

History – 12-14 years

Student Resources



We Left Because We Had To

Burundi & Rwanda

Ethnic conflict between Tutsi and Hutu people over many years has forced millions of people to flee as refugees.

By Jill Rutter, "REFUGEES: We left because we had to", (London, Refugee Council 1996) pp. 66-73

Burundi

Population

6 million

Capital

Bujumbura

Economy

Over 90 per cent of the population lives in the countryside and most people farm for a living. As in Rwanda, the main export is coffee.

Burundi has many of the same economic problems as in Rwanda. The country has gone into debt because of a drop in the world price of coffee, its main export. As in Rwanda, Burundi is very densely populated. Farms are very small and many families cannot make a decent living from their land. Other problems are soil erosion and declining soil fertility. The declining quality of the soil reduces the yield of the crops. Burundi has a very poorly developed infrastructure. There are few roads and many people lack access to clean water.

Ethnic groups

As in neighbouring Rwanda, Burundi has experienced ethnic conflicts between the Tutsi and Hutu peoples for many years. There are three ethnic groups in Burundi. Most people are Hutu. The Hutu form 84 per cent of the population of Burundi. The Tutsi comprise 15 per cent of Rwanda's population. The Twa are pygmoid peoples who still live as hunter-gatherers in the forests. They make up less than one per cent of the population of Burundi.

Twa, Tutsi and Hutu also live in other central African countries; in Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire.

The conflict in Burundi is not solely an ethnic conflict. Economic, social and political differences have contributed towards the tension and violence.



Languages

French is the official language. Rundi is spoken by most Burundis. This language is very closely related to Kinyarwanda, spoken in neighbouring Rwanda.

Rwanda

Population

About 4.5 million people now live in Rwanda. At least 500,000 people were murdered in 1994 and another 2 million Rwandans are refugees in neighbouring countries.

Capital

Kigali

Economy

Rwanda is a green and beautiful country and is sometimes called "the land of a thousand hills". Over 90 per cent of the population lives in the countryside and most people farm for a living. Rwanda's main export is coffee.

Despite being a fertile country, Rwanda has many economic problems. The country has gone into debt because of a drop in the world price of coffee, its main export. Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa. Farms are very small (most farms are under one hectare of land) and many families cannot make a decent living from their land. Other problems are soil erosion and declining soil fertility. The declining quality of the soil reduces the yield of crops.

Ethnic groups

Rwanda has experienced ethnic conflicts between the Tutsi and Hutu peoples for many years. There are three ethnic groups in Rwanda. Most people are Hutu. In 1993 the Hutu formed 90 per cent of the population of Rwanda, but now many have fled as refugees. The Tutsi make up about nine per cent of the Rwanda's population. The Twa are pygmoid peoples who still live as hunter-gatherers in the forests. They make up less than one per cent of the Rwandan population.

Twa, Tutsi and Hutu also live in other central African countries; in Burundi, Uganda and Zaire.

Newspapers have reported that the present conflict in Rwanda is ethnic. While it is true that most people who were killed in 1994 were Tutsi, there are political, economic and regional factors in today's conflict. Hutu who were opposed to the government of President Habyarimana were also killed. In the past there have also been economic inequalities between Hutu and Tutsi. From the 15th century until the late 1950s, Tutsi ruled most of Rwanda and held most of its wealth. Indeed some sociologists say that the differences between Hutu and Tutsi are not ethnic differences, but social and economic differences.

Languages

French and Kinyarwanda.



Events in Burundi

Burundi's first inhabitants were the Twa. They lived in the forests of Burundi and were hunter-gatherers.

1000-1500 New groups of people migrate to central Africa. They are the Hutu. They are farmers and clear much forest land for growing crops. Hutu people are ruled by local lords.

1600-1800 A new group of taller people migrate to central Africa from Sudan and Ethiopia. They are the Tutsi and are cattle-herding nomads. They soon emerge as the rulers. After the arrival of the Tutsi in Burundi, the country is ruled by a Tutsi king called the *mwami*, and a Tutsi princely class called the *ganwa*. The *mwami's* kingdom does not include Rwanda. Ordinary Tutsi and Hutu are in much the same position, and intermarriage between Tutsi and Hutu is common.

1894 The first European explorers arrive in Burundi. In the same year, European governments agree to divide central Africa among themselves. Burundi, along with today's Rwanda, becomes part of German East Africa. In order to bring the population of Burundi under control, the Germans give favour to a small number of wealthy Tutsi.

1916 During the First World War, Burundi is occupied by the Belgians who invade from neighbouring Belgian Congo.

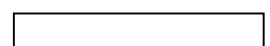
1918 After Germany's defeat in the First World War, Belgium takes control of today's Rwanda and Burundi, under a mandate of the League of Nations. The country is known as Ruanda-Urundi. The Belgians continue to favour a small Tutsi elite. The Belgians introduce identity cards and try to make the differences between Tutsi and Hutu greater.

1945-1948 After the creation of the UN, Ruanda-Urundi becomes a Belgian "Trustee Territory". The UN puts pressure on the Belgians to move Rwanda-Urundi towards democracy and independence. Burundi political parties begin to emerge. The two main parties are the UPRONA Party, led by Prince Louis Rwagasore and the Democratic Christian Party (PDC). In the years immediately after the independence the UPRONA Party tries to unite Hutu and Tutsi.

1961 The Belgians decide to leave Ruanda-Urundi. Burundi and Rwanda move towards being separate states. In Burundi, elections are held in September 1961 to decide who will head the country's first government. The UPRONA Party wins, but two weeks later Prince Louis Rwagasore is murdered by agents of the PDC Party. His death leads to divisions within the UPRONA Party and the start of conflicts between Tutsi and Hutu.

1962 Burundi becomes an independent country, with the *mwami* as Head of State. The *mwami* tries to keep the peace in Burundi and gives equal amounts of political power to Tutsi and Hutu politicians.

1965 The newly-elected Prime Minister is murdered. He is a Hutu. This is followed by a political crisis and elections are held again. In these elections the Hutu are the winners, but despite their victory the *mwami* appoints a Tutsi prime minister. Many Hutu are angry about this and in October 1965 the Hutu dominated police force



rebels and tries to take political power. They fail, and thousands of Hutu are murdered. Refugees flee to Rwanda and other neighbouring countries.

1966 There are two *coup d'état* in Burundi. The latter results in the overthrow of the *mwami*. Burundi becomes a republic.

Colonel Micombero, a Tutsi, becomes President. Most Hutu politicians and army officers are removed from their jobs.

1972 There is a Hutu rebellion against the Government. It is uncessfull and the Hutu are not able to seize power. Following the rebellion, extremists in the Tutsi-dominated army murder at least 150,000 Hutu people. Another 300,000 Hutu flee to rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania. Almost every Hutu is eliminated from the army. No-one is tried for the murders of 1972.

1976 Colonel Jean-Baptiste Bagaza seizes power in another *coup d'état*. He is also a Tutsi.

1982-1984 Elections are held in 1982 and in 1984, but Colonel Bagaza, now leader of the UPRONA party, is the only candidate in both elections.

1984-1987 There are worsening human rights abuses in Burundi. Members of Hutu opposition groups and some church members are detained and tortured. Some Christian churches are denied freedom to worship.

1987 There is another military *coup d'état*. Major Pierre Buyoya becomes Burundi's new President. There are some improvements in human rights in Burundi, but most Hutu are still denied political power.

1988 There is further violence. The army kills at least 20,000 unarmed Hutu in towns in northern Burundi. Another 60,000 refugees flee to Rwanda. After this massacre, foreign governments put much pressure on the Burundi government. President Buyoya then decides that action must be taken to end the violence in Burundi. He appoints a Hutu prime minister and gives other government posts to Hutu. President Buyoya also sets up a National Commission to examine ways to prevent the violence.

1988-1991 Burundi moves towards democracy. There is progress towards ending discrimination against the Hutu. A greater number of Hutu are able to go to university, more Hutu obtain jobs in the civil service and more Hutu obtain senior political posts. Many Hutu refugees also return to Burundi. But the army is still dominated by Tutsi and resists change.

1993 Elections are held in Burundi. Melchior Ndadaye beats Pierre Buyoya and becomes the new President. Ndadaye becomes Burundi's first Hutu President. But politicians fighting the election campaign exploit ethnic differences. Ndadaye leads the FRODEBU party. FRODEBU is seen as a Hutu party, while UPRONA is seen as a party that will defend Tutsi interests.

Although the FRODEBU party win the elections, the Tutsi dominated army and those who support UPRONA party are unwilling to give up the power they have held for many years. On 20 October 1993, army officers attack the President's palace. President Ndadaye is taken prisoner and killed the next day. The military *coup d'état* is followed by violence. Supporters of UPRONA and many Tutsi are killed in revenge for the President's death. In other areas FRODEBU supporters and Hutu and Tutsi are killed by the army. Over 50,000 Hutu and Tutsi are murdered. Another 700,000 people, mostly Hutu, flee to Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire. A large number of Tutsi and Hutu became internally displaced.

1994 The *coup d'état* of October 1993 leaves Burundi without a government. In February 1994 a new government is formed, led by President Ntaryamira. Less than two months later he is dead, killed in an air crash with President Habyarimana of Rwanda. Since then there has been continued tension and violence, and Burundi may be drifting towards civil war. Parts of the army are not controlled by the government. Tutsi soldiers and Tutsi political extremists kill Hutu members and FRODEBU. Armed Hutu extremists, helped by Hutu refugees living in neighbouring countries, kill Tutsi and members of UPRONA. Many Hutu switch their support from FRODEBU to more extreme Hutu parties.

The genocides and civil war in Rwanda causes increased tension in Burundi. Burundian Hutu refugees, living in Rwanda, are forced to return. Tutsi extremists kill some of the returning refugees. Those who return are joined by Rwandan Hutu refugees.

The new President is Sylvestre Ntibantunganya. He is a Hutu, but Tutsi and the UPRONA party hold more power in the new government.

1995 In March 1995 hundreds of people are killed in Bujumbura, the capital city. Burundi continues to be very tense. Ordinary Tutsi and Hutu still live together in many parts of Burundi and there are some attempts at conflict resolution, but these have been small-scale. Over 200,000 Burundis are internally displaced; they include Tutsi and Hutu. Burundi is also host to 200,000 Rwandan refugees. Another 740,000 Burundis, mostly Hutu, are refugees in Zaire and Tanzania.

Events in Rwanda

Rwanda's first inhabitants were the Twa. They lived in the forests of Rwanda and were hunter-gatherers. Twa still live in Rwanda, but today form less than one per cent of the population.

1000-1500 AD New groups of people migrate to central Africa. They are the Hutu. They are farmers and clear much forest land for growing crops. Hutu people are ruled by local lords.

1600-1800 A new group of taller people migrate to central Africa from Sudan and Ethiopia. They are the Tutsi and are cattle-herding nomads. They soon emerge as the rulers of much of Rwanda, apart from the North. This part of Africa is ruled by Tutsi feudal chiefs. The Hutu have to provide free labour and crops to their Tutsi chiefs. In return the Hutu are allowed to graze their cattle on Tutsi land and are given military protection. There is also much intermarriage between Tutsi and Hutu.

1894 The first European explorers arrive in Rwanda. In the same year, European governments agree to divide central Africa among themselves. Rwanda along with today's Burundi, becomes part of German East Africa. In order to bring the Hutu under control the Germans impose Tutsi chiefs on northern Rwanda. They favour the Tutsi in other ways - the Tutsi receive a European education and are used as administrators in the German colony. This reinforces the differences between Hutu and Tutsi.

1900-1910 French Catholic missionaries arrive in the region. The Roman Catholic Church also accepts the Tutsi as superior. This acts to reinforce differences between Hutu and Tutsi.



1911 There is a growing resentment in northern Rwanda towards the Tutsi, the Germans and the Roman Catholic Church. This leads to a short-lived violent uprising in part of northern Rwanda.

1916 During the First World War Rwanda is occupied by the Belgians who invade from the neighbouring Belgian Congo.

1918 After Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Belgians take control of today's Rwanda and Burundi under a mandate from the League of Nations. The country is known as Ruanda-Urundi. The Belgians continue to favour the Tutsi. The Tutsi are used as administrators. Hutu are removed from all positions of power in Ruanda-Urundi, and stopped from going on to study in higher education. The Belgians also introduce identity cards which state a person's ethnic group. The cards continue to be used throughout the 20th century, and have helped killers to identify their victims.

1945 After the creation of the UN, Ruanda-Urundi becomes a Belgian "Trustee-Territory". The UN puts pressure on the Belgians to move Ruanda-Urundi towards independence.

1950-1960 Political parties begin to emerge in Ruanda-Urundi. They are organised along ethnic and regional lines. As the new parties begin to emerge, the Belgian rulers switch their support to the majority Hutu.

1959-1960 Hutu political leaders insist that there are major changes in Ruanda-Urundi. The Tutsi leaders resist. There is growing tension and then violence. The Hutu rebel against the Tutsi chiefs and then later the Belgian colonists and the wider Tutsi population. Over 10,000 Tutsi are killed and another 120,000 people flee to Uganda and other nearby countries. Many of the refugees remain in Uganda until the 1990s.

1961 The Belgians decide to leave Ruanda-Urundi. Rwanda and Burundi move towards becoming separate states. In Rwanda a referendum is held. It is decided to abolish the Tutsi monarchy and form a republic. Gregoire Kayibanda becomes the first president of Rwanda.

1962 Rwanda and Burundi become separate, independent states.

1963 Tutsi refugees living in Uganda and Burundi form terrorist organisations that attack Rwanda. These attacks cause the Hutu to fear that they will again be ruled by the Tutsi. Events in neighbouring Burundi justify these fears in the minds of many Hutu. The hatred between Hutu and Tutsi is kept alive. This erupts as violence in December 1963. Over 20,000 Tutsi are killed and another 150,000 Tutsi flee as refugees to Uganda and Burundi.

1969 Elections are held, and President Kayibanda is re-elected. All seats in the parliament are held by his Hutu-led party.

1972 There are widespread killings of Hutu in neighbouring Burundi. The killings lead to revenge attacks on Tutsi in Rwanda. At least, 5,000 people, mostly Tutsi, are killed. In particular, school children are singled out for murder. The killings continue in 1973. There is widespread suspicion that Major General Juvenal Habyarimana, the army chief, is behind much of the unrest.

1973 Major General Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu from northern Rwanda, leads a military *coup d'état* and becomes President. All political parties are banned.

1975-1988 The National Revolutionary Movement for Development is founded. This is the only political party that is allowed. Elections are held in 1981 and 1985,



with President Habyarimana always winning. Quotas are introduced for education and employment to try and make sure that all ethnic groups are treated fairly. There are also improvements in conditions for people living in rural areas. Many peasant farmers organise themselves into cooperatives, to plant trees, share tools and sell crops.

During this period there is growing conflict between Hutu from northern and southern Rwanda. Many Hutu from the south resent the power of the Hutu from President Habyarimana's northern homeland.

The Rwandan government also has difficult relations with neighbouring Uganda. Over 250,000 Tutsi refugees live in Uganda. Many of the refugees occupy high positions in the Ugandan army.

1989 World coffee prices fall. This reduces the income of small farmers. The country goes into debt and cannot afford to import food. A famine affects much of southern Rwanda and there is growing discontent, particularly in the south.

1990 President Habyarimana agrees to let political parties organise, and for Rwanda to have elections. But for Rwandan refugees in Uganda change has come too late. A force of over 5,000 Tutsi refugees attacks Rwanda from neighbouring Uganda. They call themselves the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and most of them are deserters from the Ugandan army. They are led by Major-General Fred Rwigyema, a former Defence Minister in the Ugandan government. The RPF state that there must be more political reform in Rwanda and that President Habyarimana must go. After successes in the first weeks of fighting, the RPF are forced back by the Rwandan army, helped by French, Belgian and Zairean troops. The fighting kills over 100,000 people. Over 350,000 people are displaced by the conflict. Many Tutsi, fearing revenge attacks, flee to Uganda.

The RPF manages to hold on to a small strip of land along the border with Uganda. Here the fighting continues. In the rest of the country there is growing fear as the army takes greater control of policing the country.

1992-1993 President Habyarimana is forced to give up much of his power. A new government is formed, with power shared between two moderate parties. But the *Comité pour la Défense de la République*, an extreme and racist Hutu party, is excluded from power. In early 1993 supporters of this party respond by killing Tutsi and Hutu political opponents in northern Rwanda. The RPF then renews its activities. Many more Rwandans are killed and over 900,000 people are displaced. More refugees flee to Uganda and Burundi.

A ceasefire is agreed between the Rwandan government and the RPF and the UN sends a mission to Rwanda. A peace agreement is finally signed in Tanzania in July 1993.

1994 The peace agreement is not carried out. Many politicians, supported by Hutu extremists from northern Rwanda, resist the idea of sharing power with the Tutsi. They see all Tutsi as supporters of the RPF. Some politicians, plus radio stations and newspapers, also contribute towards anti-Tutsi feeling. The government begins to arm and train young Hutu men, forming them into militia known as the *interhamwe*. The government receives military aid from France. On 6 April 1994 President Habyarimana of Rwanda and President Ntaryamira of Burundi are killed in an air crash in Kigali. The RPF are blamed. This gives a signal to *interhamwe* to begin attacks on Tutsi and opposition Hutu. During the next two months over 500,000

people are murdered. Rwandans are killed by their neighbours and by people they trusted. Others flee as refugees to Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania.

As the massacre begins, the UN withdraws most of its military observers, saying that the peace agreement they were there to monitor is no longer valid.

In response to the massacres the Rwandan Patriotic Front invades the country. Over two million Hutu flee westwards to Zaire, fearing revenge attacks from the RPF. The refugees gather in camps around the towns of Goma and Bukavu. They have few possessions and no food. There is no clean water in Goma and conditions in the camps are soon horrific. Thousands of people die in an outbreak of cholera caused by a lack of sanitation and clean drinking water. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees and many other aid organisations are unprepared for such large numbers of refugees and it takes a long time to improve conditions in the refugee camps.

In response to the genocide and conditions in the refugee camps the UN sends troops. They help get clean water and food to refugees, but are months too late to prevent the genocide. The French government also sends an independent force to set up "safe areas" for displaced Hutu in south west Rwanda. As France provided weapons to the government of President Habyarimana and the *interhamwe*, many Rwandans distrust its motives. They believe the French government wants to reinforce its influence in French-speaking Africa. The French leave Rwanda in August 1994.

By July the RPF has taken control of Kigali, the capital city. They form a new government. Although the government contains Hutu, real power lies with the Tutsi. There seems little hope of conflict resolution in Rwanda.

1995 Over 100,000 Rwandan children have been separated from their families during the last year. The Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Save the Children Fund begin the long task of trying to trace the children's parents.

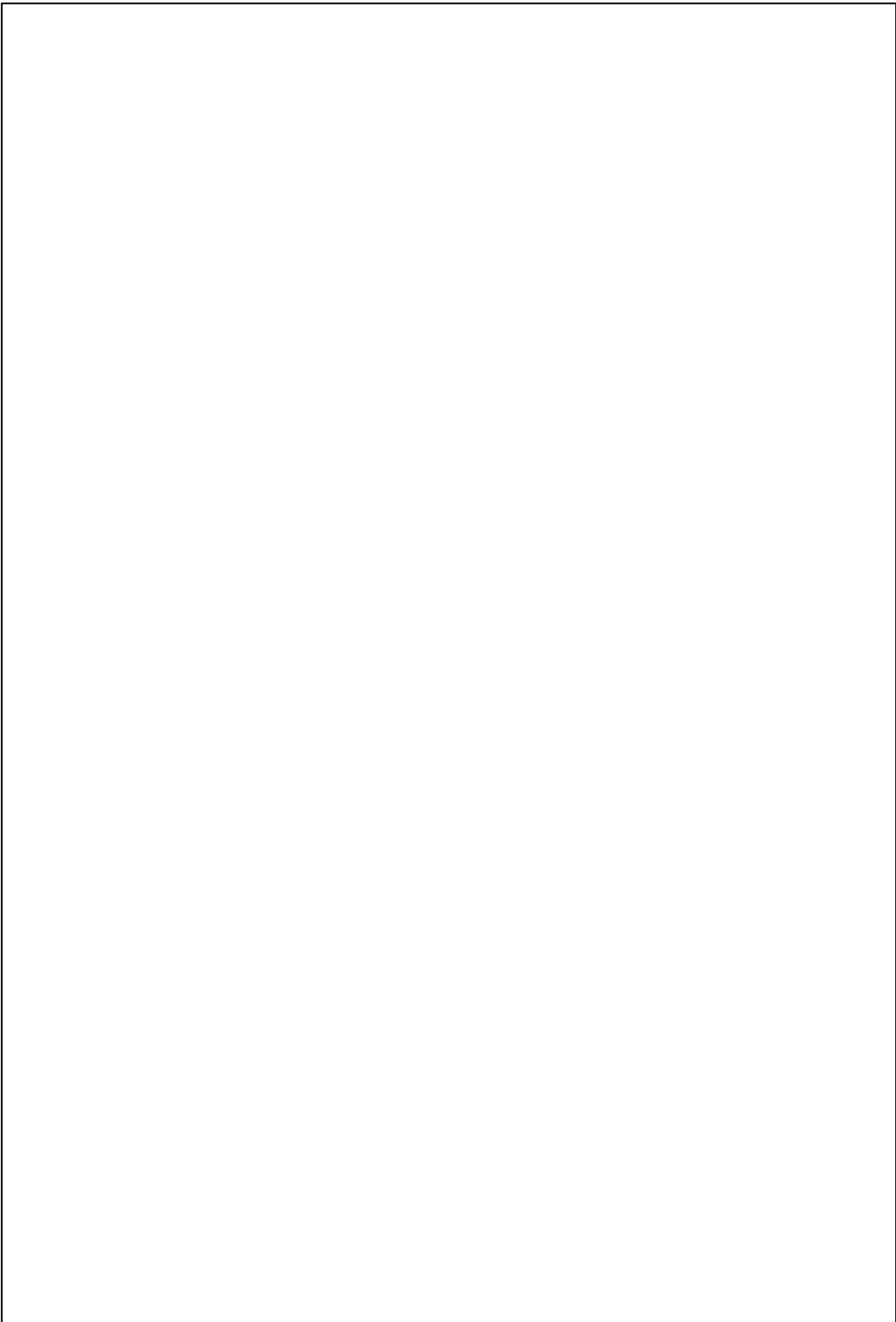
The *interhamwe* begin to regroup in the Zairean refugee camps. They try to prevent refugees from returning to Rwanda. Many human rights organisations fear that the *interhamwe* will form an army and invade Rwanda, leading to more killings and refugee movements.

There are growing human rights concerns in parts of Rwanda. The Tutsi-led army is accused of operating outside the control of the government. Soldiers also kill over 1,000 internally displaced Hutu.

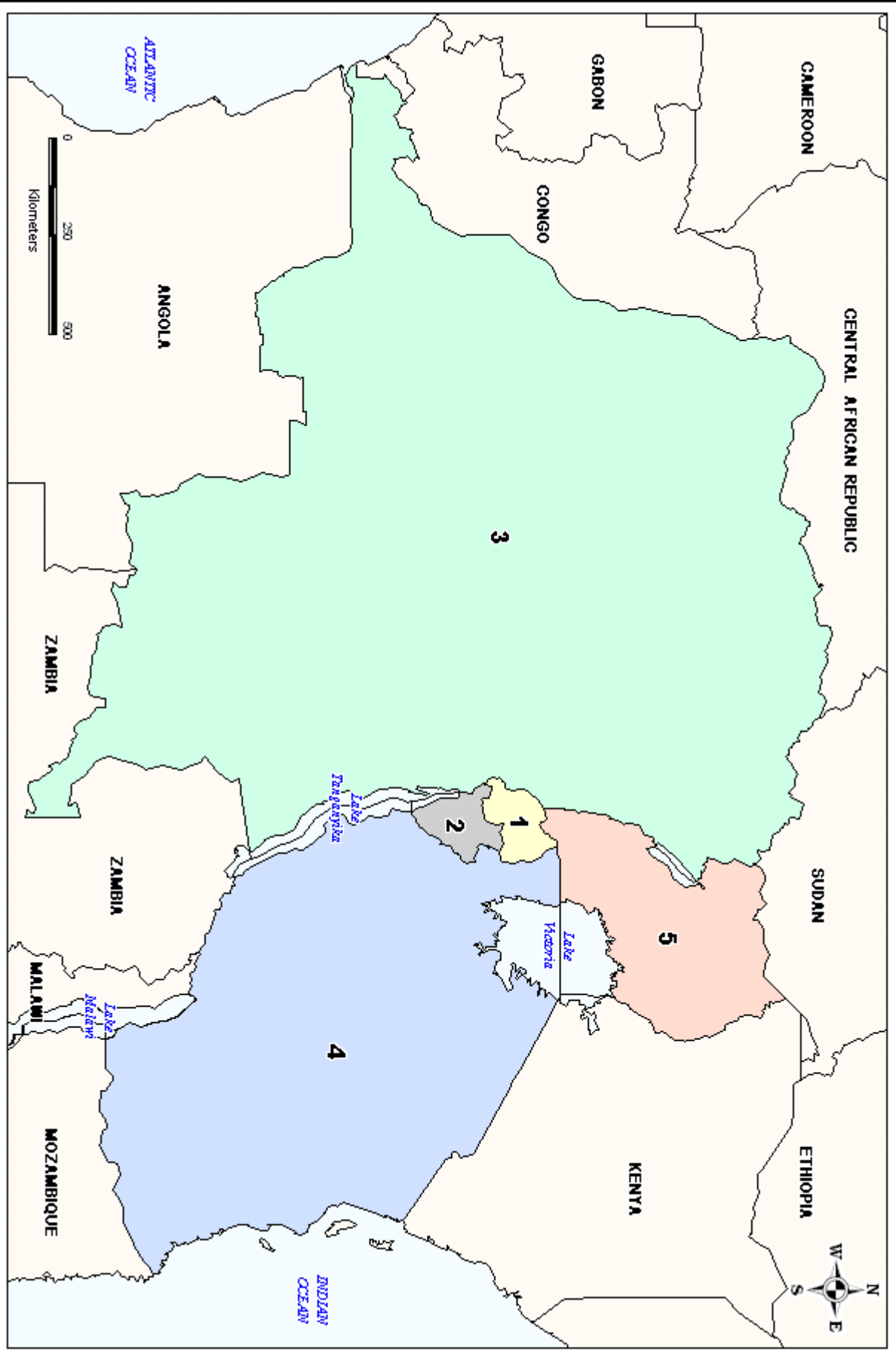
Zaire starts to expel Hutu refugees. The Zairean government states that all Rwandan refugees must leave Zaire or be deported. A large number of Hutu living in Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania fear returning because they are afraid of revenge attacks. Other refugees do not want to return because they were actively involved in the killings in Rwanda.

There have been no trials of people accused of committing the killings of 1994 although many people are being held in Rwanda's overcrowded jails. Without trials of individual people, many people feel that all Hutu will be blamed for the genocide. Trials of those accused of murder seem necessary for conflict resolution in Rwanda.

In August 1995 Faustin Twagiramungu, Rwanda's Hutu Prime Minister, is sacked after criticising the army. This makes conflict resolution even more difficult.

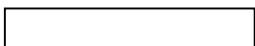


ACTIVITY SHEET: RWANDA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS



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Size, Scope of Hutu Crisis Hotly Debated

Refugees Caught In E. Zaire Chaos

*By Lynne Duke, Washington Post Foreign Service,
Sunday, November 24 1996, The Washington Post*

NYABIBWE, Zaire, Nov. 23 -- High in the eastern Zaire mountains where the clouds hug the earth, gunfire crackled on the lush green slopes where a mass of Rwandan refugees was hidden. Believed to number between 150,000 and 400,000, they were driven here like cattle by the armed former Rwandan soldiers among them who have used the helpless as human shields for their pillaging of towns and villages.

Down below, this tiny hamlet of 8,000 people looked as if an apocalyptic prophecy had been realized. Several small wooden houses were burned and torn apart. The wreckage of 30 charred, twisted cars and tankers blocked the main dirt road, also littered with shrapnel as well as unexploded grenades and mortars. Men dug graves for those killed when the town was overrun Wednesday by the armed Rwandans, who destroyed what they could not take, followed by Zairian rebels, who arrived to restore order.

With Nyabibwe still smoldering Friday, John Demescene Baragondoza and 70 other refugees, including about 20 small children, made their escape. They left the maelstrom of refugees behind them and began the long trek back to Bukavu, 65 miles to the south. Dusty but dignified in a double-breasted blazer, the former Rwandan postal worker stepped forward to issue a simple appeal to a group of journalists he encountered on the road: "Can you tell people that we need help? We need something to eat. We are very tired."

For the hapless Rwandan refugees remaining in eastern Zaire, weeks if not months of continued wandering and hardship appear to be in store. They are caught in the nexus of political, ethnic and military conflicts in Zaire, in Rwanda and in global capitals, where politicians continue to debate the refugees' numbers and whether they are significant enough to warrant help.

Travelling through the hinterlands of eastern Zaire, it becomes clear that many people-- the numbers are uncertain--remain in desperate circumstances that will deepen without help and could sow the seeds for future instability in Central Africa's Great Lakes region.

These refugees are the remainder of what the United Nations says were 1.1 million Rwanda Hutu refugees who had been living in eastern Zaire camps since 1994 when they fled Rwanda after extremists among them perpetrated a genocide against Rwanda's minority Tutsis. Some 500,000 refugees have

returned to Rwanda in recent days in a mammoth repatriation through the border station at Goma, Zaire. If 1.1 million were here to start with, then hundreds of thousands of refugees remain.

But the Goma exodus inspired a sense of diminished urgency among the world's political powers. A planned multinational peacekeeping force is on hold pending further deliberation. The United States believes that the bulk of the refugees have



gone home and that about 200,000 remain. The United Nations contends that 700,000 refugees remain in Zaire--more than have been repatriated.

The rebel movement that controls eastern Zaire claims there are no more refugees in its territory--a claim clearly refuted by the Nyabibwe story -- and that rebels with fight to stop a multinational force from bringing humanitarian assistance. Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government, which has trained and supported the Zairian rebels, also is against the force.

"We are opposed to the multinational force because we believe that the innocent people who were not involved in the massacres in Rwanda have gone home," said Jonas Sebatunzi, spokesman for the rebel alliance. "The rest are assassins."

Instead of bringing humanitarian assistance, the Zairian Tutsi-led Alliance of democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, known generally as the Banyamulenge, wants an international force to come in to disarm the Hutu militias and former soldiers among the refugees and bring them to justice.

The refugee groups are largely under the control of Hutu soldiers of the former Armed Forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militia, both of which were under the old Hutu regime in Rwanda and are believed responsible for the 1994 genocide.

Human rights advocates accuse these former soldiers of using the Zairian refugee camps as launching pads for "ethnic cleansing" against Tutsis in eastern Zaire as well as for military attacks against Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government. Tutsis in eastern Zaire are a minority group amid several other ethnicities, including Zairian Hutus.

The eastern Zairian instability gave rise to the Banyamulenge Tutsi movement. With Rwandan government training and support, the movement launched all-out war against Zairian government forces at the end of October and seized a swath of territory along Zaire's lake-bound border. When the Zairian army fled in defeat, former Armed Forces soldiers and Interahamwe combatants among the refugees took up the slack and battled the rebels themselves. Low-level conflict between these two forces continues. Refugees report severe repression from former members of the Armed Forces and Interahamwe and that people who resist instructions are killed.

"There are many bodies in the mountains," said Baragondoza, who fled the Interahamwe, as he and his group rested on the road before gathering their belongings for the month-long trek back to the border and, they hope, back home.

The fighting that broke out a month ago scattered refugees from a string of 40 U.N. camps. They surged toward the largest of the camps, called Mugunga, near Goma, Zaire, where Interahamwe forces held them under tight control until nine days ago, when the massive exodus began.

Since then, debate has raged about how many refugees remain and where they are. The Hutu refugees who last week were reported moving on Nyabibwe and points north-west are one of several groups still on the move. Another, smaller group is believed to be headed west from Bukavu, beyond rebel-held territory, toward the no man's land of the jungle. Already, the westward-moving refugees, believed to number 30,000, have encountered stiff resistance and fighting from villagers fearful of plundering by refugees. Residents of the region say some communities have destroyed small bridges to limit refugee access.



In the town of Walungu, about 30 miles west of Bukavu, a hospital director reported that Interahamwe fighters battled among themselves over provisions and medicine before pressing further west.

Humanitarian relief workers fear that a combination of battle, malnutrition and inaccessibility could seal the refugees' fate if they are not helped soon. But several factors are preventing aid workers from finding or gaining access to the refugees.

The Zairian rebels holding eastern Zaire were, until recently, loath to allow aid workers into their area, And even when aid workers are able to circulate freely here, there are unknown numbers of refugees who have been pushed so far west that they may be beyond reach.

Still, the refugees keep marching. They are faceless masses to much of the world, which spots them on satellite photographs or hears of their numbers. With little to eat, they walk barefoot and weighed down with belongings, up and down the Lake Kivu region, in and out of the mountains, deep into the jungle.

ORIGIN OF A CRISIS

The recent upheaval in the central African nations of Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire has its origin in ethnic rivalries aggravated by those nations colonial history. Since independence in the 1960s several killing sprees have occurred in the region, followed by waves of refugees to neighbouring countries that were sometimes dragged into the conflict.

POPULATION

RWANDA

6 million (846 per square mile)

BURUNDI

7 million (583 per square mile)

ETHNIC MIX

RWANDA

85% Hutus, 14% Tutsis, 1% Twa

EARLY GOVERNMENTS

RWANDA

Hutus, who had rebelled against the minority Tutsi monarchy in 1959, formed the government when independence came in 1962 and held onto power until 1994.

BURUNDI

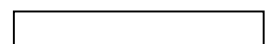
The Tutsi monarchy continued after independence in 1962, but the Hutus rebelled in 1965. Although the monarchy was dissolved, the Tutsi minority retained power, excluding the Hutus until free elections in 1993.

CURRENT GOVERNMENT

RWANDA

President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu; Vice President Paul Kagame, a Tutsi who led 1994 overthrow of Hutu government.

BURUNDI



Military government led by former major, Paul Buyoya, who seized power in a coup in July.

THE ETHNIC GROUPS

HUTUS: Moved into the area from the north-west around the second century and were primarily farmers.

TUTSIS: Migrated to the area from Ethiopia and Sudan in the 16th century and were primarily cattle herders.

HISTORY: The two groups lived for centuries in relative harmony in two separate kingdoms. Although the Hutus have always formed the majority in both countries, the Tutsis have been the rulers.

EUROPEAN COLONIZERS: Germans, then Belgians, who arrived in the 19th century, favoured Tutsis, and many were educated and moved into positions in government and the military. Colonial powers first issued identity cards specifying ethnicity and intense animosity soon developed, with the Hutus considered inferior.

THE CURRENT CRISIS

Numerous coups and countercoups based on ethnic rivalries have swept the countries since their independence in 1962. Attempts at coalition governments usually were scuttled by extremists on both sides, and each coup attempt was accompanied by killings and waves of refugees pouring into Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania.

RWANDA

When Rwanda's Hutu president died in an unexplained plane crash in 1994, Hutus blamed Tutsis. The Hutu-dominated army and allied militias slaughtered about 500,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

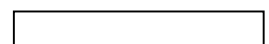
The slaughter prompted Tutsi militants, who had fled Rwanda during earlier coups and slaughters, to invade. They took over the government in Kigali, sending about 1.1 million Hutus, fearing Tutsi revenge, fleeing into Zaire.

ZAIRE

The Rwandan refugees settled in refugee camps scattered along the border in Zaire. Hutu soldiers and militias mixed with the civilian refugees and terrorized the camp population. While many aid organizations tried to persuade the refugees to go home, and the Tutsi government in Kigali promised not to exact revenge for the 1994 massacre, the refugees, under the influence of the Hutu militants, were too fearful to return home.

About 400,000 Tutsi cattle herders --known as Banyamulenge--moved into Zaire from Rwanda and Burundi two centuries ago. In 1981, the Zairian government revoked their citizenship rights in an effort to force them back to Rwanda. For years the Tutsis engaged in low-level warfare against Zairian troops. Fighting intensified in September and earlier this month, they captured Uvira, Bukavu and Goma -- the latter two with help from Rwandan troops. The poorly trained and ill-disciplined Zairian army retreated.

UGANDA



A haven for refugees from Rwanda, mostly Tutsis who fled in 1994. Most have since returned.

TANZANIA

A haven for Rwandan and Burundian refugees, mostly Tutsis. Most of the refugees who arrived in 1994 have since returned.

THE REFUGEES RETURN

This month's fighting in eastern Zaire prompted about 500,000 Hutu refugees to gather in the largest camp, Mugunga, near Goma. When most of the Hutu militants, who had terrorized the camps, withdrew west toward Masisi, the refugees began streaming toward Rwanda (photo below).

Other Hutu refugees .. estimates go into the hundreds of thousands - are stranded near Bukavu, unable to move north because of continued fighting or because Hutu extremists prevent them from leaving.

BURUNDI

The Tutsi-dominated Burundian army massacred more than 100,000 Hutus after an uprising against the Tutsi government in 1972-73. In 1993, Burundians elected their first Hutu president, but Tutsis attempted a coup and assassinated the new president. His successor was killed in the same 1994 plane crash that killed Rwanda's president. Thousands of Hutus and Tutsis were killed in 1993 and in sporadic violence since then; thousands fled the country, mostly to Zaire but also to Tanzania. Earlier this year, Tutsis ousted the Hutu president.

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Rwandans gripped by fear as Hutus return from Zaire

From Sam Kiley in Taba

ELIZABETH, a Hutu, stared in terror as her fellow tribesmen walked back into town. Married to a Tutsi who was killed in the 1994 genocide, she had lived in fear of reprisals for her refusal to participate. Yesterday, she watched some of the most notorious killers return home.

Taba, 20 miles south of Kigali, the Rwandan capital, was the scene of horrible crimes when Hutu extremists murdered a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates. The atrocities included mass murder and the systematic gang rapes and abductions of Tutsi women.

Jean-Paul Akeyesu, Taba's former burgomestre (mayor), is being held in a United Nations jail in Arsha, charged with genocide and crimes against humanity. Elizabeth, who will be a witness for the prosecution, has been threatened repeatedly by Hutus in Taba. Now that about 200 other Hutus have returned from eastern Zaire's refugee camps, she says she does not feel safe even though she lives next door to the local administration offices under 24-hour armed guard.

"What if I walk into the market? I can easily be seized and taken away and killed in the bush. No one would speak out to protect me," she said. "I am more afraid



now than I have been since the genocide." In 1994 her own brothers slaughtered three of her children because they look like their father. Yesterday she was brought face to face with men she saw kill her friends and family.

"I know some of these men. They are killers. Now where can I live? I want to testify in Arusha (the Tanzanian location of the UN genocide trials) but I am sure I won't live long enough," she said, gesturing discreetly at a group of Hutu refugees who had walked into the village earlier.

She was not the only frightened person in a village gripped by silent fear. Some Hutus walked in fearing denunciation as killers. Tutsi survivors, living in a compound under armed guard because they dare not return home for fear of Hutu neighbours already back in the country, watched them arrive knowing that the genocide was not yet over. "We are still afraid of the *interahamwe* (the Hutu militia). They have continued to kill us over the past two years and now more are coming into town," said Joseph Habimana, 38, one of 200 Tutsis who live under guard.

As he spoke, Rosanne and Georges, tugging behind them Philippe, five, arrived in the village and joined other former Hutu refugees in a small group next to the Tutsi compound. The couple did not want to talk much. Both sweated and panted in fear as Tutsis they knew eyed them across a few yards of grass. Georges stared at the ground, anxious not to catch the eye of a former neighbour. Rwanda is already holding 85,000 alleged killers in overcrowded jails. None has come to trial because the judicial system was wiped out with the Tutsis.

By supporting rebels who cleared out north Kivu's Hutu refugee camps and attacked the *interahamwe*, Rwanda Government has taken a huge gamble. Although no one can be sure how many extremists have returned with the Hutu civilians, there is no doubt that the mass influx of refugees have been a useful cover for members of the *interahamwe*.

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IN SEARCH OF SOLUTIONS

Extract from "The State of the World's Refugees 1995 - In Search of Solutions"

published by Oxford
University Press
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"Changing approaches to the refugee problem", Chapter 1, Box 1.3 (p. 32-33)

Rwanda: causes and consequences of the refugee crisis

Forced migrations within and across national borders are one of the most visible consequences of political persecution and armed conflict. But as the recent crisis in Rwanda has demonstrated, refugee problems that are left unresolved can also become the cause of further instability, violence and population displacements.

Refugee repatriation has been a dominant issue in Rwandese politics for the past 30 years. By the time the country gained independence in 1962, 120,000 people, primarily from the minority Tutsi population, had already taken refuge in neighbouring states, escaping the violence which accompanied the progressive seizure of power by the majority Hutu community. Over the next two decades, the exiles made repeated efforts to return to Rwanda by the force of arms, each of which provoked renewed violence, reprisals and refugee outflows. By the end of the 1980s, some 480,000 Rwandese - around seven per cent of the total population and half of the Tutsi community - had become refugees, primarily in Burundi (280,000), Uganda (80,000), Zaire (80,000) and Tanzania (30,000).

This situation took a decisive turn in October 1990, when the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), a movement composed mainly of Tutsi exiles, attacked north-east Rwanda from Uganda, where they had helped Yuwiri Museveni's National Resistance Army to come to power four years earlier. After taking charge in Uganda, President Museveni had reminded his Rwandese counterpart of the need to find a solution to the refugee problem. But the Hutu-led government claimed that there was so little land available in Rwanda that repatriation was out of the question.

Right to return

After the outbreak of the war in 1990, the prospects for a settlement of the refugee problem appeared to improve. As a result of internal and external pressures, the Rwandese government was obliged to end 16 years of one-party rule. A transitional administration was created, which in 1993 recognized the refugees' right to return and signed a peace agreement with the RPF. But the agreement was rejected by radical elements in both the government and rebel movement, and Rwanda became embroiled in an increasingly disruptive civil war, which created up to a million internally displaced people.



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.

The killings were accompanied and followed by massive population displacements. On 28 and 29 April alone, as the RPF launched a new offensive against government forces, some 250,000 Rwandese flooded into Tanzania. And even this appeared modest in comparison with the movement which was to take place in mid-July 1994, when in the space of a few days, approximately 800,000 people (most of them Hutus), fled into Zaire, fearing reprisals by the advancing forces of the RPF.

But this was not simply a refugee movement. 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.

Threat of violence

While they struggled to cope with the human consequences of the influx into Tanzania and Zaire, relief agency personnel also had to contend with the militant Hutus who had planned and executed the massacres, and who were now using threats of violence to prevent any refugees from returning to Rwanda. At the end of 1994, a proposal to curtail the violence by deploying a UN peacekeeping force in the refugee camps of Zaire was rejected by the UN Security Council. In February 1995, however, the government of Zaire agreed to send an elite force of 1,500 men to the settlement areas. UNHCR subsequently established a group of police and military personnel from the western states to work alongside the Zairian security force, an unprecedented arrangement in the organization's history.

Despite a general improvement in camp security and living conditions, by mid-1995 there was little immediate prospect of a solution to the Rwandese refugee problem. At a conference held in February 1995, the countries of Central Africa and the major donor states agreed on the need to encourage repatriation by a package of confidence-building measures within Rwanda, including the restoration of the rule of law and the rehabilitation of the country's shattered economy.

The implementation of this plan, however, has been obstructed by a variety of factors: continued pressure on the refugees to remain outside of their homeland; the slow rate at which a promised US\$600 million in rehabilitation assistance has



become available; disputes over property ownership, linked to the long-awaited return of the Tutsi exiles from Uganda; persistent reports of arbitrary arrests in Rwanda, leading to grossly overcrowded prisons; and the forcible closure of camps for internally displaced people in south-west Rwanda.

In April 1995, hundreds of people were killed when government troops opened fire at a camp for displaced people in Kibeho, an incident which had a serious impact on the prospects for a resolution of the refugee problem. At the end of 1994, UNHCR had started to provide transport and other assistance to the small number of refugees who wished to return to Rwanda. By February 1995, as many as 800 Rwandese were going back every day. But after the Kibeho killings, the numbers dropped to nothing.

Progress on the political front has also proved very slow. The new leaders in Kigali have stated that reconciliation with the former government is possible, but only if the individuals responsible for the genocide are punished for their crimes. Members of the former administration say that they will return to their homeland, but only if they are allowed a share of power. According to many reports, in mid-1995 the soldiers and militia forces who had withdrawn to Zaire were continuing to receive military training and supplies, and to conduct low-intensity operations in the border areas of Rwanda. With images of mass murders still fresh in the minds of the Rwandese people, peace is unlikely to come quickly or easily.

We Left Because We had to

Genocide

By Jill Rutter, "REFUGEES: We left because we had to", (London, Refugee Council 1996) pp. 66-73

The murder of 500,000 Tutsi and Hutu opposition in Rwanda is genocidal murder. This event is one of many cases of genocide in the 20th century. The events in Rwanda in 1994 pose many moral questions to all of us.

Genocide is the deliberate extermination of an ethnic, religious, political or national group. Three groups of people are involved in genocide. They are:

The perpetrators.

The victims.

The bystanders.

In Rwanda the *interhamwe* were the perpetrators. They acted on the orders of the government and the army. The *interhamwe* were also, knowingly, provided with weapons by the French government.

In Rwanda the victims were the Tutsi, and Hutu who opposed the policies of the Government and army. Ordinary Hutu who tried to stop killings also risked their own murder.

In Rwanda there were many bystanders. There were the Hutu who watched their neighbours being killed and did nothing. The UN and politicians in individual governments knew what was happening in Rwanda, but they chose to do nothing. The television coverage of the murders in Rwanda meant that a far large number of people were bystanders. Every person in the world who watched television news during the period of April-June 1994 is a bystander to the genocide in Rwanda. Very few people then took any action such as writing to their MP or giving money to an aid organisation.

Genocide does not happen suddenly. There are many preconditions that must arise before a group of people become victims of a genocide. These stages are:

The victim group is stereotyped and defined as being "different from the rest of society". The rest of society readily believes that the victim group is different.

The victim group may experience racial attacks and discrimination by ordinary people.

The victim group loses many of its legal rights.

The victim group is isolated from the rest of the society.

The victim group is dehumanised by politicians, the media and then by ordinary people. Ordinary people cease to see the victim group as being human beings just like them.



There is a catalyst event which starts the genocide. This is an event which gives the perpetrators an excuse to carry out genocide.

The perpetrators of genocide are led to believe that they are morally right in their actions. They continue to carry out the genocide.

Genocide in the 20th century

After the mass murders of Jews and Gypsies in the Second World War, the United Nations passed an international law to prevent future genocidal murders. This is known as the 1948 UN

Convention on Genocide. To use this international law a UN member-state must challenge an offending country with evidence that shows that the offending country is deliberately inflicting on the group "conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction in whole or in part" (1948 UN Convention on Genocide). But this international law has rarely been used. There are many instances of genocide in the 20th century, both before and after the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide. In almost all cases the UN, individual governments and other bystanders did nothing.

It is sometimes difficult to decide when ethnic conflict becomes genocide, but the genocides of the 20th century must include:

Armenians in Turkey 1915-1920 Over 1,500,000 people were murdered.

Selected groups in the Soviet Union 1935-1953 Groups of people such as large peasant farmers were murdered by Stalin's government. It is difficult to estimate how many people were killed, but some people believe three million people were murdered at this time.

Jews of Europe 1939-1945 Some six million Jewish people were murdered by the Nazis between 1939 and 1945.

Gypsies of Europe 1939-1945 Over 200,000 Gypsies were murdered by the Nazis between 1939 and 1945.

Bangladeshis 1971 Between 1,500,000 and two million Bangladeshi people were murdered by the government of West Pakistan and its supporters during the 1971 War of Independence.

The Hutu of Burundi 1972 Some 150,000 Hutu were killed in revenge attacks following an unsuccessful *coup d'état*.

Cambodians 1975-1978 Between one and two million Cambodians were murdered by the Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia.

The East Timorese 1975 onwards Over 250,000 people have been killed by the Indonesian government who invaded East Timor in 1975.

Tigrayans and Ethiopians 1980 Over 250,000 people, mostly Eritreans and Tigrayans, were murdered by the Ethiopian government during the "Red Terror".

The Maya of Guatemala 1980 onwards At least 50,000 people have been killed and many more Maya Indians moved from their land.

The Kurds of Iraq 1980-1988 Over 100,000 Kurdish people were killed by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi government and 500,000 people were forced to move.

The Nuba of Sudan 1990 onwards The Nuba mountains have been sealed off since 1990 and many Nuba people have been deliberately killed by government forces and militia.



Bosnian Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina 1922-1995 At least 100,000 Bosnian Muslims have been killed in a war where they have also been forced to leave their homes.

Rwandans 1994 Some 500,000 Tutsi and Hutu opponents of the government were murdered in two months of killing in 1994.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Office of the Representative for the United Kingdom

21st Floor, Millbank Tower, 21-24 Millbank, London SW1P 4QP

Tel: 020 7828 9191, Fax: 020 7630 5349,

E-mail: gbrlo@unhcr.ch, Website: <http://www.unhcr.ch>

