CHAPTER-II
Ethnic-Conflict Induced Displacement and Women in Rwanda

An ethnic conflict is a conflict between ethnic groups often happens as a result of ethnic nationalism and ethnic hatred. Ethnic Conflict-Induced Displacement occurs when people are forced to flee their homes as a result of armed conflict including ethnic and civil war, generalized violence, and persecution on the grounds of nationality, race, religion, political opinion or social group. This chapter aims to explain the major theories of displacement, concept of ethnic conflict induced displacement, historical reasons and factors behind the ethnic conflict induced displacement in Rwanda and their inter-linkages majorly between conflict, power, migration and gender identities.

This chapter explores the major characteristics and consequences of displacement. The second part of the chapter focuses on the gender based violence against Rwandan women due to the ethnic conflict in Rwanda, different problems, Challenges and consequences faced by women, issues of human rights, forced migration, health and social security issues, loss of husband and property, emotional traumas. The chapter also focuses on Role of Women in strengthening post-Genocide society after1994, Role of women in peace-building and reconciliation, women participation in post-conflict reconstruction and role of women in expanding education in Rwanda.

What is Displacement?

According to the Social Science website, the displacement of people refers to the forced movement or forced migration of people from their locality for some reasons like civil wars, ethnic conflict, landslides, natural disaster, large-scale infrastructure projects and occupational activities. Displacement can lead to a geographic shift in households, which may preserve or increase economic and racial segregation throughout an area (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_science).
Different Theories of Displacement

1. Development-Induced Displacement

Development induced displacement is the kind of displacement in which people who are compelled to move as a result of policies and projects implemented to supposedly enhance ‘development’. Examples of this include large-scale infrastructure projects such as dams, roads, ports, airports; urban clearance initiatives; mining and deforestation; and the introduction of conservation parks/reserves and biosphere projects. Development-induced displacement is a social problem affecting multiple levels of human organization, from tribal and village communities to well-developed urban areas. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development-induced_displacement).

2. Disaster-Induced Displacement

Disaster –induced displacement includes people displaced as a result of natural disasters (floods, volcanoes, landslides, earthquakes), environmental change (deforestation, desertification, land degradation, global warming) and human-made disasters (industrial accidents, radioactivity). Clearly, there is a good deal of overlap between these different types of disaster-induced displacement.

3. Ethnic Conflict induced Displacement

In ethnic conflict induced displacement people are forced to flee their homes for one or more of the following reasons and where the state authorities are unable or unwilling to protect them: armed conflict including civil war; generalized violence; and persecution on the grounds of nationality, race, religion, political opinion or social group. A large proportion of these displaced people fled across the national borders. Ethnic conflict induced Displacement is one of the stark realities of the Rwandan genocide.

Historical Background of Ethnic Conflict in Rwanda

Ethnic conflict induced displacement means a kind of displacement which had happened due to ethnic conflict between the two communities (caste) especially Hutu
and Tutsi in Rwanda. Rwanda is among the most densely populated countries in the world and also one of the poorest, with a predominantly agricultural economy, which even before the genocide could not sufficiently feed its population. Some have argued that the struggle for extremely scarce resources partly contributed to ethnic strife and genocide in Rwanda, and continues to undermine any prospect of reconciliation (Comission on Human Rights 8February1999, Para. 53). There is a long history underlying the relationship between land and politics in Rwanda. Land was used during colonial era to divide the Rwandan population along ethnic lines. When Belgian colonisers came to Rwanda they favoured the Tutsi for administration, in effect, a governing class of mainly Tutsi. They adopted the indirect rule system that enabled Belgium to extract more taxes and labour from small farmers, who mostly belong to Hutu community. Belgian colonisers justified their preferential treatment of the Tutsi by relying on racist ideologies. The Tutsi governing class, meanwhile, exploited their authority by seizing cattle and land from other Tutsi and Hutu peasants. King Rwabugiri also used acquired land to increase tension between the Hutu and Tutsi. During this time, Belgian colonial authorities gave preferential treatment to the Tutsi. This consequently, strengthened Tutsi hegemony over the Hutu.

The Republic of Rwanda, created at the end of colonial rule in 1962, was ethnically divided. Others note the long history of political and economic rivalries between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups had majorly predated the contemporary conflict. This rivalry found expression in the periodic outbreaks of violence leading to regular surges of large refugee outflow. The first major conflict in the history of Rwanda was the 1959 so-called ‘Hutu revolution’ against Tutsi hegemony. The ethnic animosity and Hutu discontent created in the colonial period was catalysed and Hutu chiefs organised the killing of rich and poor Tutsi. The abrupt shift in Belgian policy, and the role played by the Catholic Church in empowering the Hutu against the Tutsi, paved the way for this revolution (Prunier :1995; 200)

The 1959 ‘social revolution’ marked a period during which the Tutsi were excluded from participating in political and economic processes in Rwanda. Though known as
a Hutu ‘revolution’, only minority Hutu elite were to benefit. Poor Hutu were largely excluded from national political and economic processes, as well. Thus, the social revolution substituted one elite group for another. The majority of the rural poor, both Hutu and Tutsi, remained outside the realm of official politics and the formal economy (Prunier: 1995: 241). Education and employment opportunities and positions in the military were reserved for small Hutu elite from the north. Thus in the 1990s, when power and access to resources was concentrated in the hands of the northern elite, a pervading sense of frustration with formal politics and economy, and its inability to ensure livelihood security for most groups, ignited conflict. Ethnic divisions, therefore, were not the only cause of the conflict. Instead, it was a result of political manipulation by powerful ruling elite. The 1959 conflict saw a mass exodus of Tutsi refugees into neighbouring countries, especially Uganda. These refugees later became a major destabilising force in Rwandan politics. Tutsi refugees in Uganda reorganised themselves and in 1963 launched the first military invasion into Rwanda in an attempt to capture the state. (Prunier: 1995: 255). The invasion was unsuccessful and resulted in widespread killings of Tutsi and accelerated flows of refugees into neighbouring countries (Prunier: 1995: 261). The period between 1963 and the 1990 civil war was one of uncertainty, marked by Tutsi armed incursions into Rwanda and ethnic cleansing of Tutsi inside Rwanda.

The post-independence period was thus marked by ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi and Tutsi refugee out flowed mainly to Tanzania and Uganda. The subsequent Hutu governments fostered and manipulated ethnic divisions to maintain a popular rural support base. In 1990, the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) organised an armed invasion into Rwanda, from Uganda. Predominantly Tutsi, many of the RPF members were refugees or children of refugees driven out of Rwanda in the aftermath of the 1959 conflict. 1990 thus marked the beginning of a civil war that by 1992 had displaced one-tenth of the population and widely disrupted agricultural activities (THomer-Dixon: 1995:12)

Even after the signing of the Arusha Peace Accords in August 1993, hostilities continued. During this period, radical Hutu plotted the genocide with the support of
the government. Tensions reached a climax on April 6, 1994, when the plane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and his Burundian counterpart, President Cyprien Ntaryamira were shot down, killing both of them and marking the beginning of the horrible genocide. Fighting between the RPF and the Rwandan defence forces (Forces Armées Rwandaises or FAR) escalated and within a period of 100 days an estimated 800,000 Tutsi and Hutu moderates were killed by members of a radical Hutu militia group. (Prunier: 1995: 261)

The RPF emerged victorious in July 1994 and leads the government in Rwanda to this day. However, full peace and national reconciliation is still elusive. Persistent armed incursions into Rwanda that are organised by members of FAR and the Hutu militia group responsible for the genocide (the Interahamwe, now operating under its French acronym PALIR, or the Peuple en Armes Pour Libérer le Rwanda) continued (Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong and Cecile Mukarubuga) In the post-genocide period, the precarious refugee situation continues to be a source of insecurity and instability in Rwanda. The government of the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where many ex-FAR servicemen and Hutu militia sought refuge, has either been unwilling or unable to disarm them, sometimes seeing them as allies in a common struggle against Rwandese occupation (this is the view of Rwandan government).

Rwanda justifies the presence of its occupying forces in the DRC on the grounds of the continued presence of FAR and PALIR cells inside the DRC. Rwanda feels that its national security is threatened as long as the PALIR continues to operate from inside the DRC. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has stressed that Rwanda’s DRC policy is to contain PALIR military activities (Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong and Cecile Mukarubuga). Prunier analyses the role of colonialism in creating a cultural mythology that informed the ideology and actions of Hutu and Tutsi, and the role of this mythology in causing conflict. To Prunier, although conflict in Rwanda can be viewed as a power struggle between Hutus and Tutsi dating to colonialism, ethnicity is not necessarily the most important factor to understanding the conflict. He cautions against dividing the Rwandan society into Hutu, Tutsi and Twa tribes.
As Prunier explains, they share the same language and culture and, historically, coexist without separate tribal homelands. In Rwanda, there are no ethnic distinctions in terms of language, culture and religion. According to Vidal, it would be simplistic to understand the Rwandan conflict as a manifestation of ethnic differences. Like Prunier, Vidal sees ethnicity in Rwanda as a colonial creation, but one that was exacerbated and manipulated by extremist politicians to maintain popular support and control of the state. (Vidal:1995). Reyntjens disagrees, and claims that ethnicity always existed in Rwanda and is to blame for the 1994 genocide (Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong and Cecile Mukarubuga).

Chossudovsky claims that it was the general impoverishment of the population that contributed to desperation, insecurity and violence. These factors combined with the effects of the 1988–89 drought to induce ever higher levels of stress among the rural poor. The rural poor, in response, devised a variety of strategies to strengthen their livelihoods, including complicity in genocide motivated by incitement from elite political leaders (Chossudovsky: 1997).

Local populations participated in the conflict in two ways. The first was through direct armed support in the genocide and civil war. A second was to assist armed opposition groups against the government, an opposition that emanates from their grievances concerning economic marginalization and disinheritance of land and property. During the 1994 conflict, the rural peasantry played a major role in terms of carrying out the genocide orders. They were manipulated and used by extremist Hutu politicians to fulfill their desire of creating an exclusive Hutu state, which would ensure their political survival and holding of power (Prunier: 142).

Prunier observes that one of the cause for the rural poor to be involved in the conflict stems from land and resource scarcities. In his view, Hutu peasants killed the Tutsi because they would inherit the land of the murdered Tutsi (Prunier: 142). To the poor rural Hutu, inheritance of additional land and property was a lucrative incentive to participate in the genocide (Jean Bigagaza, Carolyne Abong and Cecile Mukarubuga).
Ethnic Conflict induced Displacement in Rwanda

Major Sequences of Massive displacement in the wake of the Genocide of 1994

The Arusha Peace Agreement was rejected by radical elements in both the government and rebel movement, and Rwanda became embroiled in an increasingly disruptive civil war. The country was plunged further into crisis on 6 April 1994, when presidents Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi were killed in a plane crash. Ironically, the two leaders were returning from a peace conference in the Tanzanian capital of Dar-es-Salaam, which had been convened to discuss the implementation of a power-sharing plan in both countries. While the cause of the plane crash remains unknown, it is clear that detailed preparations had already been made in Rwanda for the massacre of the Tutsi population and moderate Hutus. In attacks of indescribable brutality, committed by ordinary men and women as well as Hutu militia, at least 500,000 people are believed to have been killed. Some commentators put the figure much higher (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee UNHCR: 1995). Out of a population of 7.3 million Rwandan people—84% of whom were Hutu, 15% Tutsi and 1% Twa—the official figures published by the Rwandan government estimated the number of victims of the genocide to be 1,174,000 in 100 days (10,000 murdered every day, 400 every hour, 7 every minute). It is estimated that about 300,000 Tutsi survived the genocide. Thousands of widows, many of whom were subjected to rape, are now HIV-positive. There were about 400,000 orphans and nearly 85,000 of them were forced to become heads of families. According to the Joint Evaluation Report of Emergency Assistance estimates that 500,000 to 800,000 people were killed. The historian G. Prunier provided a figure of 800,000 to 850,000 Tutsis, including 10,000 - 30,000 Hutus (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee UNHCR: 1998: para:2.4). The non-governmental organization (NGO) Minority Rights Group International estimates that 500,000 Tutsi had perished, and that the Twa minority had been victimized by both Hutus and Tutsi. It would thus appear that the proportion of Tutsi had fallen to under 5 per cent of the population and that the Twa minority had become still smaller than it had been. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee UNHCR: 2000: para. 7).
The organizers of the genocide consisted of the regime's political, military and economic elite who had decided through a mixture of ideological and material motivation to resist political change which they perceived as threatening after the death of President Habyarimana. Although the vast majority of victims were people of Tutsi origin, the perpetrators of the violence also targeted moderate Hutu leaders - militants or sympathizers of the opposition, including journalists, professionals and academics. War re-started as the RPF resumed their military operations on 8 April 1994. The magnitude of the violence in Rwanda reached its peak when 250,000 Hutu refugees crossed the Kagera River between Rwanda and Tanzania (on 28 and 29 April, 1994) as the RPF moved into western Rwanda and army resistance collapsed. The organizers of the genocide organized a mass evacuation of the Hutu population. Around 1.75 million people - including members of the former regime and army - moved to the neighbouring countries of former Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi. As the Hutus were leaving, approximately 700,000 Tutsi refugees -including children who had been born in exile - returned to Rwanda. These are people who had been mostly in Uganda for many years and whose repatriation had been blocked by the Hutu regime in Kigali. The 1994 genocide also created many hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) throughout Rwanda. The World Refugee Survey estimated that nearly a half million were internally displaced (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee UNHCR: 1998: para 2.4).

By 4 July 1994, the French government created Opération turquoise - a 'safe humanitarian zone' in Rwanda's southwest corner, equivalent to about one-fifth of the national territory. At the RPF's proclamation of a new government in 19 July 1994, roughly 1.2 to 1.5 million IDPs had fled to this zone, most of whom had escaped the advance of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) in June and July. Many of these people subsequently fled to their homes or dispersed elsewhere in the country. As the deadline for French withdrawal drew near, a collaborative effort between political, military and international humanitarian organizations successfully encouraged a significant number of displaced persons in the southwest to remain in Rwanda, rather
than continue their flight abroad. When Opération turquoise ended on 21 August 1994, some 390,000 IDPs remained in 33 camps (Kleine-Ahlbrandt:1998).

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

**Four categories of Displaced Persons in 1994 in Rwanda**

The internally displaced in 1994 were generally members of one of four major groups. The first were those who decided to remain in the former Zone Turquoise in the southwestern part of the country after French forces withdrew in July. They were unable or unwilling to cross the border but did not feel able to return to their home communes. This group numbered approximately 350,000 in September 1994 and formed the population that crowded into some twenty IDP camps around three southwestern prefectures. A second group represented a large but difficult-to-quantify portion of 'old caseload' refugees, principally from Uganda but also from Burundi and from areas in the Horn of Africa. A substantial number settled in north and southeastern Rwanda, the former bringing with them 400,000 to 600,000 heads of cattle that wreaked devastation in the parklands. The old caseload refugees posed a very complex problem. An embodiment of the discontent that led to the creation of the RPF and RPA and the new regime's loyal constituency, these returnees after so many years in exile had high expectations. Those among the 600,000 who lacked housing, employment and land - or whose homes and lands had been occupied in the interim -represented a potentially explosive political and emotional issue. The third group of IDPs was more amorphous and difficult to quantify. They were the impoverished and dispossessed in one of the poorest countries in the world. They
included innumerable street children, those traumatized by the war, and the destitute, all of whom had been uprooted and received no assistance from a barely functioning social safety net. Finally a fourth group were 'rescapés', principally Tutsi who did not flee the genocide but chose to stay in the country even during the massacres. Ironically, these 'survivors' were objects of suspicion by Tutsi who feared that the survivors would pinpoint the 'génocidaires'. Often the only recourse for the rescapés was to abandon their homes and seek shelter in different prefectures. They, too, became part of Rwanda's displaced population.” (Minear and Kent in Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council: 2000)

**Causes of Ethnic Conflict Induced -Displacement**

New patterns of internal displacement have occurred in Rwanda in 1997 total 180,000 Internally Displaced Persons. Significant displacement occurred at the end of the year in the northwest regions of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, due to the intensification of armed conflict between members of armed groups comprised of certain members of the Rwandese armed forces (ex-FAR) and the Inerahamwe militia, and counterinsurgency operations by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). The local people have been caught in the middle of the conflict since both armies seek the support of the local population, making it difficult for civilians to remain neutral. While some attacks are indiscriminate, armed groups have targeted returnees, genocide survivors, local civilian authorities and persons considered to be collaborating with the RPA. These attacks are often followed by RPA counterinsurgency operations resulting in high numbers of civilian casualties. Much of the population is therefore disillusioned with the possibility of being protected by the RPA. Thousands of people have left rural areas and outlying sectors to seek safety closer to communal offices and urban locations. (Kleine-Ahlbrandt 1998, p.72) Large numbers of people have 'disappeared' in the context of the armed conflict in the northwestern préfectures of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi. The majority of these are men, many of whom have been rounded up by RPA soldiers in the context of military operations and led away to unknown destinations. Some people have been led away by soldiers on the basis that they were
being taken to attend a public meeting, and subsequently 'disappeared'. Mass arrests have been carried out by RPA soldiers, without any legal basis; it is likely that some of those arrested in this way are being detained in military camps. In addition to the above pattern, an estimated several thousand people - sometimes whole communities - have gone missing following armed clashes between RPA soldiers and armed opposition groups, or attacks by either side.

A number of villages in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri have been left uninhabited. Many of these people may have been displaced by the armed conflict, which is causing thousands to flee from their homes. Some flee in anticipation of likely attacks on their village; others escape in the midst of attacks or fighting. Some have probably 'disappeared'. However, given the widespread insecurity and difficulties of access, it is virtually impossible to ascertain whether and which of the inhabitants have been 'disappeared', killed - and if so, by whom -, arrested, or are in hiding. Others may have been taken hostage by armed groups. According to the official report of World Food Programme Kigali estimated in 1998 that between 100,000 and 250,000 persons were unaccounted for out of a population of some 1.5 million in the two prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. What little evidence there is suggests that atrocities were carried out by both sides in the conflict (World Food Programme: June 1999, pp.2-3)

Some 50,000 to 100,000 persons already were internally displaced when 1998 began. Displaced families included Hutu and Tutsi pushed from their homes by violence in the northwest and former Tutsi refugees who awaited new homes after repatriation. Some lived in camps, but most lived temporarily with relatives or friends until security conditions permitted them to re-occupy their property. The number of displaced people in Northwest Rwanda increased dramatically in the final five months of the year. Government authorities estimated in November that 630,000 people were internally displaced. A UN official stated that 'we have no reason to dispute (the government's) figures' within a 10 percent margin of error. The rapid increase in displaced people surprised many observers. Rwandan government officials claimed that the displacement indicated that local residents in the northwest had turned against the insurgents and were seeking government protection. Some observers said that
violence had disrupted farming activities, creating a food shortage that drove many people off their land (US Committee for Refugee USCR: 1999: pp.81-82). Internal displacement in north-west Rwanda cannot be regarded simply as the spontaneous flight of people caught in conflict. In addition to fear and insecurity caused by the destruction of homes and crops, it is also the result of persuasion, coercion, intimidation and political strategy employed by one side or the other in a protracted war.

One of the remarkable characteristics of Rwanda is the discipline - some would say passivity - of a population that continues to be exploited by the more powerful sections of society (World Food Programme: June 1999, p.2). Many aid workers attributed the massive displacement to the Rwandan government's efforts to depopulate the northwest countryside in order to deprive the insurgents of food and other support. Authorities deliberately moved many rural residents from their homes and relocated them to designated sites; some families moved to the sites voluntarily, others relocated involuntarily. Government authorities indicated that some relocation sites would become permanent new villages, moving people out of their traditional homes. Occupants of displacement camps suffered food shortages and poor medical care, resulting in some deaths. By year's end, thousands of displaced persons were returning home or slowly settling into new home sites. The pattern of population displacement in the northwest remained irregular, up to 85 percent of the residents in some localities reportedly remained uprooted, while in other localities most families remained at their homes (US Committee for Refugee USCR:1999, p.82)

**Two Peaks of Internal Displacement in History: 1994 and 1995**

The effects of Rwanda's genocide and civil strife were staggering. Out of Rwanda's population of roughly 8 million at the beginning of the 1990s, some 2 million had become displaced within Rwanda's borders during the last eight months of 1994 and close to an additional 2 million had fled as new refugees to neighbouring countries. The displaced included Tutsi, some of whom had remained in Rwanda during the genocide and others of whom were among the 600,000 'old caseload' refugees who entered with the victorious RPF. The displaced also included Hutu, who, as the
military and political tide turned, feared reprisals from the new Tutsi regime and army (Minear and Kent in Database of the Norwegian Refugee Council: 2000).

An estimated one million or more persons were displaced within Rwanda at the start of 1995. Up to 400,000 lived in dozens of camps in the southwest region of the country, where they received assistance from international relief agencies. Rwandan authorities insisted in late 1994 and early 1995 that the camps should close and that camp occupants - virtually all Hutu - could safely return to their homes. In early 1995, the UN and some NGOs attempted to close several camps by stopping food distributions. Some international observers estimated that as many as 40 percent of the individuals who returned home subsequently fled again. In late April 1995, government forces moved forcefully to close the largest remaining camp, Kibeho, which contained some 120,000 residents. The closure degenerated into massive violence. UN Officials estimated 2000 dead. Other international investigators placed the death toll at about 700 persons. The remaining camps for displaced persons officially closed by May 9. Although no sizeable camps existed after May, an estimated 500,000 persons – primarily Tutsi as well as some Hutu - remained internally displaced at year's end US Committee for Refugee USCR:1999: 62)

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

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

At the end of 1998, the government ordered the displaced to relocate once more, this time to officially designated 'villages.' Since 1995, the government had been resettling Rwandans returned from outside the country and the internally displaced in 'villages,' refusing to allow them to live in the dispersed homes customary in Rwanda. They insisted that villagisation would promote economic development and improve delivery of services to the population. As applied in the northwest, however, the program appeared to be meant primarily to reduce the likelihood of a new insurgency. By late 1999, 94 percent of the population of Kibungo and 60 percent of the population of Mutara, both prefectures in the east, had been moved into villages, as had 40 percent of the population of the prefecture surrounding the capital of Kigali. In addition 94 percent of the people of the northwest who had been in camps had been moved into villages and others, still in their own homes, had been ordered to destroy them and move to the new sites, where they were obliged to live in temporary shelters, under plastic sheeting, while building new houses. Persons who resisted these orders were fined or imprisoned. Despite government promises, most sites offered no services (water, schools, clinics) and residents often had to walk much farther to cultivate their fields. " (HRW 2000:Human Rights Developments)

According to some, like USCR, the relocation process was a new phase of displacement while for others, like UNHCR, relocation meant permanent resettlement, ending their displaced status. In 2000, OCHA seemed to agree with UNHCR's position and reported that the relocated population was no longer considered displaced. It nevertheless pointed out that this segment of population remained very vulnerable. In its September 2000 Humanitarian Report on Rwanda, OCHA stated that "are considered IDPs those who have been recently displaced due to a sudden crisis". Because of this new definition, only 2,480 persons are now categorized as internally displaced. These persons are part of a group of over 40,000 caseload refugees who were living in a forest in the Gysenyi Prefecture and who are now being resettled by the Government. Among these old caseload refugees, only
those resettled in temporary camps are considered IDPs. The ones permanently resettled by the government are not counted as such (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: 10 October 2000, pp.3-4). At the end of 1999, OCHA still included 150,000 recently relocated people in its statistics of internally displaced and mentioned that these were the people receiving direct humanitarian assistance (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: UN OCHA: 24 December 1999, Rwanda). Because of OCHA's apparently more restrictive definition of internally displaced persons, newly relocated persons in 2000 can “no longer be considered as internally displaced since they have all been moved to their 'final location', either their old houses or the imidugudu sites”. OCHA however still sees the need to distinguish the newly relocated from the rest of the population: “Nevertheless OCHA still prefer to choose the term newly re-located instead of resettled since a number of sites are lacking basic infrastructure and a large number of families are under plastic sheeting” (OCHA 31 August 2000, pp.2-3). OCHA also reports that “370'000 families - more than 1.5 million people are living in refugee like situation” (OCHA 10 October 2000, p.12). “This population relates to those people who are still living in temporary shelters in conditions of poverty and includes those who have been relocated by the GoR to villages (or Imidugudu)”(OCHA 8 June 2000, Rwanda).

Factors Responsible for Ethnic conflict Induced Displacement in Rwanda

1The traces of build-up of indigenous social and political structures can easily be seen under the reign of the tutsi king Rwabugiri during the second half of the 19th century. Rwabugiri’s administration (1860 - 1895) imposed a harsh regime on the formerly semi-autonomous Tutsi and Hutu lineages, confiscating their lands and breaking their political power. Rwabugiri amplified feudal labour systems, in particular the uburetwa, i.e. labour in return for access to land, a system that was restricted to Hutu peasant farmers while exempting Tutsi. He also manipulated social categories, and introduced an “ethnic” differentiation between Tutsi and Hutu based on historical social positions. Polarization and politicization of ethnicity existed much before the advent of European colonialism (Prunier: 1995: 21).
2. The German and Belgian colonial (trusteeship) policy of indirect rule, favouring the strengthening of Tutsi hegemony. In 1933 they have introduced the compulsory use of identity cards, reinforcing and accelerating the late pre-colonial process towards a separation of Tutsi and Hutu (and Twa). After this new rule, all Rwandese had to relate to "their" respective ethnic group, which in turn determined avenues and fortunes in society. Under European colonialism, a policy of "ethnogenesis" was actively pursued, i.e. a politically-motivated creation of ethnic identities based on socially-constituted categories of the precolonial past. The minority Tutsi became the haves and the majority Hutu the have-nots ((Prunier: 1995: 35).

3. The abrupt change by Belgium only some 25 years later, when - under the influence of the general decolonization process in Africa, the build-up towards political independence of Hutu. This eased the way for the so-called peasant, or Hutu, revolution of 1959 - 61, through which Rwanda underwent a profound transition from a Tutsi-dominated monarchy to a Hutu-led independent republic in less than three years. The replacement of one political elite by another introduced a new dimension of political and social instability and a potential for future ethnic violence. The events of 1959 - 61 also forced tens of thousands of Tutsi into exile in neighbouring countries, from where groups of refugees began to carry out armed incursions into Rwanda, sowing the seeds of the country’s ethnically-defined refugee problem (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).

4. Increasing intra-Hutu tensions - mainly between groups from the northern Gisenyi and Ruhengeri regions and those from the rest of the country - developed during the First and Second Republics (1962 -1990) and came to form an important factor underlying the cleavage between Hutu in the 1990s. In addition to competition over political spoils, at the core of this division is the historical fact that the northern Hutu were independent until the first decade of the 20th Century, when they were militarily defeated by combined German and Tutsi-led southern Rwandese troops. The northerners form a distinctive Hutu sub-culture in which awareness of a pre-Tutsi past is more pronounced than in other parts of Rwanda (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).
5. The economic deterioration, largely due to a sharp decline of world market prices for coffee - Rwanda’s prime export earner - as well as to unfavourable weather and economic policies such as increased protectionism, price controls and other regulations, affected the whole society. Combined with the effects of the civil war from October 1990, continued demographic pressure on available resources and decreasing agricultural yields, the economic crisis introduced yet another element of stress and instability into the Rwandese political and social fabric. The international community, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, overlooked these potentially explosive political consequences when designing and imposing their economic conditions for support to Rwanda’s economic recovery (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).

6. The refugee crisis, starting in 1959 and developing into a constant political and social problem throughout the history of independent Rwanda. Tens of thousands of Tutsi, in several waves from the Hutu revolution onwards, were forced into exile in neighbouring countries. Largely due to the intransigence of the Rwandese Hutu-led governments towards their demands to return, and to the unwelcoming policies of some of the host countries, the exiled Tutsi communities became over the years increasingly militant. In turn, this led to the creation of the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), the military attack on Rwandese in October 1990 and the ensuing civil war (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).

7. Linked to the problem of impunity is the legacy of fear that exists in the Rwandese social fabric as a result of repeated mass killings since 1959 and which has its origins in the process of ethnogenesis and division between privileged Tutsi and under-privileged Hutu during the colonial period. With creation of the ethnicity issue followed a social construct of Tutsi superiority and Hutu inferiority, contempt and mistrust, which ultimately permeated the entire society and developed into a culture of fear. It largely contributed to the outburst of violence at the time of Rwanda’s independence, when the tables were turned and the fear among the majority Hutu gave way to a fear among the minority Tutsi. Since then, it has been repeatedly exploited for purposes of political manipulation.
8. Overpopulation as well as inequitable distribution of land worsened land scarcity for the rural poor. Increasingly, political power and representation by elite groups at the national level determined control of land. Widespread disinheritance of land rights of the rural poor coupled with resource capture by elite groups has been closely related to deepening rural poverty which actually led to violent conflict. Over a period of time, different groups in the conflict were polarised along ethnic lines and were purposefully driven to conflict through ideologies propagated through official media. It can therefore be argued that the conflict in Rwanda was ultimately a struggle against inequitable distribution of land, tragically fought along ethnic, Tutsi versus Hutu, lines (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).

9. The lack of land, combined with few nonagricultural employment opportunities, created resentment and frustration within this large segment of Rwandan society. The population was therefore easily mobilized; there were reports of increased rivalry and conflict among neighbors over land. The structural adjustment program both reduced government aid programs and increased the price of imported goods, such as food, while poor economic conditions reduced alternative employment opportunities for youth in urban areas. Frustration was further intensified by increased corruption in the Rwandan government and the unresponsiveness of both opposition parties and government agencies to the problems of rural society. In the context of ethnic cleavages, these grievances were easily channeled into an ethnic conflict (Valerie Percival, Thomas-Dixon: 1995).

**Great Lake Region and Rwanda – Inter-linked (Regional) Reasons for Displacement**

There are different reasons behind the displacement of population and internal displacement in Great Lake Region in Africa. The different ethnic divisions that existed among the different social groups in the area that is now Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo, were taken advantage of during the colonial period for political objectives. These divisions deepened after independence, and as a consequence, numerous “ethnic” clashes have occurred throughout the region in the past 50 years (Lanjouw et al. 2001). The politics of the Great Lakes region - comprising Burundi,
eastern Congo, and Rwanda, as well as areas of western Tanzania and south-western Uganda - are shaped in crucial respects by forced migration. Before independence, at least 500,000 Rwandans and Burundians moved to neighbouring countries for economic or political reasons.

The independent Republic of Rwanda was born in a refugee crisis in 1962, and every subsequent political crisis (1973, 1990, 1994, 1996, and 1997-8) has resulted in large-scale displacement. Burundians fled their country in large numbers in 1972, 1988, and 1993-2001, eventually forming one of Africa's largest groups of refugees. The wars in Kivu in eastern Congo since 1993 have resulted in one of the world's worst situations of internal displacement. In addition, the long-term presence of Rwandan and Burundian refugees has had a decisive effect on the domestic politics of the main host states, Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, and of course Rwanda and Burundi themselves, which have both hosted large numbers of refugees from each other.

Clashes between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups in Rwanda during the late 1950s led many Tutsi to flee to Uganda and other neighboring countries. These refugees were never fully integrated, and remained as a “diaspora” in their new host countries. Repeated clashes and violence against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1963, 1967, and 1973 resulted in the flight of many more people to neighboring countries. Strains and conflicts between other groups in the DRC also contributed to the tension in the region. The Masisi and southern Kivu regions in the DRC have repeatedly seen clashes between Congolese groups and groups of Rwandan origin (“Banyarwanda”), as well as other ethnic groups. In Uganda, past problems under the Amin and Obote regimes also led to the movement of many refugees into the DRC, and northwards into Sudan.

The wars in Sudan, Somalia, and elsewhere in the region have also affected the border areas with Congo and Uganda, increasing the availability of small arms and light weapons (Boutwell and Klare 2000) and the presence of refugees, militias, and rebel groups in all of these countries. Specifically in the region around the Virunga Volcanoes range (Rwanda, Uganda, and DRC), numerous clashes among different
groups have led to population displacement across the borders. These factors all contributed to an attack, in October 1990, by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), from Uganda into Rwanda. The RPF steadily advanced on the capital, Kigali, and in June 1994, President Habyarimana of Rwanda was killed. This triggered a carefully prepared genocide that killed up to a million people in the space of 100 days. The arrival of the RPF in Kigali in July 1994 caused about two million mainly Hutu people to flee into the DRC, Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda 1996). Also fleeing from Rwanda were the army of the assassinated President Habyarimana and the perpetrators of the genocide – the extremist militia known as the interahamwe. The refugees spent more than two years in camps, and during that time the former members of the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and the interahamwe regrouped and formed political and military groupings intent on recapturing control of Rwanda (Jongmans 1999). The insurgency that followed greatly disrupted the border regions. It continues today, with incursions by the different militia groups into northwestern Rwanda (African Rights 1998).

At the end of 1996, the dismantling of refugee camps, first in DRC and then in Tanzania, prompted the forced and rapid repatriation of over two million refugees to Rwanda. This was followed by the deterioration of the security situation inside Rwanda. The country had to grapple with the formidable challenges of resettlement, reintegration, and reconciliation in a post-genocide climate, while attacks continued from rebels based in DRC (African Rights 1998). In the DRC, the Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre (AFDL) began a military operation in mid-1996 that took over the country in May 1997. A new rebel force, the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD), launched an attack on Kinshasa the following year. This war continues, with the RCD subdivided into three groups – RCD, RCD-MLC (Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo), and RCD-ML (Mouvement de la Libération) – and supported by troops from neighboring countries. Throughout this period, Uganda has also been affected by movements of Rwandan refugees, insurgencies from the DRC (as a result of the war in eastern Kivu), and an escalating cross-border conflict with rebel groups based in the DRC and Sudan (Lanjouw et al. 2001). The conflicts along the borders between the DRC, Rwanda,
and Uganda have not been resolved (Duly 2000). Interahamwe militias still roam in the forests in the DRC and rebel groups based in the DRC still attack Rwanda and Uganda. Clashes within the DRC, between different groups, continue to destabilize the country. The conflict between the Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels in the eastern DRC and President Kabila’s forces in the west still ensures that political and military objectives are at the forefront of the government’s agenda. To date, seven African nations and numerous rebel groups are engaged in the conflict in the DRC (International Crisis Group 2000a).

Displaced people lacked shelter, cooked on open fires, and desperately searched the landscape for food and building materials. Environmental impacts associated with the refugee crisis included heavy deforestation, depletion of fresh water sources, soil erosion, and problems with the disposal of waste and corpses. Consequently, the refugee crisis contributed to food shortages and soaring prices for firewood, as well as the spread of numerous diseases (including cholera, dysentery, and venereal diseases). The host communities faced additional economic hardships when Rwandan refugees took almost every unskilled job in Goma (DRC) during 1994 (Cairns 1997). With free medical care and food provided to them by humanitarian agencies, refugees were able to accept salaries far below the minimum that was standardly accepted by the local Congolese people. In such situations, differential access to humanitarian assistance can increase the inequities that exist between the people who have, and those who do not have access to resources. The Congolese population is still struggling to recover from the refugee crisis.

The impact of the crisis in Rwanda and the eastern DRC on wildlife, biodiversity, and national parks has been described in numerous reports and articles (Kalpers and Lanjouw 1999; Biswas et al. 1994; Henquin and Blondel 1996). The threats to the environment from the crisis include: Destruction or collapse of the economy and loss of opportunity for people to earn a licit livelihood, Destruction of social structures and institutions, as well as the legal framework, with long-term consequences for the livelihoods of people, Increased dependence on natural resources for food, building materials, firewood, and charcoal by many different groups of people (local people,
displaced people, armies, militias, and rebels), Presence of armed combat, landmines, and booby traps in forests and protected areas, Politicization of all work in and around the conflict zone, including park management activities, General insecurity due to the movements of armed groups, combat, and banditry, making normal activities unsafe and difficult, Clearing of forest cover by armed factions for security objectives, Settlement of displaced persons in natural areas/protected areas, Temporary settlement of rebels/militias in protected areas, Conditions of lawlessness that allow the staking of illegal land claims by agricultural populations.

Geographically, Rwanda is densely populated as well as little 'bushy' or uninhabited land. This is one of the reasons why the killing during the genocide was so efficient. The only real option open to an asylum-seeker is to cross a border to a neighbouring country. Regional dimensions to conflict in the Great Lakes region are certainly not new. For example, the initial flight of Tutsi refugees from Rwanda to Uganda, from amongst whom emerged the founders of the RPF, occurred at the time of Rwanda’s independence. But their intensity and scope has reached an unprecedented scale over the past decade, making the challenge of ending conflict in the region even greater. Many observers partly attribute this to problems of state failure in the region. In doing so, they often blame the colonial powers for creating countries with artificial boundaries. However, the label ‘state failure’ can obscure the fact that not everybody suffers to the same extent in such conditions of crisis. Indeed, parts of the elite may well benefit in such conditions of ‘durable disorder’ (P. Chabal and J-P. Daloz: 1999:69). Secondly, the label can give the false impression that the Great Lakes region has been a region of chronic and ‘timeless’ state failure since independence. Tanzania has never experienced state failure, although Zanzibar has placed the Union under occasional strain. Rwanda and Burundi had relatively effective states during the first three decades of independence, albeit ones based on the structural exclusion of one ethnic group. The DRC and Uganda have both experienced long-term state failure – but not at the same time. DRC experienced its worst collapse (1996-2003) at a time when Uganda was making significant progress towards recovery. Uganda’s full-blown collapse took place between 1981-86 (Prunier: 40). For these reasons, it might be better to talk in terms of the long-term problems of state formation in the Great
Lakes region, which have produced moments of ‘state crisis’, rather than about state failure. (Commons Library Standard Note SN/IA/4110, 18 July 2006, International Development White Paper 2006: Failing and Effective States). Given this, it can be argued that a crucial factor in the regionalization of conflict across the Great Lakes region was the complex interaction of state crisis and attempted reconstruction in Burundi, Rwanda, DRC and Uganda during the period 1990-1996. Rwandan exiles in Uganda helped Museveni seize power and begin a long process of state reconstruction. But in doing so they realised that their long-term future was not secure there. They turned their attention to returning to Rwanda by force, with Museveni’s assistance. As donors supported moves to introduce ethnic power-sharing, Burundi slipped into political crisis and civil war. Rwanda experienced state-sponsored genocide. The rapid re-establishment of state authority in Rwanda under the RPF after the genocide led to military operations in eastern Zaire/DRC against the génocidaires, allied with Uganda, tipping the DRC into complete state collapse. It was only after 1999, with growing support from the international community – including key African countries– that the states of the Great Lakes region began slowly to develop more co-operative and collective approaches to security and reconstruction (M. Berdal and D.M. Malone :2000).

The structural causes of the conflicts include bad governance, the politics of exclusion, and widespread state sponsored or state condoned human rights violations. First, the artificial boundaries created by our former colonial masters had the effect of bringing together many different people within nations that were not prepared for the cultural and ethnic diversity. The leaders of these communities, instead of building on this diversity, sought to exploit it for their own ends. In the process they ruptured social cohesion, and dislocated social entities and culturally homogeneous groups of people. Second, post-colonial ethnic conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, and in many parts of Africa, have their roots in the colonial policy of separating language, religious and ethnic communities. Where ethnic communities, scientifically speaking, did not exist, as in Rwanda, they created them.
Third, was the emphasis on the exploitation of raw materials for export, and the
generation of wealth for the colonial power, at the expense of a genuine desire to
develop the basic infrastructure and to provide basic social services to the Region.
The concentration on a few major cash crops and extraction of minerals left the
countries in the Region vulnerable to fluctuations in the prices of these commodities
on the world market. There was a deliberate effort to produce for markets of the
metropolis while ignoring national and regional markets. As a result, our internal
markets were destroyed; and our creative spirit subdued. In Rwanda for example,
while we were forced to grow and produce coffee for export, at the expense of
subsistence crops that our populations needed then, the country saw the first waves of
migrants fleeing recurrent episodes of famine. It is no wonder we have witnessed the
increase of poverty levels among the ordinary people, and a heavy debt burden which
has crippled the Region's ability to develop. Poverty, ignorance, and the feeling of
marginalisation are some of the factors that fuel conflict in Africa. Another factor
that, in my view, contributed to the conflicts in the Region that we know today, is the
weak states and the self-serving leaders who appeared on the scene as colonialists
departed. These leaders did not have any interest in the socio-economic development
of their countries, but rather supported the colonial type of policies and, in effect,
continued the siphoning of the Region's wealth. Social tensions and subsequently
conflicts emerge from widespread poverty, inequality and social inequity.
Unemployment often creates avenues for large numbers of jobless youth to
initiate/join and perpetrate civil unrests that would otherwise not result in violent
conflicts. Large pools of unemployed youth and illiterate, poor groups are often
targets for recruitment by war lords and fighters, willingly or forcefully

Secondary Factors for Ethnic conflict induced Displacement
There are other secondary factors also which contributed to massive displacement is:

1. The role of Diasporas, or the cycle of forced exile and forcible return. The role
   of refugee camps as a site of (often coercive) mobilization has been much
debated by analysts and policy-makers;
2. The ‘unintended consequences’ of economic and political liberalization measures from the 1980s onwards, which often weakened economies and produced democratisation programmes that spiralled out of control;

3. The tendency for internal power struggles within ethnically-based elites to be ‘resolved’ through increased violence against ethnically-excluded groups in society;

4. The failure of the international community to adopt a coherent regional peacemaking strategy until 1999. There is one final factor that has been comparatively under-researched but whose impact should not be underestimated: disease. It is now generally accepted that epidemics or pandemics can have a devastating impact upon the social fabric, so increasing vulnerability to conflict. At the same time, conflict creates environments in which diseases flourish, with little prospect of effective prevention or treatment;

5. The weakness of state institutions, including citizenship and border control, facilitates transnational trade networks, war economies, and the spread of regional rumors, all of which can further undermine the state. Because of the social, economic and political linkages in the Great Lakes region, one state’s crisis weakens neighboring states and increases the risk of conflict. In this volatile environment, groups and individuals manipulate fear and ethnic hatred to create and control militias, parallel economies, populations, and territories. The collapse of institutions is linked to the endemic underdevelopment and poverty in the region, as some states exist only to extract and control resources valued in the international market.

**Major Characteristics of Ethnicity in Rwanda**

Ethnic conflict induced displacement of population in Rwanda is the combination of economic crisis, civil war, genocide, internal displacement, mass emigration, political transition and return of refugees ravaged the country. Every Rwandan household was affected by at displacement. These events of displacement have scarred the Rwandan population at multiple levels: loss of family members through violent death, rape,
disease, hunger, loss of dignity, loss of property, loss of land, fleeing in neighbouring countries, renewed onslaught, absence of respect for human rights, imprisonment. Rwanda conflict induced displacement may be called as deprivation-induced grievance and violence. Rwanda Men are generally seen as the aggressors, but they also become the victims of ethnic based genocide. Men found it more difficult to cope with displacement, as it often threatened their traditional gender roles and position of authority within the family and the community. Displacement in Rwanda cannot be considered as a spontaneous fight against the people. In addition to fear and insecurity caused by the destruction of homes and crops, persuasion, coercion, intimidation and political strategy were major factors that contributed to the war. One of the remarkable characteristics of Rwanda is the discipline - some would say passivity - of a population that continues to be exploited by the more powerful sections of society. The conflict which has been devastating Rwanda for several decades is an identity-based conflict. That type of conflict generally breaks out between communities which have been living together for a long time and the frontlines are set up along identity distinctions, whether material, political, physical, social and intellectual. They crystallize on the basis of the sense of belonging to an ethnic group, a territory, a language, a religion and a culture. It could also be based on history, ideological constructions and political affiliations. The elements are specifically typical to the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and in Burundi. All the conflict situations in Rwanda from the 1959 revolution to the 1994 genocide, places emphasis on that three-phase dynamics. It is not rational but that does not prevent it from being functional in society. Identity crises are the result of long-lasting phenomena. Three elements should be combined for the sense of identity to take form: the socio-economic crisis, the state crisis and the internal or proximity heterogeneity.

The socio-economic crisis dooms such or such other group to exclusion and toughens collective identifying perceptions of groups around ontological needs. The state crisis results in its incapability of properly assuming its duties and the state places itself in the service of a minority of the privileged by giving its backing to injustices and frustrations against other groups. Those two aspects have characterized Rwanda under the first two Republics, without sparing the neighbouring countries, including DRC.
The heterogeneity factor has also played a significant role. In the case of Rwanda and Burundi, the sense of distinction has been the result of ideological constructions and has relied on parameters which are a little rational but functional: height, big or small nostrils, the shape of the face, etc. Ethno-cultural heterogeneity has also characterized the conflicts in DRC and Uganda with the specificity of the latter that it was superposed to religious heterogeneity. However, contrarily to Rwanda and Burundi, at linguistic and cultural level, the distinction lines are not clearly established in the two other countries. In Rwanda, Culture, language and religion were the main instruments of domination in the hands of powers and colonizers. Those ideological convictions of racial inequality and genetic and natural domination have sown the seeds of social injustice and, when applied to the local administration, they have undermined the social fabric. Rwandan problems are not only due to lack of good governance of the state. They are also related to lack of management and eradication of negative ideologies inherited from colonial times. Nepotism, clientelism, corruption and exclusion which have been practiced by the successive powers in this country since it acceded to independence have led to social split and identity-based fission and, eventually, to the crystallization of conflict-generating cleavages.

The role of politicians continuously remains at the heat exacerbation of identity-based conflicts, which are tearing African peoples apart. Identity-based wars would not occur today in Rwanda if post-colonial leaders had not systematically built their political discourse on themes dividing communities. Bad governance as a causal factor has formed around three fundamental structures: A bad start of independences, unequal distribution of national resources and conflict-generating systems. Injustice, Poor management and unequal distribution of national resources are the epidemics that have been devastating Rwanda after the emergence of colonial powers. In Rwanda, the new political oligarchies monopolized the power and the resources of the young independent State on the basis of identity, be it "ethnic" (Hutu), regional (South, North) or other. As a result, political powers favoured the climate of corruption, hegemony and exclusion. Jobs, schools were distributed unequally in favour of groups in power. This situation complicated social relations, resulting in frustration of the underprivileged and in crystallization of the sense of belonging to an
identity, from crises and conflicts. Extreme poverty and scarcity of resources, population increase and unemployment have constantly made living conditions particularly difficult for the population and catalyzed crises and identity-based conflicts in Rwanda. There is also the effect of intensification of conflicts due to serious violations of human needs. In the region of the Great Lakes, this means violating rights violations (of ethnic groups victimized by other groups) particularly as regards freedom, security, sense of fulfillment and development, exclusion from instruction, from employment, refusal to nationality, exile, persecution and massacres.

**Major Consequences of the Ethnic-conflict based Displacement in Rwanda**

The Rwandan genocide was the 1994 mass killing of hundreds of thousands of Rwanda’s minority of its Hutu majority. Over the course of approximately 100 days, from April 6 through to mid July; at least 500,000 people were killed. Most estimates are of a death toll between 800,000 and 1,000,000. (Prunier, Gerard: 1997). The genocide phenomenon placed people in incredibly complex moral and social situations. While some could be denounced and sent to their death by neighbours whom they had known all their lives, others could- incredibly- be saved by a kind-hearted interahamwe. Some people were denounced by their colleagues who wanted their jobs or killed by people who wanted their property, while others were saved by unknown Hutu disgusted by the violence (Prunier, Gerard: 1997). The situation was particularly difficult for mixed couples. Thus a Hutu husband had to give all his money to be allowed not to kill his wife and her relations when they were stopped at a militia road block. Some of the so-called ‘Hutsi’ (those of mixed percentage) were saved by their Hutu relations while Tutsi members of their family were slaughtered.

Psychologically, the place was full of walking wounded, traumatized Tutsi survivors who had lost everything- their friends, their relatives, their houses- and were wandering around like ghost, and traumatized Hutu survivors who could not believe what had been done to them. There were 114,000 children without parents trying to survive with nobody to care for them. There were frightened Hutu who had done nothing or had perhaps mechanically obeyed orders, but who now lived in constant
fear of being arrested or killed. There were also sullen Hutu who had killed or sympathized with the killers and whose souls seemed sick beyond redemption. (Prunier, Gerard: 1997).

It was from this human material that the country had to be restarted. An amazing number of people seemed to buckle down to it, trauma or no trauma. There was an immense need for labour, with almost 40% of the population dead or in exile. Rwanda is a wounded society where many people are not living in a ‘normal state’. The Rwandese call them the Bapfuye Buhagazi, ‘the walking dead’ the country is full of them, many people who appear out worldly tranquil belong to their numbers of some aspects of their personality which they manage to hide. The genocide is often seen by outsiders as a clear-cut affair, but it is in fact an abominably complicated and interwoven social phenomenon whose actors are psychologically deeply traumatized for a variety of reasons. (Prunier, Gerard: 1997)

Thus the situation of many people vis-à-vis the genocide is extra ordinary complex especially for women. Rwanda is not a normal country anymore, and the actors of its political life are not in normal situation. In the Rwandan crisis, physical protection of refugees especially women and children and displaced persons in camps quickly became of paramount importance. The continued dominance of former commune, and other leaders, some of whom were perpetrators of the genocide, the presence of armed elements in refugee camps; and posed a security threat to relief agency staff.

Anything that disrupts peace and tranquility in a country, such as population displacements, is bound to have adverse consequences for the nation-state & land its people. Use of mass starvation and mass forcible displacement as a weapon of destruction; extensive violence and loss of life, massive displacements of people, widespread damage to societies and economies; Obstruction of humanitarian aid; Harassment of internally displaced persons; Bombing of hospitals, clinics, schools, and other civilian sites; Use of rape as a weapon against targeted groups; Employing a divide-to-destroy strategy of pitting ethnic groups against each other, with enormous loss of civilian life; Training and supporting ethnic militias who commit atrocities; Destroying indigenous cultures; Enslavement of women and children by government-
support militias; Impeding and failing to fully implement peace agreements. Individually, each action had devastating, often deadly consequences for its victims. Together, these actions threatened the destruction of entire groups of people. The social and economic effects of conflict are inextricably linked and are, in turn, reflected in massive refugee flows and population displacement, economic, social and cultural disruption and soaring levels of mortality and morbidity in Rwanda.

**Demographic Consequences**

Population displacements disrupt established lifestyles and traditions, including forced abandonment of ancestral homes to take up temporary residence in an unknown territory; pitting in-migrants against their host populations; disrupting the reproductive cycle in affected populations (because couples are often separated in the process); disrupting the family system; and an increase in morbidity and mortality especially among children and the aged, particularly where the displaced persons cannot afford, or have no access to, medical care or aid. In a nutshell, the demographic clock stops all of a sudden when populations are displaced.

**Social Consequences**

The social consequences of displacement even further intensify the problem of living which includes the social and behavioral changes, loss of loved ones, sexual behavior, domestic violence, drug & alcoholism, security, shelter, changed lives, mental stress and trauma, resettlement tension, local politics and so on. Most of the people killed were male; the majorities of perpetrators were also male and are either in prisons (over 100,000) or are refugees. Consequently, the current Rwandan population is predominantly female: there are 84 males per 100 females in general and 67 males per 100 females among people aged between 24 and 29. More than a third of all households are headed by women. As a result of the genocide, entire families and extended families were completely wiped out. Homes of some were destroyed as well. This implies the loss of important symbols of privacy, identity and a safe place which fostered family union. People fled or were displaced, many families having lost communication with their relatives.
Economic Consequences

Population displacements tend to grind all forms of economic activity to a sudden halt. In many countries, agricultural activity stalls, resulting in reduced food production and consequently famine, lack of cash crops for export and, therefore, a fiscal crisis for the state concerned. On the other hand, it puts a heavy strain on the economy of the host country. Displaced populations are impoverished as they are deprived of their established means of livelihood, access to land, income, and occupation. On the whole economic capacities are diminished even further.

Political Consequences

Population displacements underscore the inability of Rwandan governments to contain situations that threaten the peace, unity and stability of the nation-state. First, it provides opportunities for political elites of displaced groups to initiate actions that further undermine the fragile peace and stability of the country. Second, it raises the already tense political temperature; exacerbates ethnic animosity, and eventually triggers ethnic violence. Political parties often become "ethnic parties" to advance ethnic interests even if their actions contradict the spirit of national unity. In the short term the developmental goals of the nation are distorted by ethnic demands. Third, population displacements often expose Rwanda to foreign intervention which further threatens fragile national sovereignties.

Psychological Consequences

Among the consequences of war, the impact on the mental health of the civilian population is one of the most significant. Studies of the general population show a definite increase in the incidence and prevalence of mental disorders. Women are more affected than men. Other vulnerable groups are children, the elderly and the disabled. Prevalence rates are associated with the degree of trauma, and the availability of physical and emotional support.
Consequences of Ethnic Conflict Induced-Displacements on Rwandan Women

The idea and practice of genocide are most probably as ancient as the idea and practice of war. Indeed, war and genocide have always been closely related, just as both are predicated on the existence of a certain level of human culture and civilization. The biblical concept of a war of annihilation or the destruction of Carthage by the Romans, are two familiar instances of the manner in which the eradication of another culture in war or in its immediate aftermath serves as an important instrument in the assertion of group or national identity. Genocide emerges for a variety of reasons and no single explanation can cover every case. But they almost invariably develop in the context of warfare and extreme social and political crisis, when the normal rules of human interaction are suspended and the practice of violence is honored and rewarded. Killing is a brute, physical act. It entails, most obviously, the exercise of complete domination, of ultimate power, over the victim. But the way people are killed is a ritual that carries layers of symbolic meaning, just as human sacrifice does in pre-modern societies. Killing, like the other acts of violence and like rituals in general, is a performative act. In genocides, the meaning of the act are conveyed to the thousands, even millions, of people involved, the perpetrators, bystanders, victims, and survivors, through the treatment of the body. As few scholars have written about mass killings in Rwanda in 1994, when people were killed by hacking them apart, dumping most of the body parts, somewhere else, but leaving the organs in front of the victims house, the body becomes not simply the means of death but a vehicle for effecting more traumatic symbolic and ritual violence. The RPF battalion stationed in Kigali under the Arusha accords came under attack immediately after the shooting down of the president plane. The battalion fought its way out of Kigali and joined up with RPF units in the north. The RPF renewed its civil war against the Rwanda hut government when it received word that the genocidal massacres had begun. Its leader Paul Kagame directed RPF forces in neighboring countries such as Uganda and Tanzania to invade the country, battling the Hutu forces and interahamwe militias who were committing the massacres. The resulting civil war raged concurrently with the genocide for two months. The Tutsi rebels defeated the Hutu regime and ended the genocide in July 1994, but
approximately two million Hutu refugees—some who participated in the genocide and fearing Tutsi retribution—fled to neighboring Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire (Prunier, Gerard: 1997).

Gender based Violence and Rwandan Women

What is Gender based Violence?

Gender based violence refers to the violence targeted on a person due to his/her gender. It affects the person of his/her special roles or responsibilities in the society. Gender violence in conflict situations is a violation of the fundamental human right of women to mental and physical integrity as protected under the universal declaration of human rights, CEDAW, and the convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Violence is the chief source of fear for displaced women and girls. Researchers have begun to focus their attention on the long term effects of living under the threat of violence.

Gender Dimension of Displaced Women in Rwanda

The global crisis of internal displacement has produced enormous challenges for the international assistance community. Although the precise number is unknown, expert estimate the number of displaced within borders to be around 800,000 of whom women and children comprises about 80 percent. The right of women including access to basic services, Food, shelter and health care are often ignored. Moreover, displaced women has no voice, their circumstances have compelled them to accept the little assistance offered, at the same time they are being denied the opportunity to actively participate in programs related to the activities to monitor their own and children’s lives. Displacement has affected the women differently than men. Furthermore, it was different during the various stage of crisis. When the displacement occurred, far more damage has been observed than merely the loss and destruction of goods and property; people’s lives and social fabric were left in tatters. As terrible as the disruption may be, women usually suffer the effect more acutely than the men do. Changes in gender roles are accelerated in situations of conflict as women are forced to assume responsibilities which were previously held by men.
Complex emergencies may upset the balance between men and women. Women and children often make up the majority of the IDP population. The effects of displacement depend on its duration. But immediate manifestations include family separation, exposure to gender violence, trauma associated with the deaths of family members, impaired health, loss of home and possessions. Almost every Rwandan woman has a dramatic story of hunger and deprivation, fear, flight and loss of family and friends. The ubiquity and the depth of suffering are striking, even five years after the war and genocide. The war and the genocide shattered the dense local friendship network and community solidarity and had traditionally provided solace and support for women. Many women who survived the war and the genocide experienced serious economic deprivation. Extreme poverty made it difficult for women to take care for their children.

**Gender-based Violence against Rwandan Women**

During the 1994 genocide, Rwandan women were subjected to brutal forms of sexual violence. Rape was widespread. Women were individually raped, gang-raped, raped on the point of the objects such as sharpened sticks or gun barrels held in sexual slavery (collectively or individually) or sexually mutilated. In almost every case, these crimes were inflicted upon women after they had witnessed the torture and lootings of their homes. Some women were forced to kill their own children before or after being raped. Women were raped or gang-raped repeatedly as they fled from place-to-place. This led to the problem of displacement of huge numbers of population, especially women and children. They were basically displaced from their homes, regions, localities, villages, towns, and countries. Some population fled to neighboring countries like Zaire, Burundi, or Uganda. Rape in conflict is also used as a weapon to terrorize and degrade a particular community and to achieve a specific political end. In these situations, gender intersects with other aspects of a woman’s identity such as ethnicity, religion, social class or political affiliation. The humiliation, pain and terror inflicted by the rapist is meant to degrade not just the individual woman but also to strip the humanity from the larger group to whom she belongs to. During the Rwandan genocide, rape and other forms of violence were directed primarily against Tutsi women because of both their gender and their ethnicity. Rwandan woman lives
in a world of shades of grey, of complexities, of nuance, of a hundred billion ways of imaging what terms like “women’s emancipation” or “women’s liberation” or a “woman’s world” or “women’s rights” or “gender equality” means as it is articulated through her particular love for her family, her culture, her history, her civilization, her individual sense of identity, integrity, autonomy, desire. The negative picture of ethnic conflict induced displacement on women can be synonymous with different expression like woman’s sad, sullen, pathetic, Victim of Domestic Violence; Victim of Sexual Harassment; Victim of Rampant Honour Killings; Victim of Forced Marriage; Victim of Crimes of Passion; Victim of Growing Sex Trade; Victim of Child Labour; Victim of Ancient Sadistic Rituals like Foot-Binding, and Genital Mutilation; Victim of Unequal Pay, Unequal Voting Rights, Unequal Voice, Unequal Choice . . . Victim of Being a Victim.

The extremist propaganda which exhorted Hutu to commit the genocide specifically identified the sexuality of Tutsi women as a means through which the Tutsi community sought to infiltrate and control the Hutu community. This propaganda fueled the sexual violence perpetrated against Tutsi women as a means of dehumanizing and subjugating all Tutsi. Some Hutu women were also targeted with rape because they protected Tutsi. A number of women, Tutsi and Hutu, were targeted regardless of ethnicity or political affiliation. Young girls or those considered beautiful were particularly at the mercy of the militia groups, who were a law unto themselves and often raped indiscriminately. As Rwandans begin the onerous task of rebuilding the country ravaged by bloodshed and genocide, the burden is falling heavily on Rwandan women. Rwanda has become a country of women. It is currently estimated that 70 percent of the population is female and that 50 percent of all household are headed by women. Regardless of their status-Tutsi, Hutu, displaced returnees- all women face overwhelming problems because of the upheaval caused by the genocide, including social stigmatization, poor physical and psychological health, unwanted pregnancy and, increasingly, poverty. In Rwanda as elsewhere in the world, rape and other gender-based violations carry a severe social stigma. The physical and psychological injuries suffered by Rwanda rape survivors are aggravated by a sense of isolation and ostracization. Rwandan women who have been raped or who suffered
sexual abuse generally do not dare to reveal their experiences publicly, fearing that they will be rejected by their family and wider community and that they will never be able to reintegrate or to army. In some cases, the mother’s decision to keep the child has caused deep divisions in the family, pitting those who reject the child against those who prefer to raise the child. Women survivors are struggling to make ends meet, to reclaim their property, to rebuild their destroyed houses, and to raise children: their own and orphans. Some Hutu women, whose husbands were killed or are now in exile or in prison accused of genocide, are dealing with similar issues of poverty as well as with the recrimination directed at them on the basis of their ethnicity or the alleged actions of their relatives. Many women who lost everything and are heads of households for the first time are faced with the difficult responsibility of trying to rebuild their lives while providing food, shelter and school fees for themselves and their surviving relatives. Among other things, Rwandan rape survivors have had to deal with the social isolation and ostracization experienced by rape victims worldwide, severe health complications, and the children born of rape. In addition, many widows have been unable to return to their property because of discrimination under customary law which does not give them the right to inherit. The lack of judicial accountability for the perpetrators of the genocide is further intensifying the victims, physical and psychological trauma. Regardless of their status—Tutsi Hutu, displaced, returnees all were facing problems because of the upheaval caused by the genocide and aggravated by their generally disadvantaged status as women. Although the Rwandan constitution guarantees them full equality under the law, but discriminatory practices continue to govern inheritance law, among other areas. Inheritance norms are not codified and are governed under customary law. Although there are a number of contradictory laws, general practice has established that women cannot inherit property unless they are explicitly designated as beneficiaries. Accordingly, thousands of widows and daughter currently have no legal claim to their late husbands or father’s homes, land or bank accounts because they are women. Widows whose husbands worked for state enterprises or large companies are also facing great difficulties in obtaining their husband’s pensions. A complicated application procedure, coupled with the intimidation of dealing with the authorities, has deterred many women from pursuing valid pension claims. Hutu
widows who were married to Tutsi men are facing particular problems from their
Tutsi in-laws who threaten them and drive them off their property.

The post-1994 period, during which women were obliged to organise themselves in
order to guarantee their physical, social and moral integrity. After 1994, Rwandan society gives the impression of one in which the men have failed in their recognised role as protectors by killing and raping women, leaving the latter to defend themselves. The appearance of a large number of women heads of family Women obliged to organise themselves in order to struggle against the precarious nature of their situation and that of their family, and thus having to reinvent the future on a day-to-day basis.

The government has initiated a legal commission to address these issues and to introduce legislation to allow women to inherit equally with men, but the reforms are expected to talk a long time. The profound discrimination against woman has carried over into a post-genocide Rwanda and poses serious problems for women. As a result of the past and current discrimination, many female genocide survivors have been reduced to an even lower standard of living now that they are widowed or orphaned. Most female genocide survivors have little education, lack of marketable skills, and are often denied access to their husband’s or father’s property because they are women. A study found that women took greater responsibility than men for land cultivation and water collection in addition to being responsible for the children and the household. Yet, they were not remunerated for their contribution nor were they eligible for credit or loans. Women were often required to obtain their husband’s authorization in order to qualify for credit. The division of labour in this manner had the effect of permitting men to work in salaried occupations and commercial operations in the private sector, further marginalizing women from this sector. Moreover, the commercial code contains a provision stipulating that a wife can not engage in commercial activity or employment without the express authorization of her husband. In a 1995 survey conducted of 304 rape survivors by the ministry of family and promotion of women in collaboration with UNICEF, the women were all living in difficult circumstances. Thirty–two percent were living alone without any surviving family. Barely any of the women were educated beyond primary school, 61.8 percent
had completed primary school, 25.7 percent had completed secondary school, and 10 percent had never attended school. Forty-one percent of the women were working in subsistence farming, 34 percent were student and 19 percent were state or private sector employers. In addition, rates of material and infant mortality as well as malnutrition have reportedly risen since the genocide.

Psychologically, the place was full of walking wounded, traumatized Tutsi survivors who had lost everything— their friends, their relatives, their houses—and were wandering around like ghost, and traumatized Hutu survivors who could not believe what had been done to them. There were 114,000 children without parents trying to survive with nobody to care for them. There were frightened Hutu who had done nothing or had perhaps mechanically obeyed orders, but who now lived in constant fear of being arrested or killed. There were also sullen Hutu who had killed or sympathized with the killers and whose souls seemed sick beyond redemption. It was from this human material that the country had to be restarted. An amazing number of people seemed to buckle down to it, trauma or no trauma. There was an immense need for labour, with almost 40% of the population dead or in exile. Rwanda is a wounded society where many people are not living in a ‘normal state’. The Rwandese call them the Bapfuye Buhagazi, ‘the walking dead’ the country is full of them, many people who appear out worldly tranquil belong to their numbers of some aspects of their personality which they manage to hide. The genocide is often seen by outsiders as a clear-cut affair, but it is in fact an abominably complicated and interwoven social phenomenon whose actors are psychologically deeply traumatized for a variety of reasons. Thus the situation of many people vis-à-vis the genocide is extra ordinary complex especially for women. Rwanda is not a normal country anymore, and the actors of its political life are not in normal situation. In the Rwanda crisis, physical protection of refugees especially women and children and displaced persons in camps quickly became of paramount importance. The continued dominance of former commune, and other leaders, some of whom were perpetrators of the genocide, and the presence of armed elements in refugee camps; and posed a security threat to relief agency staff. Occasional ostentatious or other forms of reckless or imprudent behavior of agency staff unnecessarily increased the risk of security problems as well.
Experience from complex emergencies has shown that behavior of staff and the way, they choose to interact with the beneficiary community has a major influence on the refugees and their own security. There were clear environmental and other costs imposed by the large refugee camps on local population in the neighboring countries of Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi as well as on local population surrounding displaced people camps. Some of these costs resulted from flawed agency polices; e.g. not taking into account environmental impact of fuel wood requirements of the massive refugee population. Moreover, armed elements in refugee camps posed a security threat to local populations. While certain groups and enterprises derived at least some temporary benefits from hosting large refugee or displaced populations, these were distributed unevenly.

The international community’s apparent lack of understanding of the psychological impact of genocide has also contributed to the distrust, and even open hostility, of the Rwandan government towards the UN human rights field operation. A primary role of field operation officers has been to hear complaints about human rights violation, investigate them, and forward their findings to the high commissioner for human rights.

It is perhaps in brutality to the body that the most marked sex differences occur in war. Men and women die different deaths and are tortured and abused in different ways in ethnic conflict, both because of physical differences between the sexes and because of the different meanings culturally ascribed to the male and female body. Post –conflict: the wounds that remain after the genocide are: Economic distress, Disruption of everyday life, Brutalization of the body, Problem of dislocation and in search of new identities, Displacement, Economic and social reconstruction, Aid, justice and reconciliation.

Consequences Faced by Rwandan Women during the time of Genocide in 1994

Health and Social Consequences of Rape

There are many health and social consequences of rape which Rwandan women had to face: physical and mental injury, shock and paralyzing fear, sexually transmitted
diseases including HIV infection, and pregnancy. If abortion is not an option for material or religious reasons, pregnancy may inflict further mental trauma including denial, serve depression, and neglect or rejection of the child after birth. Wartime rape carries additional trauma associated with war: ‘death of loved ones, loss of home and community, dislocation, untreated illness, and war related injury’ (Swiss & Giller:1993:614). Since abortion is illegal in Rwanda, doctors have also treated women with serious complications resulting from self-induced or clandestine abortions arising from rape-related pregnancies. In a number of cases, doctors have performed reconstructive surgery for women and girls who suffered sexual mutilation at the hands of their attackers. Unfortunately the stigma surrounding sexual abuse often dissuades women from seeking the medical assistance they need. A large number of women became pregnant as a result of rape during the genocide. Pregnancies and child birth among extremely young girls who were raped have also posed health problems for these mothers. The “pregnancies of the war”, “children of hate”, “enfant non-desires” (unwanted children) or “enfants mauvais souvenir” (children of bad memories) as they are known, are estimated by the national population office to be between 2,000 and 5,000. Health personnel report that some women have abandoned their children or even committed infanticide, while others have decided to keep their children. Rape by familiar is particularly detrimental and leaves women fearful, distrustful, and paranoid. The physical, moral and psychological sufferings of women who have been raped are not taken into consideration by endured and make them feel guilty. Rwandan victims of rape are now suffering the worst time of their lives; they are being isolated by their own communities in spite of the mental and physical pain they endured and are still enduring. Most survivors of violence are faced with overwhelming problems such as severe health complications, children born of rape, social isolation and ostracism. The psychological trauma of rape is intense. Health workers have noted that with the return to normalcy, as schools and markets open, the problems of rape victims are manifest. ‘Many widows we see now are withdrawing and dysfunctional, not capable of properly looking after their children’. Many Rwandan women who survived rape contemplate suicide; some feel guilty for having submitted. And some are accused of having chosen life over death. A Rwandan testifying at the Fourth International
Conference on women at Beijing said: “Raped women are double punished by society”. First, judicial practice does not grant them redress for rape as long as graphic evidence is not brought out into the open. Second, from society’s point of view there is little sympathy, for at the moment that men and children died without defense, these women used the sex card, ‘selling their bodies to save their lives’. Thus, they are judged from all sides, and even among their families they are easily pardoned. Even worse, people reproach them having preferred survival through rape (Layika & Reilly: 1996:40).

Many women who have been raped need health care but cannot afford it, or cannot afford the stigma attached to rape, or cannot bear public acknowledgement of the shame. A gynecologist at university hospital in Butare has examined hundreds of rape victims since the genocide: “It has been two years since the war, but these patients are very difficult to cure. Initially, they come in with infections, vaginal infections, and urinary tract problems –problems that are sexually transmitted. You cure the direct illness built psychologically, they are not healed…. They continue to be sick. And there are no services that specifically deal with the problems these women have. There are some groups for widows, and the like, but there are no groups to help women who have gone through this (rape)” (Quoted in Human Rights Watch in Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Genocide and its Aftermath: 1996:73)

In Rwanda, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV are highly prevalent and, as it well known, more than half of AIDS cases in Africa occur in women. Before the war, 45 to 60 per cent of Rwandan soldiers and an even higher percentage of the officer’s corps were infected with HIV. Thousands of pregnant girls and young women who were raped between April and July 1994 have tested positive for the HIV virus. Some of the rapes were said to be ‘tantamount to attempted murder because the perpetrators knew they were carrying the aids viruses (Crary:1995).What is clear is that, with one of the highest incidences of AIDS in Africa, Rwanda is unable to provide adequate health services for women with this debilitating, usually fatal, disease.
Psychological Consequences of Pregnancy

Whose women who got pregnant during the genocide rape, they have gone under deep psychological distressed, indecisiveness and mental agony related with their babies in Rwanda. Women refused to register themselves by name at the hospital, preferring to remain anonymous. Health professionals described cases where even women who had decided to keep their babies took one look at the child in the delivery room, saw what they believed to be a resemblance to the rapist, and rejected the baby. Health professionals assume that a number of women gave birth in secret and later committed infanticide. They also believe that a number of women who gave birth in the hospital allowed their babies to die after returning home. In some families, the mother’s decision to keep the child has caused deep divisions in the family. Children born out of wedlock before the genocide faced some stigma, but generally found a place in their mothers’ families. No can predict, however, how children born of rape during the genocide will be treated as they grow up. It is the unbearable question who will decide the level of mental agony of ‘unwanted children’ who were born during the period of genocide and the result of rape in future? Can their moms ever dare to tell the fact to these unwanted children? Will they ever know the truth? What will be the reaction of this child when he/she learns the truth? What should the government be doing?

Raped women also face severe psycho-social trauma and health problems. In addition to shame, ostracism, and survivor’s guilt, women must contend with the fact that their rapists were often neighbours, who may still live nearby. A subsequent psychological study of 100 of the women revealed that 70% of them were suffering from "severe post-traumatic stress disorders," while the rest were suffering from reactive depression, grief reaction and anxiety disorders (Kofi, p. 13). Women's psychological trauma is often compounded by the physical trauma of rape, including injuries to the genitals and reproductive organs resulting from brutal and frequent rape, which may have resulted in permanent disabilities or infertility. In addition, many victims of rape were infected with the AIDS virus and have passed it on to their children.
Health issues before Rwandan women

Victims experience a variety of negative mental health effects from sexual assault, including, but not limited to, post-traumatic stress symptoms. In addition, rape survivors may be struggling with how family and friends are reacting to the assault and may be coping with secondary victimization experiences they encountered in post-rape help seeking. Victims may need to process not only the rape itself, but also post-rape experiences with their informal and formal support providers. Empirical evaluations of therapeutic techniques suggest that cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT) can be effective in reducing short-term post-rape fear and anxiety symptoms. Feminist therapies tend to focus on survivors longer-term problems with guilt and self-blame. Throughout this process of recovery, victims experience guilt, shame, fear, anxiety, tension, crying spells, an exaggerated startle response, depression, anger (both generalized and specifically toward men), discomfort in social situations, impaired memory and concentration, and/or rapid mood swings. Even when evaluated several years after the assault, survivors are more likely to have a serious psychiatric diagnosis, including major depression, alcohol abuse and dependence, drug abuse and dependence, generalized anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Burnam, et al. 1988; Kilpatrick et al. 1985; Koss 1993). These varied psychological symptoms are typically viewed as a manifestation of post-traumatic stress PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Specifically, men felt isolated, confused, angry, powerless, and frustrated living with their partners' extreme emotional reactions, which ranged from depression to withdrawal to rage. Other studies with larger samples of men have found similar results: partners of rape victims have significantly higher distress symptoms than partners of non-victims (Veronen, Saunder & Resnick 1989). Rape survivors may be struggling not only with their own reactions to the assault, but also with how it is affecting those close to them. Therapists, counselors, and social workers who treat rape survivors experience many of the same reactions as do victims: anxiety, fear, depression, exaggerated startle response, difficulty sleeping, nightmares, and physical health problems. This trauma of treating survivors of violence is most commonly referred to as secondary traumatic stress (STS), compassion fatigue (CF) (Figley 1995) or vicarious traumatization (VT).
Several studies have documented that STS/CF/VT is a serious and common problem among rape counselors/therapists and rape victim advocates. Schauben and Frazier’s 1995 study of 220 female counselors found that as the percentage of therapists’ caseloads devoted to treating sexual assault victims increases, counselors report more post-traumatic stress symptoms. Similarly, Brady et al.1999 conducted a national survey of 1,000 female psychotherapists and found that therapists with higher levels of exposure to sexual abuse material reported significantly more trauma symptoms (e.g., difficulty concentrating, disturbed sleep, irritability, stress), but no significant disruption in cognitive schemas.

Prosecution of Rape

With little debate and almost total unanimity, the UN security council voted on 8 November 1994 to create war crimes tribunal to prosecute Rwandans responsible for the genocide. In September 1996, Rwanda’s parliament approved a genocide law to prosecute the 60,000 to 80,000 Hutu held in Rwanda’s putrid jails. The international tribunal covers only the year 1994 and excludes the death penalty; the Rwandan law extends back to 1990, the beginning of the civil war, and includes the death penalty for those who planned, instigated, or supervised the genocide. The international tribunal can handle fewer than one hundred cases per year; its slow, inefficient and corrupt practices have been the subject of criticism and an official UN enquiry (Crossette:1996). The massive backlog of accused must be dealt with by the Rwandan courts, which have been criticized in equal measure by the international community for their lack of justice: summary trials, defendants without lawyers, evidence limited to eye witness accounts. Both the international tribunal and Rwandan genocide law cover the crime of rape. Rape is also prosecutable under Rwandan aw, but few inspectors, and few women themselves, are aware of this; and there is a lack of female judicial investigators to whom women might speak more easily about being raped. Human rights watch investigated the reluctance of women to talk about rape at the international tribunal. The deputy prosecutor of the Rwandan tribunal told human rights watch that the reason they have not collected rape testimonies is because African women don’t want to talk about rape. ‘We haven’t received any complaints. It
is rare in investigations that women refer to rape.’(Quoted in Human Rights Watch :1996:95).

Human rights watch blames the insensitivity of tribunal investigators for this failure. Special interview conditions of safety and privacy are necessary if women are to talk, and they must believe that telling their testimony will help bring about justice. If women agree to testify, effective protection for rape victims must also be guaranteed by the tribunal. Many women fear reprisals if they testify. These fears are not unwarranted. Witnesses and survivors of the genocide continue to be killed in the country and abroad. For other women, the stigma of rape will deter them from coming forward if they cannot be assured that their privacy will be protected. Unless the tribunal takes steps to ensure that adequate privacy and security is provided to rape survivors who agree to testify, it is unlikely that women will agree to testify. Without such measures, there is also likelihood that the effort to bring the perpetrators to justice through the tribunal could further contribute to the trauma already experienced by the women (Human Rights Watch: 1996:95). The Rwandan crisis provides an opportunity for Rwandan women to step forward in the search for a lasting solution, one that allows all Rwandans to live together in peace, sharing everyday life. Women must make an effort to bring about reconciliation. The international community can help women initiate a meeting and help in the implementation of their recommendation. Women in Rwanda suffered and still suffering the many consequences of the crisis, and many of them are left to face alone the tremendous responsibilities of reconstruction. These women need to get together to use the few resources they have left to end the state of war in the country. Every day is tired of the endless killings, especially women. More men than women were killed in the conflict, and women are facing added responsibilities now that many of them are either widows or have their husbands in jail and find themselves heads of households.

The ethnic conflict changed the roles of Rwandan women, forcing them into what traditionally were men’s roles, and many of them are demonstrating remarkable ability to handle the problems of the aftermath. This is the time for Rwandan women to step forward and show what they can do when they work together as women. Before the ethnic conflict of 1994, every commune in Rwanda had a foyer social, a
formal women’s organization responsible for collective child care, firewood collection, health issues, care of the aged, etc. women can once again initiate these programmes to bring back confidence and trust. Rwandans need this confidence to function effectively, and it can be achieved only by restoring peace and stability to the country. The ethnic groups cannot be separated because, for many families, intermarriage exists since the generation of the grandmothers, and it is difficult now to tell who is who. Many Rwandans are linked together as a family. Beyond ethnicity, there are other values and ties related mainly to families, marriage, and friendship that are stronger than ethnicity, and many Rwandan women happen to fit better in those categories. There is a strong need for national solidarity, if both groups are to be able to live together in peace. A new behavior of tolerance and mutual acceptance of the other needs to be developed in order to rebuild the country. Rwandans must learn about peace, about respect for each other, and especially about respect for life, a value that was jeopardized by the war. Women, as the guarantors of society, need to invest in teaching these values to the future generation. This long-term project should be included in all school curricula so that young people will learn the values of self-respect and respect for life and other people’s rights. Rwandan women can help save the population, and they cannot wait for the international community to do movement to find a way to stop all kinds of conflicts and wars, because all are inhumane (Clotilde Twagiramariya & Meredeth Turshen :1998).

**Stigma, Isolation and Ostracization**

Psychologically, women feel isolated. Along with that, many expressed strong feelings of loneliness and despair. Some women felt about the fact that now as single women, they no longer have any status in society. The accusation of collaboration by the returnees against survivors further shames and isolates these women. Women survivors often feel guilty for having survived. Hutu widows also suffer from isolation. Those whose husbands were Tutsi often are rejected by their husbands’ families, who may blame them for their sons deaths, and by Tutsi widows who distrust them because they are Hutu. Many of these widows, as well as those whose husbands were political moderates, hesitate to return to their own families or to
associate with other Hutu in the community because they hold them responsible for the genocide and even for the killings of their husbands and children.

**Women in Mixed Marriages**

Interruption between Hutu Tutsi was common, but more Tutsi women married Hutu men than the reverse. The marriage of Hutu women to Tutsi men did occur, despite class differences and the possibilities that their-in-laws would treat them as inferiors. The plight of Hutu women who were married to Tutsi is close to that of Tutsi women raped but Hutu militiamen. Both groups of women have to answer to the question, ‘why are you still alive/ both experienced the loss of their loved ones, their husbands and children killed. And both encounter strong mistrust and even rejection by the community. During the genocide, ethnicity divided families and turned members against one another: children killed mothers, husbands killed wives, brothers and cousins killed each other because one was Tutsi, the other Hutu. ‘For some it was done willingly; others were forced to do it upon pain of death (Layika:1996 :40).

**Property and Inheritance Rights**

In pre-Genocide period, Rwandan women were extremely disadvantaged and discriminated against under civil and customary law. Since the genocide, this discrimination has been most apparent in the area of property inheritance. Customary law is generally followed in Rwanda when there is no statutory provision dealing explicitly with the issue, and where the customary practice is not contradictory to the Constitution. However, in practice, customary law which discriminates against women, in violation of the Constitution, continues to be widely applied. Although the Family Code provides statutory direction generally in the area of family law matters, it does not speak directly to the issues of inheritance and succession. Accordingly, customary law is used, even though its application discriminates against women, unless there is a will explicitly designating the beneficiaries. Because customary law designates men as the head of family, they are also recognized to inherit property, name the children, and transmit the family name. Before the genocide, when ethnic affiliation was registered at birth, men transmitted their ethnic identity to their
children. In case of the husband’s death, the children can be taken from the wife by the man’s family because the children “belong” to the husband and his family. Upon the death of the husband, the eldest son becomes the head of the family or the husband’s family claims the inheritance.

**Loss of Husband & Loss of Rights**

Rwandan law stipulates that refugees who return to the country after more than ten years in exile cannot automatically reclaim their property. Nonetheless, Tutsi returnees and their descendants, in the cities as well as in the countryside, are illegally occupying properties that belong to Hutu refugees, most of whom fled during the 1990-4 war. This situation poses special problems for Rwandan widows who cannot inherit their husbands’ property, house, cattle, or anything else. Hutu widows or Hutu women whose husbands are currently in prison on genocide charges are vulnerable to being forced off their property. Many people have been jailed without any charges filed against them. Women bear the burden of that situation. They face all the problems of feeding their families alone, with no resources, no rights, and no protection. Many of the women left alone are having trouble making ends meet. Some are living in abject poverty, hiring themselves out as day laborers to farmers. Every afternoon, they must walk three miles to the commune headquarters to bring food and water to their husbands in jail (Mackinley: 1996:12). Some women survivors of the genocide continue to live with their relatives or friends because they are not able to get access to their property which has been occupied either by families of their husbands or by Rwandan exiles who returned after the genocide. Hutu widows or Hutu women whose husbands are currently in prison on genocide charges are also vulnerable to being forced off their property. One Hutu survivor identified the range of problems that Hutu women are facing in obtaining access to their property.

**Role of Women in Strengthening Post-Genocide Society after 1994**

**Role of Women in Peace-Building and Reconciliation**

Establishing a sustainable peace in Rwanda is not simply a matter of re-building the physical infrastructure and economy, but also requires the reconstruction of the social
and moral tissue of the nation. Five years after the genocide, Rwanda remains a deeply divided society. Divisions exist not only between Hutu and Tutsi, but also between different groups within the society. For example, old conflicts persist between moderate Hutu and extremist Hutu who still support the genocidal ideology, and new conflicts have arisen between "old refugees" (Tutsi who returned to Rwanda in 1994 after decades of exile) and "new refugees" (Hutu who returned in 1996-97 from the camps in Tanzania and Zaire). There is even tension between some genocide survivors who feel as if they are being asked to forget and forgive too quickly, and some recent Tutsi returnees who maintain that Rwanda should focus more on the future than the past. Some divisions even transcend ethnic identity; for example, urban/rural and intellectual/grassroots divisions arise in policy formulation and implementation by in the government and in NGOs. It is important to recognize the multiple divisions present in Rwandan society, and not simplify the matter to one of Hutu versus Tutsi. Women problems and limitations even further deepen during the time of reconstruction, reconciliation and peace building in the society. Women share common problems in the realms of health, nutrition, water, caring for children, all of which are more difficult in the economic and social crises that have followed the genocide. They also share the lack of formal power within the system to influence decisions affecting their lives. Women are by their nature, or essence, more peaceful than men and are therefore more natural peacemakers. As mentioned above, some women were victims of the genocide while others participated actively in saving the lives of others. In Rwanda, it is women who, often without the assistance of men, are left to rebuild the society, and they do face many similar problems regardless today, problems that transcend ethnicity and politics. By tackling these problems together, women may be able to build bridges to the future.

The Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women's initiatives to reform discriminatory laws and improve the status of women should continue to be supported, even prioritized, by the government of Rwanda and the international community. Women's position in Rwandan society is rapidly changing in response to the new roles they must adopt to survive. While social change is always slow, the post-conflict crisis in Rwanda has ironically resulted in a situation not only of great
challenges but also of great opportunity for Rwandan women. If national efforts for reconstruction and reconciliation are to succeed, women will need to be supported and encouraged in their new roles as heads of households, as public representatives, as agents of reconstruction, and as peace builders.

**Women Participation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction**

Immediately after the genocide, the Rwandan government publically estimated that 70% of its population was female (Women's Commission 1997). The number of women in relation to the whole population is elevated in Rwanda because of the greater number of men killed during the genocide and wars, and absence of male groups of ex-soldiers and genocidaires who have fled to Zaire. Accordingly, women now shoulder a greater burden of economic activity and reconstruction activities in Rwanda. Women's burdens have been augmented by the fact that many adult men are in the army, and 150,000 men are in jail awaiting trial for genocide crimes, and are therefore not engaged in reconstruction and other economic development activities. As the large majority of the working adult population, women are shouldering most of the tasks of physical reconstruction. A widow's association in the commune of Save, near Butare, states that reconstruction activities in their commune are almost exclusively carried out by women. (Ngendahayo 1997). Much of this work is carried out by women's communal groups and associations. Since independence, Rwandan women have organized themselves into socio-professional associations, cooperative groups, and development associations (UNICEF 1997). However, women's associations have taken on new importance in the post-conflict society, as they attempt to address both women's specific post-conflict problems and the lack of social services normally provided by the state. At the local level, women are creating or re-constituting self-help groups, or cooperatives, to assist survivors, widows or returned refugees, or simply to meet the everyday needs of providing for their families. There are over one hundred of these groups in each commune, and they may be informal or formally registered with the government (UNICEF 1997). NGOs and donors have recognized the potential benefits of these groups in reconstruction and development, and have assisted these groups or helped to form new groups. One such development effort is the Women in Transition (WIT) Program. WIT was established as a
partnership between the Rwandan Government Ministry of Family, Gender and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) and USAID in 1996 in response to the sharp increase in women heads of households. During its first two years, the program identified genuine women's associations and provided assistance in the form of shelter development, agricultural inputs, livestock or microcredit (Shanks, B., personal interview, March 18, 1999). Another major development project targeting women, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees' Rwandan Women's Initiative, works with numerous women's associations as its implementing partners. According to UNICEF (1997), women's groups have become "authentic and operational relays for development projects at the grassroots level" because they favor direct and participatory management, facilitate the participation of women in training and income-generating projects and enable access to inputs supplies. They are also and above all solidarity groups, enabling women in a difficult situation to organize into pressure groups that put women's needs more firmly on the agenda. Finally, they facilitate the integration of returnees, by directly intervening in reinstallation projects (UNICEF 1997).

Women's associations were also active at the national level, working on meeting the special needs of women survivors and returnees, empowering women politically and economically, and reconstructing Rwandan society. Thirty-five women's organizations who work in women's rights, development or peace have organized themselves into a collective called Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe (Pro-Women All Together). The Pro-Femmes Triennial Action Plan (1998) states that the organization works for "the structural transformation of Rwandan society by putting in place the political, material, juridical, economic and moral conditions favorable to the rehabilitation of social justice and equal opportunity, to build a real, durable peace."

In addition to their programmatic activities in peace and reconstruction, Pro-Femmes also provides its members capacity-building support and assists them with communication, information and education. The Women Committees have already been targeted by the donor and NGO community as conduits for development assistance. The government gave each committee the responsibility for setting up, contributing to and managing Women Communal Funds (WCF), still in the nascent stages of development. The WCF are intended to help start economic activities at the
commune and sector level while allowing grassroots women to participate in funding decisions affecting their lives (WIT/MIGEFASO/USAID, 1999). This is accomplished in part through micro-credit activities, in which the WCF provide small loans at minimal interest rates to women who might otherwise not be able to secure credit. The USAID/MIGEFASO Women and Transition Program has reoriented many of its activities to work with the Women Committees at the commune level through the provision of funds for their activities and with training and guidance to the WCF Women Committees. Efforts to increase the representation of women are not only taking place at local levels, but at the national level as well. In a significant government reshuffling of Ministers in February 1999, the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) was split, and there are now two ministries: the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women (MIGEPROFE). MIGEPROFE officials state that the split is a positive development that have been serving to strengthen their position in government and led to the reinforcement of both ministries (Harelimana, S.M.F, personal interview, March 17, 1999).

The Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women also has projects to educate people about the concept of gender and women's rights, and programs that work to defend women's and children's rights. They are preparing educational campaigns about the proposed changes in inheritance and other discriminatory laws, and are participating in efforts to educate the populace on the need to change these laws at the current time. Now, Women's representation has also been increased in other areas of national government. While official representation at the Ministerial level is still feeble, with only 2 of 23 ministries headed by women (both newly created: the Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women, and the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement, and Environmental Protection), it is significant that 7 Secretaries-General of ministries are women. The Secretary-General of a ministry is tasked with the more technical aspects of running the ministry, while the Minister has a more public and political role; Secretary-General is a position of considerable power and influence. There are now women Secretaries-General in the ministries of gender, land, social affairs, agriculture, finance, foreign affairs and justice. In addition, the former
Minister of Family, Gender and Social Affairs, Alosie Inyumba, has been appointed to head up the newly created national Committee of Unity and Reconciliation, and will hold the same rank as a minister. In short, there are a number of women in influential positions in Rwanda's most important ministries, which bodes well for a continuation of positive governmental measures towards the promotion and protection of women.

Concluding Observations

For the Rwandan women development the government should initiate the provision of education. Material assistance and skills training will enhance the livelihood of Rwandan women. Education is among the most important means for imparting the skills, knowledge, and self-confidence to the Rwandan women. The promotion of greater access to educational opportunities for women and girls would go far not only in reducing vulnerability to abuse and exploitation but also in bringing about fundamental improvements in the quality of life for everyone in Rwanda. Rutayisire et al (2004) recommended that Rwandan schools should emphasize cooperative learning and group activities in order to develop “openness to others, dialogue, cooperation, negotiation and collective reconstruction”. These days in Rwanda, the education sector actually offers important opportunities to encourage progress towards more democratic governance and genuine reconciliation. Greater inclusion of men in efforts to eradicate gender-based violence, exploitation, and abuse is critical.

With respect to gender-based violence, male involvement has traditionally been largely focused on post abuse therapeutic efforts. Such measures include the work of therapists and industries developed to treat sex offenders, the spread of men’s support groups for those arrested for battering, and prison-based treatment groups developed to facilitate processing of negative emotions such as anger. Legal aid should be provided to serve the poor and illiterate ones who cannot by their own effort benefit from these new developments, social counseling and organization of workshops for capacity building and skill development should be effectively sponsored. A massive campaign also should be launched to sensitize men to accepting and treating women as partner for effective and meaningful development of the Rwandan society, and to
recognize that women’s role and contribution in national development is welcome, beneficial and indispensable. Sensitization of the society should be all encompassing. If Rwanda is to progress, then men and women must join hands as partners to rebuild it. The government through its policies should actively encourage this. A growing number of Rwandan women’s associations, with encouragement from the Ministry of Gender and Development, international NGOs, and individual within the Rwandan government, including representatives from the Ministry of Family, and the Promotion of Women, the Ministry of Justice Health and the prosecutor’s office, International Humanitarian Organization, United Nations Human Rights Operation, UNAMIR, peace keeping operation and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda all these organization proved good for the development of women.
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