firing. In areas where environmental degradation has gone too far, like Mugambazi in Kigali prefecture or Runda in Gitarama, the Twa risk violent beatings if they are caught collecting the grasses they need to fire pots.

For the Twa's already marginal economy these problems had a devastating impact, forcing many into extreme poverty and making even more Twa depend on begging to provide an income for the family. In 1993 begging was a major activity and a vital survival strategy for more than 70% of the Twa we visited. Casual day labour, another marginal and insecure form of employment, had also come to the fore as a major activity and source of income.

There were a number of attempts to develop and modernise the Twa's pottery techniques. In Shyorongi (Kigali prefecture) a large modern pottery workshop was set up by a European group in the Twa village. Equipped with kilns and wheels, and run by a Hutu, the Twa began to produce European style crockery and clay figurines for the tourist market. Things worked well for a few years until the Europeans pulled

out. We were told that the Hutu in charge then stole all the money meant for the workshop and fled.

In Gatagara (Gitarama prefecture), Abbé Frépont built a large centre for people with missing limbs on the Twa community's ancestral land. The Abbé made efforts to support the Twa, which included education and building a modern pottery workshop for the Twa. However, as was explained:

"When Abbé Frépont died the Hutu came to work at the pottery workshop and threw us out. I had to leave the moment they arrived. This pottery workshop was taken over by a Hutu named Munyeshuri. It is for us Twa to make the pots and pans. I reported this man to the authorities of Gatagara but nothing came of it."

(A.O., Twa man, Kigoma 1993)

In Masango commune in Gitarama there were four large communities of Twa. It was in this area that 'potterie moderne', a new range of hand made pots which included a variety of vases, animal figures and ashtrays was first developed. Potters able to make 'la potterie moderne' could earn more money and enjoy a better standard of living than their fellows. The small group of 'modern' potters were no longer discriminated against with such hostility as the rest of the impoverished community. Some Hutu would share food and drink with them. We were told that a religious group wished to encourage their initiative and donated 1,000,000 FRw (approximately US\$4,000) in 1989 to the commune to establish a pottery workshop. The commune officials explained to us that they were withholding the money because it was insufficient for what they had to do. Like the local Twa, we felt that some irregularities had occurred.

These examples illustrate how easily the Twa become dependent on outsiders who offer them support. We were often told on our visits of a certain outsider who used to help the Twa, but when he or she left no one would help them any more and as a result they suffered. Outsiders - Europeans, Tutsi, or church representatives - provided a focus of

authority and discipline which enabled the Twa to work relatively peacefully alongside people from other ethnic groups. However, when such outsiders leave, the artificial harmony breaks down and the Twa too often fall victim to abuse. Such situations also illustrate the Twa's tendency to develop dependency relations rather than having the power, confidence or knowhow to develop their own enterprises. The rise of their own indigenous organisations is a positive step away from this.

As land pressure and economic poverty increase, the other groups are able to exploit traditional Twa occupations. But, due to the discrimination they suffer, there is very little chance of the Twa taking up traditional Hutu and Tutsi occupations.

Education and jobs

Despite some half-hearted efforts by the Government to make education more accessible to the Twa, education has not provided an escape for most Twa. Those educated with full secondary school education represent less than 0.5% of the Twa population. In general, very few Twa can afford schooling. Those who manage to find the money and obtain admission suffer an inferiority complex created by discriminatory harassment. Many Rwandese still find the Twa repugnant, contemptible and worthless to approach for an opinion or decision. As less than one in a hundred pupils are Twa, the Twa school child often becomes the centre of attraction for bullying and teasing and ends up in a very miserable situation.

In Musasa commune, Kigali, two children told us about the severe discrimination they suffered at school. The teachers frequently publicly humiliated them, for instance, making them stand up in front of the rest of the class by saying "Whoever is Mutwa, stand up!", then forcing them to say that they are poor and their parents are stupid. Their classmates from other ethnic groups endlessly jeered at them and made them miserable.

In Kabarondo in Kibungo, discrimination at school was a disincentive to attend. Other children refuse to play with Twa pupils. They are teased for their shabby appearance and often end up in fights with their classmates.

As one young man put it in Rutonde:

"My parents are Twa. We were born poor, making and selling pots. My parents had land. The Hutu took it. No one listens to us. The Government ignores our complaints, so do the courts. When I was at school, everybody hated me. I was sent home for no reason. We Twa, we are humiliated."

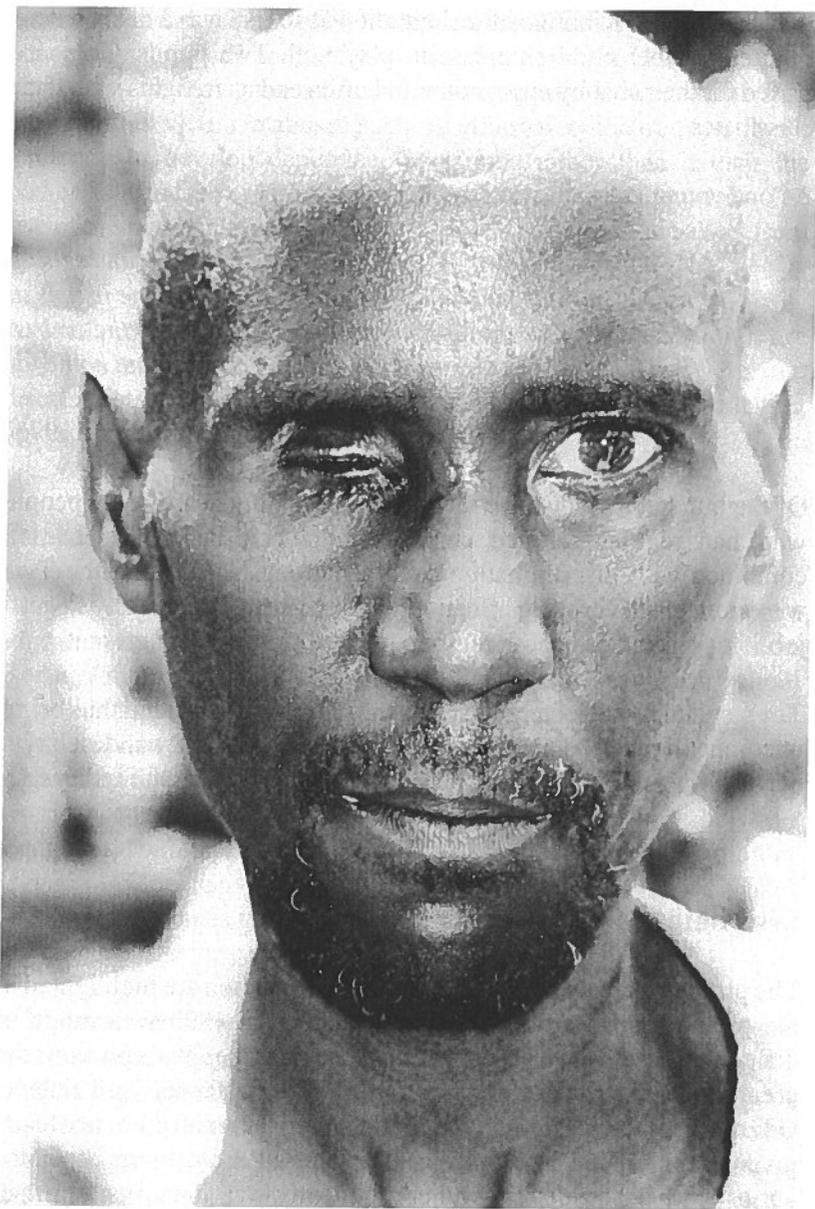
(B., Twa man, Rutonde 1993)

Of the hundreds of Twa we met in 1993, we only heard of 25 people who had regular salaried employment. Their lack of education combined with discrimination by other groups meant that the Twa were not able to compete effectively. They were very unlikely to get a job if a person from another group applied.

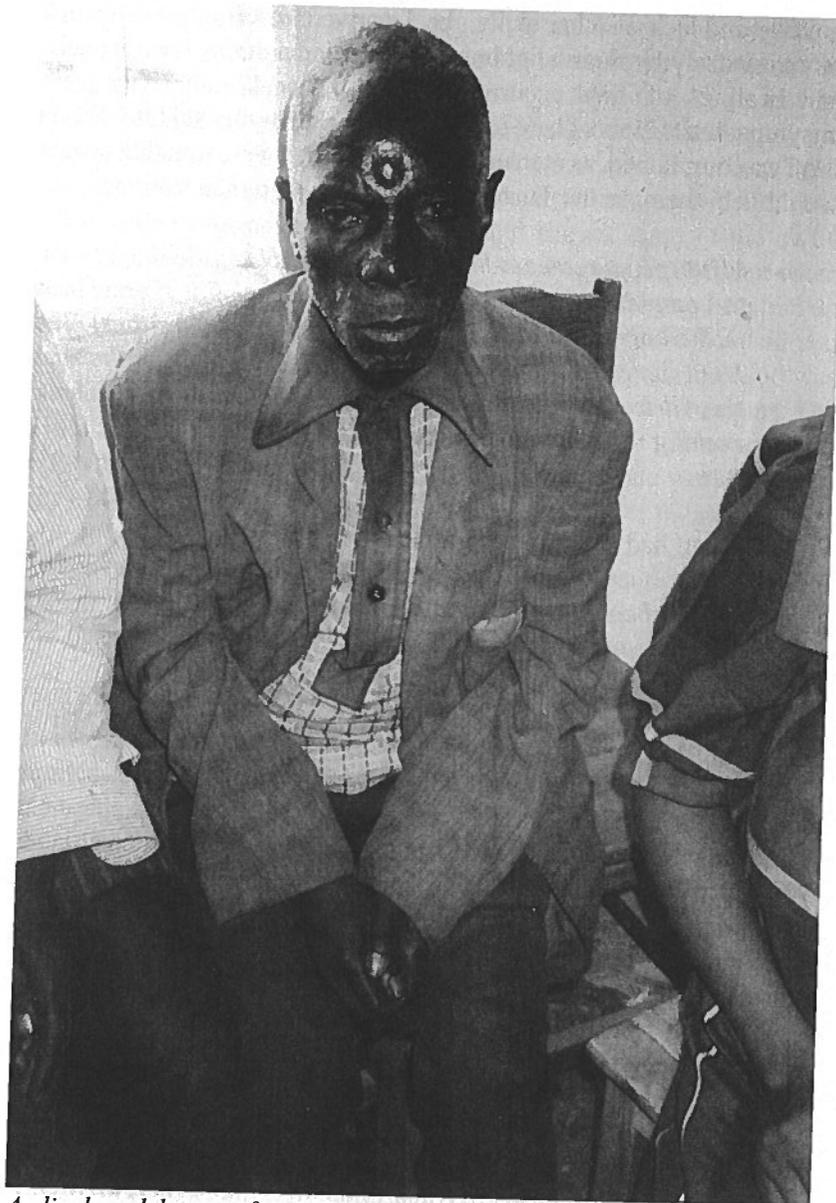
The result of being left behind in education and training, and thus being uncompetitive in the employment market, is that the Rwandese myth of the Twa's lack of intelligence and ability is further strengthened.

Discrimination

The problems created for the Twa by discrimination are highlighted in the previous sections. From our experience in 1993 in a range of different locations, we observed that the greater the Twa's poverty, the greater the discrimination they suffer. For instance, in Tambwe, Gitarama prefecture, inheritance had divided the small amount of land given by the Tutsi into ever smaller plots. People there depended almost entirely on pottery and consequently were much poorer than Twa in places like Rutonde where alternative sources of employment had been developed. Here too, as a consequence of their greater



A Twa man who lost his eye through unprovoked attack by a Hutu neighbour. Musasa, Kigali, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight).



A displaced hunter from Nyacongo refugee settlement, Kigali. His forehead shows the marks of a crowbar wound. APB Offices, Kigali, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

poverty and lack of other skills, the Twa were discriminated against more intensely by their neighbours and the local authorities. Attacks and beatings of Twa occurred regularly. Local authorities were unsympathetic. Plots of land had also been taken by local Hutu. When the Twa complained, as in many other cases, they were told that no one would help them, as the Tutsi king was gone. One man told us:

"Hutu people came to hit me, saying I had been stealing. I went to complain at the Commune. But when I got there I was pushed about and I left without reply (to my questions). The Hutu came and destroyed my home. When I told the authorities they ill-treated me and sent me away. They said the Twa have nothing to complain about, even if they have to die."

(J.A., Twa man, Tambwe 1993)

Another man had recently been attacked mindlessly:

"I was beaten on the road by Hutu. They had knives and they attacked me with them. When I went and complained to the authorities, they did not want to listen to me."

(P., Twa man, Tambwe 1993)

During our investigation in 1993, we were regularly told of serious abuses of the Twa's rights in Rwandese law - land-grabbing, physical and verbal abuse, denial of access to vital local resources such as land, clay and water, denial of effective access to education, health care and legal redress. Often when we heard of abuses we would ask "Have you complained?". Frequently people would simply look at us with an expression of "You really don't understand" and answer "No".

Habyarimana's totalitarian regime compounded the many problems suffered by the Twa and intensified discrimination against them. In all but the rarest cases the Twa were denied access to the same standards of justice as other Rwandese. Most often local level officials were the worst. The old Burgomaster of Kabarondo in Kibungo was an extreme, but not atypical, example of this.

We were told that if Twa in Kabarondo were abused or wronged, as they very frequently were, and went to complain at the Commune, the Burgomaster would send the police to beat them up. At the nearby market, commune officials and certain policemen had been known to smash their pots. When going to collect water, the Hutu beat them saying "they are eaters of mutton". We were told many stories of unprovoked beatings and wounding, and shown some of the awful scars and deformations resulting from this. They explained that when the Hutu see a Twa with anything of value, they get angry, beat him up and steal it with impunity. The man whose pig was killed and son beaten up (see page 39) is especially hated as he works hard and was modestly successful. He had two hectares of manioc and bananas. The Hutu wanted his land. The Burgomaster had already taken some and sold it publicly. He commented: "How can I continue working when they take everything? I continue anyway".

It appears that, after 1990, the abuses became more frequent and serious as the regime reacted to the RPF invasion by encouraging ethnic hatred and violence directed at non-Hutu. The old links between the Twa and Tutsi royals were highlighted to justify abuses of the Twa.

In effect, the majority of abuses suffered by the Twa until then were fuelled by economic incentives. With the rise of the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND) and their youth militia Interahamwe, with its culture of violence, murder and invincibility fuelled by a fanatic Hutu-extremist ideology, more unprovoked and politically motivated abuses took place. As a man in Masango explained to us:

"I am living on my own surrounded by the Hutu. But the worst part of it is that the Hutu spend every night behind my house, hoping to kill me. I am not poisoning anyone. I am not stealing. Why are they after me? I have no cattle. The Hutu say they will take advantage of 'multipartism' and make sure the Twa die like mice."

(D.M., Twa man, Masango 1993)

When we visited Bwakira, Kibuye, two people had recently been murdered in what amounted to killing for pleasure (see also Ntaganira's story on page 37). A widow of one of the victims, a very resourceful woman, recounted what had happened:

"I left Rwanda for Tanzania with my husband. The President of Tanzania decreed that all Rwandese should return home to their country of origin. We came back. While here, my husband went back to visit his father. He spent two days there and then came back. During the journey he went to a bar to buy a beer. He was killed there. I was unable to find his body to bury it.

I reported to the authorities and they neglected me, saying maybe he has gone back to Tanzania. We continued looking for his corpse and a bit later we found it in the river. I took it via the commune in order to ask for some help to bury him. They replied to me that we the Twa, are condemned to death like the Tutsi who loved us.

On finding the body we discovered that they had cut out his tongue, his fingers and toes. The commune, instead of helping me, beat me and pushed me on top of the corpse. A bit later I announced all this to the Sub-Prefect, and he telephoned the other authorities. They called me. I justified myself well. They buried him and told me they would help me. But still today I have heard nothing. I must continue to live with the problems of my children. There are three of them."

(M.J., Twa woman, Bwakira 1993)

Refugees

The successive attacks by the RPF on President Habyarimana's government between 1990-1993 caused considerable internal displacement. Among the first to be affected were the Twa.

In 1993 WRM met with a group of Twa refugees who had originated from Cyamba in northern Rwanda. Amongst them were many Impunyu (forest Pygmies) who had grown up in the forest but had been banned from living or hunting there since the 1960's. They eventually settled down and attempted to take up farming, but the war came and they were forced to flee. They had been on the move for one and a half years and the constant travelling and lack of food and shelter led to many falling ill and dying. Others had been mutilated by landmines. After spending about two months in various refugee camps, they ended up in Nyacongo, an area on the hills just outside Kigali city, then famous for its row upon row of makeshift plastic dwellings.

Inside the camps conflicts over food hand-outs were common. The Twa were often ignored by other ethnic groups handling the food distribution. When the food came, they had to fight hard to get any as they were constantly pushed away and denied access. Eventually, as one Twa explained, they protested exclaiming "We want food, we are human beings too." Only then did the authorities start giving them food.

The Twa at Nyacongo reported increasing levels of discrimination against them in camp. They were no longer employed, in contrast to the Hutu, and when the authorities finally consented to give them identify cards, the cards stated "Hutu". In so doing, the Twa were denied even their identity.

THE CIVIL WAR, MASS KILLINGS AND GENOCIDE

Introduction

Between April and July 1994 as many as one million Rwandese men, women and children, the majority being Tutsi's, were brutally murdered. This represents up to 14% of the nation.

"To put the scale of the carnage into a more familiar context; as many civilians (men, women, children) have been murdered in Rwanda in eight weeks as combatants (soldiers) were killed in four years of the First World War from the whole of the former British Empire. This from a total Rwandese population only one sixth that of 1916 Britain." (Physicians for Human Rights 1994:2).

The genocide was planned by Hutu extremists within the interim Government, the military, the gendarmerie, the civil service, the MRND, the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) and their accomplices and was intended to eliminate all political opposition. The death of President Habyarimana in an air crash on April 6th 1994 removed a leader ready to implement a peace treaty (the Arusha Accords) that would have led to sharing political power with opposition parties and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). The ensuing political vacuum favoured the extremists and mass killing of their opponents began. It also offered a plausible pretext for "revenge massacres". The tendency of the international community to believe the propaganda of the interim Government led them to label the killings erroneously as spontaneous 'tribal' violence when they were in fact a political strategy directed from above. This was compounded by the confused responses of the United Nations and others. The killings took on a frenzied momentum until the RPF routed the murderers in July 1994.

The policy of implicating

“as many people as possible in the killings was intended to maximise numbers killed, dilute culpability and feelings of guilt, increase those with an investment in suppressing truth and legitimise murderous behaviour through common practice. A subtler rationale was the prospect of reforging the Rwandese national identity through the shared endeavour of killing all Tutsis and those who opposed it with the objective of making Rwanda a nation wholly committed to the ideology of Hutu extremism.” (Physicians for Human Rights 1994:2).

In Rwanda thousands upon thousands of entire families have been completely wiped out. The majority of these were Tutsi families, but also included many Twa and moderate Hutu. During the war the media focused exclusively on the Hutu and Tutsi. The Twa, as usual, were entirely ignored. This chapter seeks to explain the way the Twa experienced the war, mass-killings and genocide. The following chapters deal with the aftermath and the contemporary problems the Twa communities now face.

Twa involvement in Politics

With the signing of the Arusha Accords in 1990 and the acceptance of a multi-party democratic state the President's party, MRND, and its accomplice CDR now had competition and began a sustained effort to gain popular support and thus votes. Offering material incentives of food and drink, salaried work, gifts and political protection, party members encouraged others to join. Large and influential communities were targeted all over the country, including some Twa ones. As the people of Rutonde discovered, refusal to accept these overtures resulted in violent intimidation and sustained coercion. On our visits to Rutonde in 1993, Mbishibishi, the community's leader, recounted how several times he had been forced into hiding whilst MRND members searched the village trying to kill him. Mbishibishi, along with many others of his community, was murdered at the beginning of the war.

“I am M. 's sister-in-law, my husband died during the war with my three children. We don't know why they died because they were left behind and could not escape. Many members of our families were killed: six adults and ten children, M. among them. During the war we were very miserable because we couldn't do anything. We were suffering for no reason since we did not belong to any political party. This is the general problem of Twa people.”

(N.C., Twa woman 66, Rutonde 1995)

Although the majority of Twa knew and know very little about politics and current affairs in their country, they are easy to manipulate due to their poverty and the discrimination they suffer. The material incentives and political protection offered by MRND were attractive to some. Members of two large communities we visited were persuaded to join MRND or Interahamwe.

In Shyorongi, Kigali Prefecture, in 1993 we were told how a Twa man had been beaten to death for wearing the 'wrong hat' (each party had its own hat) during a rowdy MRND demonstration. According to UNPO (1995:22), a member of the Collective of Human Rights Leagues and Associations (CLADHO) explained that some Twa from Shyorongi had been involved in activities targeting the Tutsi population well before April 1994; after the Interahamwe had murdered their victims, some Twa looted the houses. During the genocide some Twa men from Shyorongi participated as killers and looters, whilst others were killed in the massacres.

“The way I see the war is that on Thursday 11th April 1994 Habyarimana's soldiers started killing Tutsi and some Twa. The leaders of this area were the ones who were showing which people should be killed. Some Twa were also helping in that massacre. There were many houses destroyed. Some of the people living at this place left when the massacres were going on or at the time of gunfire, They were really frightened. What we would like to see is that our people who fled to Zaïre return because they are innocent. We are very happy with the new Government. It is helping us.”

(M.M., Twa man 30, Shyorongi 1995)

The former mayor of Masango (Gitarama Prefecture) Mr Mpamo was a founder member of MRND. UNPO (1995:21) report that he bribed many Twa into joining Interahamwe who were active in the area long before April 1994. Visiting the commune in 1993 we found many Twa suffering shocking levels of poverty and injustice from commune officials. The high percentage of people sent to prison by the commune was particularly striking. Every man and most women claimed to have been imprisoned. The reasons were twofold: not being able to pay the annual commune tax, and illegal marriage as the Twa could not afford to register legally.

Their desperate need for food work and political protection was easily manipulated by Mpamo and as April 1994 approached more and more Twa were bribed to join. The political message was not what attracted the Twa, but rather the opportunity for food, some money and political protection.

This climate of growing tension was intensified by the events of the October Burundian coup when thousands of displaced Hutu crossed over the border into Rwanda. This had a serious effect on internal security, in particular local communities in the border areas, many of whom became victims of physical abuse and crime. African Rights (1995) note how the Burundian refugees inspired the greatest fear among local communities due to their brutality. They report how, in 1993, the UN High Commission for Refugees formally protested that the Burundian refugees were being recruited to pressurise people into participating in the killings.

In 1993, WRM visited Ntili near the Burundian border, to investigate reports that Twa villages had been burned down. The account the Twa gave of their attackers was one of mindless, unprovoked violence. They had been to market a few days before to sell their pots. There they bought some vegetables off a Hutu who refused to give them their change. The Twa objected, so a group of Hutu began to attack them, breaking their pots and beating them with crow bars. They warned them that when they returned their village would be destroyed. When the Twa got back to their village, they found their attackers had already

arrived and the houses were in flames. One Hutu tried to grab a baby and throw it into the fire, while another caused multiple head wounds to his victim through repeated blows with a crow bar. When the attackers had left, the Twa were afraid to move from their village which had been reduced to a total ruin. A further ten such cases of torching of Twa villages, attacks and murders were reported between December 1993 and March 1994.

These events can be said to have been incited by the regular broadcasting of extremist propaganda by Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines, a private radio station run by supporters of the MRND. This was just one example of the widespread Hutu extremist exploitation of all communications media, with the intention of brainwashing large audiences into believing that the Tutsi were planning to invade Rwanda, annihilate the Hutu and restore the monarchy. At the time of the Burundian coup, a number of inflammatory stories were broadcast which both implicated the Twa as aiding the supposed Tutsi invaders and actively encouraged the listener to take justice into their own hands and punish them.

In situations of growing tension such as this, the vulnerable and unpopular Twa communities are often the first victims of maltreatment.

Mass-killings and Genocide

“‘Isembatsemba’, which means that you have to make sure that nobody unwanted remains alive, was started in April 1994 by the Interahamwe. These people are from the political party CDR and their aim was to kill all Tutsis. After the massacres these people fled to Zaïre.”

(S.Y., Twa woman 28, Shyorongi 1995)

When reading ‘Death, Despair and Defiance’ by African Rights (1994) it is striking how many testimonies begin with the President’s death on April 6th. The Hutu and Tutsi, from whom the testimonies were taken, were aware of the political significance of this event. For

the Twa, unable to listen to radios, the massacres and war took them largely by surprise. No Twa we met ever talked of this event, and only rarely did people give a chronological description of events. Most were taken by surprise when they started hearing shooting:

"When the war started, all we could hear was gun shots. So we tried to run away, myself, my husband and my five children."
(K.A., Twa woman 30, Kanzenze 1995)

"We started to hear loud bangs and we ran away. On our way I lost two children: a boy and a girl. Many families have lost their children also. The decision of coming back to our homes was due to that death. When we arrived, people from the RPF started to ask us what our reasons were for leaving our homes. We told them that when the war started many were escaping and when we saw that we also decided to escape as well. Now the war is finished and we are back."
(M.M., Twa woman 35, Tambwe 1995)

In many places the Twa were threatened and killed by Interahamwe. Their past relations with the Tutsi monarchy made their allegiance to the Hutu state doubtful in the eyes of many Interahamwe, RAF troops² and presidential guards. "First we will kill the Tutsi, then we will kill you", or "your turn will come", were threats often heard in communes around the country (UNPO 1995:19). Indeed many Twa fled when the massacres began.

"I live in a house which used to belong to a member of Interahamwe who also fled. When the massacres started my brother and I, with other people, fled to Nyarutarama. There were police for RPF at that place..... Another thing to mention is the death of a large number of Twa who were killed at Kibagabaga primary school. Before I fled, Karamage (a Hutu) came and asked me if we could go and eat the cows of

those who were killed. I told him to go and eat them because I did not want to join in the killing. He replied that he was going, but if he saw any of us the next day he would kill us like the Tutsis."

(R.D., Twa man 46, Kibagabaga 1995)

The UNPO mission (1995:19) reports massacres of Twa in Murambi and Gituza Communes, Byumba. In Nyanza, Butare, 20 Twa who ran into the Interahamwe were accused of sympathising with the RPF and killed. In Ntyazo commune, Gitarama, a group of Twa villagers with their small children were stopped at an Interahamwe road block and asked to present their ID cards, which noted ethnic identity. When it became known they were Twa they were massacred (UNPO 1995:20).

In areas where Interahamwe was weak, the villagers, including Twa, often grouped together to protect themselves.

"The villagers in this area were killed by Habyarimana's military men (RAF). We have not killed anyone. We heard gun-shots left and right. On the fifth, we saw soldiers herding people into the church at Nyamata. Later in the evening we heard gunshots and we realised they have finished them all. I did not see any villager here kill anyone or even hit anyone. We villagers used bows and arrows and spears to defend ourselves. My family lost three children. I was almost killed. Now I am unable to look for work or food. The young child I live with is almost dying."

(M.J., Twa woman 24, Kanzenze 1995).

In these areas Interahamwe also put great pressure on people to participate in the killings and so increase their numbers. Twa were also targeted:

"When the war started, all we could hear was the gun-shots. So we tried to run away, myself, my husband and my five children. But then my husband was killed, my children are here with me. We have no clothes, we are hungry... A lot of

² Rwandese Armed Forces (former Government)

people died because they refused to become Interahamwe. We were victimised for nothing. Right now we have become nothing, have nothing, not even clothes. We have no land and we cannot grow our own food. We are miserable and all we wish for is to get out of here. All our relatives died."

(K.A., Twa woman 30, Kanzenze 1995).

In many of the places we visited Twa told us of how they had hidden Tutsi in their houses to protect them from the murderers. As one man recounts, and we heard several similar stories, this is often unrecognised by present-day authorities

"All the members of my family have perished - my brothers and son. We are not on good terms with the woman who remained in charge here. So when I went to ask for identity cards, she refused and she even said she would send me to prison. Yet this woman's sister-in-law lived at my house, hidden when the Interahamwe wanted to kill her. I bribed about 30,000 francs (\$125) to save her life. When her brothers in the army came in October she joined them. Her brothers are called Emmanuel Rutagyengwa, the other is Emir who lives in Gisyezi. The other comes and we have no bad feeling. He was here in October. But the biggest problem is their sister-in-law. My biggest worry is that they have taken over our possessions and I am the only surviving Mutwa in the sector."

(M. J-P, Twa man 28, Rusatira, 1995)

Many Twa died at the hands of Interahamwe:

"I am a widow without children and M. was my brother. I was made disabled by Interahamwe. My five children died in a camp and left me with my three grandchildren. My big problem is that I can't find work."

(N.D., Twa woman 60, Rutonde 1995)

"I have four children whose father was killed by Interahamwe. One of these children was going to

school but he could not continue his education as his school fees were not paid. Even the friends who could have helped me have been killed as well."

(M.N., Twa woman 42, Rutonde 1995)

"My biggest problem is that I lost my husband who was killed by Interahamwe. His name was M. J-C. We had one child. They destroyed our house and I have nowhere to go. We have no clothes for myself and my child. We are destitute. I wish you could help me build a small house to live in. That would be my happiness."

(G.M., Twa woman 20, Musambiro 1995)

The woman's sister-in-law explained further:

"M. J-C., who was my brother, died when he was about to start building me a house on my land. M. was killed by Interahamwe, and he was the only one helping me. When he died he left me with his wife and child without anything to support them with because all his possessions were taken. On top of that, I often suffer from stomachache, since 1974. Due to this I can't do any hard work. I wish you could build me a house."

(U.A., Twa woman 43, Musambira 1995)

"I lived with other people - I was not alone. What I am asking for is help. I live with my husband who is very old. Our children have been killed by Interahamwe. They were our builders, and now our homes have been ruined."

(N.J., Twa woman 65, Nyamabuye 1995).

Although it is a very sensitive issue, some Twa talked to us about the 'force-to-kill' policy of the Interahamwe and Twa participation in the activities of Interahamwe.

"About Twa behaviour, starting around April 1994. They behaved well but we were eventually victimized. We lived by

making pots and cultivating the land, but food became scarce once the war started. People were telling us to go and man the road blocks and if we refused they said the Twa should be killed. Some did what they were told, in order not to be killed and others lost their lives. Those who managed to run away were separated from their families and some have not yet been found. Some people were arrested going to the border and put into prison without a charge, with no visitors and no food.

None of the Twa wanted power or played with the politics of killing. Each Twa finds himself or herself without relatives and we have no idea why we had to suffer. We do not understand why we should be different from other Banyarwandans, when we are all citizens of the country. We have no share in the Government and we feel the new Government of Rwanda should do something to improve the lot of the Twa."

(P. J-B., Twa man 35, Kigoma 1995)

"People say that they were forced by the Hutu to participate otherwise they were going to be killed like the Tutsi."

(M.S., Twa man 37, Shyorongi 1995)

"The way things happened the Twa were victimised during the war. Some Twa were taken to man the road-blocks and they did it in order to avoid being killed, because if you didn't they called you a traitor like the Inkotanyi (RPF)."

(M.N., Twa woman 53, Kigoma 1995)

In explaining what happened the Twa quoted above talk of being victimised. This is explained by the extreme coercion used by Interahamwe and the extreme political naïvety of the Twa. Many Twa we met felt the way Interahamwe forced others to participate to be a terrible injustice. The marginalised Twa have never had any impact on national politics, most being ignorant or preferring to remain uninvolved and relatively neutral. Thus to be accused of being an Inkotanyi (RPF) because you were not an Interahamwe was felt as a

serious abuse, as political blackmail. The coercive force and fear created by this policy of Interahamwe explains why some Twa participated. Like the man from Tambwe quoted above, most of those questioned were at pains to point out their political neutrality:

"The war started to be very strong in April 1994. During that time some Twa were forced to kill Tutsis otherwise they were also killed, accused that they were on the Tutsi side. The Hutu were seeing the return of the Tutsi to their country as the loss of power. The papers for their return were signed in Arusha, Tanzania. When President Habyarimana died, the Hutu decided to kill every Tutsi. That is the time we were forced to join in. Therefore we had no alternative since we were afraid of being killed as well. The lucky ones managed to escape. Otherwise we were supposed to kill like the other Interahamwe. That is why the RPF says that even the Twa are killers, even though this was done by force. They also say that we have eaten Tutsi cows and stolen clothes. We hope that the new Government will help us because the Twa are behind in everything. Moreover, half of the Twa have died."

(M.J., Twa man 53, Kacyru 1995)

"My husband's name is R. During the war Interahamwe people came into our house and asked my husband why he was not helping in the massacres. As he said he was unable to do so, they took him by force. He was beaten very much by people saying that the reason why he was refusing to kill was that he liked Tutsi. These Interahamwe also decided to come and check the whole house to see if there were any Tutsi hiding in it. There was nothing I could do because the Twa have always been oppressed. When the war was over R. and his brother M. were taken to prison by people saying that they had participated in the massacres. My husband was taken on Friday and the other one on Saturday. We would like them to be judged, because the one who was accusing them said that they had killed her children while she never had children. When I went to visit them, I only saw his brother. I had taken

with me some food for them. The pot I sent did not come back. Some people told me that my husband was in Gitarama, I went there, but in vain. Now I have given up."

(M., Twa woman 40, Kacyru 1995).

African Rights (1994: 252 - 257) report that a Tutsi woman, after being gang-raped by a group of Interahamwe was handed on to a Twa siding with them. This was "intended as a humiliation in the social context of Rwanda". According to the report some Twa were used by Interahamwe to scandalize women, especially at road-blocks, as related by two women from Ntongwe in Gitarama. Another testimony relates that the Twa members of a group of Interahamwe who discovered a woman in hiding were the most aggressive, pressing the others to gang-rape her in public. Accounts of Twa participating with Interahamwe for material gain are reported by UNPO (1995:21 - 22).

In the revised 2nd edition of their publication, African Rights (1995) report of the policy of avoiding any 'unfinished business' concerning the annihilation of Tutsis: "There were to be no half measures in the effort to write Tutsis out of Rwanda's future". The presidential guard, soldiers, gendarmes, Interahamwe and thousands of ordinary citizens conducted house-to-house searches for Tutsis to kill. "Having hounded them out of their homes and the churches, hospitals, football stadiums and schools where they had sought sanctuary, their attackers combed Rwanda's forests, bushes, banana plantations, sorghum fields and the swamps". African Right's report describes how many Tutsis were forced into the thick Nyungwe forest which dominates much of the landscape of Gikongoro and Cyangugu. According to a wide range of survivors, the militia and authorities enlisted Twa to flush refugees out of their hiding places in the forest.

"I went to the forest on the 12th, together with Anaclet Nsengiyumva, a peasant. But then we saw Interahamwe and Twa with dogs searching the forest. They did not see us. But they continued to hunt. I don't know if they found anyone that day." (African Rights 1995)

Flight

Ravaged by the conflict between two warring factions to whom they often had no political allegiance, for many Twa the traditional response of fleeing was the only option. Whether to avoid the threats of Interahamwe, to escape fighting between the RPF and RAF, or to avoid the RPF because of their wartime activities, most Twa fled from their homes at some stage during the conflict. The journey was very dangerous and many did not survive.

"I live with my three daughters and they helped me a lot when we were escaping to Kibuye during the war. When we saw so many dead people on the way with no one to bury them they decided to take me back so that this does not happen to us."

(N.D., Twa woman 70, Tambwe 1995).

Of those who survived the flight some reached the areas controlled by the RPF whilst others ended up in the camps in the West of Rwanda and Zaïre, in Tanzania or in Burundi.

"When we were running away we went to Gisara and Kabarondo. When the RPF won we were taken to refugee camps in Rwamagana. There we were helped as much as they could help us: food, shelter, water, clothes and so on."

(B., Twa women 48, Rutonde 1995)

"Before the war we survived by selling pots, but then we fled and stopped. Then we heard that we could go back to our homes. Unfortunately when we reached home we found that everything had been destroyed. Until now we are not well. Our children died at Kibeho (refugee camp). Indeed a lot of our people perished there. This place is all in ruins and I cannot estimate how many people died here. They were too many."

(M.B., Twa woman 55, Kanzenze 1995)

The UNPO mission visited some of the refugee camps outside Rwanda. They discovered that the Twa in the camps experienced

particular difficulty in obtaining basic necessities, including food, plastic sheeting for shelter, clothing, cooking utensils and medical care. The Twa also had great difficulty getting jobs with the international aid organisations active in the camps. Because the daily administration of the camps was largely in the hands of former Hutu administrators, discrimination against and abuse of the Twa was common. Twa explained to UNPO that there was no way to protest against this treatment, as they were a minority and the Hutu threatened them with violence (UNPO 1995: 26-30). This situation is typical when Twa become refugees. Twa returnees from Uganda described an almost identical situation during their stay in the camps there (UNPO 1995:12).

COMING HOME

As mentioned, almost all the Twa we met had spent some period of the war in exile, away from their homes. Coming home marked the beginning of a new set of problems.

"I am a very miserable person because I am a widow without children. I would like your help very much. We decided to escape when we first heard the loud noises of guns. Ruhengeri was the place we ran to. All the people I went with survived.

The problems started when we came back from exile. Many of our people were thrown into prison by people saying they were Interahamwe. We would like them back because the Twa people are very few, and therefore we need them. Our pottery does not earn us enough money to survive. So we do not eat well. A long time ago our grandfathers used to hunt, and brought us back some meat. The Twa were even getting help from the kings, like Rudahigwa. But this has changed now. All of these changes made our living conditions very poor. I, for instance, do not have a house, neither do I have a good meal.

Maybe this is happening to us because we are Twa."

(M.B., Twa woman 60, Tambwe 1995)

As the vast majority of Twa are extremely poor, they had nothing to fall back on after the loss and destruction caused by the war. They have no financial reserves, no substantial property and due to the disappearance, death or imprisonment of so many men their normal support networks have broken down. Even dancing, the Twa's favourite pastime, is no longer possible:

"We used to meet and dance. For the moment, everything has changed. It is very difficult for people to meet and dance, especially because most of them have died."

(R.P., Twa man 26, Shyorongi 1995)

Generally people fled with only the bare essentials for life on the road. Returning from exile destitute to find their houses destroyed and farms ransacked has made life for the Twa extremely difficult.

"I had a small house which was destroyed during the war. In order to have somewhere to sleep, I have tried to put together some corrugated-iron sheets. When we came back all our belongings had been stolen. We did not even have anything to sleep in. All my brothers have been killed and my husband has been thrown into prison in Kigali. I would like to have a house and a blanket. My two children who were at primary school have now stopped. We would like them to go back to school. Most of my family died during the war. We have many problems. Yet, we have our land, but we don't use it because we can't afford to buy seeds. The money we get when we sell our pottery is barely enough to buy us food."

(U.R., Twa woman 29, Shyorongi 1995)

Effectively, the vast majority of Twa are caught in a poverty trap which, without intervention, will continue to worsen.

"I was the only child in my family but I had children. During this war, these children were killed except one daughter. The husband of this one was also killed and left her one month pregnant. A few days ago I was in hospital and now I am alone because nobody from my family is there to help me. When we came back from exile we found our house destroyed and I don't have anyone who can build me another one. My child was the one who was helping me and he's not there any more. When my daughter got her baby I could not get anything to feed her with. Even the baby is too small because of the hard times her mother went through when she was pregnant."

(N.E., Twa woman 53, Kacyru 1995)

"I was left with my two children without any income. The school where they go is asking for their fees while I don't even have enough money to buy their food. What I would like is

support to help me build my own house. When my husband was alive we were helping each other but now I am very desperate. RPF used to give us some help in everything, but we haven't had anything from them for many days. My husband and children died in a camp. When I came back our house was destroyed and now I am living in bad conditions. During this time, there are many problems, diseases, poverty. The only help we had was from RPF."

(M.J., Twa woman 33, Kyamatare 1995)

Several interviewees expressed gratitude towards the RPF and new Government for the help and support they were given during and after the war.

"When we returned to our homes we were given sorghum, soya beans and other beans by the RPF. We have managed to sell 100 pots and we have a market once a week."

(K.P., Twa woman 55, Kanzenze 1995)

"I was married to a man and we had four children, but now only three are left. When the war started we fled to Gitarama. My husband died soon after. We fled in April and came back in July last year. The RPF helped us a lot, but anyone who went to Nyamata did not come back. Back in our village we found that our farm had been looted, our maize was gone and the rest had been burnt. The RPF gave us some seeds, peas, maize and beans to grow again. No help with clothing though. My family has been wiped out except for myself and two young brothers. An elder brother disappeared. They tortured me asking the whereabouts of a man who lived with us."

(U.A., Twa woman 32, Kanzenze 1995)

This testimony brings out well the contradictory nature of the relations of some Twa with the new authorities. The two poles of this relationship are extreme: on the one hand, many Twa owe their lives to the RPF who saved them from the Interahamwe, many were offered help and support in RPF refugee camps and, once they returned home,

the RPF seed-donations allowed many to begin cultivation again. The RPF deserve praise for having led such a humane war in such extremely difficult circumstances. It was the RPF alone who took the effective action necessary to halt one of the worst ever crimes against humanity. Others, in Europe, America and the UN, with the power to halt these crimes condemned the horrors but took no effective action. Indeed this inaction effectively encouraged the murderers to continue their diabolical work.

Most RPF soldiers are very disciplined and we were often impressed by their honesty and integrity even in the face of extraordinarily trying circumstances. However, after so much killing of Tutsi families and others, it is understandable that many are angry and seek revenge. In the climate of violence still covering Rwanda, some RPF have abused their authority. Many Twa have suffered greatly from the arbitrary execution of military justice.

"My husband N. is now in prison for no reason. They said that all those living in this place helped in the massacres."

(M.B., Twa woman 23, Shyorongi 1995)

Home to prison

Without doubt some Twa participated in the massacres, but many did not. Many Twa found that, when they returned home, they were falsely branded as Interahamwe simply because some Twa from their community had participated in the killings. Discrimination against a people depends on derogatory stereotypes and unjustified generalisations. Many Twa have thus become double victims; first of the fanatical extremists, now of RPF elements attempting to administer justice.

"I escaped to Zaïre with my father who died before we reached there. When I came back, my two brothers were thrown into prison in Kigali and I have become helpless. I don't have shelter, neither do I have any clothes or blankets, or something

to sleep in. Everything has been stolen. My brothers who were innocent were taken by soldiers whilst we were sleeping. Even though I am sick, I have three children to look after. My husband and I were divorced a long time ago. I was staying with my parents and now they have also been killed. I am all alone."

(M.N., Twa woman 31, Shyorongi 1995)

"Many Twa in Kabarondo have been killed. Even those who are still alive, we don't know how they survived. Many of them were killed when they were trying to escape. Now the place is for people who came from other places. There were two Twa who survived but now they are in Kibungo prison. They are innocent but have been accused of eating the cows of Tutsi who had been killed. Our new neighbours don't even want to see us and say that we are Interahamwe. I mention this because I would like to ask the new Government to consider this major problem."

(M.J., Twa woman 26, Kabarondo 1995)

Like most Rwandese, the Twa also want justice to be done, and to be done quickly.

"All the Twa who participated in the massacres have to be thrown into prison. But there is an innocent woman called M. who is now in prison and she was not involved in the massacre. I don't know if the others in prison participated or not because I was not in their group. I hope I will live to see judgement passed upon them, to see justice is done."

(K.B., Twa woman 40, Shyorongi 1995)

"These are the names of Twa who have been thrown into prison: M., K., B., Ns. and Ny. They imprisoned them saying that they killed people like other Interahamwe. But keeping them in prison does not prove the truth. Therefore, these people have to be judged as soon as possible."

(N.A., Twa man 26, Shyorongi 1995)

We heard many claims that some of the Twa arrested were innocent. Some put this down to the fact that the arrests were made by soldiers or other strangers rather than by the local village leaders who knew most individuals.

"All these are innocent people: M., B. and Ny. These people were taken by soldiers not by our village leaders. Until now we have not heard any news of them. The only thing we know is that they are in Kigali prison. Our people were innocent except Bu. and Nt. who have admitted to what they have done."

(M.S., Twa woman 25, Shyorongi 1995)

"We got married before the war. When we came back from the place where we had escaped we went to Kigali, to Kacyiru. From there my husband was thrown into prison by people who did not even know him. When we fled, we went to Munganza. When all the Interahamwe had left, that's when we decided to come back. My husband is in Kimihurura prison."

(N.F., Twa woman 24, Musambira 1995)

As the testimonies show, many Twa are now kept in prisons around the country. The present situation in Rwanda's prisons is appalling. Reports from the BBC's World Service and the filming that the BBC were permitted to carry out in a prison in mid-August 1995, confirm that over-crowding has reached breaking point. The BBC report describes people standing endlessly in the sun, only those prisoners with a higher status or better resources are able to secure for themselves some shade and a place to sit. Due to the meagre supplies of food and other necessities, most prisoners depend on their families to bring extra food and money for their survival.

Many Twa women told us that, due to their poverty, they are rarely able to bring food or money to their imprisoned relatives. UNPO (1995:24) report that on their visit to Kigali Prison, their Hutu prisoner guide and the Twa they met claimed that the Twa inmates often do not receive their due share of the scarce handouts. They are pushed aside

by their fellow inmates when lining up for distribution. The Twa within the prisons are likely to suffer from discrimination by fellow prisoners and guards, a situation exacerbated by over-crowding. Under these conditions the chances of surviving long-term imprisonment are slim. In view of the huge numbers of people awaiting trial and the very limited means available to judge them, long-term incarceration is inevitable, which for many Twa may be equivalent to a death sentence.

The effect of so many Twa, in particular adult men, being imprisoned has greatly worsened the social devastation caused by the war and left many feeling persecuted by the new Government.

"My husband has been imprisoned in Gitarama prison. He was victimised for nothing. Even the councillor knows it. We hear that they are even beaten. We did not run away. We stayed here until the returnees found us here. Then people came to rob us saying he was an accomplice. There was a white man who came because of this problem of prisoners when we were still at Gitizi. He asked me why they took my husband away even though there was no proof that he was Interahamwe. We would wish to be able to visit our prisoners. About three people were sent to prison and one died in prison."

(M.I., Twa woman 35, Musambira 1995)

In some cases prisoners have disappeared:

"When we came back from exile people started to look for us. After 3 months my son was taken from us by force. It was around one a.m. Until now no one knows where he is and that is my worry."

(M.J., Twa woman 42, Tambwe 1995)

Many of the Twa who have disappeared after their arrest may have been executed. We were told of a number of cases in which the Twa claimed their relatives had been executed by RPF soldiers. Two cases

were reported in Gitarama, two in Kigali and one in Kibungo. Those we spoke to were reluctant to raise these cases with the authorities for fear it would lead to more trouble.

UNPO (1995:20-21) report a number of massacres of Twa by RPF soldiers in the early days of the RPF take-over in June and July 1994. In interviews, a Twa widow claimed in early June 1994 that she witnessed the arrest and execution of a group of displaced Twa returning home to Gitarama. Another man related that more than 70 inhabitants of his village, including 17 Twa, were forcibly summoned by RPF soldiers to attend a meeting at their village market place on June 6th 1994. All the people present, including his wife and four children, were killed. The soldiers responsible for the massacre fled the region, and no explanation was given. UNPO were told that at the end of June, RPF soldiers killed a group of displaced Twa who had returned to their houses in search of food. On July 18th, the RPF summoned a meeting in a village in Gitarama. More than 500 people including several Twa attended and were massacred.

In Butare prefecture UNPO heard that the RPF had killed many Twa as they took over the region. As the RPF broke into houses looking for Interahamwe, many innocent people were killed. According to the Twa informant his wife, two sons and eight grand children perished in this violence.

The worry and uncertainty caused by so many people having disappeared during and after the war is a major source of anguish to those who are left. Many have resigned themselves to the facts, and simply accept them like the woman from Tambwe quoted earlier: "Maybe this is happening to us because we are Twa." Another woman can hardly bear to think about it:

"I am still together with my husband. We had 12 children but most have now died, the rest I have no idea where they went during the war."

(K.A., Twa woman 60, Kigoma 1995)

For many Twa the uncertainty of the future, the loss of so many of their menfolk, the injustices and abuses they continue to suffer and the general insecurity of their lives has created an oppressive climate of fear and helplessness. In many areas the Twa are too frightened of being arbitrarily arrested to leave their homes.

"The problems we have are no land and no houses. We don't have clay because we don't have land to get the clay. Our income comes from pottery but this has lost its value. So there is no livelihood. The way we live with other people is not good because now we can't go to Nyamata. When we go to Nyamata they say that we killed people during the war and arrest us."

(M.P., Twa man 35, Kanzenze 1995)

Many are victimised by returnees who assume that they are Interahamwe simply because they are still alive. In one place we visited we saw children throwing stones at a group of Twa women with their children. We asked why this was happening.

"Those throwing stones at us are mostly boys who are saying that our husbands are Interahamwe. Yet all the new commune officials know that we are innocent. The Interahamwe are presently in Tanzania and Zaire and not leaving there. It is other people from other places that say we are Interahamwe but how can they know?"

(K.B., Twa woman 38, Kanzenze 1995)

Many Twa are at a loss to understand why so many horrors have been forced upon them.

"When the war started we saw people running, so we fled as well to Gitarama. Then we were told by the RPF to return to our homes. We still live in our homes but they took our people who were innocent. I have lost three people since the war. We are very needy for food and clothing. There were atrocities done, anybody could be killed, Tutsi and even Hutu, but I wonder why we, the Twa, had to be maltreated?"

(M.J., Twa woman 30, Kanzenze 1995)

"None of the Twa wanted power or played with the politics of killing. Each Twa finds himself or herself without relatives and we have no idea why we had to suffer."

(P. J-B., Twa man 35, Kigoma 1995)

With no prior allegiance to either side most Twa found themselves caught in the middle of a terrible war in which they became victims irrespective of what they actually did or did not do. After miraculously surviving the mass killings and terrible threats of Interahamwe without participating, many Twa then found themselves subjected to a different type of persecution as they helplessly witnessed innocent relatives being thrown into prison, executed, disappeared or tortured, even sometimes having their lands grabbed by strangers. To most the injustice is incomprehensible. It is in this way that many Twa have become the victims of both sides in the civil war.

"What I do not understand is why every man who goes out, does not come back. They say he should die. When we fled to a place called Munatobwe the people who were with us were killed by Interahamwe at the road blocks. When my husband returned from exile and we reached the commune of Musambira, they accused him of being an accomplice to murder. He was victimised for nothing. How could they do it? We, the Twa, have always been ignored, yet they call us Interahamwe. They even called me the wife of Interahamwe and I am afraid they will kill me. Why are they making up all these lies against us? They say if my husband turns up they will kill him, and so he will stay in exile. They said we should go home and take photographs for identity cards. Yet if we go they will kill us. Moreover there is nothing to go back for."

(M.S., Twa woman, 30, Musambira 1995)

For most, the present situation cannot be justified or explained logically but can only be understood within the familiar idiom of discrimination because they are Twa and thus despised and hated.

"When the war began we heard about it from Ruhango. My husband and I, with some other people, tried to escape.

Everyone was fleeing in different directions. We were placed in refugee camps after two weeks. When the war ended we were told to go back to our homes and we went. Since we arrived, soldiers started to look for my husband saying that we had taken part in the massacres, which was not true. People from this area were killed by those who came from Kibungo.

This is happening because we are not liked, which is why they decided to say that the Twa people were involved. For we Twa, we don't belong to any political party.

But in the end my husband was thrown into prison in Gitarama. They were also saying that even their wives are Interahamwe. Therefore we were supposed to be taken as well. Even though they are innocent we get called Interahamwe which is a very bad stigma. We were also charged thirty thousand Rwandese francs (\$125 US) saying that we have eaten Tutsi cows. We do not even have land to farm on. The money we get from our pottery is being given to the leader of this village until we have paid up the thirty thousand while feeding three children at the same time.

All of these bad things were done to us because they don't like the Twa. These people do not even care about the children."

(N.F., Twa woman 31, 1995)

The loss of men

The picture which emerged from the Twa villages we visited was that many of the men who escaped death during the war are now kept in prisons around the country.

"During this war, Twa men are the ones who have been most affected. The majority of them have died and the others have been thrown into prison. On the other hand we don't know why

all these terrible things are happening to the Twa people as we don't support anyone. This is very stressful because many innocent people have suffered for no reason."

(S.S., Twa man 37, Kaborondo 1995)

As we were shocked to discover some Twa villages are peopled predominantly by elderly women and orphans. This informant went on to say:

"In this area of Kaborondo I am the only man still with my children. In Ruramira there are only old women; even their children (actually adults) who managed to survive were put into prison. In other words, the place is destroyed."

(S.S., Twa man 37, Kaborondo 1995)

One village in Bwakira commune, Kibuye, which we re-visited in 1995 had entirely disappeared under a growth of new vegetation. The only traces remaining were mounds of earth and extensive carbon deposits - strong indication that the village had burned down. Only one old lady remained. She was living with orphans in a different place a small distance away from the nearest Hutu-Tutsi village. She said she was very lonely as no one ever came to visit her. In all the villages we visited we found far more women than men.

In most of the villages we visited we carried out village censuses. This involved the whole community participating in drawing a map of their village and then filling in their personal details on the map. The following table shows the number of men, women and children living in the communities surveyed. Places are listed simply as communes. In many communes we did not visit or draw maps of every single Twa community in the commune, so these figures do not necessarily represent the total numbers of Twa.

If we visited the same community in August-September 1993 (seven months before April 1994) as we did in 1995 we put the 1993 population next to the figures for 1995 so a comparison can be made. However, it must be remembered that some Twa have fled to other places or been imprisoned. Therefore these figures do not necessarily

Prefecture	Commune	1993			1995			
		Child	Adult	Total	Child	Woman	Man	Adult
Kigali Ville	Kacyiru				55	23	14	92
Kigali Rurale	Shyorongi	168	90	258	34	15	11	60
Kigali Rurale	Kanzenze	131	103	234	63	28	20	111
Kibungo	Kabarondo	20	22	42	7	4	1	12
Kibungo	Rutonde	61	63	124	21	23	8	52
Gitarama	Kigoma	26	27	53	16	9	6	31
Gitarama	Tambwe	25	32	57	31	16	4	51
Kibuye	Bwakira	21	16	37	3	1	0	4
Totals (excluding Kacyiru)		452	353	805	175	96	50	321

illustrate the death-toll. The following table summarises our findings. The tragic loss of so many children and the dearth of men in communities we visited comes out clearly in the table above. This is a matter of much grief, great concern and a cause of severe hardship for the women who remain.

"We the Twa do not understand why we are being victimised. Moreover I find that nobody cares. We are only women here, our men have all perished. So we women now have no say whatsoever about our lives and we would like to know why we are being maltreated."

(M.O., Twa woman 18, Tambwe 1995)

The great burden of feeding and caring for the children is now mostly the responsibility of women alone. Without their menfolk to support them, life has become desperately difficult.

"All my brothers and their wives died and now I am the one who is taking care of their children who are left behind. Those who died were my two brothers and three children. One of my

brothers was called N. and the other was called K. K. left three children who I have to look after while I don't have any income to support them. That is why I would like to have somebody who can help to look after these children and build me a house because my father's land is still there."

(M.Y., Twa woman 31, Bicumbi 1995)

"I came to Rwanda from Uganda. I have to look after four children of my four brothers who died with their wives. I don't have any land or anything else to support them. I went to Uganda in 1962. That's how it is."

(M.B., Twa woman 37, Rutonde 1995)

"My husband died and left me with five children. Since I don't have any income to support these children, your help would be appreciated so much. On top of that, the way of living for Twa people is very hard. We usually depend on our pottery which is not working well because of the problem of clay. Not only that, people don't get any medical treatment once they are sick. We also don't have clothes to wear."

(K.T., Twa woman 30, Kacyiru)

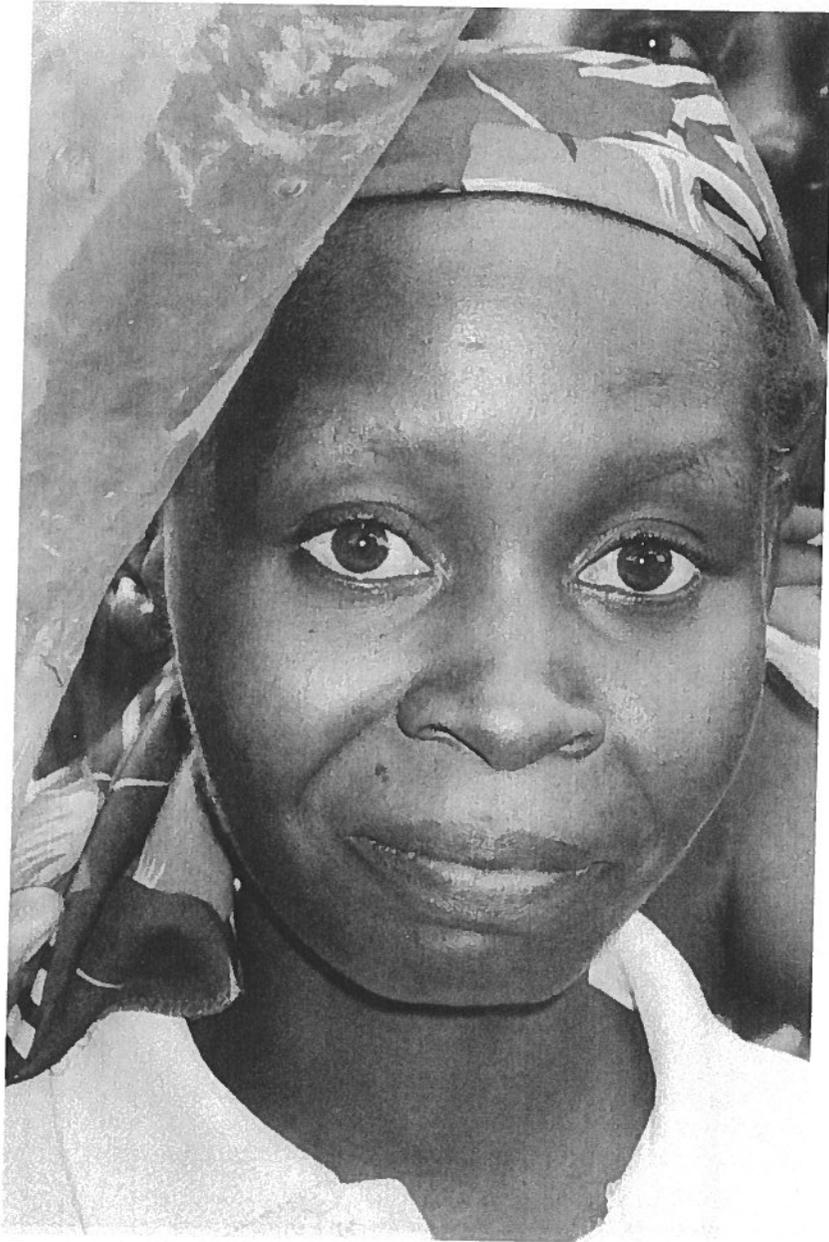
The population table shows that slightly more Twa children than Twa adults are missing from their communities. Some were slaughtered in the mass killings, others got lost in the panic of flight or died on the road. In the terrible conditions of the refugee camps, many children died as a consequence of infectious diseases and malnutrition. Even the journey home was fraught with danger. In this situation, unaccompanied children are especially vulnerable. It is clearly evident that Twa children have suffered greatly.

Some orphans were fortunate enough to get home and meet friends who would look after them:

"I am an orphan. I have lost both my parents. My mother died before the war and my father was killed during the massacres."



Portrait of a Twa woman, Kigoma, Gitarama, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)



The war has placed the burden of rebuilding communities on the women. Twa woman, Kanzenze, 1993. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

We are four children and I am the eldest of the four. I and my three siblings have been adopted by a women who is not well off, called M. J. All my relatives have fled to Zaïre."

(N.J., Twa girl 15, Shyorongi 1995)

"I have lost both parents. Even my uncle who lived with us has fled to Zaïre. I have two brothers, both living with our friends. We don't have anything to wear, no blankets or beds. It would be appreciated if you could build us a house because our father's land is still there."

(M.N., Twa girl 12, Shyorongi 1995)

"I am an orphan who has lost both parents. My mother, my father and my two brothers were killed during this war. I live with friends. Before the war I was living with my uncle but he has been thrown into prison. I had started my first year at secondary school but I don't go any more because there is no one to pay my school fees."

(U.A., Twa girl 13, Rutonde 1995)

There were many Twa orphans in the communities we visited. Caring for them put enormous strain on the adults, especially the remaining women. Due to the low esteem in which the Twa are held by other Rwandese, Twa orphans will only exceptionally be adopted by Hutu or Tutsi families. Thus the burden of caring for the orphans rests solely with the Twa community.

Many elderly people now have the burden of caring for young children. For many the strain is extreme.

"I lived with other people. I was not alone. What I am asking for is aid. I live with my husband who is very old. Our children have been killed by Interahamwe. They were our builders and our homes have been ruined. I had a son who has left two children, a boy and a girl. The boy has been with me for one year. Now, just today, the girl came to complain about us not

having looked after her. All the family have died and she came to the funeral. Now my other grandson is pressuring me too. All I wish for is to be able to build a house."

(N.J., Twa woman 65, Nyamabuye 1995)

For other elderly people the problem is almost the opposite. Having lost their entire family, they find themselves destitute and with no one to turn to.

"My husband and my children were killed by Interahamwe during this war. And now I am an old woman who doesn't have any income. I would like your help especially in building a house so that I can be happy like others."

(M.P., Twa woman 63, Musambira 1995)

The problems faced by those returning to the devastation and destruction of their homes have come out in many of the testimonies quoted above. The unlucky ones even found that their lands had been seized during their absence.

"I am M.'s sister-in-law. This M. was killed with all his family. I was born in Uganda. We moved to Rwanda from there. This war started 10 years after we settled here. When we were running away we went to Gisara and Kabarondo. When the RPF won we were taken to refugee camps in Rwamagana. There we were helped as much as they could help us: food, shelter, water, clothes and so on. Our main problem is that all our possessions have been seized, even all our lands. Therefore there is nothing remaining. We would like the RPF to solve this problem so that we can go back to our land."

(M.A., Twa woman 48, Rutonde 1995)

"I am looking for help because I am the only person who is still alive in the whole family. When I went to claim my father's land which had been seized, I was chased away. All the people who are living there are new to that place. Therefore I would

like your support so that I can go back to our land. The other person who was living there has been thrown into prison. When I went to see him I was not even allowed to see him. If he is still alive I do not know."

(M., Twa woman 22, Kabarondo 1995)

For many Twa in this situation complaining seems futile. Some simply move away.

"I was the only child my parents gave birth to. They both died when I was young and now I am married. When the war started we fled and we came back when it was over. Since we arrived my husband was thrown into prison and he left me with three children. The first one was about to start his third year of primary school but this is no longer possible as I can't afford to pay school fees.

I am disabled and I don't have any form of income to support my children. My father's house and land have been taken. That is why I moved to this place in a house which I am renting."

(K.P., Twa woman 40, Nyamabuye 1995)

As the testimonies and our research show, the problems of landlessness and poverty for those Twa still living in their communities are immense and have had far reaching consequences. For instance, a common pattern we observed was that their poverty leads to malnutrition. This makes people less able to fight disease and infection. Their lack of money prevents them from receiving medical attention.

The day-to-day struggle to get enough food means that most resources are used immediately and rarely saved or stored. Finding extra money for seeds to plant, for medicines, or for school fees is impossible for most.

"My problem is that I don't have land. Therefore I can't farm. I also would like something to wear and some money to buy

beans. I have two children who don't go to school because the school fees have not been paid. I would like your support in building a house."

(O.P., Twa woman 40, Shyorongi)

The problem of finding money for school-fees is a great worry for many, especially single mothers.

"I was living in a camp in Rwamagana with my two children. My husband died. The person who was helping me was taken by soldiers. The money I work for is only enough for food and I can't manage to pay school fees. I would like your help."

(M.M., Twa woman 24, Rutonde 1995)

"I have four children whose father was killed by Interahamwe. One of these children was going to school but he could not continue his education as his school fees were not paid. Even friends who could help me have died as well."

(M.N., Twa woman 42, Rutonde 1995)

In all the communities we visited Twa expressed the desire to find jobs but claimed they were never given them. As in the past, non-Twa are favoured over the Twa regardless of ability. It is rare to meet a Twa who has qualifications, but even for those who do, the chances of finding employment are slim.

"I know how to drive a car and have a licence but I do not know how to read. I used to drive the local parish priest's car. I was almost killed during Habyarimana's Government. All my children were maltreated especially my daughter, M. who was expelled from Lwimurindo school. This was because of one named Proshukulu. I talked about this at a political meeting where I asked why they were victimising the Twa. After that they tried to kill me but I managed to hide in a hole. I feel we Twa have been victimised, we are not political."

Although I am a good driver with a clean driving licence and a good record with the parish priest, I am still being refused work."

(M.D., Twa man 40, Kigoma 1995)

Pottery is the only means of livelihood left for many Twa. Even this activity has been fraught with difficulty.

"Pottery is my art and my business. I make pots once a week. This is because I can't carry enough clay. Clay is very heavy and at the same time I have to carry my child on my back. One pot is sold for between 50-100 Rwandese francs. The price depends on the size of the pot. The job of all Twakazi (Twa women) is to make pots. We have to go miles and miles to get clay and other materials we need for pot making. Most of the time we are not able to make pots because we are so tired. That is why men help in bringing the clay, which is usually their job in Twa tradition. Because of malnutrition people are always sick with malaria, headache and stomach problems."

(K.T., Twa woman 37, Shyorongi 1995)

The problems caused by the absence of men for these very labour-intensive tasks seriously affects the production capacity of many potters.

"I usually live in Musambira, but when the war started I was in Kigali. When the war cooled down I went back home. Musambira still has potters except those who participated in the massacres. They have been thrown into prison and others have fled. For the time being we have peace and we are working hard to earn some money to pay for our photographs which will be put in our new identity cards. But it will not be easy for us to get that money. I can't carry clay because I am always ill. I don't have a son any more to help carry the clay. I have a daughter who is also a widow but she has some children to look after."

(M., Twa woman 54, Musambira 1995)

For others the new stigma of whole communities being unjustifiably accused of helping Interahamwe has led to such levels of violence and intimidation from neighbours that in one village the women dared not take their pots to market.

"I have nothing else but for some beans which I have just harvested. I have five children who I have to feed - I wonder if you can help? My children are too young to work and my youngest can't even get some porridge. We have no problem with water, the water source is nearby. All I need is help with food and clothing for my children. One child is in primary 3. He would be in primary 4 if it was not for the war. The others are too young to start school.

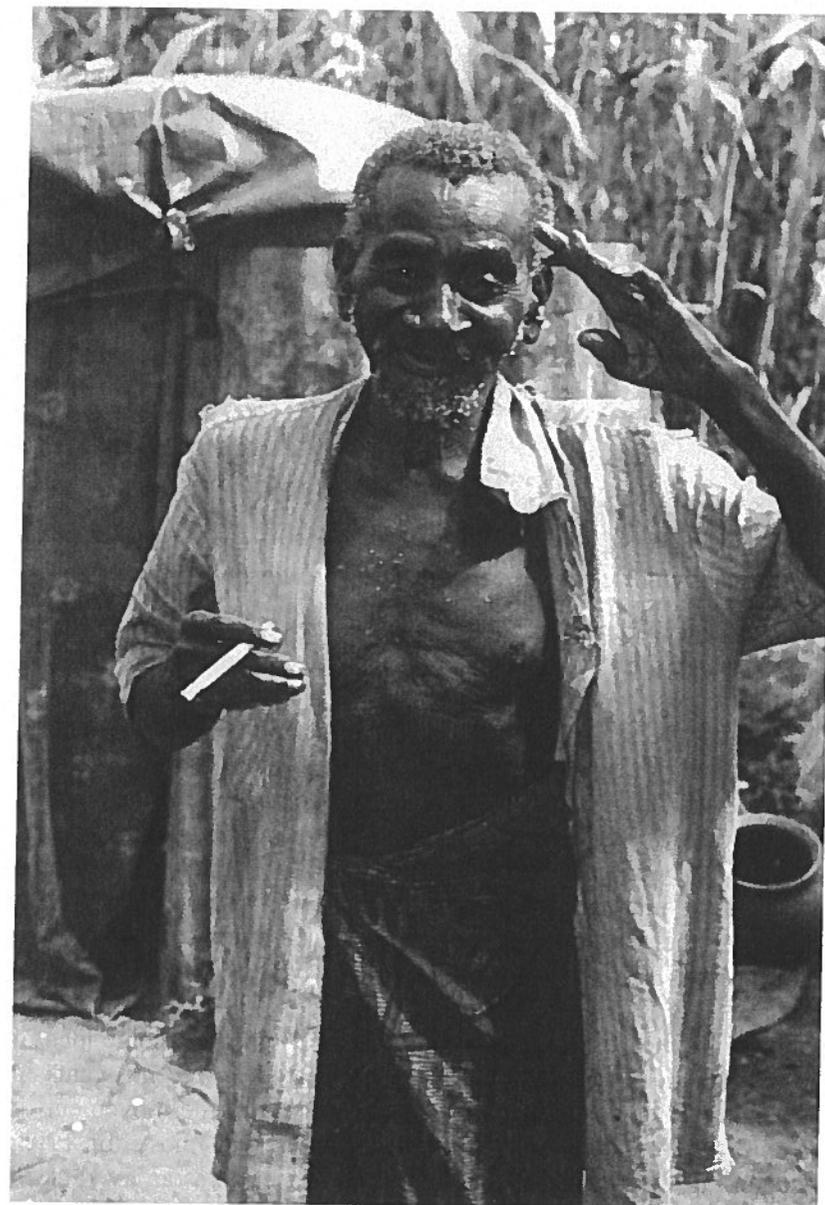
About the pots. How can we sell them? The last time I made a pot was before the war started. Afterwards others tried but stopped making any because they were attacked and their pots broken on the way to market.

Right now we have no household equipment, no plates, no clothes, not even doors. We only have empty huts with no doors."

(R.Y., Twa woman 28, Kanzenze)

How many are left?

Many Twa we talked to fear that their community is soon going to disappear. In view of the severity of the numerous problems described above which are facing the survivors of the war, life will undoubtedly continue to be extremely difficult for many years to come. Due to the numbers of Twa whose fate remains unknown and because of the numbers who now live in places other than where they originate from it is impossible to give accurate figures of the proportion of Twa who died as a consequence of the mass killings and war. Undoubtedly the death-toll continues to rise and as the chances of further conflict are high the Twas' situation may well worsen dramatically.



An old man whom we were able to interview in 1993 and in 1995. Behind him are the community's dwellings - plastic sheeting provided by UNHCR. (Photograph by Judy Knight)



Twa community at Kanzenze, June 1995. (Photograph by Judy Knight)

In October 1993, based on government figures and our own research, we estimated the Twa population to be approximately 28,000 people.

According to UNPO's findings (1995:28) the number of Twa refugees outside Rwanda was between 8,000 and 10,000 people. Between UNPO's visit in 1994 and our visit in 1995 some Twa returned home. The number of Twa refugees in 1995 is therefore likely to be around 8,000 to 9,000 people or 28 % to 32% of the 1993 population. By June 1995 all the internally displaced people camps had been disbanded. Many of the Twa from these camps have returned to their own communities or to those of relatives. Some have also fled abroad.

Comparing the 1993 figures with those for 1995 gives some idea of how dramatically the Twa have been affected by recent events in Rwanda, although the accuracy is limited due to the movement of people. The comparison of the 1993 figures with those for 1995, accounting for known immigrants in one case, gives an average of 40% of the 1993 population living in their old communes in 1995. This implies that the current population of Twa in Rwanda is approximately 11,000 people.

Based on the figure of 40% of the original Twa population left in Rwanda plus the 30% living outside the country, we conclude that approximately 30% of the Twa have died or been killed as a consequence of the mass killings and ensuing war.

The number of Rwandese civilians killed in 100 days between April and June 1994 comprised up to 14% of the nation and the vast majority were Tutsi (Physicians for Human Rights 1994). The number of British soldiers killed in the First World War amounted to 2% of the population. Many British families lost one or more members. They became known as the lost generation.

Up to 30% of the Rwandese Twa population died or were killed between October 1993 and June 1995. The remainder are divided in different countries. The majority still living in Rwanda are predominantly poverty-stricken women and children with few sources of income and inadequate land. It is clear that the implications for the future of the Rwandese Twa are profoundly distressing.

THE CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL CONTEXT

Before visiting Twa communities we would always first ask permission from local officials. One of our visits to a sub-prefect (S-P) clearly illustrated the complexity of the contemporary political context. The conversation is summarised below:

WRM: We have come to ask your permission so that we can visit the Twa living near here.

S-P: What have you come to do?

WRM: We have been invited by the APB to come and survey some communities we visited in 1993 so as to see what has happened since then.

S-P: You know that there are no ethnic groups in Rwanda: everyone speaks the same language, and shares the same land.

WRM: Yes, the Twa represent the lowest class in Rwanda.

S-P: Why is there an organisation working only for Twa? They must not favour one group over another today.

WRM: Many problems of the Twa are not shared by other groups. Other people discriminate against the Twa. This is not the Twa's choice but rather is imposed upon them by other Rwandese. For instance, as we passed the market place here today (as in fact every market place we have been to here in Rwanda) we could easily find the Twa selling pots because they weren't allowed to sit in the main market but have to stay on the edge in a special place only for them. Other people won't come and sit with them.

S-P: I am not going to permit anything to happen here which favours one ethnic group over another. Why don't you study everyone here, not just the Twa?

WRM: The Twa are the lowest class in Rwandese society, they have suffered serious discrimination for a very long time from other Rwandese. There are many problems which are particular to them. As a result of this, there are problems not suffered by other groups in Rwanda. For example, they are not allowed to live next to people from other groups; they are not allowed to share food and drink with other groups; a lack of education and discrimination prevents them getting jobs.

S-P: But there are others here with similar problems. Why don't you go and find them too? On the subject of education, I know that many Twa are not sending their children to school. It is vital that in order to uplift themselves the children go to school. If you come here and want to pay the school fees, I will not permit it. In order to overcome discrimination we must treat all Rwandese the same. Everyone who needs land is given land. They must cultivate their land to sustain their families. They should sell some of their harvest to pay their childrens' school fees. That is how it must be done. We cannot favour or refuse anyone. In fact, those who do not send their children to school must be punished. If you just come and hand over money to the Twa to pay their school fees, then you simply perpetuate their position. Rather, by punishing those who refuse, we will encourage the others to take up farming, send their children to school, and become equal with their neighbours. It is only by treating everyone the same that Rwanda will solve the problems it faces today, and that a class like the Twa will uplift themselves to be equal with all the others.

WRM: But most of the Twa had no land or insufficient land for subsistence when we visited in 1993. Its very likely that they are still in the same position.

S-P: Well, then they must come and ask for land and I will give it to them.

WRM: The Twa are inexperienced farmers, how will they cultivate it in time to pay their school fees?

S-P: Yes, this is a problem. But they have other sources of income, like pottery for instance.

WRM: But despite the large amount of work it takes to make pots, the Twa only get between 50 to 100 FRw per pot (approximately US\$ 0.2 to 0.4), the same price as in 1970.

After some time the sub-prefect allowed us to continue to the Twa villages. It is worth noting that here, as in most of Rwanda, the Hutu and Tutsi will live together in the same commune, but they will not allow Twa to build near to their homes. Only one man in the Twa community we visited that day owned land. We told the community that the sub-prefect had said he would give them land. They need only go and ask him at his office.

"But we can't go there, it's too dangerous. We just stay here, around the house and garden." In fact, this group of Twa felt so fearful that only a small number of women had gone to the commune centre since their return nine months ago. From our experience it seemed safe to travel between there and the commune offices. However, they were not to be persuaded and assured us that they always get stopped at checkpoints and often accused of things they didn't do. These checkpoints have been disbanded for many months, but the Twa remained suspicious.

This type of reaction can only be properly understood in the context of the discrimination and frequent abuse suffered by the Twa. The problem for the Twa is that their neighbours use their ethnic label to discriminate against them. Many Rwandese discriminate against the Twa simply for being a Twa and this justifies what would be considered unacceptable behaviour towards a member of their own group. Being unable to talk about this makes it difficult to address the problem. The Twa's recent experiences under Habyarimana's regime of extreme violence, then during the war and mass killings, and finally after the war as the RPF hunted the murderers, has left most in terror of contacting the authorities due to the perceived risks of violence or disappearance. This is not only the fault of RPF soldiers and

government officials, who, in great contrast to the many thugs we met in 1993, are generally polite, disciplined and honest. It is the product of the long history of violence and discrimination that the Twa have suffered at the hands of people in authority. Their lack of education makes them feel incapable of defending themselves against abuse by the authorities.

The Twa's expectation of abuse from the authorities needs to be addressed. They are very ill-informed about current events and government policy. The resulting ignorance and fear has led to an extremely suspicious and fearful attitude towards the authorities. It will take a determined long-term effort by the Rwandese Government to reverse this attitude and create confidence among the Twa. Only when the Twa feel confident and cease to be the victims of appalling discrimination will they start to take the steps required in order to enjoy the same standards as other Rwandese.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TWA INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATIONS

Prior to 1991 there had never been an association for the Twa run by the Twa themselves. There had been a number of associations formed to help the Twa, but they were always dominated by non-Twa, with very variable commitments to support the Twa.

The first of these was the Association pour le Relèvement Démocratique des Twa (AREDETWA). Created in July 1960 during a period when Rwanda was becoming politically emancipated, AREDETWA's aim was to improve the position of Twa and to enhance their level of political participation. The party failed to gain a significant number of votes and was absorbed into the other major party Parmehutu (later called MRND). Consequently, AREDETWA lost its potential for representing the Twa cause.

After the RPF invasion of Rwanda in 1990 and the political liberalisation forced upon Habyarimana's regime by the Arusha Accords, a number of educated Twa got together with the idea of creating a Twa organisation. Hitherto, the Twa had no effective means of presenting their very real grievances at a regional and national level and the media and national agencies tended to ignore their plight. The Twa created their own organisation in 1991, the Association pour la Promotion Batwa (APB) - the first autonomous 'Pygmy' association in Africa.

The APB's aims were to network with Twa in all parts of Rwanda and survey the socio-economic situation of their people. The APB thereby hoped to create a forum and information base enabling them to draw attention to the appalling situation and lack of representation of the Twa and to press for Twa rights. With very few resources and lacking even a permanent office, the APB managed to establish a legally-constituted organisation under the leadership of its Représentant Légal, François Munyeshuli. Several projects were initiated to raise awareness of Twa needs and provide practical assistance to Twa,

including a carpentry workshop, a sewing school for women, a women's group, small agricultural projects and cultural events. Contacts were also established with some ministries and local administrations, and a seminar on Twa and minority issues was held in Kigali.

The APB also began to establish regional and international contacts. In January 1993, the APB met with other 'Pygmy' organisations from Cameroon, Central African Republic and Gabon at M'Baiki, in the Central African Republic. Through its membership of the International Alliance of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, the APB was able to raise Twa concerns with the World Bank, United Nations and other international bodies. The APB was also admitted to the Unrepresented Peoples Organisation, UNPO.

Despite its promising start, the APB soon encountered problems. With the untimely death of François Munyeshuli, the APB lost its cohesiveness. The new leadership became controversial both within the Twa community and with Habyarimana's regime. In January 1993 some Twa who had been involved with the APB since 1991 split off and created the Association pour le Développement Global des Batwa du Rwanda (ADBR). There were few differences in the aims of the two associations (Veber et al. 1993). However, a significant disparity between the APB and the ADBR was that the latter received support and funding from the Government. At the same time the APB's leadership, which had been vociferously protesting about human rights abuses suffered by the Twa under the regime, were being physically attacked, poisoned and harassed by the agents of the Government. As UNPO (1995) point out:

"....the Habyarimana Government invested in ADBR to sabotage the work of APB and to ruin its reputation. In that sense, ADBR's mandate was a negative one: to oppose APB."

In January 1994 the ADBR was given its legal status by the then minister of Justice. Further developments were halted by the outbreak of the genocidal conflict of 1994. The existing Twa organisations were

completely disrupted due to the dispersal and death of their members and the problems of communication between surviving Twa. Papers, documents and other resources were destroyed in the conflict. After several months of uncertainty, news of surviving Twa began to filter out, who enlisted the help of organisations such as WRM and UNPO in presenting their account of the tragedy to the international community.

With the assistance of UNPO, Charles Uwiragiye of the APB was able to document the situation of Twa in the remaining villages and in the camps inside and outside Rwanda. The WRM was also contacted to assist with a follow-up survey of Twa contacted two years previously, and to help rebuild a representative Twa organisation.

As it had done in 1993, the WRM mission made great efforts in 1995 to bring the APB and ADBR together to discuss their differences and what their future could be. To this end the WRM sent messages out to the few educated Twa of Rwanda (approximately 20 people) calling them to come and discuss their future in Kigali. A series of five all-day meetings was held in which were discussed the consequences of their separation and the advantages of collaboration. By the fourth meeting, the Twa were unanimous in their support for creating an umbrella association which could unify and co-ordinate their activities in an effective manner. Five names were proposed and voted on. Laurent Munyankuge's suggestion 'CAURWA' (Communauté des Autochthons Rwandais) was accepted.

The aims of CAURWA are to maintain a central information base on activities of its members while at the same time developing regional and local groups throughout the country. In addition CAURWA will collect information on the Twa of Rwanda in order to begin working on their most urgent needs, including preparing specific projects for external funding support, and undertake all necessary activities for the promotion of Twa rights and welfare.

CAURWA is structured as a membership organisation, with principle authority vested in its General Assembly. In addition, the Assembly of Directors and the finance committee have executive responsibilities.

The areas of authority of these organs is stated in the statutes of CAURWA.

In order to avoid leadership conflicts and so that the few skills available to the Twa could be used with maximum efficiency it was decided to create a non-hierarchic system of 11 offices, each with its own Director responsible for their respective domains. The 11 Offices deal with National and International Relations; Field Research; Justice and Human Rights; Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and the Environment; Land, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry; Education; Vocational Training; Orphans and Single Parent Families; Culture and Arts; Women and Development.

Each office is responsible for identifying the problems in its domain of activity; then to look for organisations prepared to aid the community. Having done these two tasks the office prepares projects, in consultation with local communities and other relevant bodies.

WRM carried out a follow-up visit to CAURWA in the Autumn of 1995 to assist CAURWA officers in evaluating their progress and identifying key needs which must be met if CAURWA is to establish itself successfully as a representative organisation of the Twa.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Organisations involved with the Twa community

The various offices of CAURWA have been set up to tackle those problems which the Twa consider to be the most urgent for their communities. Although CAURWA is primarily aimed at the Twa community of Rwanda, CAURWA emphasise that if one of their projects can help people from other groups with similar problems in the project area, then they will be included in the project.

CAURWA is young. The directors of each office have been chosen for their personal interest and ability in their area of concern. But many of the activities they must now perform are novel. The past experiences of helplessness in the face of authority and the arbitrary abuse of power, generations of intensive discrimination and the violence by their neighbours and a general lack of education and information have left the Twa community without the skills and experience necessary to assess their lives and to take an active part in influencing and improving their own future.

CAURWA has requested training specific to the tasks of the various offices. In particular, development of the organisational capacity of CAURWA could benefit from participatory training programmes tailored to the needs and education levels of ordinary Twa. Participatory rural appraisal methods provide an excellent tool for empowering the marginalised and largely illiterate Twa to analyse and assess for themselves their predicament and to work out local and specific solutions.

Supported by programmes as outlined above, CAURWA can begin to assess the Twa situation, identify the objectives of the organisation, develop good communications with rural Twa and carry out activities to resolve the pressing problems faced by the Twa. Management and financial skills are also important areas where further training is required.

Aid organisations working in Rwanda

Health Unlimited (Alfred et al. 1994) as a result of a 1994 survey in Rwanda, concluded that a programme targeted at a specific ethnic group would not accord with current government policy, that the Twa are in any case too few and scattered to benefit from a health care programme specifically to them and that there is at present no viable representative agency to assist in the implementation of such a project.

However, aid organisations should nevertheless be aware that discrimination, lack of education and information result in the Twa often having very unequal access to the benefits of aid initiatives. Measures should be implemented in recruitment programmes and staff training to ensure that aid project staff are aware of the specific problems faced by Twa and problems created by discrimination in the context of aid initiatives.

Aid organisations should take the opportunity to contact CAURWA for information about the Twa situation and the locations of communities within the area in which the agency works. In addition, aid organisations whose concerns overlap with those of CAURWA should consider possibilities for collaborative projects or support for CAURWA's activities.

The United Nations

Mr Degai Segui, the UN Special Rapporteur on Rwanda and Mr Clarence, chief of the United Nations Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda (UNHRCFOR), have both expressed an interest in including Twa issues in the context of their operation in Rwanda. However, nothing had been done before the WRM mission arrival in Kigali. During their mission, the WRM encouraged UNHRCFOR to take some concrete steps in this direction. After several meetings with UNHRCFOR representatives WRM recommended the following steps:

Given that the UNHRCFOR Mission cannot provide the manpower to assign a separate field-officer to the issues of minority groups like the

Twa³, at least one or two field-officers should be assigned to function as contact-persons between the UN agencies in Rwanda and representatives of CAURWA. The field officers should develop methods to familiarise their colleagues with the situation of the Twa, so that UNHRCFOR activities take account of the predicament of Twa communities in areas where it is working. In addition, the field officers could use the UN's infrastructure to contact other field officers or organisations able to help or offer advice on specific human rights issues raised by CAURWA, as summarised below.

Prisoners:

Many Twa claim that innocent relatives have been imprisoned. CAURWA is in the process of collecting lists of such people. UNHRCFOR field-officers in the different prefectures should use this information to ascertain the current whereabouts of prisoners and monitor their situation. The Red Cross should be informed about these Twa, and the problems they face from discrimination and access to distributed food and goods within the prison. If possible meetings should be arranged between CAURWA representatives and the Red Cross.

In the context of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), contacts between the Office of the Prosecutor and CAURWA should be created. This would help guide CAURWA in its collection of evidence to support prisoners they claim are innocent.

Criminal charges:

Many Twa have been arrested for crimes against property. It is important that ICTR take into account how the perpetrators of the genocide capitalised on the economic and political vulnerability of the impoverished Twa by offering economic incentives, and by applying political pressure as well as threats and actual violence to persuade the Twa to participate. The extreme impoverishment of the vast majority

³ There are two other minority groups in Rwanda; in the southeast along the Rusumo River are the Banyabo fishing people, and in the northwest live the Abagowe a sub-group of the Tutsi.

of the Twa should be taken into account when imposing financial punishments. Forms of communal labour or community service would be a more constructive form of punishment for crimes against property.

There are Twa among those accused of participation in massacres. It is important to consider the defence of duress in their cases. People from such an impoverished and vulnerable minority have less chance than other Rwandese of resisting orders backed by threats to kill or commit other abuses. With this in mind, each case should be examined on an individual basis.

Refugees:

UNHCR should facilitate contacts between CAURWA and UNHCR. Many Twa are worried about their relatives in refugee camps outside Rwanda and want to encourage them to return home. Any attempt to retrieve Twa from the camps is likely to be a sensitive issue due to internal politics within the camps, and should be undertaken with due care. Nevertheless CAURWA representatives should be aided to travel to camps in an effort to bring Twa back to Rwanda.

The Rwandese Government

The Rwandese Government's efforts to rid the country of ethnic ideologies which encourage hatred and violence are commendable, and the Government's current ban on the use of ethnic labels in the political arena may be a useful means of limiting extremist ethnic politics.

However, the situation for vulnerable minorities like the Twa is somewhat different. Making it politically incorrect to refer to Twa by their name only makes it more difficult to focus efforts on overcoming the many problems that prevent Twa from taking their place as full citizens of Rwanda. As a reaction to the events of 1994 in Rwanda the

reluctance to use ethnic labels is quite understandable, but applying this unwritten ban outside the context of politics and political parties has a negative impact on some of the very issues the ban seeks to address.

From our short experience in Rwanda we noticed an important difference in attitude towards the Twa from government officials in Kigali and those local officials we encountered in the countryside. Generally, government workers and high-level officials in Kigali understand and appreciate the appalling situation of the Twa and realise that the particular problems faced by the Twa must be discussed publicly if their situation is to improve. In contrast, in the countryside local officials tended to be suspicious and at times obstructive in response to our attempts to open discussion about the Twa as a minority group.

As a discriminated group representing between 0.2 and 0.4% of Rwanda's population, the Twa are a very vulnerable minority in Rwanda today. Unlike the other social groups in Rwanda - the Tutsi and Hutu, whose resources and numbers are great in comparison - the Twa present no threat to power or stability in Rwanda. The Twa are unable to officially acknowledge their shared problems and specific fate. This is the result of generations of discrimination by other Rwandese, and unless positive steps are taken the Twa will be condemned to disappear into obscurity.

In order to prevent this and begin to address the problems created by discrimination against the Twa, the Rwandese Government should officially and publicly recognise the Twa as the first occupants of the country, as Rwanda's autochthons, and although a minority group, as a crucial element in the fabric of Rwandese society. In this way the urgent needs and problems faced by this community can be addressed with the same clarity and enthusiasm as the problems and needs of other vulnerable groups in Rwanda.

Government officials, especially in rural areas, should target Twa communities for confidence building. They should make efforts to visit them in their homes, to sit and to eat and drink with them and

explain in a non-aggressive way what their rights are and what the Government expects of them. In this way confidence can be built and the Twa encouraged to take advantage of the rights intended to be available to all Rwandese citizens.

Specific areas requiring urgent attention by the authorities are access to land and education.

Twa rights to land should be no greater and no less than those of other Rwandese. However, the Twa need more positive encouragement than other Rwandese in order for them to claim this right. Every Twa should be entitled to an adequate amount of demarcated, registered, good quality land with effective access to water, to clay and, where appropriate, to forest. The many Twa who have lost land since Independence should be properly restituted. Due to the fact that many women are now household heads, women must have rights to land, especially widows. Constant monitoring will be required to ensure that, in the future, Twa are not dispossessed of land allocated to them.

The Twa's educational disadvantages and their exclusion from participation in politics and administration must be addressed.

Experience has shown that positive discrimination in providing educational opportunities in favour of disadvantaged groups has been helpful, while setting up quotas for disadvantaged groups in government posts has only perpetuated the use of ethnic labels and discriminatory attitudes.

Affirmative action focusing on the Twa is essential. To avoid addressing the issue along these lines could lead to the kinds of problems encountered in Burundi, where, prior to the recent conflicts, the terminology of ethnicity was taboo and the Government preached homogeneous national identity. Consequently the problems of the Burundian Twa were not addressed effectively and no convincing efforts were made to improve their situation.

In terms of education, the Twa of Rwanda desperately need to catch up with their fellow Rwandese. The Government should offer equal

educational opportunities for the Twa with appropriate safeguards to offset the handicaps of poverty and discrimination. The Government should strive to eliminate discrimination against qualified Twa seeking administrative posts. It is important that eventually some Twa are recruited into the civil service and administrative organs of the country so that they can share in the decision-making which affects their country's future.

These measures will greatly aid the development of the Twa of Rwanda, enabling them to be incorporated into mainstream Rwandese life from a position of strength based on equality of access and opportunity.

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