
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hailed the 'most improved' country in sub-Saharan Africa in the past five years by the 2007 Mo Ibrahim Index of African governance, Rwanda has made significant strides in reforming the country in the aftermath of the 1990-94 civil war and the ensuing genocide of 1994 that killed more than 800,000 people. Rwanda managed to build and rehabilitate a shattered infrastructure; reinstate social networks and trust among the population; and implement economic policies to reduce poverty in an attempt to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Rwanda has made a remarkable transition from post-conflict recovery to reconstruction and development in the past 13 years. The country has demobilized and reintegrated ex-combatants, and approximately 3.5 million Rwandan refugees have been repatriated and resettled back in the country. From 1995 to 2007, the government has undertaken economic and governance reforms that allowed for regular GDP growth rates and a more stable economy. Furthermore, there was remarkable progress in well being and basic service delivery. The country has also made substantial progress in meeting the MDGs: primary school enrolment rates have increased significantly and reached 92% in 2006; immunization rates are among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa; HIV prevalence is decreasing; and access to water has considerably improved, reducing under-five child mortality rate by 25% in 2006. Progress has also been made in promoting gender equality in politics as Rwanda is the country with the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world. While the legacy of the genocide still persists, the country has made progress in national reconciliation. However, the country still faces challenges in its democratic practices as witnessed by reports of opposition repression; inequitable conditions set for the existence of opposition parties; and lack of freedom of the media. The security sector also faces some challenges as the issue of Rwandan refugees in the DRC has not been resolved. Furthermore, food insecurity regularly threatens the country. The human rights conditions in the country need to be improved as violations of right to fair trial, treatment of prisoners, arbitrary arrest and detention have been reported, including biases in favour of the ruling party RPF.

Causes of the conflicts in Rwanda

In order to have a clear understanding and to make a concise analysis of the various and relatively recent conflicts in Rwanda, it is essential to divide them into four separate events: the 1990-94 civil war between the government and RPF forces; the genocide from April-July 1994; the ensuing conflict from 1994-98 to break apart ex-FAR and *interahamwe* militias in the DRC; and the 1998 conflict that implicated the DRC and six other countries in the continent. However, the common factor and the principal culprit of the conflicts remains the ethnic division between Hutu and Tutsi.

The civil conflict between the government and RPF stems from:

- The colonial impact on Rwandan society and the ensuing power struggle between Tutsi and Hutu.

The 1994 genocide has its root causes in:

- Policy of ethnic hatred
- State power
- Land scarcity
- Economic collapse
- Internal and external dynamics

The conflict in 1994-98 between the Rwandan government and ex-FAR and *interahamwe* militia in the DRC was initiated to dismantle the latter, most of whom were among perpetrators of the genocide. The 1998 conflict with the DRC emanated from the fact that the government of Zaire/DRC was actively supporting ex-FAR and *interahamwe* in refugee camps in the country.

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Colonial impact in Rwandan society and ensuing power struggle between Tutsi and Hutu: The Hutu and Tutsi divide was exacerbated by the German and then Belgian rulers that favoured the Tutsi. However, as Belgian rulers became threatened by the Tutsi elite on the eve of independence, they shifted support to the Hutus, and induced the 'Hutu revolution'. At independence in 1962, the Hutu gained power and a number of Tutsi fled the country to neighbouring countries, including Uganda. The descendants of these exiled Tutsi in Uganda formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and launched an attack on the government in 1990, officially starting the civil war.

Internal and external dynamics: As the ruling elite, led by President Habyarimana, was being threatened internally by a rising opposition of Hutus that were not from the northeast, the President's region, and externally by the RPF, it had to act quickly not to lose its grip of power. It was compelled to start peace negotiations in Arusha, Tanzania in August 1993, which called for elections, ceasefire and an international peacekeeping force to monitor the ceasefire. However, the inner circle, the *akazu*, was not pleased about losing power and it started its hate propaganda linking the RPF to peaceful Tutsis in the country, increasing the number of armed forces the *Forces Armees Rwandaises* (FAR), training a youth militia, the *interahamwe*, and creating fear and insecurity in the population through print media and radio. This led to the establishment of the 'Hutu power' in October 1993.

State power: In Rwanda, the state is powerful in mobilizing and coercing citizens. When the head of the state, the President, was assassinated, ordinary citizens who have been bombarded with propaganda and already felt fear and insecurity, obeyed hardliners in imposing their 'coercive means'. Analysts agree that the genocide would not have been that extreme had it not been for the Rwandan state's capacity to mobilize citizens.

Land scarcity: As Rwanda is a small country with a high population density, land scarcity might have pushed ordinary citizens to unusual acts, building on other grievances.

Economic collapse: Poverty and unemployment gripped Rwanda in the 1980s, with an economic crisis following a sharp fall in coffee prices, negative effects of structural adjustment programmes. This may have increased the receptiveness of impoverished farmers to the hate propaganda unleashed by the state.

Peace processes

The Arusha Accord peace negotiations (1992-1993): The Arusha Peace Agreement, comprised a set of five accords (or protocols) signed in Arusha, Tanzania on 4 August 1993 by the government of Rwanda and the rebel group RPF, to end a three-year civil war. The talks were held from July 1992 to June 1993 and were organized by the United States, France and the then Organization of African Unity. The Agreement called for a broad-based transitional government open for the RPF and other political parties. The agreement also stipulated the holding of multiparty elections after a 22-month period, called for a ceasefire and an international peacekeeping force to monitor the ceasefire and secure Rwanda during its period of transition. Finally, the agreement allowed for repatriation of all Rwandan refugees and the return of internally displaced persons to their homes. However, the implementation of the agreement was repeatedly postponed despite the presence of the UN.

The Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (July 1999): Brokered in 1999 by the then Organization of African Unity and the UN, the agreement called for the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the DRC and the dismantling of ex-FAR and *interahamwe* forces in the DRC. As security improved, the United Nations Organization Mission to Congo (*Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo*;

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MONUC) been able to expand its presence in the DRC to monitor the ceasefire and verify the withdrawal of foreign forces.

The Pretoria agreement (July 2002): was made between Rwanda and the DRC for the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from the DRC in exchange for international commitment towards the disarmament of the *interahamwe* and the ex-FAR soldiers. The Rwanda Defence Force subsequently withdrew in October 2002.

Impact of the conflict

The civil war and the genocide in Rwanda was extremely serious and impacted on the humanitarian, social, and economic impacts were profound. More than 10% of the population perished in the genocide and 3 million people became refugees in neighbouring countries, where an estimated 200,000 people lost their lives. Repatriation, demobilization and reintegration programmes brought the majority of the refugees back into the country. The legacy of the genocide persisted in the country as there were hundreds of thousands of orphaned children, and more than 100,000 people in prisons awaiting trial. Infrastructure and physical properties were destroyed as well as resources such as livestock. Social networks were disrupted leading to a break down of commerce. Moreover, as rape was used as a weapon of war, HIV/AIDS prevalence increased in the aftermath of the conflict and genocide. Aggravating the physical losses were the psychological effects of the genocide, as the society suffered severe trauma.

Despite the drastic drop in school attendance immediately after the genocide, enrolment rebounded relatively quickly reached the previous level only four or five years later.

The political sphere was considerably impacted by the conflict. Factors such as high number of women genocide survivors; a shift in women's attitudes towards leadership, and efforts to recognize women's capacity for building reconciliation, have led Rwandans into implementing various initiatives to involve more women in the political structure.

The economic costs and the impact of the conflict in Rwanda were studied and found that if the genocide had not happened, per capita GDP would have been higher by about 30 percentage points, and poverty would have been much lower.

With regards to MDGS, while the conflict had initially hampered Rwanda's chance in achieving them, the country has made remarkable progress towards reaching these goals and is on its way to achieve its education goal. It has already achieved and exceeded its gender equality in primary school enrolment.

Preliminary recommendations

Political governance and transition: In order to further build on notable progress made to date towards establishing an independent and effective judicial system; conducting free and fair elections; and promoting participatory and pluralist policies; the following additional/enhanced measures may be considered:

- Strengthen democratic institutions by enforcing the independence of the judiciary
- Increase the number of attorneys in the country
- Build more tertiary institutions such as law schools
- Strengthen the justice system by promoting neutrality, impartiality, and fairness
- Improve the culture of respect for opposing views and ideas and tolerance of differences of political opinion and diversity

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- Strengthen electoral processes including by ensuring the presence of international observers throughout the entire electoral process
- Set up impartial, clear, and fair criteria for candidates
- Ensure the enforcement of constitutional right of freedom of speech and expression including the press and media
- Strengthen democratic practices in the country by reviewing the conditions set for the existence of political parties
- Further encourage popular participation by allowing the participation of the population throughout the entire electoral process
- Further accelerate the decentralization process
- Provide technical support to local governments
- Encourage the separation a civil society organizations from politics
- Set up a favourable environment where NGOs can freely operate
- Promote public/private partnership to induce impartiality in the press
- Strengthen efforts that create and facilitate reconciliation and tolerance between religious and social groups and the political system

Security sector: As security problems continue to threaten Rwanda's security and stability, especially from rebel militias in neighbouring DRC; as reprisal killings are still occurring in the country; and to address the DDR programmes for child soldiers and the problem of small arms proliferation in the country, with a view to achieving long term security in Rwanda, it is essential to:

- Further strengthen institutions that promote human rights and the rule of law
- Ensure fairness of trials and impartiality in investigations
- Build the capacity of law enforcement institutions
- Further promote the establishment and reinforcement of measures that protect children from being recruited as child soldiers
- Further tackle reintegration and resettlement processes by ensuring that all child soldiers are reintegrated in Rwandan society and by allowing all former combatants, including children to undergo the process of DDR
- Strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries to dismantle militias in those countries
- Strengthen weapons control and monitoring mechanisms to curb trafficking of small arms across borders
- Strengthen de-mining operations, including through training and capacity building of de-mining teams

Humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, and socio-economic development: While Rwanda's progress in providing basic services and in implementing economic policies that promote growth are commendable, there are still some challenges that should be addressed.

The following are some of the suggested measures:

- Increase access to primary education by improving the supply of educational supplies at reasonable cost
- Further improve the quality of education by building more schools and hiring more teachers to improve the pupil/teacher ratio
- Encourage the enrolment of more girls in tertiary institutions
- Provide local training to the local de-mining team
- Expand tertiary education by allocating more funds to the sector, and improving remuneration to staff
- Allocate funds more equitably to ensure that secondary and tertiary education are not neglected
- Further increase the number of health professionals to address health needs
- Focus on the rural area for the provision of access to healthcare

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- Further increase awareness about HIV/AIDS prevention giving particular attention to the needs of women
- Further promote the use of condoms in addition to other prevention measures
- Improve access to antiretroviral drugs
- Boost agricultural productivity to ensure food self sufficiency through new technology, improved inputs & services and credit
- Further consolidate land holdings
- Improve the use of water resources to reduce dependence of agriculture on rains
- Encourage increased investment in storage facilities; transportation systems, facilitate; community-based credit systems; and establish social safety nets
- Calibrate monetary policies to reduce inflation, especially on food items
- Further increase access to safe water to the general population as well as to IDPs
- Devise strategies to alleviate the problems facing IDPs.
- Implement policies to reduce rural/urban migration
- Strengthen the management of public finances
- Rectify the shortcomings of the first PRS by concentrating on social sectors and broad based poverty reduction
- Further improve the investment climate by reducing bureaucracy lowering the costs of establishing and running business and strengthen the rule of law in business

Human rights, justice, and reconciliation: While the human rights situation has markedly improved since 1994, there are still reports of abuses, extra judicial killings, reprisal killings, and other violations. In this regard, it is essential to:

- Establish transparent and impartial judicial procedures
- Guarantee the freedom of the media and CSOs
- Further reinforce national security forces
- Promote transparent and accountable procedures for the detention of prisoners
- Ensure respect for the rights of prisoners
- Further prosecute perpetrators of crimes against humanity and war crimes
- Maintain the momentum of awareness of equal treatment of minorities
- Further promote human rights and gender equality including through the review and implementation of comprehensive national action plans.
- Ensure the prosecution of sex offenders and other domestic abuse
- Improve the conditions of prisons and prisoners
- Implement public campaign programmes that ensure respect for national and international human rights law and violations of such laws.
- Further promote reconciliation and tolerance among the population

Gender: Whereas the remarkable progress made in improving the status of women in Rwanda is commendable, to further build on achievements made to date it is crucial to:

- Foster cultural change through the media and the educational system to eliminate biases against women
- Invest in activities that foster cultural and attitudinal changes on gender stereotypes
- Encourage micro-credit and micro-financing schemes especially targeting women
- Provide incentives and reduce challenges for girls to enter and remain in school
- Further provide health facilities focusing on women's needs
- Prosecute sexual and Gender-Based-Violence offenders
- Further increase HIV/AIDS awareness among women
- Improve access to treatment of HIV/AIDS including availability of Anti-retroviral treatment.