

The London School of Economics and Political Science

Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Rwanda

Uncovering Hidden Factors in the
Gender Policy Context

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Abstract

Post-conflict reconstruction (PCR) policies often highlight gender issues during the agenda setting stage, but they largely fall off policy agendas as PCR processes advance. Interestingly, Rwanda is a counter-example to this trend. In 1994, Rwanda experienced a horrific genocide that caused a complete breakdown of the state. At that time, a new government, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) under the leadership of Paul Kagame, came into power. During the PCR period, gender policies were deemed a priority by the new government and this resulted in gains for women in several areas. The fact that Rwanda has a majority female parliament, for example, has resulted in significant international attention to Rwanda. Much of the credit for these gains and for putting gender issues on the PCR agenda has been given to the RPF and Kagame. However, is *political will* (as it is often described) a sufficient explanation for the post-conflict gender policy focus? I argue that it is not.

By situating this research within a theoretical framework that draws upon feminist theoretical propositions, literature that questions the PCR dynamics of international aid and political outcomes, and Rwanda-specific literature, a fuller explanation of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus emerges. The evidence suggests that whilst political will was undoubtedly important, it is only one of five key factors: a majority female population, grassroots actions on the part of women, international aid, and the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women were also drivers behind this policy focus. However, these factors have largely been rendered invisible within PCR analysis on Rwanda. In this research I seek to explain why these factors were critical to setting the stage for a PCR gender policy focus and how this policy focus has been subsumed under a highly political agenda over the last two decades.

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List of Acronyms

AVEGA	Association of the Widows of Rwanda
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Assistance Committee
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PCR	Post Conflict Reconstruction
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RRN	Relief and Rehabilitation Network
RWI	Rwandan Women's Initiative (UNHCR)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WIT	Women in Transition (USAID)

Chapter One

Introduction: Gender Policies on Rwanda's PCR Agenda

In 1994 Rwanda was emerging from a horrific genocide. As a new government came to power, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), gender policies were largely incorporated into Rwanda's post-conflict reconstruction (PCR) processes and in contrast to most other post-conflict contexts globally, this policy agenda increasingly gained saliency throughout the post-conflict period. *Why was this the case?* This research explores the critical factors that were particularly relevant to Rwanda's PCR gender policy and examines how these factors contributed to a sustained gender policy focus even after Rwanda transitioned out of the post-conflict phase. Five critical factors emerged to help explain why this policy focus was a substantial part of PCR efforts in Rwanda: a majority female population, grassroots efforts by women, political will, international aid, and the Beijing Conference on Women. Taken together, these components provided the foundation for a PCR gender policy focus that was meaningfully integrated into PCR processes as well as into Rwanda's longer-term developmental strategies.

However, the political context in Rwanda casts a shadow over this PCR *success*. Rwanda has largely been identified as a gender policy success story, but this has occurred within a context where the current government, the RPF, is increasingly closing political space. Many have suggested that the Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, is leading a dictatorial or authoritarian style government;¹ this places the PCR gender policy trajectory in an uncomfortable dynamic where political factors have largely become *the story* behind these advances. Understanding *why* these policies were a priority and the subsequent trajectory of this policy focus opens the door to a number of unanswered questions including *what was the role of the international community in this process* and *what was the longer-term impact of this policy focus?* The answers to these questions suggest that the PCR gender policy agenda has led to particular developmental advances for women though it is subsumed under a political strategy that hinges upon the retention of power.

¹ See for example Reyntjens 2004, Burnet 2008, and Straus and Waldorf 2011.

Gender Policies within PCR: A Stalled Agenda

Post-conflict reconstruction (PCR) policies tend to include a strong rhetorical focus on gender equality.² All too frequently, however, as these processes move from the agenda-setting stage to actual implementation, gender equality is de-emphasized or falls off the policy agenda almost entirely, as demonstrated by recent experiences in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Greenberg 2006, Rostami-Povey 2007). The failure to translate policy rhetoric on gender into action is indicative of a larger problem within development: as Beall (2001: 136) noted, ‘...policy statements on the status of women were important, but on their own failed.’

Paradoxically, these recent policy failures have occurred in a context in which gender equality was increasingly salient within the international community. Efforts such as the 1971 World Conference on Women in Mexico and the 1980 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), provided an early foundation for women’s human rights. However, it was the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China that created significant international momentum concerning women’s issues (Chant and McIlwaine 2009: 219). Beginning in the mid-1990s, gender issues became a key focus for the development community. This is demonstrated, for example, by the World Bank’s development of a gender mainstreaming strategy³ and by the 1998 judgement by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda identifying rape as a war crime of genocide.⁴

Despite this backdrop of an increased focus on gender issues, they have yet to gain significant credibility within the overall literature on PCR; indeed, as Cornwall et al. (2004) have suggested, gender inequality has remained intractable within a number of developmental policy fronts (Cornwall et al 2004: 2). Feminist scholars in particular have problematised a lack of gender analysis in both conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. In arguing that international institutions need to be more accountable for their actions within

² The definition of *gender*, as it is conceptualized within international policies, has been defined by the United Nations Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women defines as: ‘...the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable...’ (United Nations Office of Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women 2001). There is however much slippage with typical use of the word ‘gender’ especially within a policy context. Often ‘gender’ is equated with ‘women’ (Abirafeh 2008) which complicates use of the term. This is the case in terms of Rwanda’s gender policy focus; *gender* is often used interchangeably with *women*. Whilst there are theoretical problems with this, as Baden and Goetz (1997) have argued, here I use the term *gender* to primarily reflect the language of the *gender* policy focus; however, I use the term *women* when I am specifically attempting to highlight *women* versus the gender policy focus more broadly.

³ This strategy was adopted in 2001 (World Bank 2002).

⁴ International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda 1998.

conflict and post-conflict reconstruction processes, actions that largely ignore political and economic consequences, Mazurana (2005) for example contended:

...there is such stubborn opposition to and wilful, token acknowledgment of the politics of femininity and masculinity in the causes and consequences of armed conflict and in a majority of past and current peacekeeping operations. Significantly, this resistance to seriously examining the politics of masculinity and femininity in generating unrest, in causing conflicts to become violent, and in the consequences of that violence during armed conflict and postconflict periods prevents those in charge of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations from (1) realistically explaining what has caused and sustained the particular conflict they have been assigned to end and, therefore, (2) fashioning peacekeeping and reconstruction policies that can succeed. (Mazurana 2005: 29)

Similarly, others such as Enloe (2005, 2008), Cockburn (2002), Beall (2006), Caprioli (2003, 2005), and Parpart (2002, 2008) have also argued that not enough attention is paid to how gender dynamics can play a role in establishing and contributing to the foundations for violent conflict. Further capturing the complex dynamics that seemingly ignore gender within post-conflict reconstruction processes, Ní Aoláin et al. (2011), argue:

The independent value of a gendered assessment of post-conflict processes remains contested. In this legal and political space of ending or transmuting conflict, women still struggle to influence policies that affect them directly and indirectly. They remain subordinated by dominant discourses that minimize or ignore the value of placing the needs and views of women at the centre of the conversation about ending violent communal behaviours, even though such placement is absolutely central to ending societal violence. (Ní Aoláin et al. 2011: 5)

The rendering of gender issues as invisible within international policy agendas is thus an issue that feminist scholars have attempted to challenge. Even in the face of significant effort to ensure gender issues remain on post-conflict reconstruction policy agendas however, they rarely see sustained momentum after initial policies are created. Indeed, cases including Afghanistan (Kandiyoti 2007) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Walsh 2001 and Cockburn and Hubic 2002) largely reflect this dynamic.

Rwanda however has been a notable exception to the pattern of gender policy failures within post-conflict reconstruction. Following the 1994 genocide, in which approximately 800,000 people were killed in a country of approximately seven million⁵, gender equality began to emerge as a *policy priority* within Rwanda. This could be seen, for example, in the large number of women who were involved in the transitional government and, early in the post-conflict phase, the government's decision to create a gender ministry (Mutamba and Izabiliza 2005: 12-14).

Interestingly this policy emphasis on gender equality has been sustained; for almost two decades gender policies have clearly been a priority of the current Rwandan government.

⁵ Government of Rwanda, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning 2003 and Hesselbein et al.2006: 4.

The *gender policy priority* for the purposes of this research includes measures implemented early on by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the party ruling Rwanda since the post-conflict period, to help address gender issues such as granting women the legal right to inherit land (Daley, et al. 2010), supporting girls' education (Gervais 2003: 545), and implementing gender-responsive budgeting initiatives to ensure gender issues are mainstreamed at every level of government (Republic of Rwanda, MINECOFIN May 2008).⁶ Perhaps most critical, in terms of international recognition, is a constitutional quota guaranteeing 30% of elected parliamentary seats to female representatives (Republic of Rwanda 2003).

It is important to interject here that whilst I am examining *gender policies* as well as *women* within this research, I do not take *women* to be a united, categorical entity. Indeed many feminists, including Mohanty (1998), have deconstructed a universal notion of women. Given the historical context of Rwanda, one where unfortunately issues concerning ethnicity have shaped significant periods of Rwanda's political, social, and economic trajectory, differences amongst women cannot be ignored. Three ethnic groups have historically lived in Rwanda, Hutu, Tutsis, and Twa (Newbury 1995: 12) and the 1994 genocide was largely the result of people from a Hutu background attempting to eradicate the Tutsi population. Adding complexity to the post-conflict Rwandan context is that in 1994, many Tutsis who had been living outside of Rwanda, and had not lived in Rwanda during the genocide, moved there. This resulted in significant differences amongst the Tutsi population who had experienced the genocide versus the Tutsi population that had lived outside of Rwanda's borders.⁷

Though these complexities which have an ethnic dimension to them exist, it is very difficult to explicitly address differences amongst the Rwandan population or differences amongst women.⁸ This is due to the current political climate in Rwanda, where the government has taken a position against overt discussions concerning ethnicity (as will be discussed in further depth later). Where possible, I do attempt to differentiate between women who may have been involved in or benefitted more greatly from the gender policy focus versus women at large, however, in places, I reference 'women' more generally as the data suggests females (as opposed to males), as a categorical reference to sex, have seen gains concerning particular developmental indicators.

⁶ For further information on these policy initiatives see also Republic of Rwanda, Gender Monitoring Office June 2010, Republic of Rwanda September 2009 (National Evaluation of Beijing), Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, *National Gender Policy*, July 2010.

⁷ This will be examined in more depth in following chapters.

⁸ This is discussed further within the section on methodology.

The table below illustrates selected gains where the status of women had improved between the period prior to the genocide through to 2007. Whilst these represent a select group of indicators, the evidence suggests that substantial gains between 1992 and 2007 were made in particular areas concerning women. The data suggests that particularly in terms of health, women are currently experiencing better health-related outcomes than they did before the genocide. It is important to note however, that following the 1994 genocide, DHS data no longer captured the ethnicity of respondents. This means that it is not possible to disaggregate the data based on ethnicity to reflect whether gains are being made to Rwandan women generally or whether they are being realized by a particular group of women.⁹

Table 1: Rwanda, Health and Education Indicators 1992-2007

Indicator	1992	2000	2005	2007
Percentage of women with no education	38.0	39.4	23.4	22.2
Percentage of teenagers who have begun childbearing	10.5	6.8	4.1	5.7
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	85.0	107.4	86.1	62.3
Percentage of live births receiving assistance at delivery from a trained health professional	25.9	26.7	28.4	52.1
Percentage of live births delivered at health facility	25.5	26.5	28.2	45.2

Source: Macro International Inc. (2012) - Measure DHS STATcompiler

Subsequent policy measures that indicate gender policies have indeed been sustained as a priority within Rwanda also include (but are not limited to) laws prohibiting domestic violence, the placement of the Ministry of Women and Family Promotion within the Prime Minister's Office, the creation of a Gender Monitoring Office, a nation-wide gender sensitive budgeting initiative, and the creation of a National Gender Policy (Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, *National Gender Policy*, July 2010). It is these policies and measures, taken together in their entirety, that suggest that there has been a sustained *gender policy priority* within Rwanda. The fact that the Rwandan government continues to create and implement new policy measures aimed at reducing gender inequality makes it unique amongst cases of PCR.

This policy focus has meant that Rwanda has made credible gains on a number of gender indicators and has drawn global attention for the gains achieved. Significant attention has

⁹ Chapter Seven includes further analysis on disaggregated data based on income and geographic area, however, again, due to a lack of ethnicity indicator, it is not possible to further examine whether gains are primarily benefitting one particular group of women in Rwanda.

been given to the fact that Rwanda has a majority female parliament, which reached sixty-four per cent in the 2013 election (Government of Rwanda 23 September 2013) from fifty-six per cent in 2008 (United Nations Radio 19 September 2013). Headlines emerging from the international press such as *Rwanda: A revolution in rights for women*¹⁰ have contributed to the country's positive media coverage. Given this policy emphasis within Rwanda, the following research questions demand examination: why were gender policies a priority within post-conflict Rwanda? What role did the international community play in this process? and, What long-term impact has this had?

These gains in gender equality however, must be juxtaposed against the increased tightening of political space by President Kagame. Headlines such as *Paul Kagame: Rwanda's redeemer or ruthless dictator?* (Grant 2010) imply that these advances on gender indicators are not necessarily occurring within a benign political context. Examination of the role of gender policies as prioritized by the current government, and in particular by President Paul Kagame, suggests that the gender policy focus rests uneasily in a dynamic where although particular developmental gains for women are being achieved, the policy agenda is largely entwined with a larger political and developmental agenda that was initiated during the PCR period and is currently being implemented in Rwanda. In other words, the advances made by a gender policy agenda are largely part of a political agenda that hinges upon the retention of power. Understanding how this happened however, requires a review of the gender policy priority since the 1994 post-conflict period. Perhaps what began as a benign gender policy priority in 1994 has slowly been consolidated into a larger political and developmental umbrella in Rwanda.

Prior to exploring the specific context of post-conflict Rwanda and gender policies, I will first establish the motivation behind this research and contextualize it within a global stage. My research findings can be applied to a broad range of cases beyond Rwanda's borders; whilst Rwanda serves as the primary site of inquiry, the case is instructive for shedding light on how PCR gender policies may work in highly political ways and how these policies can have a long-term impact within PCR settings.

In the following sections I will examine various pieces of this puzzle in isolation including, 1. Why does PCR matter and what role does the international community play in these settings? 2. Why should gender matter within PCR contexts? and 3. How does this play out in Rwanda? I examine each issue separately.

¹⁰ See Boseley (2010).

Post-Conflict Reconstruction: A Significant Part of International Aid

Globally conflict and post-conflict contexts affect significant segments of the world's population, especially in poor nations (Stewart 2002). The 2011 World Bank World Development Report specifically focused on the issues of *Conflict, Security, and Development* and made the case that, '...one-and-a-half billion people live in areas affected by fragility, conflict, or large-scale organized criminal violence...' (World Bank 2011: 1). The World Development Report demonstrates that violence and more specifically, conflict-related violence, is a pervasive issue affecting a significant portion of the world's population.¹¹

A 2010 OECD report further indicates that forty-three states are fragile, which includes states on the verge of conflict, in conflict, or recently emerging from conflict (OECD Summary Report February 2010). Putzel and Di John (2012) have argued that fragile states are those that are, '...particularly vulnerable to outbreaks of large-scale violence...' (Putzel and Di John 2012: iii). Given this definition, we can see that a significant number of nations are vulnerable to conflict even if they are not necessarily defined as being *in conflict* as the condition of *vulnerability* suggests that nations are fragile. This vulnerability is particularly relevant to post-conflict settings.

Whilst the label 'post-conflict' may paint a picture that the cessation of conflict has occurred, this is not necessarily the case. Data suggests that most nations that are identified as being post-conflict, are not truly 'post-conflict'; nations that have been involved in conflict are much more likely to see a reoccurrence of violence in the future (World Bank 2011: 3). In 2000 the rate in which there was a violent onset in countries which had previous conflicts was 90% (World Bank 2011: 3). Cramer and Goodhand also contend that the label of 'post-conflict' may not necessarily be an adequate reflection of reality:

Given high levels of violence in the aftermath of apparently successful peace settlements in countries such as El Salvador, Mozambique, Nicaragua and South Africa, it should be a basic expectation that in a 'post-conflict' society, violence of one sort or another will continue to be one of the primary policy challenges. One reason is that in most countries after a formal peace deal the state still has not secured an effective monopoly over the means of violence. (Cramer and Goodhand 2002: 886)

Similarly, Beall et al. (2011: 2) make the case that conflict related violence extends beyond the explicit boundaries of a particular conflict by arguing that:

Our research suggests that civic conflict is on the rise, in relative if not absolute terms. This is linked in part to civil wars being in decline and being associated with

¹¹ Whilst the report focuses on violence beyond conflict, the case is clearly made that conflict and fragility contribute to the perpetuation of many forms of violence (World Bank 2011).

urbanisation processes that sometimes result in civic conflict. Where civil conflicts spiral into civic ones, they become increasingly urban in character. External intervention in sovereign conflicts can also give rise to new conflicts – particularly in cities – *even where the aim is ‘post-conflict’ reconstruction.* (My emphasis, Beall et al. 2011: 2)

This suggests that particular heed must be paid to policy-making processes when a nation initially emerges from conflict in order to mitigate circumstances which may pave the way for future violence. The ways in which PCR policy-making processes unfold can shape the longer-term outlook of a nation and the international community plays an increasingly pervasive role in shaping these contexts.

Whilst every conflict is unique, the one variable that is increasingly stable across post-conflict contexts is international community intervention. Contexts including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, for example (Ní Aoláin et al. 2011), currently illustrate the prevalence of international community involvement in a diverse set of conflicts and whilst these are not all necessarily *post-conflict* sites, the international community is involved in ‘rebuilding’ efforts in each of these.

There has been a demonstrable increase in PCR activity over the last fifteen years. Whilst reasons for this increase in activity are very much up for debate,¹² an examination of resource allocation, which is a good indicator of policy priorities, illustrates that there is increased funding directed to conflicts and PCR activities; donors have undeniably prioritized these contexts over the last two decades. Analysis conducted by Mlambo et al. indicate that overall overseas development assistance (ODA) to post-conflict nations has increased rapidly from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s (Mlambo et al. 2009: i62). Between 1995-2005 emergency aid as a percentage of ODA increased substantially for almost all of the thirteen post-conflict nations analysed (Mlambo et al. 2009: i65). This increase has continued throughout the 2000s as indicated by a 2010 OECD analysis: ‘ODA to fragile states has increased in real terms by 8.7% in 2008 to USD 33.2 billion, representing 30% of global ODA flows.’ (OECD Summary Report February 2010: 2)¹³

Increases in ODA can also be traced to increases in NGO and large international agency budgets. A brief examination of some of the largest NGOs and international agencies involved in PCR efforts indicates substantial increases in PCR budgets. As a representative

¹² Scholars such as Duffield (1997, 2007) would argue for example that post-conflict contexts allow for deeper international involvement in some of these settings. This is in contrast to the notion that post-conflict reconstruction comes under a humanitarian or development umbrella as many aid organizations argue (see UNHCR 2013 or DFID 2010 for example).

¹³ This report further indicates that of the forty-three fragile states examined, 51% of aid is directed to six states (OECD Summary Report February 2010: 2).

from *Save the Children*, a large NGO frequently involved in conflict and post-conflict settings, indicated at a 2004 USAID meeting on post-conflict reconstruction, ‘Ten years ago Save the Children was operating in seven conflict or post-conflict situations. Today they are operating in twenty-six such situations around the world’ (ACVFA Public Meeting Report, June 2004, 1). This is illustrative of ways in which international involvement by NGOs in post-conflict settings is increasing. Even in a global economic downturn, operating revenue for development agencies that are active in PCR settings, increased. Again using *Save the Children*, an NGO frequently involved in PCR settings, as an example, this trend can be seen; funding increased by almost \$100 million in one year alone between 2009 and 2010 (Save the Children 2011).¹⁴

Other organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, a key player in conflict and PCR activities, also saw similar funding upswings of close to \$100 million between 2009 and 2010 (ICRC 2009: 91, and ICRC 2010: 102); again these increases are particularly remarkable given that economic conditions bordering on recession in western donor nations would theoretically put pressure on aid budgets. These large (and increasing) budget allocations suggest that conflict and PCR related activities are very much a priority within the international development arena.

NGOs are one subset of the actors present in PCR contexts; international agencies, such as the World Bank or the United Nations, are also present in these contexts. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for example is one of the largest agencies working on conflict-related activities and is working in 120 countries and claims to be reaching 34 million people; Afghanistan, Chad, Columbia, DRC, Pakistan, Iraq, and Sudan account for its largest operations (UNHCR 2010). UNHCR has also seen an upsurge in resources since it was created:

UNHCR was launched on a shoestring annual budget of US\$3,000,000 in 1950. As its work and size have grown, the refugee agency’s expenditure has soared. Its annual budget rose to more than US\$1 billion in the early 1990s and reached a record US\$4.3 billion in 2012, compared to US\$1.8 billion in 2008.

A new annual high of US\$5.3 billion had been reached by the end of June 2013, including almost US\$4 billion for the annual budget and US\$1.3 billion for supplementary appeals. (UNHCR 2014)

¹⁴ This references overall operating revenue. Approximately 32% (almost \$150 million) of overall revenue was designated as funding for *emergencies* which includes war and conflict related spending as well as spending in natural disaster contexts (Save the Children 2011: 4).

The budget increases suggest that funding mandates for UNHCR have grown significantly and this has meant that the UNHCR has firmly established itself as a key agency in many conflict and PCR settings globally.¹⁵

Examining the data presented here in the aggregate indicates that conflict and PCR related development activities are a central concern for development agencies with tens of billions of dollars at stake annually. However as noted, there is substantial debate regarding *why* resources have been targeted to these contexts. Whilst international institutions, aid agencies or NGOs may seek to position post-conflict aid within a benign framework of ‘help’ or ‘moral imperatives’ for example (Gheciu and Welsh 2009),¹⁶ scholars such as Duffield argue that this form of international assistance simply affords the international community deeper, ‘...institutional reach through the expediency of permanent emergency’ (Duffield 2007: 33). Similarly, Keen argues that humanitarian aid is used by donor countries to strategically advance their own political agendas (Keen 2008: 116-117).

Further to these propositions, Uvin (1998), in an examination of the Rwandan genocide, suggests development aid is very much a political commodity. Uvin further argues that there is a lack of attention to the ways in which aid contributes to local political dynamics which in turn can lead to particularly devastating consequences such as genocide (Uvin 1998). In recent years, these propositions have contributed to more substantial examinations concerning the consequences of aid and international activity. As a 2010 OECD report focused on PCR policy-making and activities stated: ‘The consequences of not understanding the shape of a political settlement can lead donors, often unknowingly, to do harm to statebuilding’ (OECD 2010: 11).

In contrast to dominant trends over the past two decades, there have been recent nods to the notion that PCR policy-making strategies need to account for longer-term outcomes. The 2011 World Development Report and the *Do No Harm* report by the OECD (2010) highlight this need whilst Ajakaiye and Ali (2009) also note that post-conflict recovery requires policy-making and planning frameworks need to account for long-time horizons. The 2011 World Development Report specifically expresses the need for longer-term policies in preventing conflict and indicates that factors such as domestic accountability play a role in short-term programme cycles. The report details specific guidance:

¹⁵ The UNHCR was one of the primary agencies that established refugee camps outside of Rwanda’s borders during the genocide. These refugee camps were highly criticized because they were effectively points for the rearming and consolidation of *genocidaires*, those who orchestrated the Rwandan genocide.

¹⁶ See also Rugumamu and Gbla for example for a discussion on the ‘moral imperative to help those in dire need’ (December 2003: 12).

International agencies need to think carefully about how to lengthen the duration of assistance to meet the realities of institutional transformation over a generation without raising costs, (World Bank 2011: 33).

Due to the complex and violent context of conflict settings, analysis of PCR policies predominantly focuses on a narrow set of issues. These include refugee camps, peace negotiations, political leadership, transitional justice, elections, and economic indicators. Problematically, most of this analysis is conceptualized within short-term policy horizons and given gender policy issues often require long-term implementation timeframes, the short-term nature of PCR is particularly problematic. Though recent rhetoric promoted by international policy making institutions may imply that there is a greater focus on longer term PCR outcomes, these institutions rarely conduct analysis on long-term policy outcomes within policy creation and implementation processes. Academics such as Cramer and Goodhand (2002), Uvin (1998), and Keen (2008) largely critique these shortcomings.¹⁷ Whilst there are indeed contested rationales behind post-conflict policymaking, it nevertheless suggests that post-conflict reconstruction is very much a salient issue within contemporary international development initiatives.

Conflict and Unequal Gender Relations

Examining *gender issues* within PCR settings is critical. Particular gendered elements of conflict are frequently highlighted by both academics and development practitioners and often highlight experiences of women (such as rape) in conflict (Ní Aoláin et al.: 2011, Mazurana et al: 2005, Cockburn and Zarkov: 2002, and Cockburn: 2007). We can see for example that women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are being subjected to horrific acts of sexual violence in the context of conflict (Peterman et al.. 2011, Adetunji 2011) and an estimated quarter of a million women experienced sexual violence during the Rwandan genocide (Mutamba 2005: 9). However, even though highlighting the experiences of women in conflict could conceptually be viewed as an integration of gender issues within PCR processes, unfortunately the unequal gender dynamics that are inherent to political, social, and economic processes do not feature prominently on post-conflict agendas. Indeed, as the earlier critiques regarding PCR more generally highlighted the deficiency of these processes in adequately engaging with the political factors inherent to these contexts, the same can be said for the ways in which PCR gender analysis fails to account for the political context and instead seeks to prioritize ‘integrating women’ into these processes.

¹⁷ Afghanistan is a recent (as well as an on-going) example of this policy paradigm. As a US government analysis indicates, approximately \$19 billion spent by the US on foreign aid to Afghanistan over a ten year period was spent without adequate consideration for the negative long-term consequences of directing billions of dollars into a politically complex setting (Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate 2011). The Committee states, ‘We need more analysis of the effects – positive and negative – of our aid on the local population.’ (Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate 2011: 13).

Unequal gender relations also play an important role in a nation's propensity to engage in conflict. This is a critically important point that has implications on the international stage – a stage much larger than the state of Rwanda. As Caprioli (Caprioli 2000 and Caprioli et al. 2009) suggests, evidence demonstrates that nations with higher levels of gender equality have a higher propensity for peace, and nations involved in conflict are much more likely to be unequal in terms of gender equality. Though this does not prove causality, it nonetheless helps to contextualize the importance of examining the gendered dynamics that are inherent to conflict and post-conflict sites. States which have been deemed *fragile* according to the OECD (2012) also have low levels of gender equality (United Nations Development Programme 2013).

All of this suggests the importance of considering how post-conflict reconstruction policies address gender inequality is a necessary endeavour. Given that significant levels of international resources are being invested in post-conflict contexts a real opportunity exists to strategically address gender inequality via reconstruction policies. Billions of dollars are being spent annually on post-conflict contexts and within this allocation tens of millions are being spent on women's programming. Given these larger global trends regarding post-conflict reconstruction and gender issues and conflict, what can Rwanda tell us?

*From the Global Stage to Rwanda...*¹⁸

Brief overview of the genocide and the RPF coming to power

The Rwandan Genocide occurred from April-July 1994. During that period almost 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. Women also suffered extreme sexual violence (Sharlach 1999); it is estimated that approximately 250,000 women suffered sexual violence during that period (Mutamba and Izabiliza 2005: 9). During this period the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a rebel force primarily comprised of Tutsi refugees who had been driven out of Rwanda in the 1950s and their offspring, began moving into Rwanda from neighbouring Uganda to stop the genocide. As the RPF force led by Paul Kagame moved further into Rwanda, they were able to secure areas of the country where mass murder had taken place and on 4 July 1994, the RPF effectively ended the genocide by securing Kigali (Silva-Leander 2008: 1607). The RPF, which had been considered a rebel military

¹⁸ Some of the background information detailed in the following two sections is also summarized in a 2013 publication by Goodfellow and Smith, 'From urban catastrophe to 'model' city: Politics, security and development in post-conflict Kigali' in *Urban Studies*. Here, I am careful to utilize information that I had initially drafted.

movement at the time, is now largely credited with having prevented the total annihilation of the Tutsi population.

As the RPF led the transitional government after the genocide, high-ranking RPF military officials were also brought into the government at this time and this included a significant number of women. Many high-ranking female RPF officials ‘were part of the struggle’ and thus became an important part of the reconstruction efforts.¹⁹ Women such as Aloisea Inyumba and Rose Kabuye,²⁰ who were part of the RPF, retained positions within the new government: Inyumba was the first Minister of Women’s Affairs and Kabuye went on to become Chief of Protocol for President Kagame (Powley 2006: 5).²¹ The RPF leadership began working with international donors to secure funding for reconstruction efforts.²²

In Rwanda the post-conflict reconstruction period can generally be thought to encompass three phases; the first phase between 1994-1996 was largely the emergency phase, the second, the period between 1996-1998, was a time when Rwanda transitioned from a state of emergency to one of reconstruction, and the third came in approximately 1998-2000 when Rwanda began to transition from focusing on reconstruction to longer-term development by launching Vision 2020, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Joint Evaluation of General Budget Support, Rwanda Country Report 2006: S1). Around 2000 was also the time when donors began to shift to providing the Rwandan government with general budget support (Joint Evaluation of General Budget Support, Rwanda Country Report 2006: S2).

Why were Gender Policies a Priority in this PCR Context?

Given the complexities of post-conflict context that had a horrific genocide at its centre there were multiple factors in play that appear to have contributed to a focus on gender relations within Rwanda immediately following the genocide. There are limited debates however as to *why* gender issues were prioritized during this period. Examinations generally focus on particular gender and/or PCR issues (versus the broader policy context) and provide piecemeal explanations for the gender policy focus.

A particularly prominent theory in terms of why PCR processes unravelled the way they did in Rwanda (including the gender policy focus) concerns political will. There is a

¹⁹ References to women in *the struggle* are a common theme in writing about women in Rwanda; Powley (2006) for example, notes how interviewees stated women were an important part of the RPF military movement.

²⁰ Rose Kabuye had been arrested in Germany in 2008 on a French warrant alleging that she was part of the effort to take down Habriyamana’s plane, but the warrant was subsequently cancelled.

²¹ After leaving her ministerial position Inyumba held a seat in parliament and was recently reappointed as Minister of Gender and Family Promotion.

²² The returnee population in Kigali was able to draw from previously existing regional and international networks and to create new ones. Returnees also brought economic resources with them which helped them establish themselves in Kigali (Interview 13.2.09).

predominant focus on how the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) leader and current Rwandan president, Paul Kagame, prioritized gender concerns. Uwineza and Pearson (2009) suggested in regard to policies that promote women, ‘President Kagame himself leads this effort at the highest levels...’ (Uwineza and Pearson 2009: 16). As Rwanda has emerged from the immediate PCR period there has been a more substantial focus on the role of Kagame in setting the overall PCR policy agenda (Straus and Waldorf 2011). Whilst leadership commitment to these issues is undeniably critical to advancing gender equality, it is important to expand the examination beyond a particular leader (even one playing such a key role).

Literature (for example, Burnet 2008) indicates that when the genocide ended in July 1994, the majority of the population was female; the figure 70 per cent is often quoted.²³ Many more men than women had been killed during the genocide and men who had taken part in the genocide fled to neighbouring nations. Because of this, Devlin and Elgie (2008) and Powley (2003) have suggested that one reason gender issues have been prioritized was because women were a substantial majority of the population following the genocide. However, the fact that women constituted the majority of the population does not automatically translate into real power that influences policies. Moreover, women are not homogeneous in their attitudes and will not necessarily prioritize gender concerns simply because they are women (Mohanty 1988) especially in a post-conflict context where ethnicity remained a contentious issue.²⁴

Whilst it seemed that the political power of Kagame and a female majority were the most likely factors influencing a gender policy focus, these factors did not seem sufficient to explain the central question. Indeed, given the horrific ‘chaos’ following, the explanatory factor of these variables seemed to be overstated. In particular, the notion that Kagame was a driver behind the gender policy focus seemed over-determined. Kagame was undoubtedly an important figure during the post-conflict period, however, because his prominence has grown significantly over the past twenty years and he is currently the primary political figure in Rwanda, his current status has been and is unquestionably applied to his status during the post-conflict period. Although he was a critical player in post-conflict efforts, he did not have the same level of power in the post-conflict years that he currently has, yet

²³ Aloysia Inyumba as cited in Jones (2002). It is important to note that whilst this figure is often circulated, evidence verifying this number had been difficult to identify.

²⁴ Mohanty deconstructed the existence of an established notion of a “third world woman” (1988: 51) which historically appeared in feminist literature. While deconstructing a ‘singular monolithic subject’ of ‘woman’ (1988: 51) by examining differences between Western feminists and the “third world women”, Mohanty establishes a foundation for examining difference *between* women. Along with Mohanty, Saunders (2002), Lazreg (2002), Parpart (2002), and earlier work by Kandiyoti (1996) have all problematized the notion of a single unified notion of a universal ‘woman’.

contemporary analysis of Rwanda would suggest otherwise. It thus seemed that additional factors that were pertinent to the PCR context required examination.

Immediately following the genocide, almost 100% of Rwanda's national budget came from foreign aid; given this, exploring what effect, if any, this funding had on the post-conflict gender policy focus is necessary. This assistance provided emergency funding and helped to establish a new government within Rwanda (Ezemanri et al. 2008: 2, Gervais 2003: 543). Post-conflict Rwanda was a context where local and international components clearly came together in a substantial way. Newbury and Baldwin (2000) are particularly instructive here, as they argue that international aid played a role in the proliferation of women's organizations in the post-conflict period. Whilst this points to the fact that international involvement most likely played a role in Rwanda's post-conflict reconstruction policy focus, this factor is not at the forefront of literature concerning the PCR policy context within Rwanda.

The case of Rwanda is especially instructive and interesting: given the PCR context from which Rwanda was emerging, why did the transitional government led by Paul Kagame prioritize gender policies? Given the role of the international community within post-conflict Rwanda, did this involvement have a role in this priority? Adding additional complexity is the fact that President Kagame is tightening political control within Rwanda's borders whilst simultaneously prioritizing the eradication of gender inequality via policy measures.²⁵ Critiques of Rwanda's government point out that policy measures are frequently dictated from above, which more strongly suggests that gender policy within Rwanda is intertwined with a political agenda (Burnet 2008, Hintjens 2008).²⁶ Burnet, in her research on gender issues in Rwanda from 1997-2007, explains that there is a tightening of political control in Rwanda and as a result, when it comes to female political representation a paradox exists:

As a result of this increasing authoritarianism, female political participation represents a paradox in the short term: as their participation has increased, women's ability to influence policy-making has decreased. In the long term, however, the increased participation of women could prepare the path for their meaningful participation in a genuine democracy. (Burnet 2008: 363)

²⁵ This will be discussed in much more depth in the following chapters.

²⁶ As this research will demonstrate, informants that I interviewed did feel that political will was instrumental in ensuring that gender equality was a policy priority; one informant noted political will from the top was critical for change to occur (Interview 18.2.09). However, the level of political oversight is becoming increasingly problematic. For example, the link between civil society/grassroots efforts is very much entwined with governmental development efforts (Gready 2011). All NGOs must work through government structures and must be approved by the government in order to implement programming (Burnet 2008: 376, Mugabe 2008). NGO registration and oversight falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Local Government.

Burnet rightly states that the high percentage of female political representation in Rwanda provides significant credit to the current government in the form of international recognition and also provides a positive point to be relied upon in the case of governmental criticism (Burnet 2008: 362). Adding a further critique regarding the Kagame presidency is the recent volume edited by Straus and Waldorf (2011) which suggests that state institutions are utilized for political control and gain by Kagame. The gender policy priority has a place within a larger political agenda.

PCR contexts are clearly sites of varied policies and the need to explore how these policies are created and their subsequent impact on local populations is increasingly becoming more evident. The case of Rwanda provides invaluable lessons on how development policies prioritized during the post-conflict phase clearly have an impact in terms of longer-term outcomes. Positioning of gender policies within the political context of Rwanda is rarely done, therefore this research also seeks to provide insight on how PCR policy structures can be utilized for political gains whether in the immediate PCR context or in longer-term time horizons. Indeed, analysis I conducted of gender policy documents demonstrates that the politicization of gender policies may be occurring in contemporary Rwanda.²⁷

This PhD research utilizes a case-study framework and takes an integrated approach to research as its central core. PCR contexts are clearly complex – and the culmination of both international and local processes actually create the policy arena for PCR. Gender equality has its place within these policy settings. These strands unfortunately do not lend themselves to a neat and tight analysis; instead the complexity is what allows the insight to emerge and demonstrates that PCR contexts need to be re-examined through nuanced lenses.

Methodological Approach

As the central research question pertains to *why was there a gender policy focus in post-conflict Rwanda* and the secondary questions examine *what was the role of the international community within this process*, and *what was the longer-term impact of this policy focus*, a case study approach was utilized. I integrated qualitative and quantitative methods in order to capture both the individual components that were inherent to the PCR context as well as the dynamics that were in place during that period.

The 1994 genocide was a traumatic period in Rwanda; a period of approximately 100 days of conflict shaped the subsequent trajectory of the country. Whilst the 1994 genocide all but

²⁷ This will be explored in depth in Chapter Five.

obliterated the state and state infrastructure along with literal and psychological destruction of the population, the historical and social antecedents leading to the genocide did not simply evaporate.²⁸ It is within this context that this case study unfolded. As Gerring notes in a discussion regarding case study methodology, ‘The observational world does not usually provide cases with both temporal variation (making possible “pre” and “post” tests) and spatial variation (“treatment” and “control” cases) across variables of theoretical interest, whilst holding all else constant.’ (Gerring 2007: 172). This is especially true when examining Rwanda. Whilst not having the opportunity to conduct a pre and post test to determine what factors can be proven to have caused the PCR gender policy focus, certain factors present in Rwanda make it an important site for this type of inquiry; the relatively small size of Rwanda, an immediate change in government, the large amounts of international activity and funding following the 1994 genocide all indicate that Rwanda presents an optimal site for an examination of gender issues within post-conflict reconstruction and the longer-term impact these policies and processes have on gender attitudes.

Kigali, Rwanda served as the primary site of inquiry for fieldwork research; this was chosen due to the fact that the capital is currently the place of national policy-making institutions as well as the site where policy decisions were made during the post-conflict period, as the 1996 Joint Evaluation by the Relief and Rehabilitation Network demonstrates. As a site of development aid distribution during the reconstruction period, the likelihood of interviewing people involved in these efforts was also higher in the capital than in other parts of Rwanda. Due to a national redistricting exercise in 2006, Kigali comprises both urban and rural areas and this also helped to provide a spatial variation on urban and rural populations (Ministry of Natural Resources no date: 27).

Because initial research on Rwanda revealed that the contemporary political context was restrictive, it was critical to design a methodological approach that could be utilized in such an environment. As Swedlund, Loyle, and I suggested (2012) the political context had a significant impact on how the fieldwork research was designed: ‘The Rwandan political context influenced our experience conducting research in several ways – both indirectly and directly. Each of the three co-authors entered Rwanda following a wave of backlashes against researchers who took a critical perspective on the regime.’ (Swedlund, Loyle, and Smith 2012: 8)

²⁸ For further information see: African Rights 1995, Baines 2005, Des Forges 1999, Gourevitch 1999, Goodfellow 2009, Hayman 2007, Mutamba 2005, Newbury and Baldwin 2000, Prunier 1995, and Straus 2006.

Researchers who focus on Rwanda have uniformly had to contend with issues regarding ethnicity within their work. Extensive research emerging from Rwanda has indicated that the government was clearly concerned with *Rwandan unity*; this meant that the government was promoting a discourse and ideology that actively suggested that all Rwandans were the same and differences amongst the Rwandan people did not exist. This presents a difficult methodological challenge in a context where one ethnic group attempted to eradicate another ethnic group via genocide.

The Rwandan government actively sought to erase any notions of differences amongst the population in policy and discourse. This could be seen for example in Demographic and Health Surveys; the 1992 DHS survey contained an ethnicity indicator (DHS 1992: 3 and 212) whilst surveys conducted after the genocide did not (DHS 2000, 2005, DHS 2007-08 and DHS 2010). The only indication of ethnicity that appears in DHS reports following the 1994 genocide, can be seen in the 2010 report in reference to the, ‘...Genocide of the Tutsis...’ (DHS 2010: 3) or ‘Tutsi genocide’ (DHS 2010: 11).²⁹

The introduction of a 2008 Genocide Ideology law preventing actions that would potentially increase ethnic hatred, also led to restrictions on how ethnicity was discussed in practice. Authors such as Waldorf (2011) had stated that under this law, the government was able to suppress political opposition by contending that opposition candidates were attempting to divide the Rwandan population and stir up ethnic hatred. In practice, this meant that any deep analytical explorations into existing differences amongst Hutus and Tutsis was actively discouraged by the government and viewed as a potential threat to peace. This made it difficult to research any issues related to ethnicity that were potentially deemed sensitive in terms of government policy. As Waldorf suggested, ‘Rwanda’s law on genocide ideology is so broadly drafted that it is easily manipulated for personal and political reasons. It also conflates any challenges to the government’s master narratives on the genocide and reconciliation with genocide ideology’ (Waldorf 2011: 59). These contextual realities thus limit the scope of what researchers can examine.

Zorbas for example, had indicated that respondents in her research had indicated that, ‘...ethnicity did not exist’ (Zorbas 2009: 130). She further suggested that this sentiment was largely due to governmental narratives that had permeated even though this was not the case in reality; issues of ethnicity were indeed pertinent to Rwanda especially given that genocide

²⁹ This also represents an interesting shift in language between the 2000 and 2010 reports in that the genocide was officially referred to as a genocide against the Tutsi.

had been so central to shaping Rwanda's trajectory since 1994. Burnet (2012) also contended with these issues and explained this in her research:

In the lexicon of postgenocide Rwanda, however, only Tutsi women can be called "genocide survivors." Hutu women who were targeted for killing or raped by Interahamwe militia-men or whose husbands and children were killed in the genocide are not called "survivors" in Rwanda today. To resist this erasure of survivor status from those who experienced the genocide as victims, I do not use the term "survivor" only for Tutsi women. *In fact, during my research I was often unsure of the ethnicity of interviewees, since asking direct questions about it was forbidden in practice, and more recently by law, in Rwanda.* (My emphasis, Burnet 2012: 7)

Burnet also indicated that she was verbally attacked after presenting research in Rwanda that questioned the official state narratives and explained: 'After the genocide, the RPF-led government made national reconciliation its exclusive political territory' (Burnet 2012: 148). This illustrates a particular challenge that researchers encounter if attempting to also integrate analysis on ethnicity into their work; it is neither acceptable in practice or in law. Whilst it is widely recognized that in a context where one group attempted to kill another group, issues concerning ethnicity require examination, it is a very risky endeavour to do this within Rwanda. This means that an important underlying issue, ethnicity, is rarely explicitly examined within the literature as well as within this research.

Thus, the political and social environment of Rwanda played a key role in shaping the approaches utilized within this research. Knowing in advance that the government had tight control and oversight of the population influenced the overall research design. Issues concerning ethnicity could not overtly be discussed, for example.

However, attempting to work within these limits meant employing a research strategy consisting of both qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry that would allow for a triangulation of results (G. Miller and Fox 2006: 36). As Fischer notes:

In many ways, the adoptions of a multi-methodological approach opens the door to a more subtle and complex form of rigour. Instead of narrowly concentrating on the rules of research design, combined with statistical analysis (which usually passes for empirical rigour), the postempiricist approach brings into play a multi-methodological range of intellectual skills both qualitative and quantitative. (Fischer 2003: 132)

Pursuing a research strategy that allowed for a triangulation of results was especially important in a context such as Rwanda; analysis from different methodological approaches would help reveal insight into the reach of PC gender policies which in turn would help contextualize the political nature of these policies.

In conjunction with research for the LSE Crisis States Research Centre, I went to Kigali to research both technical aspects of the city, such as governance structures, civil society

networks, and internal workings of the city council, along with ways in which gender policies are prioritized and implemented. During fieldwork I employed research methods consisting of semi-structured in-depth interviews, community group discussions, and a gender attitudes survey of over two hundred people in Kigali. I spent approximately four months (in two separate trips) in Kigali, with the first visit serving as an initial scoping exercise to determine whether indeed factors beyond a majority female population and Paul Kagame's priorities were at play in the post-conflict gender policy focus. I attempted to meet with a wide sample of interviewees in order to obtain a general perspective on the reasons for the post-conflict gender policy focus.

Whilst in-depth interviews could be conducted on a more informal basis, I was required to obtain government permission at every level in order to hold community group discussions and to conduct the gender attitudes survey in market places in Kigali; seeking the required authorizations of course added logistical barriers throughout the fieldwork. Whilst government officials at all levels, from the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIDGEPROF) to district representatives, were all very helpful, identifying and speaking with the necessary people could be challenging. Formal authorization from the ministry was a requirement before I was able to meet with community members and frequent visits to the MIDGEPROF office were required in order to obtain this authorization. Written permission was then needed from district level officials to speak to community members and to conduct surveys within market places in a given district. The authorization process took approximately three weeks in total.

Whilst I was conducting research on a post-conflict policy context it was important to remember that my research was about policies which unfolded immediately after a genocide. Indeed as Mazurana, Gale, and Jacobsen argue, conflict settings change rapidly (2013: 7); this is certainly true in the case of Rwanda where the genocide unfolded over the course of one hundred days. In their work on the psychological effects of living in conflict settings, de Jong et al (2001) demonstrate that there are long-term consequences to experiencing conflict. This could be particularly problematic in terms of *recall bias*, as people's recollections may not be completely accurate or alternatively, they may have difficulty remembering events (de Jong et al 2001: 561). This was indeed a factor that I had to recognize within my research. I attempted to account for this particular challenge by asking detailed follow-up questions in order to seek out the most accurate information possible. High level government officials and aid workers tended to recollect the immediate post-conflict policy realities with ease; however, I found that recollection of the gender policy

focus in the immediate post-conflict period was minimal within the larger community due to the personal circumstances from which people were emerging after the genocide.

There was also a significant practical implication to conducting the research on Rwanda's post-conflict context; much of the information needed to facilitate this examination had largely been lost due to the inherent complexities of the post-conflict period. Record keeping immediately following the genocide was not a high priority, so country level documentation research yielded little.³⁰ There was also a difficulty in tracking down individuals who had worked on gender policy issues in the immediate PCR period as many had left their jobs and their successors were not necessarily able to identify who had been working on gender issues in the mid-to-late 1990s.

Interviews

Though there were challenges in terms of identifying people who had been significant players in the PCR period, interviews with many officials and NGO representatives in Rwanda yielded important information. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were a useful method to employ as they allowed for interesting details to be brought to light regarding the PCR gender policy focus. Though interviews, of course, have their methodological limitations, as Miller and Glassner (2004) recognize, '...interviewees sometimes respond to interviewers through the use of familiar narrative constructs, rather than by providing meaningful insights into their subjective view.' (Miller and Glassner 2004: 127) This challenge takes on added complexity in the case of Rwanda where strong levels of suspicion among people is ever present and thus interviewees may potentially be guarded in their responses. The 2007 World Values Survey demonstrated that Rwandans had the lowest level of social trust globally of the ninety countries surveyed (Munyandamutsa and Foa 2007: 39) which meant substantial consideration had to be granted to the levels in which people may filter or self-censor their responses.

I conducted fifty-five in-depth semi-structured interviews, with both men and women, in Kigali, Rwanda. Interviewees included political figures, NGO representatives, donors, and men and women who were associated with community level cooperative groups. An anonymised list of interviewees can be found in Appendix A. The sample included individuals who were part of the reconstruction process and those who currently work on gender issues. I also had many informal conversations that granted insight into gender

³⁰ Rwanda's reporting mechanisms are incredibly strong now so a plethora of information concerning the contemporary gender policy agenda was widely available.

issues within Rwanda; whilst these conversations were not recorded nor counted as part of the sample, these informal discussions helped me to obtain a sense of potential avenues to explore within formal interviews.

Most of the interviews were conducted in English and where translation was needed, a research assistant translated into the local language of Kinyarwanda. Many of the national or city level government officials interviewed spoke English, whilst most of the local NGO representative interviews required translation. Because English was one of the main languages of government officials, there was likely a Tutsi bias in terms of government interviewees.³¹

Even when taking these factors into consideration, interviews do provide methodological value as they provide insight into the social reality of the interview participant (Miller and Glassner 2004: 126). It had also been my experience³² that people are very opinionated in discussions about gender and these conversations can often be contextualized in larger *cultural* versus *political* processes which, in the case of Rwanda, may open the way to a more honest, transparent dialogue. The focus on *gender issues* (versus issues that were perceived to be overtly political) may thus have opened the door to more transparent dialogue than other politically sensitive topics such as RPF reprisals following the genocide. Due to potential sensitivities within Rwanda however, confidentiality was an issue. Because of this, I assured people that I would keep interviewee names confidential and I did not record interviews.

The in-depth interviews shed significant light on a number of the critical components that contributed to the gender policy focus during the reconstruction period and also on the political dynamics contributing to policy implementation within Rwanda. These interviews also provided nuanced insight into where potential political sensitivities may lie. In-depth interviews revealed interesting information about the post-conflict gender policy focus; I was able to then delve further into this information within community group discussions. This allowed for a secondary way to verify findings from in-depth interviews.

³¹ Many of the governmental officials at the national level have roots in the RPF exile experience in Uganda and this is where English was acquired. Therefore, if officials spoke English well, this was a sign that they may have been linked to the RPF movement that was exiled in Uganda prior to the 1994 genocide.

³² This was partly surmised from professional experience working in other sub-Saharan African states.

Group Discussions and Gender Attitudes Survey

Group interviews are predicated on the premise that discussion among participants will reveal information that may not be uncovered in one-on-one interviews as participants are also reacting to what other participants say (Wilkinson: 178). Group discussions with men and women were utilized within this research in order to help gather information on multiple aspects of the research: for example *why did people feel gender was a policy priority during reconstruction*, and *what are the some of the concerns people have regarding gender issues currently*. After receiving the necessary written approvals, I held three community group discussions³³ with a total of twenty people in order to obtain an overall sense as to how people viewed gender issues and why they thought there was a gender policy priority in Rwanda. The free flow of conversation allowed people to speak more freely and respond to each other. It also provided an opportunity to follow up on discussion points; this led to the unearthing of critical nuances that were pertinent to the research.

Given the level of social mistrust in Rwanda (as exemplified for example by the 2007 World Values Survey results discussed above), there was a risk that group interviews might not be the most useful methodological approach; however inquiries into this issue suggested that people may in fact prefer group interviews because a group setting would potentially provide an additional level of anonymity between me, the researcher, and subject.³⁴ These discussions provided insight on gender issues during the reconstruction period and on the current status of gender relations. The data obtained during these discussions subsequently directly fed into the survey creation process.

I needed to obtain quantitative data on gender attitudes in order to determine whether current attitudes could be mapped onto *international* or *local* gender ideologies. As discussed in the introduction, little quantitative evidence demonstrating how post-conflict policies have a longer-term impact in local contexts exists. As Janes indicates, ‘A survey or questionnaire will be at its best when getting a snapshot of the current state of affairs in a given group or population...’ (Janes 2001: 419). The survey would thus allow for a quantitative *snapshot* to help capture the impact of gender policies within Rwanda; it would also allow for perspective on how post-conflict reconstruction policies shape outcomes in subsequent years. In order to obtain this information, I implemented a gender attitudes survey in market places throughout urban and rural Kigali. Due to the political context, I had to be careful to ensure the survey would be acceptable to the Rwandan authorities. The supporting

³³ Two groups were all female and one group was both male and female.

³⁴ These discussions were all translated by a volunteer research assistant. The discussions were all facilitated by me so I could ask appropriate follow-up questions. The groups were primarily identified via local NGOs or local cooperatives. No one received payment for attending the discussions although I did provide refreshments.

documentation for the 2007 World Values Survey mentioned earlier indicated that the Rwandan government would only allow the survey to be administered if twelve questions were removed (The Steadman Group 2007: 5),³⁵ thus highlighting the extensive oversight and control the government has on research conducted within its borders. Factors such as this required careful consideration in the survey design and implementation. In Chapter Seven (which includes a discussion of survey results) I provide more detail on the survey design so below I only present a truncated discussion on the survey.

I designed a gender attitudes survey based on interview and community group discussion findings. The survey was implemented in five market places throughout Kigali after field testing. In total 232 surveys were conducted and 225 of those were actually completed and used for analysis; approximately half the sample was female, half male and approximately half the sample was urban and half rural. A more detailed explanation of the survey can be found in Chapter Seven.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a further research strategy employed here in order to determine whether current gender attitudes can be traced to policies that emanated from the post-conflict reconstruction period. This, in turn, will help assess the importance and origins of particular factors within Rwanda's gender policy focus within the PCR period and whether these policies may have been politicized following the PC years.

Discourse analysis can take on a plethora of meanings, which complicates its employment as a methodological approach. Whilst the origins of discourse analysis primarily rest with Foucault and his attempts to trace knowledge to socially constructed meanings and power relations (Foucault 1969), discourse analysis has also evolved into a technical approach. Potter indicates, 'DA has an analytic commitment to studying discourse as *texts and talk in social practices*' (Potter 2006: 202). As *gender* itself refers to socially constructed meanings and practices surrounding what it is to be male or female, discourse analysis thus serves as an appropriate method for examining social constructs within policies.

Discourse analysis within my research framework is operationalised by examining local and international documents such as policy documents, in order to locate the underlying gendered constructs embedded in Rwanda's reconstruction process. More specifically, this entails examining an international policy document, such as the Beijing Platform for

³⁵ The questions removed included for example a question on whether people had confidence in the armed forces and the government or whether human rights are respected within Rwanda (The Steadman Group 2007: 5).

Action³⁶, against Rwanda's National Gender Strategy to compare similarities and differences of gendered constructs presented in the documents. Discourse analysis is necessary to reveal whether current gendered constructs are linked to local or international influences that were initiated during the reconstruction period. It will also help to reveal if these representations are further linked to gender attitudes at an individual level through the gender attitudes survey.

Aid Data Analysis

In order to examine aid allocations to Rwanda for the post-conflict period, as well as over the longer-term, I accessed data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) database. I conducted primary analysis on this data to uncover funding allocations to women's organizations and institutions as well as gender-related activities more broadly. A more detailed explanation of this database can be found in Chapter Six.

Chapter Outline

As discussed in earlier sections, the political and social constraints in Rwanda required that careful attention was given to working within *acceptable* boundaries, especially whilst conducting fieldwork. As indicated, I was not able to explicitly unravel ways ethnicity worked and had an impact on gender policy dynamics within Rwanda; there is no doubt that differences amongst women in a post-conflict context emerging from genocide existed, however, the political context did not allow for nuanced, in-depth analysis on this point. This is of course an analytical limitation of the research. However, the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative methods did allow interesting insights to emerge. In contrast to many of the contemporary hegemonic debates on PCR in Rwanda, I contend that there were five key factors that helped set the stage for Rwanda's post-conflict gender policy focus: 1. Female majority, 2. Grassroots efforts, 3. Political will, 4. The Beijing Conference on Women, and 5. International Aid. The following chapter outline briefly summarizes how each chapter demonstrates that the gender policy priority within Rwanda had as much to do with local factors as it did with international involvement. This case illustrates how political factors can be a critical component of any PCR context and the policies that are implemented during that period have serious effects well into the future.

³⁶ Within my research to date the Beijing Platform for Action has emerged as a key policy document framing Rwanda's national gender policies.

Chapter Two provides a theoretical discussion to examine these issues. An exploration of gender and conflict theory demonstrates there is a substantial theoretical gap that, when uncovered, helps to further explain Rwanda's post-conflict gender policy focus. Particular attention is paid to the intersection of feminist critiques that argue gender issues within development have largely been depoliticized and larger development debates that suggest larger developmental processes (including PCR) ignore the importance of political factors.

Chapter Three provides a brief historical overview of gender relations prior to the genocide, in the context in which the genocide unfolded, and within the PCR context. I also examine policy changes that have occurred subsequent to the takeover of the RPF in 1994. I highlight ways in which feminist grassroots in Rwanda began to take hold in the late 1980s and early 1990s to suggest that, whilst the current government is largely credited with the gender policy focus, Rwandan women were making strides in this area prior to the RPF taking power in 1994.

Chapter Four explores the ways in which a majority female population and grassroots efforts by women played a significant role in setting the stage for the PCR gender policy focus. Because there has been an almost sole focus on Rwanda's political trajectory (particularly under Kagame), the actions of women within the PCR period have been sidelined within the macro-level political analysis. This exploration provides helps to balance the dominance of literature that prioritizes political will as the sole influence of Rwanda's PCR trajectory.

Chapter Five explicitly examines how political will, and specifically the role of President Paul Kagame, indeed helps explain why gender policies were prioritized in the PCR period. I examine explanations that suggest the PCR (and current) gender policy focus is largely due to the linkages between the RPF's and its historical experience in Uganda. Within this chapter I uncover deeper rationales which motivated the RPF to ensure gender issues were a critical part of the PCR agenda; these factors reveal that women in the RPF were central to the overall political focus on women.

Chapter Six contains an in-depth analysis of how international factors contributed to the gender policy focus. Under-examined factors, such as foreign aid directed to women's organizations, as well as the Beijing Conference on Women, are investigated to demonstrate that these dynamics also contributed to setting the foundations for a gender policy focus within the PCR period. What emerges within this chapter is that aid was critical to providing financial backing to women's organizations and this in turn contributed to the overall reconstruction and rebuilding of Rwanda. I also suggest the Beijing Conference on

Women, and particularly the Platform that emerged from the conference, provided Rwanda with a gender policy roadmap that the government was subsequently able to utilize as a foundation for its national policy.

Chapter Seven examines the effects of the PCR gender policy focus. The chapter contains an analysis of a gender attitudes survey I conducted in market places throughout Kigali, Rwanda. By exploring contemporary attitudes, this survey quantified whether gender policies have had an impact beyond the rhetorical policy level. I further explore the national policy structures that have played a role in gender policy dissemination. The end of the chapter explores the effects of the gender policy more broadly, particularly in terms of the larger political agenda that has been implemented in Rwanda over the past two decades as well as the linkages between this agenda and development aid.

Chapter Eight concludes the research and suggests that the gender policy focus, despite measurable gains in particular development-related areas, cannot be viewed separately from the political context. Viewing the evidence through the larger theoretical framework established in Chapter Two suggests that the gender policy focus was driven by factors beyond political will, yet the political consolidation that has occurred over the past two decades has, ironically, largely rendered these factors, especially the role of women, invisible. I suggest that this theoretically places feminist conflict theory in a tenuous position, as Rwanda has largely been set forth as the PCR gender policy success story.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Propositions

The debates concerning post-conflict reconstruction largely call into question how a nation should emerge from conflict. Within this chapter I focus on a conceptual framework that assesses both mainstream PCR theory as well as feminist theory in order to capture all factors pertinent to Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus. I largely argue three propositions in relation to this research: firstly, mainstream PCR literature is particularly valuable in questioning the role of the international community within PCR settings, and for highlighting that structural inequalities are often inherent to conflict and PCR contexts. However, as feminist theorists point out, there is a central deficiency in that this literature fails to adequately engage with issues of gender inequality. Secondly, feminist PCR literature has demonstrated that women have often been invisible within PCR efforts, and as such, they must be *included* in these processes; the primary lines of this debate have centred upon notions of *inclusion*. Thirdly, current PCR analysis on Rwanda has prioritized political will as the primary explanation for Rwanda's PCR trajectory and this has resulted in a skewed understanding of the PCR context as it existed in the immediate PCR period. I explore these propositions and illustrate how each body of literature paves the way for a more nuanced understanding of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus than contemporary analysis on PCR in Rwanda would suggest.

Mainstream Propositions on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Feminist Challenges

As demonstrated in the introduction, PCR activities are on the rise and these efforts are falling under the larger umbrella of development. As Easterly and Williamson indicate, donors "...began in the 1990s to emphasize more democracy and corruption and to intervene more aggressively in post-conflict reconstruction and "fixing failed states" (Easterly and Williamson: 39). Conflicts arising in the early 2000s (particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan) have led to increased debate concerning PCR activities that are largely focused on processes of state-building or international community involvement in local contexts. Gheciu and Welsh (2009) spoke to international community efforts within PCR and articulated the lines of debate as follows:

Those members of the international community who serve in and support such missions contend that these activities represent rational and ethical attempts to support such "universal" goods as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and thereby create conditions under which those who have endured conflict and disruption can pursue the "good life." Critics, meanwhile, argue that the practices of post-conflict reconstruction themselves violate the basic rights of liberties of local populations, labelling some

instances of international administration as neo-colonialism. (Gheciu and Welsh 2009: 121)

Democracy in particular has gained saliency as a PCR goal. However, as Bayart notes, interestingly ‘Democracy’ has contributed to processes that actually help consolidate power (Bayart 2000: 226). The primary locus of analysis that emerges from this debate is that international community activity is the driver of PCR activities and thus, international community involvement in local contexts is centrally questioned.

This is a key question at the heart of PCR dynamics. Duffield (1997) for example, takes issue with the ways in which the international community targets conflict and post-conflict contexts:

Mainstream aid policy regards internal war as resulting from a combination of economic scarcity and institutional weakness. It is thought to be irrational and represents a breakdown of normal state structures and relations. The role of aid is to restore the balance upset by conflict and to re-establish harmony. In this manner, societies can be helped onto or assisted to rejoin the path to liberal-democracy. (Duffield 1997: i)

Duffield further indicates that one of the central problems in this conceptualization of state breakdown (as well as the international policy response to that breakdown) is that it fails to identify the structural inequalities (Duffield 1997: 75) that paved the way for the onset of conflict. Structural inequalities are a key underlying issue that play out in terms of conflict (Uvin 1998) though international community actors frequently ignore these dynamics in pursuit of a rhetorically benign development agenda.

In an aptly named article titled ‘Try Again, Fail Again, Fail Better?’ (which nicely maps onto Ferguson’s (1994) succeed/failed paradigm), Cramer and Goodhand (2002) reveal that much of the focus of development is about, ‘...a fantasy of liberal states benignly providing basic services and public goods.’ (Cramer and Goodhand 2002: 885) They continue by noting that these fantasies, ‘... are never more common than at the beginning of so called ‘post-conflict’ moments (Cramer and Goodhand 2002: 885). Whilst they explore the post-conflict challenges in Afghanistan, their analysis problematizes ways in which foreign aid has contributed to preserving, and indeed exacerbating, systems of structural violence over decades. This position is in direct agreement with Peter Uvin (1998) who demonstrated how international aid directly contributed to the foundation that set the context for genocide in Rwanda.

Indeed, Cramer and Goodhand demonstrate with ease that, historically in Afghanistan, foreign aid and grants played a critical role in allowing rulers to tighten their domestic control (Cramer and Goodhand 2002: 893). Central to their analysis (implicitly) are the

political effects of foreign aid. Whilst numerous practitioners of post-conflict reconstruction prefer to prioritize issues such as emergency measures or economic growth, Cramer and Goodhand highlight how post-conflict processes are inherently *political* processes even if development practitioners implicitly attempt to be apolitical.

These positions are in sharp contrast to the plethora of literature that calls for more money to be directed to developmental contexts more generally (Sachs 2005). Indeed the development orthodoxy concerning PCR would indicate that PCR needs an ever increasing resource base in order to *succeed*; however, this does little to help understand the *effects* of foreign aid within highly complex, political settings and can instead exacerbate negative political, social, and economic processes which established the foundation for conflict in the first place.³⁷

Analysis that problematizes the way the international community addresses PCR contexts has undoubtedly opened the door to a more nuanced understanding of the factors that underpin PCR efforts. Of particular importance is a heightened focus on the ways political settlements emerge in the final stages of a conflict (Parks and Cole 2010); this partially attempts to account for structural (and political) inequalities. Centralizing political settlements places particular emphasis on the need to engage with the roles of elites within PCR settings. It further highlights the dynamics between actors and institutions in order to arrive at a better understanding of the potential tenability of peace within a post-conflict context (Parks and Cole 2010, Hesselbein et al. 2006, and DFID 2010). In demonstrating the need to ensure that political agreements are a critical part of PCR efforts, Englebert and Tull (2008) further point out that elite political figures can utilize PCR processes for their own gain.

Adding to the notion that PCR processes are indeed political ones, the OECD advises that strengthening state capacity is a critical component in a nation's successful transition from a conflict to a peaceful state and donors must start paying more attention to these components; further to this, strong arguments are made to critically address the political processes at play within PCR contexts. Research conducted for the OECD Do No Harm Report argues:

³⁷ Adding to this particular binary is the fact that a chasm can be seen between an increasingly critical academic community and the development practitioner community. Indeed, because so much of the development and PCR discourse is dominated by the *practice* of development, public discussion is skewed towards the donor and practitioner community whose primary objectives lie in a continual quest for funding. There is, of course, also the altruistic public image of aid, or the *moral* side of aid, that is particularly inherent to conflict or emergency contexts. However, as Riddell (2007) and others suggest, perhaps this notion does not necessarily contribute to positive change globally and rather, we need to think more critically about how development processes unfold in local contexts in order to adequately assess the outcomes. Others including Easterly (2006), Cohen and Easterly (2009), and Ferguson (1994) have taken issue with the *practice* of development.

Political processes are the mechanisms by which the relations between state and society are mediated and bargains are struck and institutionalised. Donors need to understand how their interventions may affect political processes and especially the political settlement, which is the particular balance of power that exists in any reigning political settlement that underpins the state. (OECD 2010: 37)

Partial permeation of these arguments is beginning to appear within the practitioner community. For example, a recent World Bank World Development Report advocated for a more holistic approach to understanding violence, accounting for both social and economic dynamics which contribute to it (World Bank 2011: 2) and efforts by donors such as DFID have further indicated that political factors play a critical role in long-term outcomes (Beswick 2011: 1921).

Given the level of international activity within PCR contexts, '*politicisation of aid*' has increasingly become a salient critique within PCR (Duffield 2010).³⁸ This critique necessarily questions the integration of donor political objectives with the merging of development agendas. In a 2010 article Duffield integrates a Foucauldian perspective in exploring how donor architectural arrangements of fortified buildings within beneficiary nations have both physical and symbolic implications for *development* in post-conflict nations. Here, Duffield directly engages with notions of power: 'What is noteworthy about aid's material assemblages, at least with respect to the power effects, is that aid policy tends to operate as if such effects do not exist' (Duffield 2010: 454). Though Duffield is specifically referencing the physical infrastructure of aid within local environments, this notion also directly applies to non-material effects of aid; donor and aid agencies fail to consider how aid policy can have an impact on power or political relations within local contexts. He continues: '...the aid industry has no sovereignty or power effects of its own. In closing the gap between juridical and empirical sovereignty, it operates as a benign 'hidden hand' (Duffield 2010: 454).

Examining the deeper impact of international intervention is critical to an analysis on PCR in Rwanda, as it allows for an analysis that reaches beyond political will.

Examining literature that explores larger process (not just ones that explicitly pertain to conflict) concerning the politicization of aid helps capture ways that political factors can play a role in PCR donor agendas. Though critics of development aid have been able to demonstrate that the intermingling of donor political agendas and aid agendas lead to a politicization of aid on the part of the donor nations, aid in practice is continually placed into

³⁸ Whilst Duffield focuses particularly on post-intervention sites, his larger critiques are applicable to larger developmental debates, thus I have chosen to integrate this discussion here as opposed to within the section on PCR literature.

a dynamic which focuses on the *moral* obligation to give aid (Ferguson 1994: 15). ‘Those who can should help those who are in extreme need.’ (Riddell 2007:1) Riddell’s opening to his book nicely captures how this moral side of development is constructed within popular discourses on *development*. However, filtering aid through a popular discourse centralized on moral giving upholds the concept of the *benign ‘hidden hand’* and does not advance an understanding as to how these processes may impact the political sphere within a local setting.

Whilst recognizing that there is a political nature to donor agendas, limited debate and discussion on the *political ramifications of aid within recipient nations* exists. Whilst Duffield (2010) and others have demonstrated how aid is wrapped into donor political agendas and this in turn helps to understand how aid *works* in practice, a significant part of the equation has all too frequently been overlooked; the political effects of aid on local political systems.

Thus the movement of the object of inquiry from political motivations of donors *to political motivations of recipients* is a critical one. Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998) are particularly instructive here. In his seminal analysis of aid in Lesotho, Ferguson aptly demonstrates that ‘development’ contributes to highly political processes and outcomes. In discussing the ‘instrument-effect’ of aid, he proposes that ‘development’ is, ‘...the institutional effect of expanding bureaucratic state power is the conceptual or ideological effect of *depoliticizing* both poverty and the state’ (my emphasis, Ferguson 1994: 256). His influential work centrally brought into question the *effects* of development and rightly shifted the object of inquiry from donor political motivations to political effects within local contexts.

Uvin (1998), in an analysis of the Rwandan genocide, illustrates the impact development aid can have on a local context beyond the immediate mandate or goals of a ‘project’.³⁹ His primary position is that the genocide would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out without the economic support of Western aid primarily because aid contributed to establishing the situation in which the genocide occurred:

Unfortunately, the development aid system is not simply ineffective, unsustainable, limited, and uncertain in its impact - unsatisfactory as that may be. It also contributes to processes of structural violence in many ways. It does so directly, through its own behavior, whether unintended (as is the case of growing income inequality and land concentration) or intended (as in its condescending attitude toward poor people). It also does so indirectly, by strengthening systems of exclusion and elite building through massive financial transfers, accompanied by self-imposed political and social blindness.’ (Uvin 1998: 143)

³⁹ Parallels can be drawn with Ferguson’s analysis on Lesotho (1994).

Uvin continues to demonstrate that aid also contributed to highly political processes within Rwanda. He unequivocally states:

One of the foremost conclusions of this book is that *all development aid constitutes a form of political intervention*. This holds as much for bilateral and multilateral aid as for nongovernmental development aid. It is also the case at all levels, from the central government to the local community. Ethnic and political amnesia does not make development aid and the process it sets in motion apolitical; it just renders these processes invisible. (My emphasis, Uvin 1998: 232)

This conclusion centralizes the notion that aid is indeed political within a local context. Like Ferguson (1994), Uvin explicitly captures how international aid contributes to local political processes by simultaneously ensuring that both *development aid* and *politics* is kept at the forefront of aid analysis.

Bayart (2000) also adds to this argument. His exploration of *extraversion* critically positions the actions of local actors within development dynamics and contests the notion that development is only top-down on the part of donor nations: ‘...the events of the last ten years have tended to corroborate the idea that external constraints were used as an instrument by native holders of power and by other political actors’ (Bayart 2000: 224).

Here, by centrally locating local actors within an exploration of how development processes can work, Bayart (2000), like Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998), demonstrates that these processes are often utilized for political means. However, in contrast to Bayart (2000) whose primary position on *extraversion* too easily dismisses nuanced outcomes of development processes, Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998) capture these processes and political effects in a more useful and tangible manner. Bayart (2000) too often employs large brush strokes to implicate all politicians in all nations in sub-Saharan Africa as playing a negative role in negative outcomes within local settings.

What emerges from these arguments is that international aid plays a political role within local contexts. Donors’ motivations may be political as Duffield (2007) suggests and/or international aid can be utilized for political purposes (Ferguson 1994 and Uvin 1998). This largely suggests that the role of the international community within the PCR process must be more critically examined, especially when rhetorical devices concerning moral imperatives are used to drive political agendas (or agendas that have a political effect) within PCR contexts. These propositions are indeed critical in helping to examine Rwanda’s PCR context (especially the gender policy focus), however, turning to feminist propositions reveals a central deficiency that limits our overall understand of PCR processes.

Feminist Arguments on PCR: Women Must be Included

Attempting to locate an entry point for a PCR gender policy analysis within mainstream PCR debates is a challenge: the one particularly relevant entry point that emerges is that *structural inequalities* are a key reason that conflict occurs and the international community largely ignores this (Duffield 1997 and Uvin 1998). Though problematically, even those who suggest that structural inequalities require examination within any PCR analytical project, rarely pay heed to gender inequalities that are inherent to many conflict contexts. Whilst these propositions concerning PCR help identify mechanisms and processes that can be analysed in relation to Rwanda's PCR trajectory, feminist theory calls into question the completeness of these propositions. Propositions highlighted by feminists who analyse development theory and practice have, critically, established much-needed frameworks for ensuring the visibility of gender issues. Scholars such as Kabeer (1999), Enloe (2005) Harcourt (2005a, 2005b), Cockburn (2002), Chant and Mellwaine (2009), Parpart (2002, 2008), and Cornwall (2003 and 2007) have largely advanced debates which question how a categorical conceptualization of *women* fits into larger development debates.

Early propositions that argued that mainstream development analysis largely ignores women within development processes have meant that more nuanced debates (concerning differences amongst women for example) on these processes have taken hold. These debates have also paved the way for feminist conflict and PCR analysis to emerge. In particular, feminist theorists illuminate the fact that there is a glaring absence of engagement with issues concerning gender inequality. Moser and Clark (2001) for example articulate that much of the literature on conflict and post-conflict contexts is '...largely gender-blind with women's participation simply not identified' (Moser and Clark 2001: 3). This has been a central argument for many who focus on gender issues within conflict and PCR including Enloe (2005, 2008), Cockburn (2002), Beall (2006), Mazurana (2005), Caprioli (2003, 2005), Daley (2007), and Parpart (2002, 2008). Moser (2001) has particularly advanced the understanding of how and why gender inequalities are inherent to conflict and post-conflict contexts by suggesting that gender inequalities stem from a 'continuum of violence' that exists even in peacetime.

Thus a key undertaking of feminist theorists has been to ensure gender issues are consciously integrated into PCR processes. Centralizing women's experience of conflict and post-conflict has been a critical step in this process. Mazurana et al (2005) contest:

Although armed conflict and postconflict reconstruction processes strongly affect them, women are *largely absent* at the peace tables and levels of decision making within foreign affairs, defence, or international relations bodies. Likewise, the gender

dimensions of the conflict and postconflict periods are usually absent. (My emphasis, Mazurana et al 2005: 3)

We see similar notions of inclusion regularly integrated into primary arguments focused on the gender and conflict discourse. Castillejo (2011) for example indicates: ‘As the political settlement effectively sets the framework for state building, the *inclusion* of women’s interests in political settlements is critical if these are to result in a state that delivers for women’ (my emphasis, Castillejo 2011: 3).

Or similarly, arguments to recognize ‘women’s contributions’ (Powley, UN Report 2004: 7), or ‘women’s participation’ (Women’s Commission, Winter 2000: 2) are often at the heart of gender and PCR literature. This contention is largely at the crux of feminist theory as it applies to PCR: women are largely *excluded* from the process even though these processes have a critical impact upon them. Research on the wider field concerning gender and conflict⁴⁰ (Cockburn 1998 and 2007, Sørensen 1998, Parpart and Zalewski 2008, Skjelsbaek and Smith 2001, and Ní Aoláin et al. 2011) has demonstrated this; women are indeed largely ignored as part of the conflict and post-conflict reconstruction equation. Analysis of conflicts in the Balkans (Walsh 2001, Vandenberg 2005, Slapsak 2001), Latin America (Kumar and Baldwin 2001, Weiss Fagen and Yudelman 2001, Ready et al. 2001, Tuft 2001), and sub-Saharan Africa (Jacobson 2005, Baines 2005, Mackay 2005) further demonstrate the critical ways in which women experience conflict as well as play a role in conflicts (Moser and Clark 2001).

Gender inequalities are indeed a key factor underlying many conflict and post-conflict contexts. Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov (2002) illustrate the importance of examining gender relations when it comes to conflict and post-conflict reconstruction:

...a failure to understand the *politics* of masculinity and femininity in causing and sustaining violence, and in working to redress violence, has till now rendered such operations less effective than they might have been. At worst, by playing in to the existing gender order, some have reinforced aggressive and predatory forces, and entrenched violent and unstable environments. (My emphasis 2002:11)

Cockburn and Zarkov necessarily argue that gender dynamics have a political dimension and these play a role in conflict contexts. They rightly interject the notion of *politics* into gender dynamics and I would further argue that the larger political arena is an extension of gender politics or more significantly, that the political arena is constitutive of gender politics.

⁴⁰ Research emerging from the late 1990s and early 2000s was particularly instrumental in establishing the initial foundations for the focus on issues of women and gender equality within conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.

Cockburn and Zarkov (2002) are explicitly speaking to a lack of gender analysis within conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. Because so many of the gender debates within this field are implicitly making the argument for *inclusion* of gender issues into these processes, there is limited debate between gender and mainstream conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. The gender debates are rather confined to the types of *feminism* or how women's issues can advance as a political project within these contexts (E. Miller 2001, Chenoy and Vanaik 2001).

Indeed, the emergence of this work, primarily in the mid-late 1990s to early 2000s, embodies significant movement towards ensuring women were, and are, on conflict and post-conflict agendas.⁴¹ This body of literature has presented a real challenge to the mainstream PCR literature that implicitly ignores the role of women within conflict and PCR. However, as great strides were made in increasing global attention to these issues and creating policy measures to target women in conflict, the boundaries of gender debates concerning conflict and post-conflict have largely been confined to these terms, terms which prioritize the inclusion of women within PCR agendas as the primary critical factor for policies to address.

Notions of *inclusion*, *participation*, and *representation* of women may be permeating post-conflict contexts but the impact of this in terms of changing power structures is perhaps more questionable. In relation to quotas being established (particularly at the level of 30 per cent which is frequently seen) Dahlerup (2001) suggested that: 'It is still too early to say whether the empowerment of women and an increase in women's political representation can lead to fundamental changes' (Dahlerup 2001: 121).

Well over a decade after Dahlerup (2001) contended that it was 'too early' to fully assess whether increases in women's participation had an impact on the underlying dynamics at the heart of gender inequality, it appears that substantial change may not be occurring at the pace, or to the extent that feminist theorists may have hoped for. A recent literature review by Seckinelgin and Klot (2013) demonstrates that PCR policy efforts frequently focus on increasing women's political participation within conflict-affected areas though the results of this are more limited: 'Arguably, the number of countries using quotas and the number of women in their parliaments are considered to be the 'evidence' of the importance of gender equality in that particular context – not the achievement of gender equality' (Seckinelgin and Klot 2013: 38).

⁴¹ See Gierycz (2001), Dahlerup (2001), and Cockburn (1998).

Because *inclusion* can easily be measured (for example by stating a quota for female representatives within committees, etc.) a goal of inclusion is therefore achieved whilst little heed is given to how unequal gender relations may perpetuate violence (Chenoy and Vanaik 2001). As Seckingelgin and Klot (2013) suggested, these policy efforts are being conceptualized as an end in and of themselves, an approach which is starkly different from feminist agendas that sought to alter unequal power relations, particularly in conflict contexts.

Indeed, critical engagement with gender issues has yet to become salient within mainstream development as Cornwall et al. note; ‘Gender inequality has proved to be much more intractable than anticipated.’ (Cornwall, et.al 2004: 1) One contributing factor is the limited way in which gender issues were integrated into policy mechanisms. Gierycz (2001) argues that the approach to early UN efforts concerning women and conflict, ‘...was mainly focused on the collection of data on the level of women’s representation in various decision-making bodies at the local, national and international levels...’ (Gierycz 2001: 16). Further to this, even whilst women’s roles are often recognized (Mazurana et al 2005: 3) at a discursive level, this rarely translates into meaningful policy engagement.

On the surface, the case of Rwanda presents a challenge to these trends. Utilizing the theoretical proposition that women are largely excluded from PCR processes as a key lens for examination would lead us to the conclusion that Rwanda serves as a counter example; from this theoretical vantage point, Rwanda could be viewed as a PCR gender policy *success* story. The *integration* and *participation* of particular women within the PCR context as exemplified by the meaningful roles of RPF-affiliated women within the PCR government (Rose Kabuye, for example) and the presence of women in parliament would perhaps lead one to conclude that Rwanda is a successful example of PCR gender policy integration.

However, whilst conflict/post-conflict feminist theory has shed critical light on advancing women’s agendas within this field, the situation as it pertains to Rwanda is more complex once the findings of macro-level feminist development literature are examined. When merging feminist development theory into the gender and PCR literature, we can see that solely using the gender and PCR theoretical lens perhaps limits our understanding of gender policies within PCR Rwanda. It is necessary to examine the larger linkages between gender and development in order to more adequately understand the trajectory that the PCR gender policy focus has taken and to further locate *political* factors within this dynamic.

In Rwanda, PCR gender policies have been sustained since 1994, the gender policy project resting within a greater transition from emergency to developmental policies. Baden and Goetz (1997), in their analysis of the political trajectory of ‘gender’ within development⁴², have indicated that the political project of feminism has been taken on board by the development community as a gender mainstreaming project which de-politicizes the challenging intent of feminism (Baden and Goetz 1997). They argue:

The variety of ways in which ‘gender’ has come to be institutionalized and operationalized in the development arena presents a contradictory and ironic picture. There is a disjuncture between the feminist intent behind the term and the ways in which it is employed such as to minimize the political and contested character of relations between women and men. (Baden and Goetz 1997: 10)

They continue by noting ‘It is ironic that a concept which was engineered to carry a political message can be so depoliticized in its use as to be rejected by some of the people most committed to gender-redistributive change, such as feminist development activists.’ (Baden and Goetz 1997: 10) Of particular importance is their focus on the *political* project of feminism.

Reflecting these notions, Cornwall et al. (2004) point out that feminist political arguments within the international development arena have transitioned into a less meaningful agenda:

Represented to technocrats and policy-makers in the form of tools, frameworks and mechanisms, “gender” appears as neutralised of political intent. Diluted, denatured, depoliticised, included everywhere as an afterthought, “gender” has become something everyone knows that they are supposed to do something about. (Cornwall, et al. 2004: 1)

This critique is very much applicable to development institutions as well as national governments (such as in Rwanda) given that the government is a creator and implementer of development policy. The critique Cornwall et al. (2004) discuss is particularly relevant to the PCR context of Rwanda; whilst gender policies have largely been integrated into PCR processes, the overall utilization of these policies has not served as a political challenge to those in power as Burnet (2008) and Debusscher and Ansoms (2013) have demonstrated.

The process through which this has happened, as Baden and Goetz (1997) have offered, falls under the larger umbrella of gender mainstreaming. Within the macro-level project of gender mainstreaming, particular areas have been prioritized within the development community with *integration* being a key implementable factor in this process. Whilst inclusion may serve as a first step in attempting to ensure female voices are heard, it has

⁴² They specifically explore the operationalization of ‘gender’ as a theoretical counterpoint to ‘women’ as it was used in the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. As the Beijing Conference on Women was a key component in Rwanda’s PCR gender policy focus, this is a particularly applicable critique.

unfortunately transitioned into a countable measurement where *inclusion* of women is reduced to counting the number of women sitting at a particular policy-making table. As Sørensen (1998) explained: ‘Women’s wish to be included in the peace negotiation process is more than a simple demand for numeric representation proportional to women’s presence in a particular society’ (Sørensen 1998: 9).

Indeed, the issue of representation has been instrumentalized within post-conflict reconstruction processes via a simple tallying of numeric representation of women.⁴³ This, as Anne Marie Goetz (2006, 2009) has discussed, has led to a trend where women are *instrumentalized* within development practice. The instrumentalizing of women within development has meant that women’s issues and/or gender issues are largely conceptualized as *measurable* inputs and outputs within development. These measures are often predicated upon indicators such as female political representation, maternal mortality, infant mortality or girls’ school enrolment. This instrumentalization has meant that a hierarchy of gender issues has been created and it is one which prioritizes non-political, easily implemented, least contested issues.⁴⁴ Representation may, of course, be a critical component in reconstruction processes; however, fundamental questions underpin *what* women are representing, whom they are representing and how representation translates into actual power. As Burnet (2008) and Debusscher and Ansoms (2013) argue in the case of Rwanda, female representatives have little transformative or political power.

The gender and conflict literature allows for a fluid examination of how women and gender roles are constitutive of PCR contexts and highlights the importance of these issues in PCR analysis. The challenge here is that these propositions would largely point to a *positive* analysis of the PCR gender policy focus and would, perhaps, limit our understanding of the wider political context that was in play in Rwanda during the PCR period. A feminist proposition would perhaps suggest that the integration and representation of women was indeed a real advancement for gender issues within PCR; however, larger feminist debates that seek to question whether power relations have shifted, reveal that meaningful challenges to political structures have yet to materialize. PCR gender policy agendas, at their feminist core, should theoretically present a political challenge to social and political hierarchies, yet gender policies in Rwanda were instead integrated into a highly political agenda. The gender policy focus has largely followed a trajectory of depoliticized action.

⁴³ I will discuss later how Rwanda has both utilized and gone beyond representational quotas as part of its gender equality policy mandate.

⁴⁴ I am not suggesting that these issues are not contested; however, I am saying that this hierarchy takes the path of least resistance.

Why were Gender Policies a Post-Conflict Reconstruction Priority in Rwanda?

This question can be examined through multiple theoretical lenses. Drawing upon Fischer who contends that ‘...existing theoretical approaches to inquiry are insufficient for dealing with the complexity of social and political change...’ (Fischer 2003: 27) is particularly instructive to this research as mono-causal theoretical approaches were reductionist for this particular inquiry as the central research question allows for the examination of multiple theoretical propositions. Applying Fischer’s lens to post-conflict Rwanda helps reveal that post-conflict complexity and the emergence of a gender policy priority is too complex to explore by simply approaching the question through one existing binary debate. Are individual theoretical explanations found in PCR, gender and contemporary political literature on Rwanda, sufficient to explain the policy focus or is a combination of these required?⁴⁵

Here, I will examine current political debates on Rwanda, as these are the most salient at the moment, in order to evaluate the explanatory power that these arguments have to elucidate the PCR gender policy focus. These debates largely focus on the significant power of President Paul Kagame and are often utilized to explain Rwanda’s post-conflict policy trajectory; I question whether these arguments are valid when applied to the PCR gender policy focus.

Ex-Post Theoretical Application: Is ‘Political Will’ Overstated?

Authoritarian, dictator ... is this the explanation for Rwanda’s PCR gender policy focus? These are labels currently applied to President Kagame and suggest that all policies in Rwanda stem from his leadership. However, do these contemporary imageries (which are often applied ex-post to the PCR processes in Rwanda) help explain the policy context immediately following the genocide? Is political will, as it is often referred to within Rwanda,⁴⁶ a sufficient explanation for the gender policy focus that emerged in post-conflict Rwanda almost two decades ago; perhaps not, as I will discuss.

Contemporary propositions that suggest Rwanda is an authoritarian state under the RPF and Kagame⁴⁷ overwhelmingly define the current terms of debate on Rwanda; however are these sufficient explanation for the gender policy priority that was initiated almost two decades

⁴⁵ Any theoretical engagement requires making strategic decisions regarding where the research is best placed. This means that though there are many theoretical propositions that may be applicable to an analysis on gender policies within PCR Rwanda, particular debates are more useful to the analysis. There is a significant body of work on state-making and security that sheds critical light on Rwanda’s PCR context, however, these frameworks were not explicitly conducive to the research lens I am exploring within this PhD.

⁴⁶ For example, see Dominique 2012 and Kwihangana 2013.

⁴⁷ See Straus and Waldorf 2011 and Burnet 2008.

ago? *Authoritarian, political consolidation, dictatorship* - are all imageries that have been gaining saliency since the mid 2000s. As Straus and Waldorf have suggested, ‘Since 1994, the RPF-led government has practiced a deft authoritarianism that justifies its restrictions on political parties, civil society, and the media as necessary measures to guard against a recrudescence of ethnic violence.’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 4) Similarly, Burnet states, ‘...the Rwandan state has become increasingly authoritarian under the guise of ‘democratization’...’ (Burnet 2008: 363).

Indeed, *authoritarian* is increasingly being used as a label to describe President Paul Kagame within these critiques.⁴⁸ Phrases such as, ‘...authoritarian tendencies of the regime...’ (Beswick 2011: 1911), ‘...authoritarian characteristics displayed by the Rwandan regime...’⁴⁹ (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1113-1114), or newspaper headlines such as, ‘Paul Kagame’s Rwanda: African success story or authoritarian state?’ (Smith, *The Guardian*, 2012) are frequently employed to describe Kagame’s leadership style and the political context of Rwanda today.

Notions of an authoritarian state clearly imply, from a policy perspective, that all policy priorities are dictated from above; thus the authoritarian ruler is credited with all policy advances. Fischer’s contention that ‘...policy remains tied up with the political process...’ (Fischer 2007: 7) would indeed suggest that, especially in an authoritarian context, policymaking is not disconnected from *political* contexts. Fischer nicely captures this intersection and lends further credence to the notion that political will within an authoritarian system will be the driver of policy initiatives. However, whilst there is mounting evidence⁵⁰ that Kagame has tightened political space in Rwanda since 1994, the utilization of an ‘authoritarian’ imagery is not necessarily particularly instructive for analysis of the *post-conflict period*.⁵¹

Suggesting that political leadership (or what is often described as political will) has retained an overwhelming position in explaining Rwanda’s PCR trajectory Longman has said:

Rwanda’s supposed remarkable recovery is generally credited to the post-genocide government led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Many observers heap particular praise on Paul Kagame, president of Rwanda since 2000. (Longman 2011: 25)

⁴⁸ See, for example, Longman 2011 and Burnet 2008.

⁴⁹ The wording used here seeming reflects a concerted effort not to necessarily label the Kagame regime as ‘authoritarian’ but to soften the charge by utilizing a phrase like ‘authoritarian characteristics’.

⁵⁰ See Longman 2011, Gready 2011, Muhumuza 2014.

⁵¹ This will be examined in further detail in subsequent chapters.

Whilst there is substantial evidence that policy measures are indeed dictated from the highest political level⁵² - from President Kagame - there is a need to ensure that academic inquiry captures the multitude of dynamics that uphold this structure. There is also a need to question whether this ‘authoritarian’ label was actually applicable *during* the PCR context and particularly during the 1994-1998 period. This is especially relevant here as gender policy measures (even those emerging during the post-conflict period) are often attributed to political leadership.

Counter to the imageries that an *authoritarian* label may give rise to, many prefer to cast Kagame in a more positive light. He is often viewed as someone who stopped the genocide⁵³ and as a leader who has positively focused on development initiatives. This representation of Kagame and the Rwandan government is often parroted by western leaders and is particularly prevalent within the aid and development community. A notable example occurred when The Clinton Global Initiative, founded by United States President Clinton, named Kagame as a 2009 Clinton Global Citizen Award honouree for the reasons indicated above and included the rationale that Kagame was ‘...leading the force which ended the 1994 genocide’ (Clinton Global Initiative 2009).⁵⁴ Kagame was also recognized because he:

...worked to develop infrastructure, boost tourism, increase access to energy and health care in rural areas, expand exports, and develop ties to the international business community. After the 1994 civil war, he helped usher in a decade of 7.6-percent annual economic growth, and last year, in the midst of global decline, Rwanda’s economy grew 11.2 percent. From crisis, President Kagame has forged a strong, unified and growing nation with the potential to become a model for the rest of Africa and the world. (Clinton Global Initiative 2009)⁵⁵

Here, the ending of the genocide and Rwanda’s economic growth is directly attributed to Kagame. Interestingly, there is a lack of recognition of the fact that substantial amounts of foreign aid, aid that increased even in the global economic downturn beginning in 2008 (OECD DAC 2014), played any role in economic progress even though almost half of Rwanda’s budget is funded by foreign donors. There is evidence to contest the notion that Rwanda is a ‘unified’ nation; Rwanda’s own Joint Governance Assessment Steering Committee indicated that the World Values Survey for Rwanda found high levels of mistrust amongst Rwandans (Rwanda Joint Governance Assessment 2008: 26) thus suggesting that tensions exist.

⁵² See Easterly 2011 for further discussion on this.

⁵³ See, for example, Gourevitch 1998.

⁵⁴ http://press.clintonglobalinitiative.org/press_releases/former-president-clinton-announces-winners-of-the-third-annual-clinton-global-citizen-awards/ - date consulted: 15.11.12.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* - date consulted: 15.11.12

Though there is sufficient evidence to the contrary, rationales suggesting that Rwanda is an ideal developmental state persist. United Kingdom Prime Minister David Cameron, for example, justified large aid payments to Rwanda on similar developmental grounds:⁵⁶

I'm clear Rwanda has been, and continues to be, a success story of a country that has moved from genocide and disaster to become a role model for development and lifting people out of poverty in Africa.

And I'm proud of the fact that the last government and this government have continued to invest in that success. (BBC News 17.10.12)

This sentiment perfectly exemplifies the current hegemonic debate on Rwanda that positions developmental progress⁵⁷ against authoritarian political tendencies. Developmental and donor agencies utilize the same rationales as Cameron in suggesting that Rwanda is a *success* based on forward movement on a host of development indicators such as a reduction in poverty, increased school enrolment rates, and economic growth (Government of Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010). Developmental agencies echo similar sentiments as these world leaders. Paul Collier, in a UK Department for International Development blog indicated:

An *outstanding example* of Britain's aid *success* in such environments has been our programmes in Rwanda. Objective, independently analysed household survey data has now demonstrated that over the last five years a million Rwandans – one in five of those who were poor – have been lifted out of poverty. The rate of poverty reduction is the fastest ever achieved in Rwanda and equals the best achieved globally. (my emphasis Collier 2 July 2012)⁵⁸

These statements strongly exemplify the donor rhetoric on Rwanda; a rhetoric that almost exclusively focuses on basic development indicators and one that is largely removed from the political context in which it is located. Though Collier was speaking to the 'success' that aid has had in Rwanda, international rhetoric frequently fails to recognize that billions in foreign aid have flowed into Rwanda, which undoubtedly has had an impact on this *success*.⁵⁹

These debates clearly fall into a binary framework where President Kagame is portrayed as either an authoritarian or a saviour. However, is this binary particularly useful for examining gender policies in the PCR period? Here, Pottier (2002) becomes particularly relevant; he suggested that there has been a *re-imagining* of Rwanda's history and trajectory

⁵⁶ Cameron was forced to defend aid to Rwanda in the face of increasing allegations that indicate Rwanda had been supporting a proxy war in the DRC.

⁵⁷ Here, I am loosely using the term 'progress' to refer to numeric advancements made on development indicators. The concept of *progress* is indeed problematic within the study of development as numerous scholars, especially ones who would fall into a post-development camp, have suggested; for more information on this see Ferguson 1994. Given that Rwanda is often referred to as a success, or as achieving significant developmental gains, I am using the term 'progress' in a very narrow sense.

⁵⁸ *Aid in Troubled Times*. 2 July 2012 blog. <http://blogs.dfid.gov.uk/2012/07/aid-in-troubled-times/> date consulted: 14.11.12.

⁵⁹ I will explore aid in more depth later in the chapter.

since the 1994 genocide (Pottier: 2002). Whilst Pottier primarily asserts this in terms of larger historical and political factors pertinent to Rwanda, this notion is relevant in terms of the ways in which Rwanda's post-conflict period is discussed. Pottier has posited that Rwanda:

...came to be 're-imagined' in 1994-96 through a synchronised production of knowledge, i.e. a process, pervasive even though not always consciously pursued, by which 'instant' journalists, diplomats, aid workers and academics accepted, formulated and spread images of Rwanda that chimed well with the RPF-led regime now in power in Kigali. (Pottier 2002: 4)

Indeed, I would argue that the authoritarian/saviour debate has largely encompassed a 're-imagined' (Pottier: 2002) context where neither side by itself is fully sufficient to explain gender policy trajectories within the post-conflict period. Utilizing Pottier's notion of a 're-imagined Rwanda', I will now move on to explore this proposition and bring in larger bodies of work on Rwanda to demonstrate this dynamic. This will help show that debates on Rwanda have skewed our understanding of the contextual post-conflict realities in which the gender policy focus was rooted.

Rwandan Genocide and PCR Literature: A Deeper Contextualization?

Examining the overall base of literature that emerged during the PCR period may assist in shedding light on the PCR realities that contributed to the gender policy focus. Though it may not explicitly speak to gender issues, this analysis helps to contextualize the wider context in which the gender policy priority was rooted.

An expansive amount of literature has been produced on Rwanda since the 1994 genocide. Authors including Gourevitch (1998), Uvin (1998), Melvern (2006), Dallaire (2004), Hatzfeld (2003), Prunier (1995), Des Forges (1999), and Straus (2006), attempt to provide detailed and comprehensive accounts of how the genocide unfolded and seek to explain *why the genocide happened*. From these texts, various debates emerge regarding which factors were pertinent to a context that allowed almost one million people to be killed over one hundred days.

We can see, for example, that reasons such as a lack of international involvement as, Melvern (2006), Dallaire (2004), and Gourevitch (1998) suggest, were central to the unfolding of the genocide. Uvin proposed a different reading regarding the role of the international community by offering that development aid actually created the structural conditions for the genocide (Uvin 1998). Other rationales focus more on the 'intense civil war, state power, and pre-existing ethnic/racial classifications' (Straus 2006: 224) as the

primary explanations as to how Rwanda fell into incredible violence in such a short period of time.

Literature on the genocide also helps demonstrate that there were negative gender dynamics that underpinned the genocide and illustrates that women were both perpetrators and victims (Jones 2002, Powley UN Report 2004). An August 1995 publication by African Rights, for example, highlighted ways in which women actively partook in genocidal killings:

...when it came to mass murder, there were a lot of women who needed no encouragement. Some were inspired by their own extremist views. Others saw the extermination of the Tutsi as an opportunity to ingratiate themselves to those in power. For others, the genocide was a chance to enrich themselves by expropriating the property of their victims, or an opportunity to settle scores with enemies, real and imaginary. (African Rights 1995: 15)

The accounts brought to light within the report serve as a reminder that *women* were (and are) not a homogenous group within Rwanda as current gender discourses on Rwanda would suggest. While women were active participants in genocidal killings, rape and sexual violence against women (particularly Tutsi women) was a part of the genocidal strategy (Des Forges 1999).⁶⁰ This empirical evidence highlights the multifaceted roles of women within genocide and further suggests that the experiences of Rwandan women in 1994 were not at all homogenous and relations between women were imbued with negative ethnic factors.⁶¹ Though the literature described above provides critical detail as to what happened during the genocide and seeks to *explain why* the genocide unfolded, literature that critically engages with gender *dynamics* (or inequalities) within Rwanda is missing from this body of work.

Though there is a rich academic base that attempts to both describe the ways in which the genocide unfolded and explain why it happened, problematically, the analysis of actual PCR processes within Rwanda is much more limited. The lack of a clear-cut conceptualization of what *PCR actually is* may rest at the core of this issue. I will take a moment to examine larger, macro-level issues pertaining to this critique prior to demonstrating how it specifically applies to a PCR analysis of Rwanda.

As discussed, increasingly, post-conflict reconstruction has gained a prominent position on the global development policy agenda. Trends in funding demonstrate that PCR is increasingly becoming a development priority for the international community and, over the past decade and a half, the conflict contexts of Iraq and Afghanistan have given rise to greater discussion of PCR in general. However, what are we actually talking about when we

⁶⁰ See edited volume by Moser and Clark 2001 for a larger discussion on the roles of women in conflict contexts.

⁶¹ This is a point that I will explore in more depth in Chapter Four.

examine PCR? Let me begin by setting forth what I hope is a useful conceptualization of *post-conflict reconstruction* to help frame the discussion. A key institution involved in PCR processes, the World Bank, offers the following description of PCR:

The Bank's assistance has had two overall objectives: to facilitate the transition from war to sustainable peace and to support the resumption of economic and social development. Thus, while post-conflict reconstruction, like post-natural disaster reconstruction, typically involves the repair and reconstruction of physical infrastructure, it also entails a number of interventions aimed at rebuilding *institutions*. Those interventions have included jump-starting the economy, reconstructing the framework for governance, rebuilding and maintaining key social infrastructure, and planning for financial normalization. (Author's emphasis, Kreimer, et. al.: 2)

This definition is rather expansive and implies that a plethora of efforts can fall under the umbrella of PCR. It is indeed a rather useful conceptualization (especially for this research) because the expansive nature at its core seamlessly allows for the integration of a gender analysis. Pertinent to my earlier critique, is that this definition also focuses on *immediate processes* of 'repair and reconstruction of physical infrastructure' as well as institution building. Particularly relevant is the temporal specification provided within the above definition where 'the transition from war to sustainable peace and to support the resumption of economic and social development' is highlighted. This very much implies that PCR occurs following a conflict and that longer-term development trajectories occur following PCR. This is a particularly critical point as it then becomes more evident that contemporary analyses on PCR Rwanda are even more deficient in actually informing us how PCR processes emerged and instead limit our analysis to the longer-term *consequences* of PCR policies.

One critique of this larger conceptualization of PCR is that it fractures any attempt to create a cohesive academic umbrella under which to engage with PCR in a broad sense. Whilst the World Bank description highlights key aspects of rebuilding, including the physical rebuilding of decimated infrastructure, the majority of the literature focusing on PCR within Rwanda engages with themes concerning why the genocide happened, why the international community did not stop it, how perpetrators could adequately be brought to justice, and how best to integrate refugees back into Rwanda. These disaggregated issues all contribute to components of reconstruction; however, they do not necessarily offer an overarching framework in which to engage with broad-ranging *PCR* policy initiatives in Rwanda. The larger policy-making arena is often removed from PCR examinations and instead, particular *issues* drive PCR inquiries.⁶² This has resulted in a narrow set of explorations that critically engage with PCR factors beyond political will as the discussion below demonstrates.

⁶² This critique could be applied to this research. However, whilst I am specifically looking at gender policies in PCR, this examination delivers insight on larger PCR processes in Rwanda. The empirical research presented

A 2011 volume edited by Straus and Waldorf acknowledged the deficiency in PCR literature on Rwanda and sought to advance the knowledge base on PCR: ‘...*Remaking Rwanda* fills an important niche by presenting a comprehensive account of post-genocide reconstruction in Rwanda’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 6). Straus and Waldorf argue that academics and development agencies alike are beginning to push for ‘...a more complex model to explain the trajectory – not merely the outcome – of post-conflict recovery.’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 15) This contention, however, is at odds with the contemporary analytical lens used to explore Rwanda’s PCR period; paradoxically whilst Straus and Waldorf suggest the PCR should be examined through a complex lens that analyses the *trajectory*, their edited volume largely explores *outcomes* of PCR as the foundational point of inquiry and further to this, political leadership is used as a primary variable to explain many of the examined outcomes.

Whilst many contributors to *Remaking Rwanda* are critical of the current government, these contemporary critiques are subsequently applied to Rwanda’s post-conflict context; so although the volume explicitly purports to address *reconstruction*, it is *current* political dynamics that are examined (rather than *reconstruction* dynamics) and this analysis is then applied to the PCR period ex-post. Most of the authors in this volume mirror this dynamic. We can see, for example, that Pells’ interesting examination of the role of children within Rwanda today reflects this tendency: ‘...the government is controlling the space and form of children’s rights discourses domestically...’ (Pells 2011: 81).

Though Pell provides a brief explanation of the post-genocide trajectory of children’s rights in Rwanda, the above passage helps illustrate how the analysis is primarily rooted in the country’s contemporary political dynamics. The research and analysis presented by Pells allows insight and advances understandings of the *consequences* of particular legislation and policies that emerged in the 2000s, but limited evidence is presented to contextualize how policy processes unfolded in the immediate post-conflict period.

This tendency is reflected throughout the volume. Huggins, for example, delves into issues of land reform and the way in which the Presidential Commission on Land works in practice (Huggins 2011). Land reform was, indeed, a critical issue in post-conflict Rwanda; given the death of almost one million people and the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees, land and housing rights were extremely contentious following the conflict and were a PCR

later will demonstrate that contemporary literature on PCR in Rwanda has very much skewed our understanding of the policy context that was relevant in 1994.

policy priority (Human Rights Watch 2001 and Goodfellow and Smith 2013). Huggins contends that the analysis presented investigates:

...an underexamined aspect of the land question in Rwanda: the role of official government commissions in redistributing land. In particular, the chapter looks at the *recent* Presidential Commission on Land in Eastern Province, which offers a useful indicator of government attitudes toward land issues in Rwanda. The commission, which was established directly by President Paul Kagame and staffed by high-ranking military officers and government officials, had little oversight or influence from international donor agencies. (my emphasis Huggins 2011: 252-253)

He argues:

The commission's land redistribution shows that Rwandan elites lack commitment to a transparent and equitable land reform and registration process, and are able to ignore national laws to benefit themselves and their allies. (Huggins 2011: 252)

A few interesting points emerge from this passage. Firstly, the primary focus on recent land reform implicitly suggests the analysis is rooted in the *consequences* of PCR and not the processes that unfolded in 1994. Huggins also suggests that the commission is not influenced by donor agencies. Yet, if he had focused the discussion on PCR processes that were pertinent to the mid-to-late 1990s (versus contemporary dynamics), a different conclusion would have been drawn. Indeed, housing issues and the *villagization* process that was implemented during the PCR period were fraught with tensions between the donor community and the Rwandan government (Human Rights Watch 2001). Also, as I will demonstrate in subsequent chapters, donors directed large amounts of money to rebuilding houses (specifically, substantial funds were earmarked for women to physically undertake the rebuilding) but none of these PCR factors were examined by Huggins.

The issue I am highlighting here is that the research presented above rests within a volume that contends to be a leading source on *PCR* in Rwanda, even though most of the analysis presented is on the *current consequences* of policies and dynamics that have emerged following the post-conflict period and not on the actual PCR dynamics themselves. Many of the theoretical foundations presented within the volume are based on a more recent reading of the political context. The result is that immediate post-conflict factors are not adequately engaged with and limited insight is gained into the actual PCR *trajectory* initially advocated for by Straus and Waldorf (2011). This is not to imply that this analysis is not valuable, but it presents a challenge to the notion that PCR processes are the central point of investigation.

Problematically this body of work reflects Pottier's critique in that there is a *re-imagining* of Rwanda (Pottier 2002) that is not based on the contextual realities of the reconstruction process. The PCR literature primarily utilizes political will as a determining factor of the post-conflict trajectory of Rwanda which is too reductionist an explanation for PCR policy

measures given the genocidal complexity from which Rwanda was emerging. The second difficulty with this literature is that though it claims to be about PCR, it is actually about the longer term *consequences* of PCR policies and, as such, we are left not knowing very much about how these processes unfolded during the immediate post-conflict years; instead we learn a great deal about the contemporary context of Rwanda which is largely removed from the post-conflict realities at play almost two decades ago. Again, this ex-post theoretical application of contemporary analysis to the post-conflict period skews our understanding of these processes and this is particularly true of the way in which gender issues are treated within contemporary analysis. This renders insight into the immediate PCR processes partial at best and instead captures the longer-term consequences of PCR processes.⁶³

Turning to additional literature concerning post-conflict Rwanda helps demonstrate the complex environment that emerged in 1994, however, we encounter similar challenges in terms of having a meaningful PCR umbrella under which to examine the gender policy priority. A 2008 edited volume by Clark and Kaufman entitled *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-conflict Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond* further exemplifies the challenge faced when attempting to engage with broader policy processes pertaining to PCR in Rwanda. Clark and Kaufman say that the volume offers substantial engagement and insight on PCR processes in Rwanda. They rightly contend that '[t]he growth in academic discussions of transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction is relatively recent, and the terms of reference are still fluid...' (Clark and Kaufman 2008: 4) thus suggesting that the boundaries for debates on larger PCR processes are yet to be drawn. This critically highlights a central difficulty in investigating PCR processes: how do we engage in debate on PCR if the boundaries are so unclear?

If utilizing an expansive definition of PCR (such as the World Bank definition presented above), a central tension arises within Clark and Kaufman's work: their volume is almost solely focused on *justice processes*; there is an unfortunate conflation of transitional justice and PCR. This analytically limits insight on larger PCR processes and creates a black box for those who want to engage with the larger PCR context in existence following the genocide.⁶⁴ Transitional justice is a central component of PCR, especially in a post-genocidal context, however, proposing that PCR analysis is a significant component of the book skews the lines of debate on PCR as the volume is primarily about *transitional justice*.

⁶³ Assessing long-term consequences is extremely important, however, there is a difference between contextualizing the PCR trajectory and applying contemporary dynamics to processes that took place almost two decades ago.

⁶⁴ There is a significant focus on healing within the book; this is largely linked to experiences of the genocide (see Chapters Four through Nine of Clark and Kaufman, 2008).

Inquiries such as this implicitly establish justice as a key priority of PCR even when factors such as housing, health, and psychological trauma are particularly acute following genocide. Whilst the volume edited by Straus and Waldorf (2011) seeks to capture a range of PCR issues, Clark and Kaufman (2008) utilize a more narrow focus. Of particular interest to this research is that, like the more recent Straus and Waldorf (2011) volume, limited insight on the gendered dynamics of these processes is offered and does not help to answer the larger question of *why gender policies were a PCR priority*.

Thus far I have demonstrated that the central problems with PCR literature are its focus on political will, or perhaps more centrally, the power of Kagame, as the primary determining variable for the current state of Rwanda and the utilization of contemporary political leadership as the central line of inquiry. There is yet another shortcoming of this literature in terms of its explanatory power as it pertains to the PCR gender policy priority.

Zalewski and Parpart have argued that due to the lack of focus on women in conflict, conducting a comprehensive gender analysis requires paying attention to silence (Zalewski and Parpart: 8). When applying this position as an analytical lens to explore the literature presented above, a disconcerting dynamic emerges; there is minimal engagement with the gendered dynamics or the gender policy processes that emerged in the immediate post-conflict period. Given the high ratio of women to men,⁶⁵ the sexual violence experienced during the genocide, and the level in which women engaged with the physical rebuilding of Rwanda in the PCR period, it is surprising that explicit engagement with these issues is extremely limited within a volume that purports to provide ‘a comprehensive account of post-genocide reconstruction’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 6). Even though there was a simultaneous recognition that ‘gender mainstreaming’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 4) was part of the RPF reconstruction agenda, and mentions of women are integrated throughout the book, this does not constitute critical engagement with a particularly substantial part of Rwanda’s post-conflict context, women and gender issues. It is now time to turn to other factors that may reveal why gender policies were a PCR priority in Rwanda.

Other Rationales for the PCR Gender Policy Focus

Political will, women’s grassroots efforts, international involvement... are these sufficient rationales to explain the PCR gender policy focus? Explicit explanations for the overall gender policy focus that emerged in Rwanda’s PCR phase are sparse. Limited debate exists

⁶⁵ It has been suggested that the female population was 70% following the genocide (Powley 2004: 5). Whilst in Chapter Four I contest whether 70% is an accurate figure, the evidence suggests that the post-conflict population in Rwanda was heavily female.

as to *why* gender issues were such a significant focus in the PCR period although research focusing on specific themes that were highlighted in the PCR period offers some insight into the larger policy context. For example, examinations of women's role in peace-making (Mutamba 2005), the emergence of women's organizations (Newbury and Baldwin 2000, Debusscher and Ansoms 2013) and the role of women in decision-making (Burnet 2008) all serve as a foundation for exploring the overall PCR gender policy context. From this body of work reasons such as political will, women's grassroots activity and international involvement have all emerged to shed light on how gender policy issues unfolded in the years following the genocide and help explain why they may have been a priority.

In contrast to the dominant contemporary political debates explored earlier, this literature moves beyond solely engaging with political will as the primary driver behind PCR policies in Rwanda. The efforts of grassroots level activities, and further, the significant work of women in taking on more responsibilities (including reconstruction) during the PCR period feature more prominently in this body of work. Mutamba, for example, proposes that government commitment to female political representation was rooted in the action of women:

Behind this commitment also lie other factors like the great contribution of women to national reconstruction and recovery. Women took over some of the responsibilities of looking after and providing services originally managed by men, in house construction, for example. (Mutamba 2005 expert report: 11)

Here, we can see that women filled traditionally male roles in the aftermath of the genocide.

Uwineza and Pearson (2009) also suggest that post-conflict changes were due to women's actions:

In addition to the RPF experience in exile, the genocide forced shifts in gender roles. With so many widowed survivors who had lost their husbands and the wives of genocide suspects, who were de facto widows because their husbands fled or were imprisoned-women had newfound responsibilities. The genocide thrust women into new roles; they took the lead in restoring communities, often in an effort to meet the basic needs of their children and other survivors. (Uwineza and Pearson, 2009: 15)

Locating the changing roles and actions of women within the PCR period is critically important and serves as a counter to the largely decontextualized accounts of PCR that currently define the boundaries of debates on Rwanda. The accounts of women's roles within PCR suggest that there is a significant gap within the literature explored earlier; women do not feature at all prominently in most PCR explorations on Rwanda though evidence suggests they were a key driver behind PCR efforts.

Newbury and Baldwin (2000) explore the emergence of women's organizations following the genocide and suggest that the organization of women was critical to reconstruction efforts. They posit that this phenomenon was due to women who had previously been in organizations re-organizing after the genocide, the historical activity of women's groups prior to the genocide, international community support, and government policies (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2). They rightly capture a range of factors that set the foundation for the emergence of women's groups. Interestingly, with respect to the government policies, they indicate:

...the policies of Rwanda's postgenocide government constitute a fourth factor encouraging the reemergence of women's organizations after the genocide. The Ministry of Gender and Promotion of Women's Development (Migeprofe, formerly Migefaso) supported women's organizations by establishing a ministry representative in each prefecture and commune; these officials (who were usually, but not always, women) worked alongside and placed pressure on local government authorities to bring attention to women's concerns. (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2)

These accounts of the roles of women within the PCR context very nicely contextualize the realities pertinent to the context in 1994. However, here lies a particular gap in the literature focused on PCR gender policy measures; the identification of the political interplay between the RPF, women's organizations and international actors is largely absent from these explanations.

By establishing that government policies helped women's organizations, Newbury and Baldwin, for example, implicitly overlook the underlying dynamics that initially led to these governmental policies - and these dynamics may have been heavily political. Here, it is taken as a foundational point for their exploration on why women's organizations proliferated, but *why did the government prioritize gender policies in the first place?* The more recent work by Straus and Waldorf (2011) and Hayman (2011) and Pottier's account of the political aspirations of the RPF (Pottier 2002) helps to centralize political motivations behind particular PCR policy measures.

International community efforts were also a factor behind particular gender initiatives during the immediate PCR period. In slight contrast to Newbury and Baldwin's position that women's groups were able to flourish in the PCR period because of significant assistance by the international community (Newbury and Baldwin 2000), Burnet suggests:

Despite these significant contributions, the Rwanda women's movement in the mid-to-late 1990s should be viewed as being principally indigenous rather than simply driven by outside forces. While the Rwandan women's organizations would not have been able to make as much of an impact without international aid, *the majority of the local organizations did not allow the agendas of international partners to drive their work plans*. Many local women's civil society organizations were scrambling to negotiate the

complex international aid systems so that they could become partners of international NGOs or direct recipients of international air grants. (my emphasis, Burnet 2008: 375)

Whilst Burnet is exploring issues of increased women's representation in the context of a tightening of democratic space, like Newbury and Baldwin (2000), she does not examine the political undercurrent of the context to ascertain whether local organizations were, in fact, autonomous from government oversight at this time; I will expand upon this later.⁶⁶

Interestingly these positions presuppose a type of benign political force without locating the political and contextual dynamics in play during the PCR period that may have incentivized the government to focus on gender policy issues. Whilst I do not deny that political will may have been critical, I suggest that there is, perhaps, a larger story to be told which contextualizes this particular factor even further.

What does this literature tell us? Emerging from these examinations is that political leadership, women's grassroots actions and organizations, and international aid helped to advance particular policy causes. However, as demonstrated above, the *why* behind the larger gender policy focus has not been sufficiently addressed and, within the propositions explored, political will is largely presented as a cause to explain certain phenomenon whilst the actual concept itself remains under-examined.

Are these propositions sufficient to explain the gender policy focus?

The factors explored above do help to fill in the puzzle, but the contextualization of the complex political dynamics that were constitutive of the PCR is largely missing from the literature exploring the PCR gender policies. If we re-visit Zalewski and Parpart's proposition that paying attention to silence can unveil critical information (Zalewski and Parpart 2008: 8), we can see that this literature nicely captures factors beyond political will. However, it does not fully capture the larger political and developmental dynamics that were at play in the immediate PCR period or shed in-depth light on how the interplay between these dynamics unfolded within the PCR period. For example, whilst international aid may have helped advance particular gender-focused initiatives, the way this action worked within a larger post-conflict political context is yet unexamined. Looming behind these explanations however, are larger political processes that may help to theoretically locate why gender policies were a PCR priority.

⁶⁶ As I later explore, the RPF was tightening control over international involvement within the PCR period and Burnet's contention that women's organizations were acting irrespective of international whims fails to account for local political dynamics that may have impacted their activities. This may be especially applicable to the fact that donors were largely funding house rebuilding efforts which also greatly benefitted the new government which was facing a housing crisis (Goodfellow and Smith 2013).

In direct opposition to this position is the argument often pursued by development practitioners which assumes that Rwanda has made impressive gains since emerging from the 1994 genocide and given the historical context, it is understandable that Kagame would tightly control the state. This argument seemingly reflects the larger developmental debate, that focuses on improvement on a menu of indicators. This side often utilizes many of the arguments that President Kagame himself uses to justify many of the policy measures in Rwanda. The gender policy advances in Rwanda are advanced under the developmental banner of progress.

In her critique on aid to Rwanda, Zorbas notes: ‘The RPF has matched, and even surpassed, donor expectations on several counts. Rwanda has had high growth rates, which averaged more than 10 percent per year between 1994 and 2005 and about 5 percent per year since then’ (Zorbas 2011: 105). She later argues that:

...donor representatives mention the Government of Rwanda’s big achievements such as security, economic growth, low corruption, and progress toward universal primary education, but omitted the increasing economic disparities characterizing both urban and rural Rwanda. (Zorbas 2011:110)

This argument thus implicitly argues that measurable gains are the priority and the political context is not the primary issue.

Further to this point, Hayman contends that economic development is the top concern for donors: ‘...[a] donor representative said that political concerns only came into the equation when they affected the bigger picture of donor attention, such as the MDGs, or if they triggered domestic pressure in the donor country’ (Hayman 2011: 126). The explicit lack of consideration of political concerns reinforces the positions set forth by Uvin (1998), Ferguson (1994), and Cramer and Goodhand (2002) by demonstrating that, even though significant evidence exists that donor funding can negatively affect local political processes, these considerations are not necessarily donor priorities.

The above literatures clearly help locate international aid and politics within PCR processes. However, a substantial gap within this literature, as with the literature on the political context of Rwanda, is the lack of explicit engagement with gender issues. Again, employing Zalewski and Parpart’s proposition that silence is analytically important (Zalewski and Parpart 2008: 8) reveals that lack of engagement with the negative gender dynamics which permeate PCR contexts (and often actually help set the structural foundations in which conflict initially emerged as Caprioli 2003 illustrated), is noticeably missing from these PCR

explorations. Whilst there are mentions of rape, for example, (Uvin 1998: 77t), there is minimal serious engagement with how gender inequalities played a role within conflict environments.

The Theoretical Trajectory

Within this chapter I have attempted to draw from various theoretical bodies of literature to construct a roadmap for thinking about the gender policy priority within post-conflict Rwanda. Contemporary political analysis has made significant contributions to demonstrating how President Paul Kagame has almost limitless power and control within Rwanda's borders; however, though centralizing the role of political will within Rwanda is important and indeed necessary to this research, it clearly is decontextualized from the PCR period - even in literature that purports to be about post-conflict reconstruction. Here, we see Pottier's 're-imagining' theory on Rwanda (2002) is particularly salient.

Given this, whilst political will is a critical factor that this particular research must examine, it is clearly not the *only* factor. Literature on gender issues within Rwanda provides a wider range of factors to engage with, such as the role of women in PCR, the role of grassroots organizations and international aid (Burnet 2008, Newbury and Baldwin 2000, Mutamba 2005, Uwineza and Pearson 2009). These contributions are critical in terms of constructing a clearer, more contextualized analysis as to why gender policies were a PCR priority.

However, these explanations lacked a clear analysis of the ways in which the PCR context was highly politicized; this gap thus necessitated examining feminist development literature as well as international aid literature. Theorists such as Cornwall (2003 and Cornwall et al. 2004), Goetz (2006, 2009) and Bayart (2000) well as Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998) help to more centrally locate the role of politics within gender policies and international aid, thus allowing for a more nuanced analysis of why gender policies were a PCR priority in Rwanda.

As explained in the introduction, this research uncovered five key reasons why there was a gender policy focus – female majority, women's grassroots organizations, political will, international aid, and the Beijing Conference on Women. Each of these factors is associated with various bodies of literature and it is only by drawing upon these different debates that we can arrive at a more thorough examination of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus.

The following chapters map empirical evidence on to this theoretical framework and help reveal a PCR gender policy focus that was riddled with complexities and competing motivations. The dynamics mirror the developmental and political challenges at play within contemporary Rwanda; however, they illustrate that integrating theoretical complexity perhaps widens our understanding of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus as well as PCR much more generally.

Chapter Three

The Historical Role of Gender and the PCR Context

As explored in the earlier chapters, Rwanda is currently heralded for its policy focus on gender equality. Measures such as a constitutional quota for females in elected seats and land reform, guaranteeing women the right to own land, have granted Rwanda international recognition for its progress concerning gender equality. Indeed, headlines such as ‘*Rwanda, A revolution in rights for women*,’⁶⁷ ‘*Rwanda: Gender and Women Promotion Achievements Inspiring*,’⁶⁸ or ‘*Rwanda shows the world how to gender balance politics*,’⁶⁹ demonstrate that gender policies in Rwanda are helping to usher in accolades from the international community.⁷⁰ The RPF is largely credited with the advances made in terms of gender issues since the genocide; however, is it adequate to accept that gender equality only became a development priority following the genocide and in the PCR period? This calls for a consideration of the role of women prior to the Rwandan genocide with a view to investigating possible historical antecedents to the PCR gender policy focus.

Before delving into detailed analysis in the following chapters on *why* gender policies were a post-conflict priority and what this actually means in terms of longer-term outcomes, I will use this chapter to briefly explore the status of women prior to the 1994 genocide. This examination suggests that gender policy initiatives were on the national agenda prior to the genocide, thus prior to the RPF taking governmental control. It also examines current efforts by the RPF to link contemporary policies concerning gender issues to the historical position of powerful women within the Tutsi monarchy and concludes that these linkages may be overstated.

Given these questions, this chapter provides an overview of Rwanda’s historical context, examines the role of women within this context, explores whether gender issues were gaining momentum prior to 1994, and provides an overview of the measures the RPF took within the PCR period to indicate that gender policies were a priority. This includes an examination of pre-colonial ruling structures, the colonial period, and the period in the run-up to the genocide. Many scholars have explored the history of Rwanda in great detail so

⁶⁷ The Guardian, Friday 28 May, 2010

⁶⁸ Peacewomen

⁶⁹ 20-first/Womenomics

⁷⁰ Here, I am explicitly limiting the conversation to gender policies. Later in the thesis I will further explore the way in which a gender policy focus plays out in terms of political dynamics.

this chapter provides a truncated overview to illustrate the pre-PCR context from which gender policies emerged in 1994.⁷¹

Brief Historical Overview: Gender Relations Prior to the Genocide

The current government has utilized a particular narrative that explicitly suggests that Rwanda's divisions were primarily due to the colonial legacy. This narrative argues that historically, under the Tutsi monarchy, Rwanda was a peaceful nation:

For centuries, Rwanda existed as a centralized monarchy under a succession of Tutsi kings from one clan, who ruled through cattle chiefs, land chiefs and military chiefs. The king was supreme but the rest of the population, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa lived in *symbiotic harmony*. (my emphasis, Government of Rwanda 2013)

In a 2004 speech, President Kagame further spoke to the pre-colonial context and suggested that the '...cohesion was disrupted by the colonial policy of divide and rule' (Kagame 2004: 2).

The benefits of this position are particularly political in nature; as the ruling officials within the RPF (including President Kagame) are from a Tutsi background, the construct helps attempt to further legitimize a government that came in from Uganda in 1994 and also helps promote the notion that a Tutsi-led government is capable of pursuing a peaceful agenda within Rwanda. There are particular gendered-dimensions to this narrative that I explore later, but it is important to note that the government's version of Rwanda's historical antecedents is not necessarily as cut and dried as this narrative suggests. Whilst the government's contention is 'harmony' prior to colonization, others have argued otherwise.

Prior to colonial structures dividing Africa and creating the modern state of Rwanda, Rwanda had existed as a kingdom (Longman 2010: 34). Three groups historically lived in Rwanda; Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa (Newbury 1995: 12).⁷² Each group was generally seen to hold a different place in society. As Des Forges described, Hutus made up the majority of the population (approximately 85 per cent) and were largely farmers, the Tutsis were approximately 14 per cent of the population and mainly raised livestock, whilst the Twa were approximately 1 per cent of the population and existed primarily as hunters (Des Forges 2011: 4).

⁷¹ For example, see African Rights 1995, Baines 2005, Burnet 2008, Codere 1973, Des Forges 1999, 2011 (based on her PhD dissertation submitted in 1972), Golooba-Mutebi (2008), Gourevitch 1999, Goodfellow 2009, Hayman 2007, Hesselbein et al. 2006, Jefremovas 1991, Longman 2010, Mamdani 2001, Mutamba 2005, C. Newbury 1988, D. Newbury 2009, Pottier 2002, Prunier 1995, Straus 2006, The Times 1962, 1964a, 1964b, 1966a, 1966b, 1966c, Uvin 1998, Vansina 2004, Weinstein 1977.

⁷² See also Newbury 1988.

However, harmony between the groups (as the government suggests) may not accurately depict the pre-colonial context as Burnet contends: ‘...we should not be seduced by idyllic depictions of a precolonial Rwanda where social harmony and ethnic equality were predominant features’ (Burnet 2012: 14). In echoing a similar sentiment, Prunier has noted that there were both parallels and differences amongst the Rwandan population:

The first explorers who reached Rwanda and Burundi were immediately struck by the fact that the population though linguistically and culturally homogeneous were divided into three groups, the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa. These are the people who have often and inappropriately been called the ‘tribes’ of Rwanda. They had none of the characteristics of tribes which are micro-nations. They shared the same Bantu language, lived side by side with each other without any ‘Hutuland’ or ‘Tutsiland’ and often intermarried. But they were neither similar nor equal. (Prunier 1995: 5).

Prunier thus indicates that divisions within the population existed prior to the colonial period; the RPF’s illustration of pre-colonial Rwanda as a harmonious society may not be accurate even though this sentiment neatly delineates between a peaceful pre-colonial history under the Tutsi monarchy and a society in upheaval due to the impact of colonialism.

Whilst generalities regarding the three main groups in Rwanda can perhaps be utilized as a starting point or analytical factor to help examine Rwanda’s historical (and at times violent) trajectory, these identifications are certainly not static or pre-determined. As Mamdani argues:

... whatever other disagreements they may have, historians and political analysts of Rwanda have been preoccupied with finding a *single* answer to the question: Who is a Hutu and who is a Tutsi? In contrast, I argue that Hutu and Tutsi have changed as political identities along with the state that has enforced these identities. There cannot therefore be a single answer that pins Hutu and Tutsi as transhistorical identities. (Author’s emphasis, Mamdani 2001: 34)

Rwanda during the pre-colonial period had primarily been a monarchy where the Tutsi largely held power. Longman has suggested that:

In the late nineteenth century, however, after a period of rapid territorial expansion, the Rwandan monarch Kigeri IV Rwabugiri sought to consolidate and centralize his rule by placing close supporters in positions of power in areas formerly relatively autonomous and by expanding systems of clientship, such as *ubuhake*, cattle clientship, and *ubutaka*, land clientship. After colonial rulers arrived in 1898, they assisted the Rwandan royal court in the consolidation and centralization of its rule. (Longman 2010: 34-35)

In contrast to the notion that perhaps the king had absolute power and ruled as an absolute monarch, Mamdani suggests that power was more decentralized via three levels ‘...from province to district to hill’ (Mamdani 2001: 68). Whilst the chiefs who served under the king were appointed, kings, ‘...were considered sacred, and all were Tutsi’ (Mamdani 2001: 69). Mamdani also suggests that though the monarchs were Tutsi, the Hutu and Twa retained a significant place within the governing (and military) administration (Mamdani 2001: 69).

Germany began claiming rights to Rwanda in the 1880s (Des Forges 2011: 16, Prunier 1995: 3). Germany utilized the governing structures that were already in place in a scheme of indirect rule; this largely meant that Tutsi political players and, more specifically, those who were connected to the Tutsi monarchy, were strategically used to increase German control within Rwanda. However, the colonizers were not the only ones benefitting. Longman argues that the administrative structures established by the Germans were simultaneously used to increase the monarch's power:

As the German colonial administration and the royal court worked together to consolidate rule over the entire territory defined by the colonial powers as Rwanda, they met with resistance, particularly in regions where independent Hutu kingdoms had existed until the advent of Musinga's reign. (Longman 2010: 40)

Others have argued a similar point. Mamdani (2001:91), for example, explains that colonial powers installed Tutsi officials at the local level and this helped solidify Tutsi political power within Rwanda; further to this, he has suggested that colonial rule was a hybrid of direct and indirect mechanisms (Mamdani 2001:103).⁷³

European government officials were not the only Europeans to help the king advance his objectives. Longman (2010: 40) further demonstrates that the monarchy had ties to Christian missionaries which helped advance the king's political objectives; missionary authorities required that missionaries,

...side with the Rwandan king, whom they judged to be the legitimate authority in the country, and the support of the missionaries proved essential to efforts to consolidate rule. Musinga strategically granted the right to establish missions in regions only recently brought into Rwanda where royal authority was weakest...(Longman 2010: 40)

Here, we can see that both the Christian missions and the King were able to further deepen their power by this mutual political alignment. During the colonial period the Catholic Church became more predominant and powerful (Prunier 1995:32).

Whilst the current RPF government argues that the colonial period *created* differences within the population, others have demonstrated that the colonial structures instead *exacerbated pre-existing* differences (Uvin 1998: 16, Weinstein 1977: 52, Reyntjens 1987). Scholars have demonstrated that the colonial period⁷⁴ had a detrimental impact on Rwandan society: however, these arguments show that a significant result of colonization processes was that it increased the power of the Tutsi monarchy; the current government does not

⁷³ C. Newbury described this joint governance structure as a '...dual colonial state, ruled by Europeans and by Tutsi...' (C. Newbury 1988: 179).

⁷⁴ Germany wielded power in Rwanda between approximately 1897-1916 (Prunier 1995: 25); in 1916 a League of Nations Mandate granted Belgium administrative power in Rwanda.

necessarily highlight this part of the argument. The colonial powers drew upon previously existing group lines and exploited them as Uvin (citing Prunier 1995: 30) argues:

Hence, under indirect rule, social relationships in Rwanda became more uniform, rigid, unequal, and exploitative than ever, with a clear hierarchy from Bazungu to Tutsi to Hutu to Twa, with each higher level having privileges denied to the lower level and with an ideology of racial superiority underlying this system of inequality (Prunier 1995, 30). (Uvin 1998: 17)

These inequalities continued to be exacerbated in the run-up to the granting of independence in 1962.

These passages centralize the notion that the Tutsi monarchy (and elites) had significant power within Rwanda's pre-colonial period. Problematically, this works for and against the current Rwandan government; the Tutsi monarchy is credited with ruling over a peaceful or harmonious society, yet the fact that significant inequalities were present during that period, is overlooked. Given the level of ruling power held within the Tutsi monarchy, the relationship between the monarchy and the colonial power calls into question whether the monarchy was as benign as the current discourse pushed by the government would suggest. In a 1972 PhD dissertation (published posthumously in 2011), Alison Des Forges provides great detail on the ways in which the Tutsi monarchy itself was hardly a peaceful and coherent entity; she suggests that it was largely marked by internal conflict, where political rivalries and killings were rampant (Des Forges 2011). Her view is supported by Codere, who claimed that the Tutsi had a '...capacity for cruelty.' (Codere 1973: 21)

Whilst there is evidence demonstrating that colonialism intensified social and political tension between Hutus and Tutsis, there are also indications that colonization was not necessarily the *determining* factor that divided Hutus and Tutsis (as the current government suggests). In a study examining social attitudes Codere found that, when asked 'Before the Europeans came the Banyarwanda had fewer problems and found life happier?' (Codere 1962: 80), attitudinal differences amongst Hutus and Tutsis were evident:

Of the Tutsi 52 per cent of the men and 73 per cent of the women affirm the statement. While among the Hutu 73 per cent of the men and 79 per cent of the women deny it; 25 per cent of the Hutu men and 30 per cent of the women deny it vehemently. (Codere 1962: 80)

This study suggests that each group viewed colonialism differently and that perhaps societal tension existed prior to colonization; this may partly be because the Hutus frequently held a lower position in society than the Tutsi in pre-colonial Rwanda.⁷⁵ This particular study

⁷⁵ In highlighting these particular passages, we can see that again, the 're-imagining' of Rwanda that Pottier (2002) discusses is relevant. Whilst I am in no way negating the horrific, violent acts committed by Hutus, especially in 1959 and during the 1994 genocide, I am simply pointing to the fact that the current discourse put

provides evidence that contrasts with the current government's claim that the historical origins of Rwanda were fundamentally peaceful.⁷⁶

In the 1950s the balance of power began to shift from existing as an almost exclusively Tutsi purview to Hutus gaining political leverage; the shift in power also saw a change in Belgian loyalties (Prunier 1995). As the political tide turned, Rwanda saw an increase of violence within its borders which culminated in a period of extremely violent attacks by Hutus on Tutsis:

On November 1, 1959, a popular Hutu subchief was maltreated by Tutsi youths. On November 3, 1959, Hutu revolted against Tutsi domination. The revolt spread to most parts of the country. Hutu gangs roamed the hillsides attacking Tutsi, burning and pillaging their homesteads. (Weinstein 1977: 55)

The 1959 violence was known as the "Hutu Revolution" (Ingelaere and Verpoorten 2014:10). This violent outbreak demonstrated '...the ability of the Hutu to destabilize the state' (C. Newbury 1988: 195) and had a detrimental and lasting impact on the Tutsi power structure within Rwanda.⁷⁷

Belgium did little to stop the violence. Prunier suggested, '...Belgian authorities showed extreme partiality for the Hutu, even letting them burn Tutsi houses...' (Prunier 1995: 49). Christian institutions were particularly complicit in this violence. Hutus retained top positions within these institutions whilst Tutsis retained middle-level positions.⁷⁸ As Mamdani explains: 'It is from the ranks of the Church-connected movement that the leadership of the 1959 Revolution was drawn' (Mamdani 2001: 232).

The 1959 Revolution was particularly significant because the wave of Hutu attacks against Tutsis caused 130,000 Tutsis to flee (over the course of several years) to surrounding areas, including Uganda (Prunier 1995: 51, Weinstein 1977: 61).⁷⁹ According to Barnett, this time period also marked a particular turning point as, 'Ethnic violence now became a central feature of Rwanda's politics' (Barnett 2002: 52). The Tutsis who were driven to neighbouring countries became refugees and sought to return to Rwanda⁸⁰ and the battle between Rwandan refugees and the Rwandan government would become a decades-long problem.

forth by the government regarding a historically peaceful society under a Tutsi monarchy may be simplifying a more complex reality.

⁷⁶ See also Ingelaere 2011 and Freedman, et al. 2011 for further discussion.

⁷⁷ See also Barnett 2002.

⁷⁸ This ruling structure contrasted with the governing administrative system in Rwanda where Tutsis held the most powerful positions (Mamdani 2000: 232).

⁷⁹ The group of Tutsis who fled during that period are frequently referred to as the 59ers.

⁸⁰ See Prunier 1995 and Pottier 2002 for more information.

Indeed, as alluded to above, Rwanda had been mired in complex ethnic or political relations (depending on the lens one uses) and this resulted in a dynamic whereby Rwanda has been on the brink of war many times. Newspaper archives in the early to mid 1960s are particularly instructive regarding this point. Even prior to independence in 1962, the threat of war loomed, as a Times article blaming Tutsi actions describes:

The threat comes from the Watutsi, former absolute overlords of Rwanda, who have been driven out of the country in successive waves of refugees since the Wahutu, who form 80 per cent of the population, overthrew the monarchist Tutsi regime in 1959. (The Times 19 June 1962)

Whilst this is a journalist's biased account of the happenings in the run-up to independence, it does show that relations between various groups in Rwanda were strained.

Following the 1959 revolution, the Hutus in the ruling party began to discriminate against the Tutsis as Uvin detailed: '...the new Hutu elite developed a policy of systematic discrimination against Tutsi, especially in areas of direct political importance and vertical mobility' (Uvin 1998: 34).

Tensions between Hutus and Tutsis were not the only political tensions in Rwanda in the 1960s and early 1970s. According to Weinstein (1977: 65), civil war loomed in 1973 due to tensions between Hutus of different regions; in 1973 Rwandan army general, Habyarimana (also a Hutu), took governmental control of Rwanda (Weinstein 1977: 65). Habyarimana was in power when the genocide occurred in 1994.

Exiled Tutsis had attempted to forcibly remove the Hutu-led government many times and 1990 saw the beginnings of a significant civil war led by the RPF (primarily operating out of Uganda) against Rwandan Hutu forces. This civil war eventually culminated in the 1994 genocide. The genocide occurred from April-July 1994 and during that period almost 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by extremely brutal means.⁸¹ Hutu extremists were responsible for initiating the violence however, many ordinary Hutus engaged in violent acts aimed at eradicating the Tutsi population (Straus 2006). Women also suffered extreme sexual violence (Sharlach 1999); it is estimated that approximately 250,000 women suffered sexual violence during that period (Mutamba and Izabiliza 2005: 9).

⁸¹ There is a great deal of literature that goes into detail about the genocide. See Dallaire 2004, Melvern 2004, Uvin 1998, Straus 2006, Prunier 1995, Pottier 2002, Hatzfeld 2007, Des Forges 1999 for further information.

During this period the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) (the armed section of the RPF),⁸² began moving into Rwanda from neighbouring Uganda to stop the genocide. As the RPA force led by Paul Kagame moved further into Rwanda, it secured the areas of the country where mass murder had taken place and, on 4 July 1994, the RPF effectively ended the genocide by securing Kigali (Silva-Leander 2008: 1607). The RPF, which had been considered a rebel military movement at the time, is now largely credited with having prevented the total annihilation of the Tutsi population.

Gender Relations: Position of Women Prior to the 1994 Genocide

As the current RPF government has often attempted to evoke an image of a peaceful Rwanda under the Tutsi monarchy (due to the fact that it helps lend legitimacy to the current government), this imagery has also proven useful in linking the pre-colonial period to the post-conflict emphasis on gender relations. The RPF has placed emphasis on the fact that when the Tutsi monarchy was in place, the *queen mothers* had political power. This is evident in the National Gender Policy where the RPF-led government highlights the historical role of the queen mother in order to suggest that the position of women was valued in the pre-colonial period:

Although Rwandan society was patriarchal, women played an important role in the management of family life, household resources and to some extent public affairs. No major decision in the family could be taken without the woman's consent on sensitive issues such as the exchange of cows and brides. The institution of the queen mother was highly regarded. (Government of Rwanda, National Gender Policy 2010: 20)

The government further highlights the role of women within ruling bodies. According to the National Gender Policy:

Pre-colonial Rwanda was led according to the principle of patriarchy. The head of state was a powerful polygamist king, whose powers were theoretically limitless. Under him were different categories of leaders, who were mostly men. A few women were appointed at low levels of power. However, the institution of the Queen Mother in Rwandan monarchy was evidence of the Rwandan monarchy's flexibility that allowed some opportunities for women to play a role in decision-making. (Government of Rwanda, National Gender Policy 2010: 9)

The association between the historical role of women within the monarchy and women within political positions in Rwanda presently, implies that the government is drawing upon historical antecedents in order to suggest that current policies are grounded in pre-colonial structures.

This particular linkage between the historical institution of the queen mother and the current focus on gender issues within Rwanda appears to permeate beyond governmental

⁸² The RPA was a rebel force primarily comprising of Tutsi refugees (and their offspring) who had been driven out of Rwanda in the 1950s.

institutions. Interview research conducted in recent years by Uwineza and Pearson indicated that within Rwanda use of these historical narratives is being linked to current policy initiatives:

Historical examples of women's involvement in decision-making, such as the existence of female chiefs and the Queen Mother, are often cited as the foundation for the present level of women's political participation. (Uwineza and Pearson 2009: 6)

Mutamba advances a similar argument:

Interviews with a cross section of people highlighted the fact that although there are influences within the Rwandan culture that discriminate against women, there are also other cultural values and practices that assign women important roles as advisers, sources of power and wisdom, and managers of wealth. The existence of mother-queen institutions, women chiefs, and female religious leaders and custodians of indigenous technical knowledge partly explain why men in Rwanda are not generally opposed to the women's empowerment agenda. (Mutamba 2005: 16-17)

These passages indicate that in contemporary Rwanda the historical role of powerful women provides a partial explanation and foundation for the current gender policy focus. However, is use of this narrative too narrow and does it suggest that one particular narrative has simply permeated the discourse?

The evidence suggests that elite Tutsi women within the monarchy did indeed have a prominent place in pre-colonial Rwanda. Prior to colonization, kings co-ruled with their mothers (Uwineza and Pearson: 12, Des Forges 2011, Vansina 2004: 38) thus signalling that women may have had some political power during this period (Codere 1962: 58). However, this power was not necessarily guaranteed, nor stable. D. Newbury has suggested that women within the monarchy were often at the centre of succession struggles particularly amongst '...wives of the former king, or the families of these women, for it was the relative strength among the competing matrilineal kin that often determined the successor' (D. Newbury 2009: 327). Further to this, D. Newbury explains in regard to questions involving succession:

...conflict over the position of the queen mother was the critical issue, for in naming the queen mother one indirectly named the king; one also brought the queen mother's kin to the center of power. Therefore, mobilizing matrilineal kin was the essential resource in the struggle for dynastic succession, and the women themselves appear in the traditions as the dominant political actors in these struggles. (D. Newbury 2009: 331)

This implies that particular elite women did have a powerful role within the highest political level in Rwanda prior to colonization.

It is interesting to note that even as the imagery of the queen mother is utilized to show that women had some political power before colonialism some details are omitted; the queen

mother was not as respectable a political figure as implied by the government.⁸³ The example of one particular queen mother, Kanjogera, is particularly important. Kanjogera was Queen Mother as Rwanda transitioned to colonial rule and thus, she serves as a more recent illustration of the power held by women within the monarchy; Kanjogera is also the queen mother who appears to linger in contemporary imagery.

In the late 1890s Queen Mother Kanjogera⁸⁴ had considerable power because she was responsible for the king's son and appointed heir, Rutarindwa. Rutarindwa was the king's child from another wife and this created many tensions within the monarchy (D. Newbury 2009: 334).⁸⁵ Kanjogera had loyalties that were not in Rutarindwa's interest (because he was not her bloodline) and therefore she actively campaigned to have her own son, Musinga, enthroned (Des Forges 2011: 17). By many accounts, Queen Mother Kanjogera was not necessarily viewed positively. Des Forges says describes how she '...was renowned as an exceptionally overbearing woman...' (Des Forges 2011: 73). Kanjogera was particularly instrumental in eliminating political opposition in a brutal manner (Des Forges 2011: 17). As Uwineza and Pearson explain in a detailed account on historical gender relations within Rwanda:

Rwandans remember Kanjogera as a merciless leader who casually ordered the death of many of her subjects. With formidable authority and notorious interventions - including a coup d'état that placed her son on the throne - the name "Kanjogera" has become synonymous with a woman who wields terrible power and possesses the real authority behind the public face of a male leader. (Uwineza and Pearson: 12)⁸⁶

Others such as Vansina (2004: 178) and Des Forges (2011: 17) also indicate that Kanjogera acted in self-interest and would take violent measures in order to achieve her goals. This suggests that whilst royal women, particularly queen mothers, may have had decision-making power prior to colonization, they were not necessarily serving as benevolent leaders. Queen Mother Kanjogera also lost much of her freedom and decision-making authority once her son actually became the king (Des Forges 2011).

Given the historical context in which Kanjogera acted, evoking memories of the queen mother by the RPF, is perhaps more questionable given the more contemporary imagery of Kanjogera which linked the queen mother to President Habyarimana's wife⁸⁷:

In a tribute to another powerful woman who played an important historical role, Mrs. Habyarimana was nicknamed "Kanjogera," after a famous queen in Rwandese history known for her domineering and highly political role. (African Rights 1995: 5)

⁸³ See the passage cited earlier from the National Gender Policy.

⁸⁴ '...Kanjogera, known by the royal name Nyirayuhi...', (Uwineza and Pearson 2009: 12)

⁸⁵ Rutarindwa's mother had been killed by the king and Kanjogera appointed Queen Mother to the heir to the throne (C. Newbury 1988: 58).

⁸⁶ See also Prunier 1995 and Uwineza and Pearson 2009.

⁸⁷ Habyarimana was in office in the period prior to the genocide.

As Vansina argues, ‘Rwandans know that Kanjogera almost succeeded in concentrating all power in her own hands...’ (Vansina 2004: 202), thus calling Habyarimana’s wife “Kanjogera” was a negative connotation.

The newly-portrayed image of Queen Kanjogera is often used by the current RPF government to suggest that gender equality is ‘natural’ in Rwandan culture and that colonialism negatively impacted gender dynamics (Uwineza and Pearson 2009). The present use of this particular historical narrative may help advance the political saliency of gender issues by the Rwandan government. Whilst drawing upon the imagery of a historical queen mother allows for a strengthened connection to the historical roots of the RPF it also lends credence to a local level connection to the importance of gender issues. By highlighting the pre-colonial position of the queen mother, the RPF government is able to create an imagery that demonstrates women were an important part of the political structure prior to colonization. This neatly fits with the RPF’s arguments that colonization was largely disruptive and destructive to Rwanda’s relatively ‘peaceful’ pre-colonial society.

Status of Women Beyond the Monarchy

Though the example of the queen mother suggests that some women at the highest levels of society may have had limited power, this is not representative of the overall context in which women lived. There is evidence to indicate that women were regularly viewed as holding a lesser position than men. Colonization in particular pushed women into the private versus public spheres (Daley 2007: 54) and this meant that the role of women was largely relegated to work that was done in relation to the household.⁸⁸ Hunt further demonstrates that Belgian colonizers often implemented programmes that instructed women on how to carry out domestic activities such as cooking and washing clothes (Hunt 1990: 447). In addition to retaining household responsibilities, women also retained significant agricultural responsibilities. As C. Newbury explained:

Cultivated plots are worked by the entire family; both men and women participate together in the major agricultural activities of cultivation and harvesting, and during the rainy season much of their time is spent in their fields. Otherwise the care of fields and home are the domain of women, while care of livestock (cattle, goats, sheep) and the maintenance of lineage ties falls to men. (C. Newbury 1988: 220)

C. Newbury continued to explain how cattle were historically particularly important in Rwandan society in terms of social and political issues (C. Newbury 1988: 220); this suggests that men had more control over the more prestigious work.

⁸⁸ Daley (2007) writes extensively on ways in which colonial structures in Burundi had an impact on shaping gender roles.

The push of women to the domestic sphere had implications. Pottier, for example, has suggested that women's power is limited particularly in the public sphere (Pottier:155) and even elite women's autonomy was limited (a point that is in juxtaposition to the discourse that focuses on the role of queen mothers). Jefremovas has also argued, 'Women, however wealthy or powerful, are restricted in ways that wealthy and powerful men are not' (Jefremovas 1991: 379). Jefremovas explained how gendered constructs within the home had an impact on women's agency and resource control: 'In Rwanda, men and women hold separate responsibilities for household reproduction, but men have rights over any surplus a woman might generate' (Jefremovas 1991: 379). Uwineza and Pearson further similarly argued that, within the household women may have had some say, but men still had the final decision-making authority (Uwineza and Pearson 2009: 8).⁸⁹

Historical accounts of life stories lend credence to the notion that men retained a better position in society than women. Research published in 1973 by Helen Codere provides more contextual evidence regarding the dynamics between men and women and demonstrates that men were typically in an advantageous position to women. For example, the story of a female Tutsi noble provides some indication as to the value of having a female baby: 'The fact was that my husband had forbidden me sending word to him that I had a girl. ... When they learned it was a boy there was a great celebration and rejoicing everywhere. They came and drank' (Codere 1973: 151). The noblewoman also described how her husband had '...never wanted even to see his daughters' (Codere 1973: 153). This suggests that girls were not held in the same esteem as boys.

Polygamous unions were also commonplace and these unions frequently disadvantaged women (and children); men had multiple wives (or partners) and these unions often left women vulnerable to the whims of a male spouse or those of a male partner who had a spouse (Codere 1973). In exemplifying this dynamic, a Rwandan woman retelling her life history explained: 'The man I was so fond of continued to live with me, then one day his wife came to get him at my house. He grabbed her and fought with her and came back to me' (Codere 1973: 192).

This serves as an illustrative case showing how particular women (in this case, the wife) could simply be left with little recourse. In a society where women had few social or legal rights, these dynamics were particularly problematic because women and children could be

⁸⁹ My own research presented in Chapter Six demonstrates that a similar dynamic still exists in Rwanda with men primarily holding the role of 'head of household'.

abandoned and left with very little at any point in time. Pottier further indicates that second wives and their offspring were particularly marginalized within Rwandan society (Pottier 2002: 192).

Whilst polygamous arrangements were potentially detrimental to women, being unmarried and pregnant similarly meant women were in a precarious situation. Hunt suggests that strict norms of behaviour for women were established by Belgian colonizers (in conjunction with religious institutions) and taught within social programmes implemented by the colonial government (Hunt 1990). Jefremovas further indicates that there were rigid expectations governing women's actions in society and these expectations cut across class and ethnic lines: 'Women were characterized as behaving either as virtuous wives and virginal daughters or as loose women. Censure and praise were both phrased in these terms (Jefremovas 1991: 378-379).

Deviating from these expectations could have a detrimental impact; D. Newbury for example shows that unmarried Rwandan women could be excluded from their homes for being pregnant (D. Newbury 2009: 92).⁹⁰

A brief examination of the legal and educational context prior to the genocide further reveals that women were not regarded as equals to men within Rwanda. The lower status of women was not only a *social or cultural* issue, it was enshrined in Rwanda's legal framework as indicated by Article 206 of the Civil Code which explicitly noted that husbands are head of the family (Titre Preliminare et Livre Premier Du Code Civil: 1988). The codification of men as head of the family suggests that women had limited power within the household compared to men. Other laws also explicitly discriminated against women and gave men substantially more legal rights than women. Laws concerning land ownership for example:

...women control very few resources outside of the home. Married women have practically no legal status independent of their husband and cannot inherit land. Furthermore, women can rarely enter into legal obligations, including the purchase of land, without the husband's consent. (UNICEF XI)

Similarly, a 1992 report by USAID:

Inheritance of land is, by tradition and practice, exclusively through male progeny. Even widows, women heads of farm households, hold land at the arranged sufferance of senior males as great insecurity to the female farmers and their children. The division of labor in the rural economy also favors males. And males have disproportionate control over cash incomes. (USAID Africa Bureau Democracy and Governance Project April 1992: 18)

⁹⁰ See Pottier 2002: 192 for further discussion of illegitimacy.

Divorced women were also in a particularly fragile situation when it came to land ownership (Pottier 2002: 192). This suggests that women had little say in particular aspects of life such as land ownership and household expenditures and the pre-1994 legal framework did little to help this situation.⁹¹

An examination of literacy rates and educational opportunities also shows that women were disadvantaged within these areas. In the late 1980s, almost 75% of the female population was illiterate whilst the corresponding number for the male population was approximately 52% (UNICEF: 84). Demographic and Health Survey data from 1992 also indicates that on most social indicators men fared better than women; for example men retained professional positions at higher rates than women and were also better educated (Barrère et al 2004). Men were granted more educational opportunities and, at all levels of education men did better than women as the table below demonstrates.

Table 2: 1992 Education Levels of Men and Women in Rwanda

1992 DHS National Data	No Education	Primary	Secondary	Higher
Men	31.4	60.8	5.7	0.4
Women	42.6	52.1	4.3	0.1

Source: Measure DHS STATcompiler (2008)

However...A Nod to Gender Equality Before 1994

Whilst the above discussion suggests that women were not valued in the same way men were, to a limited extent gender issues began to gain recognition prior to the genocide.⁹² Currently, a significant focus of the current gender equality discourse on Rwanda attributes the gains made on gender issues to the RPF and progress made since 1994; however, it is important to recognize that efforts concerning gender issues had begun to take hold in the previous decade. Women’s grassroots efforts in particular started to gain momentum in the 1980s (Burnet 2008: 12). During this period women in Rwanda began to focus on the unequal status of women; at the same time women’s movements globally were becoming more salient. The creation of women’s associations such as the Duterimbere Association, an

⁹¹ The fact that women were not legally entitled to land ownership was particularly problematic in the wake of the 1994 genocide. A gender imbalance (tilted towards women) meant that many widows were left with few rights to family land. This became a particularly critical issue during the reconstruction period.

⁹² Unfortunately, many of the documents that could have spoken to gender-focused initiatives were destroyed during the 1994 genocide. However, evidence suggest that in the 1950s for example, a key political document (the Manifesto) behind the 1959 violence which caused Hutus to attack Tutsis, contained a demand regarding ‘...the establishment of social centers for women and girls in the rural areas.’ (C. Newbury 1988: 192)

NGO founded in 1987 to help women in small business (Imbuto Foundation 2011), signalled the beginning of a women's movement in Rwanda.

In their analysis of gender issues in Rwanda Buscaglia and Randell (2012) argue that the creation of women's groups in the 1980s played a role in increasing the emphasis on gender equality:

Things started to change at the end of the 1980s, when some women in civil society began to organize themselves following the international trend of female activism inaugurated by the 1985 UN International Conference in Nairobi at the end of the Decade for Women. Several women's associations were created, such as *Duterimbere*, *Haguruka*, *Reseau des Femmes*, and *Pro-femmes Twese Hamew*. (their footnote: *Pro-femmes Twese Hamew* means 'women together'.) The idea that female promotion must also include women's empowerment through access to the public sphere and to political power was first raised by a lively civil society, rapidly struck down by war and the genocide against the Tutsi. (Buscaglia and Randell 2012: 79)

Further evidence supports the idea that grassroots efforts by women's associations were having a positive impact in the 1980s. Echoing a similar notion to Buscaglia and Randell (2012) regarding the changing context for women, Newbury and Baldwin contended that:

In the past, Rwandan women normally remained silent in the presence of men and acted as if they knew little. Yet behind the scenes, sisters, wives, and mothers often had a good deal to say, and they were sometimes listened to. Moreover, collaboration and cooperation among women in Rwanda have long historical roots. The public reticence of women was changing by the 1980s, with their organizational activities taking a more assertive public stance. (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 9)

The 1980s clearly heralded the beginnings of a shift in gender issues.

Changes in women's roles could also be seen in the economic sphere; the rise of women's associations in particular led to increased opportunities for women working in small businesses. There is some evidence that shows that women were making strides within business prior to 1994 although challenges to gender equality were still persistent.

A 1992 USAID report, *Survey of Women-Owned Small and Micro Enterprises in Rwanda*, provides useful insight into how businesswomen in Rwanda viewed gender issues within business contexts prior to the genocide. USAID researchers conducted in-depth interviews with eighteen female businesswomen in order to gain further perspective on this issue. The report demonstrated that these women were able to gain entry into particular labour markets, thus suggesting that women were not solely confined to domestic or agricultural activities at this time.⁹³ The interview results also demonstrated that within the given sample, 'no one

⁹³ Of course the *extent* to which opportunities existed is more difficult to quantify. Given severe limitations on credit, including high interest rates on loans and the role of ethnicity in obtaining loans, women did not necessarily have ample opportunities at this time. These statements however, simply provide qualitative contextual evidence to relations between men and women in 1992.

respondent perceived her gender as a handicap to being in business,' (USAID 1992: 7/75) which again suggests that in certain economic activities at least, women had some opportunities outside of the home prior to the genocide.

On government support for women in business, one woman stated that, '...women are basically ignored by the government and the business community in their attempts to succeed in business' (USAID 1992: 23/91). Whilst this indicates that the government was not interested in assisting businesswomen, others in the development community thought otherwise. A 1988 UNICEF report further indicates that, again to some extent, gender issues were beginning to be part of the national dialogue during the 1980s:

Perhaps the most important positive aspect of the Rwandan situation is that the *Government has a genuine commitment* to the interests of children and women. This commitment is evidenced in the specific development priorities identified by the Government, along general lines, in the draft outline of its national development plan. (My emphasis, UNICEF: VII)

This suggests the Hutu-led government of the 1980s had begun to see gender issues as a policy issue. The *why* and the *extent* of this commitment deserve examination.

The government may have begun focusing on women's associations primarily due to the government's policy of increasing agricultural output and not necessarily to promote gender issues as Goyette suggests. In a case study examining the link between women's associations and agricultural productivity, Goyette (1992) argues:

The increased interest in this type of organization is due to many factors. The government, in its policy of increasing food production is promoting these associations, but there is still no umbrella organization at the national level. Women's rural associations provide an efficient vehicle for development and can contribute towards better organization of scattered farmers. (Goyette 1992: ii)

The Habyarimana government was thus seemingly linking women's organizations to efficient agricultural initiatives.

This is a more nuanced argument that perhaps destabilizes UNICEF's position regarding the government's 'genuine commitment' to women; the government was seemingly committed to development and women's organizations were a vehicle to achieve developmental goals. This is a different argument than one that suggests a commitment to women as an end in and of itself. The evaluation by UNICEF however (minimally), provides a general indication that issues concerning women were part of a governmental dialogue; I am not suggesting that this statement in any way provides concrete evidence that gender issues were a priority under the Habyarimana government, but they were on the policy agenda. A key phrase in the above passage, 'along general lines', seems to suggest the government may have been

providing lip service to gender issues versus actually advancing policies that had gender equality at their core.⁹⁴

Whilst Goyette explicitly illustrates the link between the increase in women's organizations and national level developmental initiatives, there is, perhaps, an additional reason for the increased attention paid to women's organizations by the Habyarimana government. The early 1990s also saw increased international attention to women's issues internationally and this could have contributed to the government's motivation to pay attention to women.⁹⁵ Uvin (1998) suggests that the Habyarimana government was very well versed in the language of international aid and the government may well have strategically calculated that whilst women's organizations could be a mechanism for increased, efficient developmental initiatives, they could also demonstrate to the international community that the government considered women's development to be a critical policy area. It can be argued that the 'genuine commitment' to women that UNICEF alluded to above was overstated, as the evidence beneath the rhetoric suggests otherwise. Uvin (1998) also noted that in the early 1990s when tens of millions of dollars in aid was going to Habyarimana's government, a mere \$500,000 was directed to women's projects and the government contributed only \$20,000 to these projects (Uvin 1998: 94); this suggests that whilst the government may have been placing an emphasis on women's policy issues within international aid circles, substantive commitment was indeed limited.

Interestingly, these two arguments, one concerning efficient national development and one concerning playing the aid game (Uvin 1998), can be applied to the RPF-led government both in the immediate post-conflict period and presently.⁹⁶

Whilst the extent to which a substantive commitment to gender issues is up for debate, a noteworthy factor in examining the pre-PCR period is that during the 1994 genocide a female prime minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, was in office; this is particularly significant when considering the current credit the RPF is granted in terms of increasing women in decision-making positions. Whilst increased parliamentary representation of women has occurred in Rwanda since 1994, female political representation at a very high level was actually achieved pre-1994. Uwilingiyimana was a highly political figure; she was a moderate Hutu and this was not popular in a nation engaged in a civil war with Tutsi forces.

⁹⁴ Again, this simply provides an example to illustrate that there was some focus on gender policies prior to the arrival of the RPF in 1994.

⁹⁵ Increased international attention to these issues was partly driven by large-scale conferences such as the 1985 World Conference on Women held in Nairobi, Kenya.

⁹⁶ This will be explored in more depth in later chapters.

Uwilingiyimana was appointed at a time when an unpopular peace agreement (the Arusha Accords) was going to be signed and her appointment rested within a political quagmire that had little to do with gender equality.⁹⁷ Uwilingiyimana was, strategically, one of the first victims of the genocide - precisely because she was a moderate Hutu (Prunier 1995: 230). Whether Uwilingiyimana's appointment should be viewed as a gain for gender equality is up for debate; I would argue that this appointment existed largely outside concerns for gender representation, albeit serving as an example of a high-level female political figure prior to 1994.

In examining the Habyarimana government's pre-1994 gender initiatives (or the appointment of a female prime minister), it is difficult to definitively establish whether the objectives behind the developmental initiatives were benign. Due to the destruction of official documentation during the 1994 genocide, few documents speaking to gender policy objectives have survived. The increase in grassroots women's activities could have meant there was more internal pressure being put on the government to take women's issues seriously. However, as Uvin (1998) has suggested, Habyarimana used the international aid system to his advantage, so perhaps pre-1994 gender initiatives were part of a political, strategic objective to attract foreign aid.

Whilst the motivation behind these initiatives is unclear, we can see that the foundation for a national dialogue on gender equality was at least being set prior to the 1994 genocide or the RPF coming to power. This argument destabilizes some of the dominant narratives which solely credit the RPF with the gender policy progress that occurred within the post-conflict and subsequent rebuilding periods.

The RPF: Early Signs of Gender Equality as a Policy Priority

Given the genocide, the context of post-conflict reconstruction was mired in complexities that cannot be overstated. Following the 1994 genocide, Rwanda was starting '...from a base without skills or capacity' as Rwandan Ambassador Gatete (2009) described, or as Rwandan President Paul Kagame said, it was a nation starting 'from zero' (Soudan 2009). However, because Rwanda was emerging from a genocide, it can be argued that Rwanda was not starting 'from zero'; indeed there were extremely complex historical, political, and social factors were underlying the context.

⁹⁷ See Prunier 1995: 188 for more information on her appointment.

At the time the RPF was leading the transitional process from conflict to PCR Rwanda was a nation with over 800,000 people dead, approximately two million refugees in exile in neighbouring nations (UN 2000: 246, Traniello 2008), and almost one million old caseload refugees returning; rebuilding a nation within this context was a very large feat. Many 'old caseload' returnees - members of a Tutsi Diaspora that had fled beginning in the late 1950s - settled in Kigali, considered to be a safe geographic location at the time. The RPF military offensive which stopped the genocide was becoming the new ruling government entity. A multiparty transitional government was established and individuals who played a role in the RPF struggle became a critical part of the transitional government. A Hutu member of the RPF, Pasteur Bizimungu, assumed the presidency and Paul Kagame the vice-presidency (Silva-Leander: 1608).

Individuals who had advanced the RPF military and political initiatives were seemingly a logical human resource pool for transitional and reconstruction efforts within Rwanda. As the transitional government took form, with the RPF taking a substantial lead, the RPF leadership began working with international donors to secure funding for reconstruction.⁹⁸ Those closely associated with the RPF in Kigali were able to attain government positions or positions within international donor agencies or NGOs. Post-conflict Rwanda was a setting where both local and international actors had significant influence. Donor guilt over failure to intervene and prevent the genocide contributed to an outpouring of funding from the donor community. According to a 1996 report, between April and December 1994 approximately US\$1.4 billion was targeted to the international community response to the genocide, the Commission of the European Union and the US Government being the largest donors, contributing a combined 50% of funding, followed by the United Nations, and the Red Cross Movement (RRN 1996: 3).

Due to the international community's earlier failures the RPF was able to utilize what some observers term 'genocide credit' (Reyntjens 2004) to exert considerable influence, and power relations began to shift with the RPF gaining more control over the targeting of development aid. The dominant narrative constructed by the RPF focused on these failures and, as they transitioned from a military force to a ruling governmental entity, their moral leverage increased (Hayman 2007).

⁹⁸ The returnee population in Kigali was able to draw on previously existing regional and international networks and to create new ones. Returnees also brought economic resources with them which helped them establish themselves in Kigali. (Interview 13.2.09).

From the onset of reconstruction efforts the RPF began to demonstrate that gender issues were a concern to the party.⁹⁹ The RPF had historically been comprised of many women in high-level positions and the significant presence of women continued within the new transitional government. During the transition period, high ranking RPF military officials were brought into the government and this included a number of women. Many high-ranking female RPF officials ‘were part of the struggle’ and thus became an important part of the reconstruction efforts.¹⁰⁰ Women such as Aloisea Inyumba¹⁰¹ and Rose Kabuye,¹⁰² who were part of the RPF, retained positions within the new government: Inyumba was the first Minister of Women’s Affairs and Kabuye went on to become Chief of Protocol for President Kagame (Powley 2006: 5).

The RPF also appointed women to almost 50% of the seats they were allocated in parliament during the period of the transitional government (Powley 2006: 5), thus taking initial, concrete steps to ensure gender issues were part of the transition agenda.¹⁰³ Granting such a large percentage of seats to women demonstrated a commitment to ensure they were part of Rwanda’s new government; this action was significant in that it demonstrated to a nation torn apart by conflict that women (particularly Tutsi women) had an important role within the RPF. In addition to placing high-level female RPF representatives in governmental and parliamentary positions, a new gender ministry was formed, the Ministry of Family and Women’s Promotion (Republic of Rwanda, July 2007: 21)¹⁰⁴, again sending a very public message that gender issues were a top concern of the government. Because many of the high level female appointments were of women who had ranked highly within the RPF, these appointments were seemingly based on merit of the individuals. There is, however, the question of whether these appointments were part of a larger political strategy.

As the Rwandan government transitioned from meeting emergency needs to strategic

⁹⁹ The RPF transitional government was predominantly a military entity which took governmental power in Rwanda. Given military forces are not known for prioritizing gender issues, it is notable this happened in post-genocide Rwanda. An example of how the transitional government demonstrated their commitment to gender issues during the reconstruction period is exemplified, for example, by the establishment of a women’s ministry.

¹⁰⁰ References to women in *the struggle* are a common theme in writing about women in Rwanda; Powley (2006) for example, notes how people they interviewed mentioned women an important part of the RPF military movement. A number of respondents that I interviewed also used this term.

¹⁰¹ After leaving her ministerial position Inyumba held a seat in parliament and was recently reappointed as Minister of Gender and Family Promotion.

¹⁰² Rose Kabuye had been arrested in Germany in 2008 on a French warrant alleging that she was part of the effort to take down Habriyimana’s plane, but the warrant against her was subsequently dropped.

¹⁰³ This was prior to the 2003 constitutional quota which guaranteed 30% of seats for women.

¹⁰⁴ This was the name of the ministry from 1994-1997. The ministry underwent several name changes including, the Ministry of Family, Gender and Social Affairs from 1997-1999, Ministry of Gender and Women’s Promotion in 1999, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion in 2003, and Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office in Charge of Family Promotion and Gender in 2005. (Republic of Rwanda, July 2007, Single Report Equal to Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Reports on the Implementation of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: 21) This is the current name of the Ministry, also referred to as MIGEPROF.

planning for long-term development priorities, gender equality continued to appear on the national policy agenda. A turning point in terms of advancing equality between men and women came with the 2003 constitution; here, equality was codified and specific policy measures that could be implemented were detailed. Not only did the Constitution explicitly ensure ‘...equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men without prejudice to the principles of gender equality and complementarity in national development,’ (Republic of Rwanda, Constitution: 2), but the Constitution also guaranteed that 30% of elected seats would be allocated to women (Republic of Rwanda, Constitution: 20). These measures were viewed as a major advancement for women within Rwanda. The constitution also codified the National Council of Women, which subsequently led to the creation of women’s councils within each district across Rwanda (Republic of Rwanda, Constitution: 51). The constitutional quota guaranteeing women seats in elections gave way to measurable results; in 2003 women won nearly 49% (Powley 2003: 154) and in 2008 over 50% of parliamentary seats.

Additional policy measures over the last two decades, including the creation of a national gender policy, a gender sensitive budgeting initiative, and a gender-based violence law suggest that the RPF has ensured that gender issues are a critical part of Rwanda’s policy agenda. The policy focus on gender has meant significant political gains for women, specifically resulting in such achievements as Rwanda retaining the largest proportion of female parliamentarians of any nation globally (UNIFEM 2008). Whilst female representation in elected positions is one important indicator for examining gains made by women, other indicators also suggest that a gender policy focus has resulted in additional improvements - in education and health, for example (Measure DHS 2012). Positive advances have been made, but this returns us to the central research question, *why* were gender policies a PCR priority?

Conclusion

Within this chapter I have tried to briefly set out a historical overview of gender issues within Rwanda. The imagery of a harmonious Rwanda under a Tutsi monarchy is frequently referred to by the current government in order to demonstrate historical linkages between them and the pre-colonial power. Whilst evidence suggests that the colonial period was detrimental to Rwandan society, this evidence also points to the fact that the increase in power of the Tutsi monarchy helped to exacerbate tensions within Rwandan society.

Interestingly, the narrative concerning the Tutsi monarchy also has a gendered element to draw upon; the role of the queen mother was indeed important, however, the most recent queen mother, despite the current government's portrayal of her, had negative connotations within Rwanda. The newly-positive narrative of the queen mother that the government is promoting may be permeating current gender discourses within Rwanda (beyond the government level) as Mutamba (2005) and Uwineza and Pearson (2009) had indicated; the link is indeed being made between the political figure and the PCR gender policy focus. That is not to say this narrative has been unquestioningly accepted by all Rwandans, however, it does suggest that governmental policy statements are permeating.

Finally, the pre-1994 context demonstrates that initiatives focused on women were increasing; whether this was for developmental purposes or for political ones, perhaps motivated by garnering favour with the international community, are up for debate. However, it suggests that the link between development and women's initiatives had its antecedents in the pre-genocide period, thus prior to the RPF and Kagame coming into power.

Taken together, questions arise as to whether the credit given to the RPF in regard to gender advances is perhaps overstated or not nuanced enough to capture whether this policy focus is part of a larger political strategy. To centralize Pottier once again, is there a 're-imagining' of Rwanda (Pottier 2002) that applies to the PCR gender policy focus? Here, I have demonstrated that the groundwork was being laid for a heightened focus on women's policy initiatives prior to the genocide. In the next chapter I explore how women in Rwanda were a significant driver of the PCR gender policy focus.

Chapter Four

Why were Gender Policies a Priority in Rwanda: The Role of Rwandan Women

In the previous chapter I examined the pre-1994 context and demonstrated that women's policy issues started to become salient before the arrival of the RPF. The extent to which gender issues were emerging was still limited; however, I argued that some of the groundwork for the PCR gender policy focus was laid before the genocide. A central component of this was the work done by feminists within Rwanda to advance a gender agenda in the 1980s and the early 1990s. This factor re-emerges in this chapter as I highlight the role of Rwandan women themselves. They were instrumental in setting the stage for a PCR gender policy focus; unfortunately however, *women* who played a role in have largely been lost in the post-conflict story concerning gender issues in Rwanda.

Earlier, I suggested that part of the difficulty in engaging with a theoretical framework that was applicable to this research was the absence of critical engagement with women or gender issues within PCR literature on Rwanda. Miller and Rose, in their examination of practices of governing, contend that, '...the political history of our present needed to be written in terms of the activities of the minor figures that we studied, yet who were largely below the threshold of visibility...' (Miller and Rose 2008: 5). Their approach to exploring these processes by giving voice to the invisible is particularly relevant when it comes to any investigation of women or gender issues within the PCR period in Rwanda. Implicitly, both contemporary and reflective discourses on Rwanda's PCR period unfortunately make women either invisible or minor characters. This is despite the fact that women in Rwanda were actually an active majority in the PCR context and, paradoxically, a majority that has subsequently become *invisible* within PCR analysis on Rwanda.

In contrast to much of the mainstream PCR literature on Rwanda, this chapter explicitly investigates the role of women in Rwanda during the PCR period. I argue that women were a majority of the population in the post-conflict period and contend that this female majority was indeed a critical factor both for post-conflict reconstruction efforts and the gender policy priority. I then examine how the majority female population was centrally linked to grassroots action on the part of women; women were the driving force behind reconstruction. The important role of women in the reconstruction process was, critically, another factor in establishing the foundation for a gender policy focus in Rwanda. In this chapter I demonstrate that women were a driving force behind the gender policy priority; although these efforts were glossed over by the increasingly political agenda that emerges

within much of the analysis on PCR Rwanda. Lastly, I explore theoretically how these factors, in and of themselves, are not sufficient to fully explain the gender policy focus.

Female Majority: 'After the genocide women were 70% of the population'

Many authors, such as Burnet (2008), Hamilton (2000), Rugumamu and Gbla (2003, and C. L. Hogg (2009) have noted that immediately following the genocide, Rwanda's population was largely female. However, before examining *how* the female majority played a role in prioritizing gender in the post-conflict period, here I will consider the statistical evidence surrounding discussions on the sex imbalance following the genocide.

The figure of a 70 per cent female majority is often cited to indicate the extremely skewed sex ratio in Rwanda after the genocide.¹⁰⁵ The figure of 70 per cent was (and continues to be) in regular circulation throughout the post-conflict period. Rwandan government estimates have suggested that there was a 70 per cent female majority because so many men had either been killed during the genocide or had fled Rwanda (Hamilton 2000).¹⁰⁶ Government officials throughout the mid to late 1990s used the statistic to demonstrate a particularly negative way that the genocide had affected the population. For example, in September 1995, Alyosia Inyumba, Minister for Family and Women's Affairs, suggested that two-thirds of the population was comprised of women (Hutzler 1995).¹⁰⁷ Two years after this, still in the middle of the official post-conflict phase, an October 1997 press conference report illustrates the prominence of this figure during the post-conflict period:

Christine Umutoni, Assistant to the Ministers in the Office of the President of Rwanda, told correspondents at a Headquarters press conference this morning that the genocide in her country had changed its population; women now accounted for 70 per cent of the population. (United Nations 24 October 1997)¹⁰⁸

Human Rights Watch demonstrates that this figure had not only been used for official governmental purposes, but had also permeated thinking within Rwanda about the post-genocide majority female population: 'Virtually every women interviewed by Human Rights Watch/FIDH noted...women make up some 70 percent of the population...' (Human Rights Watch 1996 n. p.).

Given that these interviews were conducted approximately two years after the genocide, it suggests that the extremely skewed sex ratio, or perhaps more accurately, the figure of 70

¹⁰⁵ See for example Burnet (2008, 2012), Hamilton (2000), and C. L. Hogg (2009).

¹⁰⁶ Hamilton 2000 n.p. number.

¹⁰⁷ This was a newspaper article written within the context of the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, Africa News 24 October 1997. Rwanda; Press Conference by Rwanda.

per cent, was central to the thinking of the population as well as the government with regard to the share of women in the population.

Verifying that the sex ratio was so highly skewed immediately following the genocide is difficult given the chaos of the post-genocide context. The genocide not only left a devastated population in its wake, but also left a seriously damaged infrastructure that impeded the efficiency with which the new government could operate.¹⁰⁹ Given this context, it would have been difficult to accurately capture statistics and official information. Whilst the origins of the 70 per cent figure as well as the accuracy of the number are difficult to trace, it has often been used in literature focusing on women or more generally within literature that focused on the impact of genocide by both aid agencies and academics. In an article focused on women in Rwanda Burnet suggests: ‘In the immediate aftermath of violence in 1994, the population had become predominantly female. Human Rights Watch estimated that 70 percent of the population inside Rwanda was female’ (Burnet 2008: 383).¹¹⁰ Whilst it is clearly noted that this is an *estimate*, is this estimate realistic?

The Human Rights Watch document cited by Burnet, *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath* does not fully account for this estimate. The Human Rights Watch report notes that ‘Rwanda has become a country of women. It is currently estimated that 70 percent of the population is female and that 50 percent of all households are headed by women’ (Human Rights Watch 1996 n. p.). The figure is used numerous times throughout the report, though no clear citation or calculation is referenced.

We can see a similar use of the figure in Devlin and Elgie where, they too, indicate that following the genocide there was a 70 per cent female majority (Devlin and Elgie 2008: 242). The source utilized by Devlin and Elgie was a 2004 United Nations document, *Strengthening Governance: The Role of Women in Rwanda’s Transition (A Summary)* prepared by Elizabeth Powley. This particular UN document simply notes that the female population was 70 per cent female immediately following the genocide (Powley June 2004: 5) but does not provide a basis for the estimate.

The use of this figure has also permeated more recent references concerning women in Rwanda. For example, this was mentioned during the 2008 Rwandan election (PBS 28 October 2008) and by an NGO representative that I interviewed in Rwanda: ‘...after [the]

¹⁰⁹ Many accounts of the genocide indicate that was substantial damage to Kigali. See Melvern 2004, Uvin 1998, and Goodfellow and Smith 2013 for example.

¹¹⁰ See also Burnet 2012: 65.

genocide women were 70% of the population, men had been outside of the country or killed...’ (NGO representative, interview, 2nd November 2009). A 2013 article by Debusscher and Ansoms also quotes this figure (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1115). Indeed, it has become the standard estimate for the share of women in the immediate post-genocidal period.¹¹¹

The above discussion suggests that this particular figure has become accepted as a fact. Whilst the evidence indicates that there was a majority female population, as I discuss subsequently, an exploration of the reproduction of *knowledge* is necessary within a research framework that suggests contemporary debates on gender in Rwanda involve a range of assumptions which have largely gone unquestioned. I would argue that critical examination of these discourses is important to understand underlying PCR policy discourses. Fischer also considers such examinations of data are necessary: ‘Only by examining the data through conflicting frameworks or standpoints can unrecognized and hidden suppositions that give it meaning be uncovered or exposed’ (Fischer 2003: 131).

Therefore, especially when making the argument that the significant female majority was a critical factor in establishing a context where gender policies were a priority, it is necessary to examine the ways in which particular statistics regarding the female majority have been automatically reproduced in an effort to illuminate a more complex gender policy story in Rwanda.

Is a 70 per cent Post-Conflict Female Majority Credible?

It has been suggested that women were the majority of the population because men were killed at higher rates than women and it was men who fled in the wake of the genocide (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1115)¹¹². However, the estimation of a 70 per cent female majority seems to be predicated upon the most extreme figures in circulation. The following table illustrates population figures in 1994.

¹¹¹ Alternative estimates regarding the share of women immediately after the genocide are not mentioned in the literature.

¹¹² They also indicate that men were in prison (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1115). Hamilton (2000) and Burnet (2008) also suggest in conjunction with the numbers of men who fled Rwanda and the numbers of men who were imprisoned, the combination of factors would point to a female majority. There were approximately 100,000 people in prison, of whom approximately three percent were women (Straus 2006: 98-100).

Table 3: Estimates To Arrive At a Female Majority In The Post-Conflict Period in Rwanda

1994	
7,800,000 ¹¹³	Total Population
3,822,000 male ¹¹⁴	Approximate Male Population
3,978,000 female	Approximate Female Population
800,000 ¹¹⁵	Total Killed
2,100,000 ¹¹⁶	Total Fled
700,000 ¹¹⁷	'Old Caseload' Tutsi Returnees in immediate PCR period

The figures above reflect the highest estimates concerning the total number of people killed and fled. Using these figures, if we assume that *only* men were killed in the genocide and that *only* men fled, and using a low estimate that half of the 'Old Caseload' Tutsi returnees were men¹¹⁸, this results in the male population being approximately 32 per cent of the population in the immediate post-conflict period. This breakdown closely reflects the figure that has been circulated over the past twenty years.

These assumptions are also problematically based upon the highest estimate regarding the numbers of people who fled Rwanda in 1994, a figure which has been disputed. Straus, for example, has suggested that 800,000 is too high and that the calculation of 500,000 deaths made by Alison Des Forges in 1999 is the most accurate estimate (Straus 2006: 51). The work of scholars such as Straus (2006), Melvern (2004), Des Forges (1999), and Gourevitch (1998) provide detailed accounts of the genocide that suggest that all Tutsis, men, women, and children, were targeted during the genocide.¹¹⁹ In his examination of deaths within Kibuye Prefecture, Straus presents evidence indicating that the ratio of women killed ranged between approximately thirty per cent to fifty per cent of total deaths in that particular prefecture, thus suggesting that women were killed at a similar rate to men (Straus 2006: 59).

Adding further complication to the issue is that there is an indication that the population that fled was estimated to be *between* 1.2 and 2.1 million (Prunier 1995: 312). Taking the lower

¹¹³ 1994 population estimate based on 1991 Rwandan census (Prunier 1995: 265).

¹¹⁴ This is based on an estimate that suggested Rwanda's female population was 51 percent (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda 2014: 7).

¹¹⁵ This is an estimate cited in Prunier (1995: 312). There is debate as to the number of people killed; later estimates suggested that the figure is closer to 500,000 people (Straus 2004: 95).

¹¹⁶ This is a UNHCR estimate cited in Prunier (1995: 312), however the range of estimates of people who fled is 1.3 - 2.1 million people (Prunier 1995: 312). I am using the most extreme estimates for illustrative purposes.

¹¹⁷ Goodfellow and Smith 2013.

¹¹⁸ This is my low estimate for illustrative purposes. Given the patterns of refugee movements during this period, the percentage of the population returning that would be male, would be much higher.

¹¹⁹ See Chapter Three for historical information.

estimates of those who were killed or fled would further suggest that women could not have made up such a significant proportion of the remaining population. Thus, the earlier noted claim by Christine Umutoni, Assistant to the Ministers in the Office of the President of Rwanda, in 1997 that the population was ‘now’ 70 per cent female¹²⁰ is also problematic. This simply could not have been the case in 1997 as a number of refugees who had fled during the genocide had returned by that point (a refugee population that differed from the ‘Old Caseload’ refugees that returned immediately following the genocide). The population figures were thus most likely to be not as skewed as the immediate post-conflict period in 1994.

Given that the evidence suggests that women *were* killed, and women *did* flee, a 70 per cent female population in the post-conflict period seems to be an exaggerated figure. Yet, the repetition of this figure has endured over the last twenty years. This very much speaks to the re-imagining that Pottier has described; a particular narrative, and in this case, a particular figure, is unquestionably seen as ‘truth’. The use of this figure seems to have begun with international estimates by Human Rights Watch; it was most likely an inaccurate estimate yet it was seized upon, perhaps for political gain. For example, suggesting that a nation emerging from genocide was seventy per cent female emphasizes a sense of victimhood, and in turn, this may have increased funding for particular organizations. The RPF could have similarly utilized this estimate in order to solidify an image of a victimized nation and this in turn may have contributed to higher levels of support for the new government.¹²¹ A post-genocidal nation of mostly women presents a compelling case for support.

Whilst the estimate of a 70 per cent female majority may be difficult to verify, the post-genocidal context nevertheless indicates that there was a female majority even if it were not necessarily 70 per cent. Below I explore the evidence that suggests that there were significantly more women than men in Rwanda and then examine how this contributed to a gender policy focus within PCR Rwanda.

Plausibility of a Significant Female Majority

Whilst the 70 per cent figure may be disputed, it does not mean that women were not a majority in the post-conflict period. Data collected in the years following the genocide suggest that the sex imbalance was reduced but not eliminated. Burnet, for example, does not attempt to verify whether the 70 per cent figure is accurate, however, she does indicate

¹²⁰ United Nations 24 October 1997.

¹²¹ Here I am referring to international funding and this will be explored in more depth in Chapter Six.

that a few years after the genocide with the return of refugees, the sex ratio was more balanced though women were still a majority:

A demographic survey conducted in late 1996 and early 1997 established that the overall sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) for the Rwandan population was 86, meaning that women constituted 53.7 percent of the adult population, an abrupt shift from the estimate only 1-2 years earlier. (Burnet 2008: 383)

Whilst the refugee influx may have partially restored the balance between men and women in the years following the genocide, an imbalance still existed. Prior to the genocide, women made up approximately 51 per cent of the population, so a shift to 53 per cent indicates that the genocide had a significant impact on the gender ratio. This can be contrasted to China for example where approximately 52 per cent of the population is male (Government of Canada 2014) however, this imbalance only occurred after decades of China's one-child policy being introduced.

Burnet provides additional evidence demonstrating that, especially for certain geographic areas and/or particular age cohorts, the imbalance is still quite apparent in post-conflict Rwanda: '...in my own census of a rural community in Butare prefecture in 2001, adult women comprised 55.6 percent of the adult population. Yet in the 40-50 age bracket women were 65.4 percent' (Burnet 2008: 383).

This points to a significant female majority in a particular geographic area approximately seven years after the genocide and given the contextual factors that were present immediately after the genocide, the skewed ratio was most likely even higher at that point. However, the genocide is not the sole factor in the gender imbalance. Male migration out of rural areas for example, could have slightly contributed to this difference. The 1992 Demographic and Health Survey for Rwanda indicated that there were slightly more female-headed households in rural areas (versus urban ones) due to male migration (Barrère 1994: 13).

Adding to the context is the fact that the genocide also unfolded against the backdrop of a larger civil war and male deaths over this longer period may have also contributed to the sex imbalance. Officially, fighting between the RPF and the Rwandan government broke out on 1 October 1990 when the RPF invaded from Uganda and was ongoing in the years leading up to the genocide (African Rights: 11). Whilst the RPF is largely credited with stopping the genocide, there is contentious debate over the extent to which it engaged in reciprocal killings following the official end of the genocide.¹²² Whilst the current government has

¹²² See Melvern 2004, Dallair 2004, Des Forges 1998, Hintjens 2008, and Straus and Waldorf 2011.

officially labelled the genocide, the *Tutsi* genocide (Waldorf 2011: 49), Hutus also perished in the violence. In discussing Hutu victims of the genocide, Hintjens (2008: 85) suggests a figure of 60,000 - 500,000 Hutus dead. Whilst Prunier notes journalist Steven Smith's estimate that the RPF killed 100,000 people in the immediate genocidal aftermath, he suggests that this figure is not reasonable (Prunier: 360). Here, I will not discuss in detail the numeric estimates of total reciprocity killings; I will focus on the likelihood that those who were killed during this period were more likely to be men than women.

Official RPF policy at the time suggests that killing for the sake of reciprocity was not acceptable. As Des Forges suggests, 'RPF authorities insisted that both personal acts of vengeance and more general killing of those thought to have committed genocide were prohibited.' (Des Forges March 1999: 547) Whilst official RPF policy may have been to bring all perpetrators to justice via a fair process, that does not rule out the possibility that RPF soldiers engaged in reciprocal killings in the immediate aftermath of the genocide, as there is often a significant disjuncture between policy intent and implementation - especially within a context of conflict.

Allegations imply that the RPF had killed *men* who were suspected of taking part in the genocide. This was illustrated by an interviewee quoted in a 1999 Human Rights Watch report; 'I saw the RPF soldiers bringing bodies in trucks at night and throwing them in toilets at Mwogo, near where they had dug their trenches. They brought men already wounded with their arms tied behind their backs. *They brought no women*' (my emphasis, Des Forges March 1999: 547). Further to this, 'A witness from Rutare camp also declared that he saw *groups of men* being marched off behind a nearby school and that they did not return'¹²³ (my emphasis, Des Forges March 1999: 550). Other statements counter the notion that men were the only targets however: 'A foreign doctor working in Byumba reported two people killed and two wounded by RPF soldiers in mid-May and stated that others, including women, had come to the hospital for treatment for wounds that they said had been inflicted by the RPF troops' (Des Forges March 1999: 550).

Again, the issue of alleged RPF atrocities committed during the civil war, during the genocide, and immediately following the genocide, is one that is deeply political and contested. The statements included above are decontextualized from the overall political and genocidal context in which they were given.¹²⁴ However, I have included them here to

¹²³ This was in regard to RPF activity.

¹²⁴ To be clear, I am not addressing this debate as it is extremely complex and outside of the research focus presented here.

suggest that aside from many Tutsi and moderate Hutu men being murdered within the genocide by the genocidaires, or male genocidaires fleeing Rwanda's borders to escape the RPF, action on the part of the RPF may have included the killing of large numbers of men which, in turn, contributed to a skewed sex ratio which led to a majority female population in post-conflict Rwanda.

Female Majority and the PCR Gender Policy Focus

Though I have pointed out that a particularly exaggerated figure has been heavily circulated when it comes to discussions regarding Rwanda's PCR context, I have not suggested that there was not a female majority; I simply indicate that 70 per cent would have been nearly impossible. Current data indicates that there is still a female majority in Rwanda, though the percentage has decreased since the PCR period to approximately 52% according to the latest estimates by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (2014).

Given that the current sex imbalance is less drastic than the estimates pointed to following the genocide, current discussions on post-conflict Rwanda may easily overlook the fact that a female majority may have played a central role in the immediate reconstruction efforts following the genocide. The majority female population was indeed a central component of the PCR gender-policy focus; this resonated within both literature reviews that primarily focused on women within PCR and the primary interviews I conducted.

In their comprehensive examination, *Aftermath: Women's Organizations in Postconflict Rwanda*, Newbury and Baldwin (2000) argue, 'Their communities had been shattered and dispersed, and the men on whom they had depended were dead or had fled.' (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 1) Whilst this does not explicitly mention there was a female majority, this does suggest that women were the ones who had been left behind following the genocide. Further to this Burnet says, 'Following the genocide, many Rwandan women found themselves as heads of household, whether because their husbands were dead, in exile, in prison, or in military service with the RPF' (Burnet 2008: 384). This point also resonates with Gervais who indicates, 'Burdened with increased responsibilities (head of households or farms, economic actors), women had to adapt to these new roles in a particularly restrictive context' (Gervais 2003: 544). The importance of women in the economy and in reconstruction efforts is a critical factor in the PCR policy-making context, and explicitly contributed to the gender policy focus that emerged in the PCR period. However, it also indicates that women were significantly burdened with the fallout from the genocide.

Interview responses corroborate the sense that women's roles in the post-genocide period were a critical factor in contributing to the gender policy focus. When discussing why gender issues were prioritized within the PCR context, one informant noted '...because there are *many women*, they do many activities men did...' (my emphasis, interview local NGO representative 17 February 2009). This is an example of where the interviewee indicated that there was a large female population and this meant women had to take on traditionally male roles. In discussing the gender policy focus in post-conflict Rwanda a number of interviewees illustrated this point. The notion that there were 'many women' resonated within a number of interviews (World Bank representative A, 15 October 2009; World Bank representative B, 15 October 2009; representative for the Commission for Reconciliation, 21 October 2009). Because a majority female population has been identified as being particularly pertinent to the post-genocidal context, this suggests that women were indeed a critical component of the gender policy focus.

Grassroots Efforts - Women Had to 'Rebuild'

A post-genocidal context where women were a majority¹²⁵ of the population could theoretically stand as a factor in and of itself¹²⁶ in establishing a foundation for a gender policy priority (i.e., there were a lot of women, so the government had to pay attention to this majority); however a main factor linked to the fact that women were the majority, was that the *actions* of women were vital to setting a PCR gender policy focus. When asked why gender policies were a priority one informant indicated that it was because of:

...women – from their own activities – being the majority, but also being active. They had to be given a say. [The] government promoted gender equality (through councils, international NGOs) because of individual efforts of women. (government representative from the National Electoral Commission, 9 February 2009)

This explicitly highlights the role of women and the actions they took as a key reason behind the PCR gender policy focus. Another informant who worked at a local NGO expressed a similar notion; she suggested that women had to 'reconstruct and rebuild' after the genocide (NGO representative, 11 February 2009) and that men had been the ones who had been responsible, but as many men had died or gone to prison, women assumed responsibility (NGO representative 9 October 2009). These statements indicate that women were the ones who shouldered a significant burden in 'rebuilding' following the genocide.

¹²⁵ This contention would be based on the fact that women were the majority; however, it would not account for significant differences amongst women, especially women emerging from a genocidal context.

¹²⁶ Though, I do contest this theoretical position and I explore the theoretical implications of a majority female population at the end of the chapter.

The notion of women ‘rebuilding’ Rwanda was one that emerged frequently within my research even though it is largely ignored in the mainstream PCR literature on Rwanda.¹²⁷ This rebuilding of Rwanda by women primarily took the form of grassroots action. The centrality of women’s grassroots efforts during the PCR period is reflected within literature that explicitly focuses on gender issues in post-conflict Rwanda. Newbury and Baldwin (2000), and Mutamba and Izabiliza (2005), for example, are particularly instructive here, as they have explicitly investigated the importance of women’s grassroots efforts. Newbury and Baldwin, in an in-depth analysis of women’s organizations in post-genocide Rwanda, suggest, ‘...in the aftermath of the conflicts, women’s organizations, both new and old, took a leading role in efforts to rebuild the country’ (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 1). Here, I will consider the relevance of women’s groups to reconstruction and within the conclusions of the chapter I explore how this action by women has been subsumed under contemporary PCR discourses that implicitly minimize the extraordinary role that these groups played in reconstruction and laying the foundation for a gender policy priority.

Women’s organizations that existed prior to the genocide played an important role during the post-conflict period. Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, for example, is an umbrella organization, established in 1992, that focuses on women’s development; at that time thirteen member associations worked with the organization (Pro-Femmes Twese Hamew 2014). Following the genocide, the organization was able to continue its work in coordinating smaller women’s associations (Pro-Femmes Twese Hamew 2014). Another previously existing organization that played a role in PCR was Duterimbere, a microfinance institution founded in 1987 that provided small loans to women (Duterimbere 2014). In the aftermath of the genocide these organizations grew and new ones were created. AVEGA, an association created in 1995 by widows from the genocide, became a key women’s organization to assist female survivors of the genocide (AVEGA 2014).

A representative from AVEGA explained the process of how fifty women started the organization:

...when people were in hiding they thought they were the only one alive, then people started to meet and [were] crying over who had died – they began meeting in church and discussed how they can keep living – they didn’t know who was alive – they had to figure out where to live. (AVEGA representative, 17 February 2009)

She continued by highlighting how basic needs were a key priority that motivated women:

¹²⁷ This was discussed in-depth in Chapter Two. I argued that the majority of recent analysis of Rwanda’s PCR efforts predominantly prioritizes the role of President Kagame and minimizes the roles of others within Rwanda’s PCR context. Women were either given a cursory mention or ignored altogether and little analysis actually engaged with the ways in which women were central to PCR efforts; this could for example be seen in most of the analysis found in edited volumes by Clark and Kaufman (2008) and Straus and Waldorf (2011).

... some [women] had children; [there was a] problem of going to school and getting food for them. [They] decided to create an association and began creating projects of income-generating activities. (AVEGA representative, 17 February 2009)

AVEGA was thus created and the organization began to obtain help from donors. Italian donors in particular, who funded health sector activities, assisted them by paying nurses to help survivors with physical and psychological problems.¹²⁸

A representative from PROFEMMES similarly described how women had to organize in order to deal with the realities of a post-genocidal context:

...before [the] genocide [there were] 12 women's associations and after, many things pushed women to organize – violence, widows, orphans. Women had to organize themselves to respond to challenges. In our culture, [there is a] challenge with family as men are firstly responsible. If men are in prison, died, they leave women and women must take the lead. After the genocide, [it was a] big issue to prepare women to take the lead. (PROFEMMES representative, interview 9 October 2009)

These passages suggest that women were organizing to begin rebuilding processes following the genocide. Similar notions are suggested by Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe organizational literature:

After the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, Pro-femmes Twese Hamwe has been instrumental in rebuilding the social fabric, community mobilization, advocacy for the participation of women in decision-making bodies and the fight against Gender Based Violence.

It is thus recognized at nationally (*sic*) and internationally for its contributions to rebuilding society after the 1994 Rwandan genocide. (Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe 2014)

The notion of 'rebuilding' permeates in these statements.

Stories that were captured during the PCR period further demonstrate that women's groups were key to the rebuilding initiatives (especially in terms of rebuilding homes).¹²⁹ A 1997 Women's Commission report echoes many of the sentiments described above: women had to organize out of absolute necessity and they had to engage in tasks such as rebuilding their own houses (The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 8). Women's organizations had to primarily rely on their own initiatives in the immediate post-conflict period; for example, women had to track down goods that had been stolen from them during the genocide including housing materials such as doors and iron sheets¹³⁰ (The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 8). Later, the international

¹²⁸ The role of aid is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

¹²⁹ See Human Rights Watch 1999 and The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997 for example.

¹³⁰ See Des Forges (1999: 13-14) for further discussion regarding how these types of materials were stolen during the genocide.

community began providing support (Newbury and Baldwin 2000, *The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children* 1997: 8).

As alluded to in these statements, the activity of women's associations began to gain substantial momentum during the PCR period. A study cited by Newbury and Baldwin estimated that there were approximately 15,400 women's groups in post-conflict Rwanda (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2).¹³¹ Newbury and Baldwin set forth that the emergence of these groups was due to a historical backdrop of women organizing, support from the international community, and Ministry of Gender and Promotion of Women's Development policies that encouraged women to organize (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 1-2). Supporting this position, an April 1995 news article focusing on women's groups in post-conflict Rwanda suggested:

Many of these organizations started before the war, when women's economic cooperatives gained a strong foothold in the country. Dativa's rural area, for instance, boasted 27 groups aiding women. Now, both cooperatives and non-governmental organizations are taking the lead in equipping women for the hardships of post-war life. (IPS-Inter Press Service, 27 April, 1995)¹³²

Newbury and Baldwin further demonstrate that the activities of women's grassroots organizations were clearly vital to reconstruction efforts, filling a void during this complex period. Efforts included building homes for widows, providing counselling, increasing women's access to income generating activities, and improving knowledge of HIV/AIDS (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 16-17). Their analysis suggests grassroots organizations provided necessary social¹³³ and economic services in lieu of state services during the post-conflict period. These organizations were also an avenue for providing basic necessities such as food and soap (Burnet 2012: 183).

Hamilton echoes this point, '...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' (Hamilton 2000: no page number). AVEGA, for example, focused on providing medical and psychological care for widows who survived the genocide (AVEGA 2014). Evidence gleaned from international development community reports also strengthens the argument that women were indeed coming together to help reconstruct the nation and fill the vacuum left by genocidal violence.

¹³¹ This study was conducted by de Keersmaecker and Peart (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2).

¹³² Julia Spry-Leverton. IPS-Inter Press Service Thursday, 27 April 1995.

¹³³ Burnet 2012 also suggests that services such as counseling were delivered via women's organizations (Burnet 2012: 183).

Whilst women's organizations were instrumental in providing vital services to individuals, they were also critical to Rwanda's national reconstruction. Mutamba and Izabiliza, in a government analysis specifically focused on women's role in peace-building during the post-conflict period, highlighted this point;

Women became a driving force of the socio-economic development of the country after the 1994 genocide. A vast network of women groups (*sic*) such as NGOs, associations and cooperatives at the grassroots level played a pivotal role in empowerment initiatives. (Mutamba and Izabiliza 2005: 26)

Efforts on the part of grassroots organizations often included the physical rebuilding of infrastructure including personal houses (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 8), again a key point that is often overlooked in much of the mainstream reconstruction literature on Rwanda. Donors often worked with women's associations to assist with the rebuilding efforts. For example, a USAID project called Women in Transition (WIT) provided housing materials to associations but it was the women in the association who built the houses (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 11). An NGO representative interviewed in Rwanda indicated that it was '...amazing to see women building house(s) up on [the] roof...' (interview 26.10.09), suggesting that this was an extremely rare sight prior to the conflict and a contrast to the way women were previously conceptualized.

A range of informants I interviewed also echoed the point that women's organizing and grassroots efforts were central to the PCR period. The idea that women had to carry out responsibilities that 'were done by men' (interview with representative from Gender Monitoring Office, 6 October 2009) was one that often resonated. This explicitly links to Gervais' contention that women in the post-conflict context been left with a very patriarchal social structure (Gervais 2003: 544). Given that men were traditionally head of the household,¹³⁴ their absence represented a significant shift in household and societal relations.

During reconstruction women had to 'perform' - they were the ones who had to play 'a big role' in rebuilding the nation after the genocide (interview with representative from Gender Monitoring Office, 6 October 2009). As one NGO representative in Rwanda indicated, due to their large numbers, women '...were available to work hard for development [of the] country...' (NGO representative, 7 February 2009). Echoing the point that women had to step in and work for development was a representative of the National Electoral

¹³⁴ Men are still considered to be head of the household; survey results presented in Chapter Seven discuss this issue in more depth.

Commission who indicated that many men were killed in the genocide and women were ‘...playing a large role in economic, political, and social’ spheres (interview, 9 February 2009).

A representative of the NGO, Rwanda Women’s Network, indicated that prior to the genocide women were not used to ‘...being responsible – there was domination of male to female and women had depended on men – brothers, fathers...’ (interview, 9 October 2009). However the situation changed after the genocide; ‘women became responsible without preparation for it’ as husbands who had previously taken on particular responsibilities had been killed or were in jail (interview 9 October 2009). Clearly, the female majority meant women had to engage in activities that they had not previously participated in prior to the genocide. Another NGO representative also specified that women had to take responsibility following the genocide and they had to organize themselves to respond to challenges (interview, 9 October 2009). The idea that *civil society played a key role* in the reconstruction process (and that civil society was dominated by women) was a key reason for the gender policy focus (World Bank representative interview, 15 October 2009).

The above discussion points to the notion that people I interviewed clearly viewed grassroots or civil society action on the part of women as a key component of reconstruction and also of the gender policy focus. Women were indeed central to the PCR period and this action helped establish the foundation for a more significant policy focus during the reconstruction period.

Theoretical Implications

Majority Female Population and Grassroots Efforts: Does it Explain the Gender Policy Focus?

Whilst I do think a female majority and grassroots actions were critical to establishing the gender policy focus in post-conflict Rwanda, there are indeed theoretical propositions that suggest these components, in and of themselves, are not sufficient to explain the gender policy focus. Here, I will explore how feminist arguments which highlight differences amongst women are applicable - and destabilize contemporary debates on Rwanda which primarily utilize women as a homogenous category within Rwanda. I will firstly explore how these arguments are applicable and then examine gaps in mainstream post-conflict literature that fail to engage with these particular factors.

In attempting to examine the factors which laid a foundation for the PCR gender policy focus, it is tempting to suggest that the female majority and grassroots efforts by women were sufficient to explain it. However, a majority female population does not guarantee a gender policy focus in post-conflict reconstruction. In and of itself, a female majority could, in fact, be meaningless. Here, feminist arguments, which are often centred upon theoretical fault lines which point to differences amongst women, become particularly instructive.

Feminist theory itself is diverse and one universal theory cannot apply to the social, economic, and cultural situation of all men and women globally. Whilst a broader universal agenda of *feminism* would allude to a political struggle against patriarchal structures, feminists debates illustrate differences amongst women. Feminists such as Chandra Talpade Mohanty, for example, have deconstructed the existence of a “third world woman” (1988: 51). As Mohanty has suggested, women are not homogeneous and being female does not necessarily promise a commitment to feminist agendas. Mohanty accurately deconstructs a ‘singular monolithic subject’ of ‘woman’ (1988: 51) and the work of Saunders (2002), Lazreg (2002), Parpart (2002), and Kandiyoti (1996) have all built on this position. The case of post-genocide Rwanda aptly demonstrates that there were vast differences amongst women. Of particular significance in Rwanda is that the violence in 1994 was *genocidal violence*, i.e., the prime motivation of the killing was the attempted destruction of one ethnic group by another - the attempted destruction of the Tutsi population by the Hutu population. By definition (specifically in relation to the genocide), the conflict in Rwanda suggests that there would have been differences amongst the Rwandese female population.

Though there is fierce debate as to how *differences between Hutu and Tutsi* came into being, historical evidence suggests that there were political divisions between the two groups which resulted in extreme violence for more than half a century. The 1994 genocide would certainly have exacerbated the differences, given the violent and horrific acts that were committed (Des Forges 1999, Human Rights Watch 1996, Gourevitch 1998, Prunier 1995). Whilst the root causes of these divisions has also been extensively debated, here I suggest that any divisions which existed within political, social, or economic spheres were ones that were, of course, also applicable to women; women were part of the functional dynamics between the two groups so any group differences that were in existence prior to the genocide would not simply have been ameliorated after it.

Current policy discourses on women in Rwanda however, gloss over notions of difference between women. As C. L. Hogg suggests in a discussion of women’s political representation in the country:

Whilst the common experience of the genocide suggests that Rwandan women *will* have a different relationship to politics, the RPF has pared women's identities down to *women* representing *all Rwandan women* through its commitment to increasing women's political representation. This essentialisation dangerously elides women's *de facto* identifications as Hutu or Tutsi, as well as some of the more extremist women's roles in perpetrating genocidal violence. (Author's emphasis C. L. Hogg 2009: 39)

The codification of this essentialisation can be seen in Rwandan policies. The National Gender Policy, whilst it highlights differences between the sexes, does not mention differences *amongst* women. Genocidal ideology laws and strict regulation as to the use of the ethnic terms of identification, Hutu and Tutsi, discourage active engagement with factors that can potentially be viewed in terms of ethnic difference.¹³⁵ However, engagement with *gender difference* is clearly acceptable:

The Government of Rwanda acknowledges that differences existing between men and women, girls and boys needed to be effectively recognised and addressed in its development processes to make its development interventions effective and efficient (Government of Rwanda National Gender Policy 2010: 19).

I do not advocate that the National Gender Policy should engage with identity politics in a purely reductionist manner based on ethnicity or gender; however, it is worth noting that Rwandan women have (had) a diverse range of experience, which would clearly have had an impact on the PCR phase. Differences amongst women historically and during the 1994 genocide would indicate that it is indeed highly unlikely that women were all on the same page after the genocide - especially given that women took part in the genocide in a number of ways. I turn to some of the evidence that illustrates this point.

A 1995 report entitled *Rwanda Not So Innocent: When Women Become Killers*, provides substantial evidence to explicitly contest the idea that women are a peaceful group simply because they are women. The report historically examines how women in Rwanda have often played key roles in Rwanda's violence. In an exploration of violence that occurred in 1973 the report suggests:

For women, it was a first; the beginning of their widespread participation in violence. Like their male counterparts, Hutu women in schools and work places formed what were called *Comités du Salut Public*, or "Public Rescue Committees." The women's task was to identify Tutsi girls and women in schools and workplaces. A number of girls who had been at *École de Karubanda* in Butare and interviewed by African Rights were beaten by their fellow-pupils and subjected to a reign of terror. (African Rights 1995: 5)

This indicates that two decades prior to the genocide women were participating in a violent context with an explicit goal of persecuting the Tutsi population. Whilst the example above demonstrates one way in which women were taking part in a campaign of persecution in schools and workplaces, evidence from the 1994 genocide demonstrates female Hutu leaders

¹³⁵ Rather paradoxically, as Waldorf points out, the government has officially renamed the genocide the *Tutsi* Genocide which explicitly puts ethnicity at the centre of any discussions on genocide whilst at the same time the government has been attempting to eradicate ethnicity within Rwanda (Waldorf 2011: 50).

were often behind the orchestration of mass killings. In an example from 1994, African Rights illustrated how the then Minister for Women and Family Affairs was active in the genocide:

Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, the minister for women and family affairs in both the last government of Habyarimana and the interim government, was in fact dedicated to the systematic elimination of Tutsi families. Most of Pauline Nyiramasuhuko's "work" was carried out in Butare, her home region. She began organising the killings even before the removal and murder of the préfet, Jean Baptiste Habyarimana, who succeeded in preventing massacres during the first two weeks of the genocide. (African Rights 1995: 50)

This particular case challenges any essentialized notion of women as peaceful in two ways; firstly, Nyiramasuhuko is female thus countering any theoretical notions of women as inherently peaceful and secondly, she worked on issues concerning women and family which may suggest that she might have been more sympathetic to issues concerning violence. The African Rights report provides numerous cases of women participating in mass killing in Rwanda. Adding to this, is information collected by N. Hogg (2010) who interviewed approximately seventy women who were in jail, accused of genocide. N. Hogg demonstrates that women participated in the genocide in a number of ways, particularly in terms of, '...looting of Tutsi property, revealing the hiding spots of Tutsis to the killers, and supporting their menfolk...' (N. Hogg 2010: 78). She also demonstrates that female political leaders played a crucial role in orchestrating the genocide (N. Hogg 2010).

Hatzfeld (2006), who interviewed and documented killers' responses as to why they took part in the genocide, also provides further evidence of women's involvement. In one passage, killer Élie, interviewed by Hatzfeld indicated:

It was impossible for the women to squabble with their men over those killings and the foolish sex matters.¹³⁶ After all, they themselves had to go looting, too, to deal with hunger since crops were being neglected. The men, the women - no upset came between them during the killings. The men went out to kill, the women went out to pillage; the women sold, the men drank; it was the same as with farming. (Hatzfeld 2006: 111)

The above passages clearly point to the fact that women, as well as being victims of the genocide, also played various aggressive roles in it. Straus, in an examination of *why the genocide happened* summed up women's participation:

...women did play important roles during the genocide. In particular, where women were in leadership positions at the national and local levels, they often were instrumental in organizing, promoting, and authorizing genocidal killing. Women participated in other ways during the genocide. Sometimes women looted, in particular after Tutsis were killed. Sometimes women told bands of killers where the Tutsis were

¹³⁶ It is worth noting that the 'foolish sex matters' noted here most likely refer to the sexual violence and rape that approximately 250,000 women were subjected to during the genocide (See Mutamba and Izabiliza 2005: 10).

hiding. Sometimes women encouraged their husbands or sons to attack Tutsis. (Straus 2006: 100)¹³⁷

The differences between women that were ever-present during the genocide also permeated the post-conflict context. In the early 2000s a USAID report examining civil society indicated that ‘...mutual distrust between Tutsis and Hutus...’ was a significant barrier to strengthening civil society and democratic institutions (USAID no year, no page numbers but approx. pg 8). N. Hogg also illustrates this dynamic in her work which was based on interviews with approximately seventy female detainees who were genocide suspects. A particular passage quoted from one detainee demonstrates the depth of perceived differences amongst women in Rwanda at the time of the genocide:

Women believed in the need to kill Tutsis for 3 reasons:

1. Tutsis were perceived to be associated with the RPF. Women, like men, believed the propaganda. Most women had confidence in what they heard.
2. Hutu women hated and were jealous of Tutsi women.
3. Hutu women were jealous of Tutsis’ wealth. Women wanted their goods.

(N. Hogg 2010: 87)

This passage clearly highlights some of the particular tensions amongst Rwandan women. Whilst here the divisions suggested are delineated along the lines of ethnicity, the post-conflict phase added additional fissures between women as Tutsi women who had been in Rwanda prior to and during the genocide had extremely different experiences from those who had only returned to Rwanda following the genocide and the RPF government takeover.

As I have suggested, there is little reason to believe that following the genocide women would simply overcome social, political, economic, or ethnic differences to seamlessly rebuild the nation. Whilst there was a majority female population during this period, it was a fractured demographic. Newbury and Baldwin (2000) suggested that, ‘...in post-1994 Rwanda, some women’s organizations tended to be (in practice if not official objectives) ethnically homogeneous’ (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 5). This suggests that there was not necessarily a magical, seamless integration of all women, despite contemporary literature on Rwanda’s repeated conceptualization of women as a monolithic category.

A 1997 Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children demonstrated that differences in the female population most certainly existed as demonstrated by interviews conducted during the post-conflict phase:

¹³⁷ Straus put this forward within a discussion regarding his decision to limit his sample solely to men (Straus 2006: 100).

“Do not talk to me about reconciliation” said one survivor. “How can you expect us to welcome back the people who killed our husbands and children? We speak of coping, or finding ways to live alongside these people. We do not speak of reconciliation. (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 16)

Burnet (2012) indicates that following the genocide there were tensions within an organization that had been founded in the mid 1980s (Association des Femmes pour le Développement Rural – AFDR):

At times conflicts arose between “old members,” those who had joined before the genocide, and “new members”, those who joined after. Old members sometimes felt that the new members did not share the same vision of the association’s mission or lacked commitment. Like all civil society organizations, AFDR had to negotiate the complicated and sometimes difficult politics around ethnic categories. (Burnet 2012: 185)

These passages indicate that there were undoubtedly very real differences within the population.

Further adding to the complex dynamic of *differences amongst women* was *differences amongst Tutsi women* as Tutsis who were in Rwanda before and during the genocide had experienced very different realities from Tutsis who were outside of Rwanda during that period. As one NGO representative indicated women were, ‘...coming in from every corner of the world - neighbouring countries’¹³⁸ (Men’s Resource Centre Representative, 26 October 2009). Burnet (2012) indicates that exiled women were drawn to women’s organizations. In her discussion of one particular organization (ADFR) Burnet indicates:

...there was a surge in interest in Rwandan women’s organizations following the war. Many women who returned from exile in 1994 had been active members of women’s associations in their countries of exile in Africa, Europe, and North America. They brought experience and a strong desire to rebuild their country. Second, international aid to Rwanda increased dramatically after the genocide, and many of these organizations’ programs directly targeted women. The increased resources attracted new members to women’s organizations, which launched new programs that benefited members. (Burnet 2012: 181)

The exiled community that returned to Rwanda in the immediate post-conflict period (‘old caseload refugees’) were primarily of Tutsi origin.¹³⁹ The information above suggests that the Tutsi women who had been living outside of Rwanda’s borders during the genocide returned and played a role in women’s grassroots organizations in the PCR period.¹⁴⁰ A 1997 report written by the Women’s Commission also documented this:

Few of the projects supported by the Rwandan Women’s Initiative or other international organizations are benefitting refugee returnee groups or Hutu-run associations. In fact, it was difficult for the Women’s Commission to interview recent returnees, as most of

¹³⁸ People returning from neighbouring countries were most likely to be Tutsi refugees who left in previous waves of violence or people were born to parents who had previously left.

¹³⁹ See Goodfellow and Smith 2013 for further discussion on this.

¹⁴⁰ Later in the chapter I discuss differences amongst women. Whilst the experiences of Hutu and Tutsi women differed, especially during the genocide, there were also differences amongst the experiences of Tutsi women who were in Rwanda during the genocide and those who lived outside of Rwanda at the time.

the programs set up to assist genocide survivors are run by “old caseload” refugees, people of Tutsi background who returned in the last three years from Burundi, Kenya, Uganda and other countries. (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 14)

This suggests there were differences between Tutsi women who had been out of Rwanda for many years (the ‘old caseload’ refugee members of the RPF) and Hutu women who had been living in Rwanda prior to the genocide, left Rwanda because of the genocide, and subsequently returned.¹⁴¹ Evidence also suggests that international organisations were funding projects targeted to ‘survivors’ which created a hierarchy as to which women received international assistance (Burnet 2012: 142).

In line with feminist arguments that women are certainly not a single group with similar experiences or objectives, one interviewee noted that there was a big difference between women who had been in Rwanda during the genocide and those who had returned after the genocide was over. Women who had been in Rwanda during the genocide had seen family members killed, for example, and had been traumatized (AVEGA programme coordinator 17.2.09). In another case demonstrating this dynamic, a representative from a youth microfinance organization noted that women worked better individually or with one other woman and that there were problems when they worked in groups of three or more but that women from the same social or common background found it easier to work together (NGO representative, 12 February 2009), thus suggesting that social cohesion does not necessarily exist between women simply because they are women.

Whilst there is clear indication that any theoretical proposition which uncritically represents women as a homogenous entity would indeed be on tenuous ground when examining the PCR period in Rwanda, the notion that women’s grassroots efforts presented a unifying force should also be questioned.

The Puzzle Thus Far

As Cockburn and Zarkov (2002)¹⁴² have suggested, it is necessary to ensure critical engagement with gender issues in PCR. Indeed, as has been demonstrated here, women played a critical role in post-conflict reconstruction and in setting the stage for a gender policy priority in Rwanda. Unfortunately this role has, over time, become implicitly invisible and this is the case in one of the most recent examinations of Rwanda’s PCR

¹⁴¹ There is substantial evidence on tensions between various groups in Rwanda following the genocide. See for example: Burnet 2012, Goodfellow and Smith 2013, Pottier 2002, and Straus 2006. Also see edited volumes by Clark and Kaufman 2008 and Straus and Waldorf 2011.

¹⁴² See Chapter Two for discussion of their work.

process. As indicated earlier, *Remaking Rwanda* is represented by the editors as filling a critical gap in the examination of post-conflict Rwanda. However, in direct contrast to the research presented here, a reading of the text would implicitly suggest that the role of women in rebuilding the state of Rwanda in the years following the genocide was not that significant. Straus and Waldorf suggest a primary aim of the book is ‘...to highlight Rwanda’s importance for analysing post-conflict recovery’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 7) yet their lack of explicit engagement with gender issues suggests they are missing a substantial part of the post-conflict story. Instead, contemporary analysis¹⁴³ is often centred on the political structures that emerged following the genocide.

The primary points emerging from this chapter suggest that a majority female post-conflict population significantly contributed to laying the foundation for a gender policy focus even if the figure of 70 percent cannot be verified. Centrally linked to this was that grassroots efforts by women were also a critical factor in PCR even if there were differences amongst women as feminist theory helps reveal. These efforts played a role in getting the government’s attention. As one local NGO representative has suggested, ‘...women’s organizations play[ed a] big role in civil society and put pressure on authorities’ (DUTERIMBRE representative, interview, 13 October 2009). Signifying that women were a critical part of reconstruction, a governmental representative at the Gender Monitoring Office indicated: ‘Women showed their willingness in participation of country. [They] showed they were able to do reconstruction as men. [They were a] key partner’ (Gender Monitoring Office Representative, interview, 28 October 2009).

Whilst I have suggested that women’s actions were a critical part of reconstruction, questions remain. Women, particularly women who had previously been involved in women’s groups in Rwanda, were initially organizing out of necessity and because there was a substantial void in terms of accessing services after the genocide; however, did the new government recognize this fairly quickly and subsequently instrumentalize women as a means to an end? Perhaps. It is important to recognize that civil society or grassroots organizations had been in existence prior to the genocide, and they were not necessarily autonomous from the state. As Uvin suggests:

Rwanda’s civil society organizations were mostly of recent creation. They were also strongly externally inspired and driven, truly products of the development aid machinery. The cooperatives were all created in the decade after 1975, as a result of government policy change. Most of the more than 100 Rwandan NGOs were created after 1985, as were the pre-cooperatives and the farmers’ organizations. (Uvin 1998: 169)

¹⁴³ This was explored in Chapter Two.

A USAID report from the early 2000s also suggests that prior to the genocide: ‘Donors poured large amounts of resources into the country and hailed Rwanda’s dense network of vibrant grassroots associations despite the fact that these associations were highly dependent upon and tightly controlled by the state’ (USAID n. d: 2).

Was the new government, the RPF, following a similar roadmap? Were they able to tap into the women’s grassroots network to gain a foothold on PCR? A UNIFEM representative noted that after the genocide women were seen as contributors to their communities and worked without pay (UNIFEM representative, interview, 14 October 2009). Another NGO representative interviewed in Rwanda indicated that the ‘... government recognized women worked...’ (NGO representative, interview, 11 February 2009). These statements indicate that women were indeed a key driver behind PCR; however, it may also be true that women were utilized for developmental and political purposes.

In the next chapter I explicitly explore these issues in more depth. I examine how political commitment to gender issues has indeed contributed to the PCR gender policy focus and analyse whether the gender policy focus was based on a benign commitment to women on the part of the new RPF government or whether women were instrumentalized as a means for reconstruction and political gain. As part of this, I also examine ways in which the political debates on Rwanda have contributed to the invisibility of women within PCR and the gender policy priority there.

Chapter Five

The RPF and Paul Kagame: Political Will was Critical to the PCR Gender Policy Focus

1994 New Government: RPF Prioritized Gender Issues

In the previous chapter I demonstrated that Rwandan women played a significant role in setting the stage for Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus. I also argued that this point is largely lost within contemporary analysis due to the focus on political will. This is not to suggest that political will did not play a role; political will was indeed a critical component of the PCR gender policy focus but in interaction with other factors from below as well above.

Empirically, in this chapter, I demonstrate that political will has played a significant role in driving the PCR gender policy focus. This is due to three main reasons: firstly, evidence suggests that the prior experience of the RPF before the genocide influenced gender policy issues when they gained power in 1994. In particular, the experience of exile in Uganda and the historical narratives surrounding female leadership have been put forth as critical reasons for an RPF gender policy focus. Secondly, given that women were organizing and 'rebuilding' Rwanda the RPF had an interest in maximizing their role in reconstruction efforts. Thirdly, due to the extensive (and increasing) power base of the RPF and Kagame once they retained governmental power within Rwanda in 1994, issues that were deemed policy priorities by the RPF could subsequently be implemented through a fairly tight policy implementation structure within Rwanda. Thus, Kagame and the RPF were able to maintain a focus on gender issues as a key development priority in the reconstruction period.

However, as noted in earlier chapters, I argue that political will, as an exclusive explanatory factor for Rwanda's PCR trajectory, needs to be contextualized. In concluding the chapter, I attempt to re-contextualize the realities of the PCR period to demonstrate that Kagame and the RPF were not necessarily as all-powerful within the Rwandan political system in 1994 as they have come to be, and this in turn, demonstrates that whilst political will inarguably played a role in the PCR gender policy focus it has been more important in *maintaining* than *creating* the gender policy focus in the PCR period.

'Political Will' Features in Local Explanations for the Gender Policy Focus

The concept of political will within development literature is often addressed through various lenses to capture how political leadership (primarily acting within a state-level capacity), as well as the priorities of that leadership, are instrumental to positive development. There is not necessarily a coherent understanding of what is meant by the concept of political will, however. Political will is often conflated with other concepts such as strong political leadership or government efforts and this necessitates a larger examination of ways in which leadership and policy-making intersect that spans beyond a sole exploration of political will. Easterly (2011), for example, explicitly seeks to capture how 'benevolent autocrats' play a role in obtaining high growth patterns in a number of countries, but he takes issue with lack of definition associated with this term (Easterly 2011: no page).

This can be seen within literature on Rwanda (Reyntjens 2004: 179) where political will is mentioned but the phrase is not conceptually interrogated. Other more expansive phrases regarding leadership structure in Rwanda are used as a proxy for political will. These often describe policy implementation mechanisms as a proxy for leadership - phrases such as '...top-down, state imposed...' (Thomson 2012: 97) or '...dense state apparatus...' (Purdeková 2012: 192). We can also see that contemporary policy-making and implementation structures in Rwanda reflect a vision that is being implemented without clear articulation of who is behind it. Gready for example has suggested, '...the government has a very clear sense of its preferred policy vision or direction, as a second feature of consultation, it often takes the form of information sharing and instruction, particularly at a more local level...' (Gready 2011: 89). This suggests that policy making is largely concentrated at upper levels of government. These dynamics result in an unclear understanding of how political will is functioning in Rwanda particularly beyond the level of the president. Conceptually, the lack of a clear definition means that political will can be used as a catch-all phrase concerning political leadership which results in many different concepts being ascribed to it.

The lack of cohesive understanding regarding what political will is does not necessarily prevent it from being used however, as DFID has suggested:

When the success or failure of development policies is discussed, we frequently hear it said that 'political will' – or the lack of it – affected the outcome. But it is often unclear what this term means. 'Political will' is commonly used as a catch-all concept, the meaning of which is so vague that it does little to enrich our understanding of the political and policy processes. (DFID no date: 1)

DFID subsequently suggested a narrow definition that is particularly useful to this research: ‘... the determination of an individual political actor to do and say things that will produce a desired outcome.’ (DFID no date: 1)

This conceptualization of ‘political will’ suggested by DFID allows for an analytical focus on Kagame within the PCR period. I will expand this definition to capture both Kagame and the RPF more generally, because there is often slippage in the literature between the two political entities.

Contemporary political analysis concerning post-conflict Rwanda often establishes the RPF and Kagame as the analytical point of inquiry. There are two challenges with this. Firstly, this type of analysis primarily suggests that Kagame and the RPF are solely responsible for Rwanda’s post-conflict policy trajectory. Easterly, speaks to a central problem with this type of analytical outcome:

Policy-makers’ discussions of benevolent autocrats assume a very simple theory where the autocrat chooses policies and then implements them. In other words, they assume an omnipotent autocrat, so that the outcomes observed under autocracy reflect the intentions of the autocrat. (Easterly 2011: no page)

Whilst Easterly is directly speaking to ‘benevolent autocrats’, the theoretical critique can be applied to theoretical propositions which primarily focus on political will; the same dynamic occurs when political will is used to explain policy outcomes and this is certainly applicable to post-conflict analysis on Rwanda.

The second challenge concerning an examination of political will in Rwanda is that the veiled secrecy of RPF decision-making structures means that post-conflict policy measures are often attributed to either President Paul Kagame or the RPF without clearly differentiating between the two. A number of high ranking RPF officials, including Colonel Karegeya and General Nuamwasa (Verhoeven 2012: 275), played a critical role in Rwanda’s post-conflict trajectory, yet because they have fled Rwanda and RPF leadership has become divided (Verhoeven 2012), Kagame has increasingly become the face of the RPF. This has resulted in a slippage amongst labels used to describe political leadership in Rwanda; ‘Tutsi Elite’, ‘RPF’, ‘President Paul Kagame’, and ‘government officials’¹⁴⁴ are all used to describe the leadership and this makes it very difficult to conduct decisive analysis of a factor like

¹⁴⁴ To be clear, this is not to say that these labels indicate a cohesive, harmonious political entity. In fact, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there were rifts in the RPF in 1994 as well as now (Reyntjens 2004). However, because much of the PCR analysis uses ‘RPF’ and ‘Kagame’ interchangeably, it is difficult to disaggregate between the two.

political will.¹⁴⁵ Verhoeven further indicates that all discussions on governance must reference the RPF (Verhoeven 2012: 270), yet it is not necessarily clear who the powerful RPF members are beyond Kagame. Golooba-Mutebi, for example, indicated that in his research:

When asked to name the ‘most powerful’ people in the country, many Rwandans are at a loss to name anyone beyond President Kagame. In failing to name anyone else, they point to the regularity with which senior members of the ruling party and the military, who they once considered to be ‘very powerful’, are prosecuted and imprisoned or removed from their offices on account of corruption or one or other form of abuse of office. (Golooba-Mutebi 2008: 33)

This dynamic has resulted in an increase in power for Kagame, as once another official becomes too powerful they are removed and through this process the RPF in some ways becomes a euphemism for Kagame. This is perhaps a critical point to highlight and may help explain why it is difficult to understand power structures below Kagame; if people who begin to become too powerful and present a potential threat are removed this ensures power is concentrated primarily (but not solely) with Kagame.

There is of course an additional and significant problem with the conceptualization of political will as discussed above in that if primarily suggests that political will is top-down; given that much of the literature on Rwanda reflects this dynamic, it is difficult to capture (either qualitatively or quantitatively) bottom-up dynamics of political will within Rwanda. A more Foucaudian perspective on political will, or more specifically notions of a State and power, would suggest that top-down explanations of political will are too simplistic because power exists everywhere (Foucault 1980):

I don’t want to say that the State isn’t important; what I want to say is that relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them, necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State. In two senses: first of all because from the State, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and further because the State can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations. (Foucault 1980: 122)

Foucault continues by suggesting that, ‘...the State consists in the codification of a whole number of power relations which render its functioning possible...’ (Foucault 1980: 122). A Foucaudian conceptualization of power is critically important to the process that led to the RPF and Kagame becoming the dominant political players in Rwanda.

Adding further complexity to the understanding of ‘political will’ in Rwanda is the label ‘authoritarian’ that is often given to Kagame. Tripp has suggested a useful

¹⁴⁵ Because there is considerable evidence that Kagame was a key figure in the RPF (and is indeed *the* key RPF figure in Rwanda now), phrases such as, ‘Since the RPF came to power...’ (OECD 2009: 5) can simultaneously reference the RPF and Kagame.

conceptualization of how semiauthoritarian and authoritarian regimes work within the context of Sub-Saharan Africa:

Semiauthoritarian/semidemocratic regimes introduced competitive party elections (Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia) or no-party competitive elections, as in Uganda until 2003, when the country began to move toward multipartyism' continuing, 'Authoritarian regimes do not permit a changing of the guard through the ballot box. They may be run by military leaders, and may even hold elections, but they do so under circumstances that cannot be considered free and fair. (Tripp 2004: 3).

Rwanda is difficult to categorize under this description because whilst Rwanda holds elections, there has been controversy over whether they are free and fair (Longman 2011).

However, given how often the adjective 'authoritarian' is applied to Kagame, it is worth considering the dynamics of how an authoritarian structure may work in Rwanda. As Scott has suggested, that authoritarian states have been able to, '...nullify resistance and push ahead' (Scott 1998: 342) and that authoritarian power was '...least contested at those moments when other forms of coordination had failed or seemed utterly inadequate to the great tasks at hand: in times of war, revolution, economic collapse, or newly won independence (Scott 1998: 343).

This explanation is particularly relevant for thinking about how the RPF came to power. The way in which the genocide unfolded, the way the RPF secured Rwanda's borders, the subsequent 'genocide credit' (Reyntjens 2004) that the RPR gained following the genocide, and the tightening of political space in Rwanda since 1994, have all constrained inquiries which attempt to capture more nuanced dynamics of power within Rwanda. This is not at all to say that bottom up dynamics of power relations, or indeed political will, were not at play in post-genocidal Rwanda, however, given the context, the RPF and Kagame were able to retain a fairly tight hold on power relations within Rwanda over the course of a few years following the genocide. Whilst political power was being amassed, simultaneously (particularly during the emergency period) Rwandans within Rwanda's borders as well as the international community were largely focused on immediate needs such as food, shelter, and placing orphans with families.

Given this context, 'political will' in contemporary Rwandan literature largely refers to the intentions of Kagame (and/or the RPF). Whilst, I am not attempting to diminish the need to

use a more nuanced understanding of political will, I am engaging with the term in the way it is largely reflected within the literature.

I will thus use the term ‘political will’ as a reflective response that generally applies to high level RPF government officials (including Paul Kagame) who played a role in the post-conflict phase and served as policy-makers in the years following the genocide. This includes additional RPF figures such as Aloisea Inyumba, the first Minister of Gender and Social Affairs and Rose Kubuye, who served in high-level political positions (including Mayor of Kigali) following the genocide. Though I am expanding the definition of political will as suggested by DFID, it is consistent with contemporary political and policy literature on Rwanda. As indicated in earlier chapters, political will for PCR gender policy issues was demonstrated by the RPF by particular measures such as appointing women to high level positions in the immediate PCR period, revising land laws to ensure women had inheritance rights and prioritizing girls’ education.

As discussed in earlier chapters political will has been the predominant story in PCR analysis; as previously noted Uwineza and Pearson (2009), for example, indicated that the gender policy focus in Rwandan is largely driven by Kagame (Uwineza and Pearson 2009: 16) whilst PCR analysis more generally has largely engaged with how Kagame shaped PCR policy agendas.¹⁴⁶ The importance of political leadership in promoting the PCR gender policy focus was (perhaps unsurprisingly) also demonstrated by a number of Rwandan government representatives interviewed. When asked about factors that played a role in the post-conflict gender policy focus, a Ministry of Gender official noted that, ‘...all things were based on political will...’ (interview 13.2.09) and suggested that the new government opened up space for women in the PCR period: ‘[In the] aftermath of genocide women had to struggle to survive. Women had someone to hear them, to tell them they had rights, [they] could talk, they had been inhibited’ (interview 13.2.09).

An official at the Gender Monitoring Office also explained that there was ‘high political will’ for gender issues (interview 6 October 2009) and similarly, a representative for the National Youth Council noted that gender policies were a priority because the government had made it a priority (interview 7 October 2009).

Beyond a general nod to political will, the role of Kagame also explicitly surfaced to explain the PCR gender policy focus. The National Gender Policy, a key policy document, illustrates this point:

¹⁴⁶ See Straus and Waldorf 2011 for example.

The *political will* of the Rwandan leader after 1994 and the 4th World Conference of Women held in Beijing (China) in 1995 were the key factors that underpinned important changes in Rwandan society. (My emphasis, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion July 2010: 10)

Here, political will is highlighted, though it is explicitly linked to the role of Kagame,¹⁴⁷ and not RPF leadership more generally.¹⁴⁸ Similarly, a representative from the Rwandan Women's Parliamentarian Forum identified Kagame as key component of the gender policy focus. She suggested: 'Leaders have will to support women – [the] president is gender sensitive – he's behind us and this has mobilized other men to understand women should be involved in building of our nation' (interview 7 October 2009).

Unsurprisingly governmental representatives clearly identified political will as a key driver behind the PCR gender policy.¹⁴⁹

Those outside of government agencies also indicated that governmental will for gender policies was critical in the PCR period. A representative from the Rwanda Women's Network noted that after the genocide there was 'political will': '[The] government tried to motivate women – 'come out of houses, be free' (interview, 9 October 2009). Further to this point representatives from NGOs including Profemmes (interview, 9 October 2009), an umbrella organization for women's organizations and a representative from HAGURUKA, an NGO which focuses on women's and children's rights, also commented that political will had been important to the gender policy focus (interviews 12 October 2009). These responses also suggested that 'political will' has been conceptualized as a top-down process though it is perhaps more applicable to notions regarding governmental leadership.

Whilst political will features as a key factor behind the PCR gender policy focus, examining *why* this was the case is important to understand the issue beyond the political level.

RPF Ties to Uganda: Linkages to the Past

In examining Rwanda's gender policies, Burnet, for example, suggests that RPF experiences in Uganda strongly influenced the new regime's gender policy priority in post-conflict

¹⁴⁷ Interestingly, explicit mention of Kagame did not appear in an earlier draft of the National Gender Policy and this perhaps reflects recent trends that focus on Kagame's role more explicitly within PCR policies. Powley, for example, has suggested that Rwandans consider Aloisea Inyumba '...to be the 'founding-mother' of gender issues in post-genocide Rwanda,' (Powley 2006: 5) though she is largely absent from PCR analysis.

¹⁴⁸ The importance of the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women will be discussed in depth in the following chapter.

¹⁴⁹ As discussed in the methodology section earlier, people's memories of the gender policy focus within the PCR period were not necessarily entirely clear, so disaggregating between the RPF and Kagame more generally as it applied to the PCR period was difficult.

Rwanda (Burnet 2008: 367). The historical experience of the RPF as Tutsi exiles in Uganda is often proposed as an explanation for numerous policy priorities put in place after the genocide.¹⁵⁰ The Tutsi exodus from Rwanda in 1959 resulted in many Rwandan Tutsis living in Uganda as refugees until the genocide. Rwandan Tutsis were not necessarily welcomed however as Pottier (2002) has noted; the Ugandan Prime Minister at the time, Milton Obote, was particularly concerned about how the refugees were using Uganda as a base to attack Rwanda and did not want the situation to continue (Pottier 2002: 23).¹⁵¹ As the local political landscape in Uganda became tenuous, many of the Rwandan Tutsis in Uganda supported a rebel movement led by Yoweri Museveni (Pottier 2002: 23).¹⁵² This movement was successful in toppling the Ugandan government and Museveni subsequently became president in the mid-1980s.

Fighting alongside Museveni meant that the Rwandan Tutsis in Uganda had a powerful ally. The close relationship between Kagame and the Ugandan president, Museveni, has given rise to explanations that largely suggest that Kagame's policy decisions were generally influenced by his relationship with Museveni. Evidence demonstrates that the RPF and Kagame did indeed have close links to current Ugandan President Museveni. Melvern indicates Kagame: '...had risen in the ranks of the Ugandan army to assistant director of military intelligence. Kagame was one of only twenty-seven recruits who had fought alongside the future Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, to oust Milton Obote' (Melvern 2006: 17).

Prunier also indicates that there was a close relationship between the Kagame and Museveni as Kagame: '...was among the small nucleus of friends who stayed close to Museveni during his difficult days in the provisional government and stood by him after his party was politically crushed in the December 1980 elections' (Prunier: 68).

The International Crisis Group has also suggested a link between RPF policy agendas and their experience in Uganda by indicating that the RPF was '[I]oyal to their years of education in Uganda in the ideas of Yoweri Museveni...' (ICC 2002: 2).¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ See Melvern (2006) and Prunier (1998) for example.

¹⁵¹ Pottier was also citing Lemarchand.

¹⁵² Numerous historical accounts concerning the RPF detail how many Rwandan refugees living in Uganda were active in Museveni's army. See for example, Verhoeven 2012: 266, Uvin 1998: 61.

¹⁵³ Further explanations of the relationship between Museveni and Kagame can be found in Prunier 1995 and Rugumamu and Gbla 2003:43.

This relationship between Kagame and Museveni has been directly linked to the RPF prioritization of gender policies within post-conflict Rwanda. Burnet (2008) explicitly engages with this notion:

The policies of Museveni and the NRM have continued to influence RPF policy in the post-genocide period. RPF policies *vis-à-vis* the inclusion of women in governance seem closely modelled on those of Museveni and the NRM. Museveni and the NRM took a two-pronged approach in Uganda: (1) they mainstreamed women within the NRM and appointed women to important posts in the Cabinet and the Supreme Court, and (2) they set aside reserved seats for women in the legislature. (Burnet 2008: 367)

Debusscher and Ansoms (2013: 1116) similarly argue that Rwanda's gender policy focus is partly due to the historical experiences of the RPF within Uganda:

The core leadership of the RPF was in exile in Uganda for a lengthy period; during this time they were exposed to Ugandan policies, including policies on women's rights and inclusion (Longman, 2006). During exile, Paul Kagame and several of his associates were officers in Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) and they have adopted many of its tactics and policies. Mirroring the Ugandan NRM, the RPF mainstreamed women from early 1990, in both its political and armed wings. (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1116)

Though these arguments certainly have merit, they unfortunately underexplore the larger dynamics that go beyond the political level and thus are only partial explanations regarding the Uganda/Rwanda policy linkages. Simplistically, these arguments suggest that because Museveni and the NRM prioritized gender, Kagame and the RPF did the same. Whilst the relationship between the RPF (or perhaps more specifically, Kagame) and Museveni most likely influenced Kagame, it is important to more widely examine how the gender policy context in Uganda more broadly may have played a role in influencing the RPF leadership.

Given that female political representation in Rwanda was a key PCR priority of the RPF (as exemplified, for example, by the 2003 constitution),¹⁵⁴ exploring Uganda's policy environment concerning female political representation in Uganda may help to shed light on the connection between Rwanda's post-conflict gender policy agenda and the gender policy agenda in Uganda. I would argue that there are key elements that go beyond macro-level political explanations regarding the relationship between Kagame and Museveni.

As previously indicated, Rwanda has a constitutional quota guaranteeing women political representation and is often the recipient of much positive international attention due to its majority female parliament. Interestingly, Uganda also has constitutional quotas for female political participation (Republic of Uganda 1995).¹⁵⁵ Given the similarities in terms of the use of quotas, I will briefly explore quotas on women's political representation in Uganda in

¹⁵⁴ See Government of Rwanda, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 2003.

¹⁵⁵ The constitution contains two quotas: at the national level, one parliamentary seat per district is reserved for women (Republic of Uganda 1995: 42) and at the local level, one third of local government council seats are reserved for women (Republic of Uganda 1995: 80).

order to uncover any potential similarities between the policy processes of the two nations. Because theories suggest that Kagame's close ties to Museveni meant he was heavily influenced by Museveni, it is worth exploring whether gender policies in Uganda were shaped by Museveni or whether there were additional factors at play which influenced these agendas.

A quota for female representation in Uganda was initially established in 1986 when the ruling party (the National Resistance Movement) took power; this was in the form of one seat for women in local councils (Tamale 2003: 1). Whilst this particular quota was a start, the Ugandan women's movement actively sought to increase female political representation and this ultimately resulted in the inclusion of a quota in the 1995 Ugandan constitution (Tamale 2003: 2). In a discussion of female political representation in Africa, Tripp suggests that Uganda had a strong, independent women's movement and this allowed for public discussion on a range of issues including women's political representation (Tripp no date: 10-12). She further suggests:

In Uganda, it was widely acknowledged that no other group was as organized and cohesive as women's organizations when it came to making a concerted effort to influence the Constitution writing process. Women's organizations wrote more memoranda submitted to the Constitutional Commission than any other sector of society. (Tripp no date: 20)

Barnes and Burchard also indicated that the women's movement '...was instrumental in convincing President Yoweri Museveni to appoint women...' (Barnes and Burchard 2012: 773) and Goetz suggests that '...women's organizations mobilised to lobby Museveni soon after his take-over' (Goetz 2002: 555)¹⁵⁶. This suggests that Museveni was not necessarily the driver behind initiatives to ensure women were in governmental positions (whilst he may have *supported* these efforts, this is different from *initiating* the efforts).

In Uganda women's grassroots leadership and initiatives had a meaningful impact on ensuring the Constitution included provisions to address female political representation as indicated above. The story is thus not one that is simply about Museveni prioritizing women in government, but rather one where women were critical to moving the agenda forward. As in Rwanda, there are clearly factors contributing to women's policy issues which extend beyond the top levels of political will.

While grassroots efforts in Uganda were instrumental, the direct experiences of women fighting beside men in guerrilla warfare may have also played a role in ensuring quotas for

¹⁵⁶ Mwaka (1996) provides a historical examination of the women's movement in Uganda.

female political representation were integrated into the Ugandan Constitution as Mutume suggests:

Uganda's quota system evolved from the current government's origins in a guerrilla war during the 1980s, when women fought alongside men in the National Resistance Army (NRA).

In each of the zones the rebels won, local councils were set up, with each including a secretary for women's affairs. (Mutume 2004)

The points highlighted here illustrate that women's organizations and women's involvement in warfare led to a policy mandate for female representation within the 1995 Ugandan Constitution. The focus on female representation was thus, not solely due to a particularly strong, central leader such as Museveni but very much had to do with the role of women, both in fighting with a rebel group and their subsequent advocacy work.¹⁵⁷

Macro level historical explanations which suggest that Rwanda's gender policy focus is due to the fact that the RPF had strong roots in Uganda and close ties to Museveni, overlooks the fact that Uganda's gender policy focus was substantially due to bottom-up policy-making by women.¹⁵⁸ It is also worth noting that the constitutional quota for female representation in Uganda occurred during Rwanda's post-conflict phase and internationally, women's issues were also coming to the forefront of both local and international policy agendas in the run-up to the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. While I will discuss this in greater detail in the next chapter, the overall backdrop concerning women's issues in Uganda suggests that a simplistic theory that *Museveni prioritized gender issues so Kagame did the same* does not necessarily hold up under scrutiny. The assumption that a gender policy focus is primarily due to macro-level political leadership severely oversimplifies a complex story of women's advocacy in Uganda.

RPF Leadership: Experiences of Exile and 'The Struggle'

The RPF and Kagame had strong ties to Uganda and its current leadership; however, in contrast to Burnet's (2008) position which suggests that the RPF prioritized gender policies because of the relationship with Museveni and the NRM, the RPF experience in Uganda went beyond macro-level interactions with military and political leaders. Members of the RPF were living as exiles in Uganda and the experience of being in exile as well as engaging in a *struggle* to return to Rwanda strongly influenced the post-conflict gender policy agenda. While the military *struggle* may have been shaped by RPF military experience in Uganda

¹⁵⁷ Here, parallels can be seen with the role of women within the RPF and these will be explored later in the chapter.

¹⁵⁸ See Tripp 2002 for further information on the women's movement in Uganda.

(which included the mainstreaming of women into the RPF), this experience had an impact on social experience which subsequently influenced gender policies.

This is strongly exemplified by the notion that women were ‘part of the struggle’ which resonated with interviewees who had been part of RPF efforts before returning to Rwanda in 1994.¹⁵⁹ Interviewees suggested that because women were part of the military/political effort prior to 1994, they would be a priority within reconstruction policies and efforts. The national government itself, in the 2010 National Gender Policy, suggests that the RPF had a role in influencing gender issues in Rwanda even prior to their 1994 government take over:

Due to the starting of liberation (*sic*) war led by Rwanda Patriotic Front INKOTANYI which triggered the introduction of multipartism and the involvement of women in all development areas, most political parties had at least one woman among their leaders. (Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion July 2010: 9)¹⁶⁰

I do not suggest that this statement necessarily demonstrates an absolute truth; however, I do suggest that current governmental narratives are linking the historical experience of the RPF to current gender policies.¹⁶¹ In noting that the civil war in the 1990s ‘triggered’ increased participation of women in development and politics, this introduction is making a direct link between the RPF’s military actions and subsequent advances for women; this may, perhaps, be an example where Rwanda is being ‘re-imagined’ as Pottier (2002) has suggested, in that the RPF is trying to further justify (or legitimize) its role within the current Rwandan political system.¹⁶²

The experience of exile and the roles of women within these contexts have played a role in shaping the RPF post-conflict policy agendas. Exile experiences were often difficult. Prunier suggests that Rwandese Tutsi in Uganda were treated as ‘...hated and despised foreigners...’ (Prunier 1995: 70). Both the experience of living in exile and being treated poorly by the host community while in exile may have had an impact on how the RPF viewed both men and women. Interview evidence suggested there was a link between the exile experience and the RPF’s PCR gender policy focus. A representative working for UNIFEM (who had previously been in exile) suggested that women played a key role in the exile experience; this interviewee suggested that prior to the genocide, women were often breadwinners and this had an impact on social relations: ‘This generation saw women able to

¹⁵⁹ See also Herndon and Randell 2013: 78.

¹⁶⁰ I examine this statement in more depth in the conclusion.

¹⁶¹ Interestingly this passage was not in early draft versions of the policy though it was included in the final 2010 version of the National Gender Policy (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion 2009 and 2010).

¹⁶² While an overtly political slant is seemingly imbued in the text quoted from the National Gender Policy, I will firstly explore other rationales behind this text before exploring the politicized nature of such sentiments in the concluding chapter.

provide for families; they sustained [the] family even when things were crumbling. Women proved themselves – able – strong – can stand beside men’ (interview, 10 February 2009).

Additional interview statements backed up this point. A representative of the Electoral Commission noted that the post-conflict gender policy focus was due to ‘our women and political history...The RPF was a political struggle and many women were involved organizational[ly] and politically’ (interview 9 February 2009).¹⁶³

A high level official at the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion had a similar vantage point; she indicated that the experience of the RPF had influenced current gender policies, explaining that the policy and strategy of the RPF was ‘not leaving anyone behind’ and this applied to both ‘the struggle and the genocide’ (interview, 13 February 2009). She continued to describe how the plight of the RPF influenced a younger generation: ‘during [the] struggle in [the] forest brave women motivated Rwandan girls’ (interview, 13 February 2009).¹⁶⁴ This suggests that within the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, (the ministry directly responsible for gender policies) the policy imperatives are linked to the RPF and previous experiences of RPF members while outside of Rwanda. Powley (2006: 5) has also argued that women were a critical component of the RPF struggle. These sentiments indicate that women were instrumental to many aspects of life within the exiled community and this in turn suggests that the actions of female RPF members helped create a context that highlighted the importance of the women more generally.

Straus has similarly demonstrated that women played a strong role in the RPF; in his examination of the causes of genocide he suggests that one of the reasons perpetrators of the genocide gave for killing Tutsis was:

...women and children were seen as a fifth column of support for the rebels. Thus killing them was a way to weaken the soldiers’ fighting force and more generally a way to defeat the rebels. In short, women and children aided combatants and therefore were considered akin to combatants. (Straus 2006: 164-165)

This analysis very much speaks to the notion that genocidal perpetrators viewed women (and children) as part of the RPF force and supports sentiments expressed by RPF members that women were part of ‘the struggle’.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³ This particular interviewee also suggested that the gender policy focus in Rwanda was due to additional factors. These had to do with women being the majority and also being ‘active’, ‘they had to be given a say’ (interview, 9 February 2009).

¹⁶⁴ This was similar to the context in Uganda.

¹⁶⁵ Women have been a critical part of rebel movements globally (Cockburn 2007) but this has not necessarily led to key advancement for women if the movement succeeded in coming into power. Here, I am suggesting that the role of women within exile and as part of the RPF ‘struggle’ was simply one factor behind the RPF gender policy priority.

The above discussion suggests that the historical experiences of the RPF while in exile contributed to the background behind explanations which linked political will to Rwanda's gender policy focus. Additionally, the other historical factor that has surfaced as a rationale behind RPF commitment to gender policies is the historical role of the Tutsi monarchy and especially the role of the Queen Mother. This was largely explored in Chapter Three and evidence was presented which demonstrated that the RPF has linked the current focus on women to the ruling structures of the monarchy that were in place prior to Belgian rule.

The RPF focus on the 'Queen Mother' and on the historical role of women contributes to a larger gender narrative that allows it to utilize historical processes or information to justify contemporary policy measures.¹⁶⁶ While the historical justification for a contemporary focus on contemporary gender issues may help legitimize the RPF's post-conflict gender policy focus, the use of this narrative may have encountered difficulties with the Rwandese population. One government official suggested that in reference to differences between the Rwandese exiled population and Rwandans who never left Rwanda, '...some who returned have more knowledge of the culture than the Rwandese who were here...' (interview, 17 February 2009). This may perhaps suggest that the Queen Mother narrative¹⁶⁷ has been sanitized by the RPF to provide a locally-rooted justification for a gender policy focus. Whether this narrative is more of a political justification for a focus on women in contemporary Rwanda, or perhaps because it makes gender issues seemingly more palatable within contemporary Rwanda, is up for debate.

Though the RPF's suggested linkage between the role of women in the Tutsi monarchy and the current focus on women is tenuous at best, evidence nevertheless suggests that gender issues were a concern for the RPF and Kagame prior to the 1994 genocide (primarily due to exile experiences) and the context from which the RPF operated, thus shaping the RPF's priorities within PCR.

Pragmatic, Developmental Reasons: 'Need All Hands'

Once the RPF came to power, immediate measures relating to women's involvement were put in place.¹⁶⁸ Pragmatic reasons, along with historical ones, may have contributed to the new Rwandan government's prioritization of gender policy issues during the post-conflict period. As discussed in earlier chapters, evidence suggests there was a significant female majority following the genocide at a time when the country was in ruins and women were

¹⁶⁶ See Chapter Three for more information.

¹⁶⁷ As explored in Chapter Two, the institution of the 'queen mother' was not necessarily benign and fair.

¹⁶⁸ See Chapters One and Two for detailed discussion on policy issues.

actively involved in the rebuilding process. An NGO respondent indicated that gender issues had been introduced in Rwanda because the, ‘...government thought it would be good to involve everyone – to rebuild the country – need all hands’ (interview, 12 October 2009). This implies that women were viewed by the RPF as an important force (or possibly as a *work force*) for rebuilding efforts. The evidence does indeed point to the fact that women were critical to the actual reconstruction and rebuilding of Rwanda during the PCR period (as was largely discussed in Chapter Three). Powley has argued that women: ‘...were the ones who picked up the pieces of a literally decimated society and began to rebuild; they buried the dead, found homes for nearly 500,000 orphans, and built shelters’ (Powley 2006: 3).

Remembering the PCR context more generally is perhaps also critical at this point; between 500,000-800,000 thousand people were dead, there were mass movements of refugees flowing both out of and in to Rwanda, and Rwanda’s infrastructure had been decimated (Human Rights Watch 1996, Des Forges 1999, Uvin 1998, Pottier 2002, Prunier 1998, Gourevitch 1998).¹⁶⁹ Given this general post-genocide resource-limited context, the RPF may have pragmatically viewed women as a work force for reconstruction and development.

A United Nations speech given by the then Minister for Gender and Development, Angelina Muganza, reflects on the linkages between women and longer-term development:

Members of Parliament have embarked on a nationwide campaign to sensitise the population about the gender-based violence and the role of women in national development as a strategy of achieving sustainable development. (Muganza 2000).

Here, a high level governmental official suggests that female involvement is very much interconnected with strategic developmental objects. While this speech was given at a time when Rwanda was transitioning out of its emergency phase, Muganza was actively involved in Rwanda’s reconstruction phase. This statement conveys that women may have been viewed as a mechanism for national development within PCR policies.¹⁷⁰

The National Gender Policy also explicitly states that one of the ‘major changes’ that occurred following the genocide was the, ‘...physical and social reconstruction of the country, which involved women’ (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion July 2010: 10). Again, there is an association made between women and post-conflict reconstruction in terms of recognizing that women were part of the reconstruction process.

¹⁶⁹ See also Goodfellow and Smith 2013, Melvern 2004, and Rehabilitation and Relief Network 1996.

¹⁷⁰ Aside from serving as the Minister of Gender and Women in Development, Muganza had also served in a number of governmental agencies following the genocide, including the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Social Integration and the Public Service Commission (The Hunt Alternatives Fund 2012).

Further to this, linkages between gender equality and development surface within the national dialogue on gender issues (including the draft National Gender Policy). An assessment of gender policies from the early 2000s suggests that the government explicitly linked gender equality to national development at that time. The ‘Overall Objective’ noted within a section on ‘Strategy for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality’ read:

To facilitate the integration of the gender concerns in implementation of national priority policies and programmes and therefore enhance a quick societal transformation for equitable and sustainable development. (UNIFEM Learning-Oriented Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming and Women’s Empowerment Strategies in Rwanda 2002: 2)

The assessment also linked the draft National Gender Policy to development:

The National Gender Policy was finalized in January 2002, and has been submitted to the Cabinet for final approval. The intention is that it will become an integral part of the overall national development strategy of poverty eradication and economic growth. Because of the crosscutting nature of gender in development, the draft spells out specific priority gender issues and concerns that must be mainstreamed in national development policies and programmes. (UNIFEM Learning-Oriented Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming and Women’s Empowerment Strategies in Rwanda 2002: 3)

The final 2010 National Gender Policy explicitly states that gender equality is a, ‘...prerequisite for sustainable development...’ (Government of Rwanda 2010: 7).

I am not attempting to inflate the importance of these passages, however, in context, the passages above indicate that the government conceptualized a clear link between gender equality and national development. The summary from the early 2000s would especially be applicable to the PCR policy context. Explicit mention of ‘...a quick societal transformation for equitable and sustainable development...’¹⁷¹ implies that gender equality was one strategy for development. This would lend credibility to the arguments outlined in Chapter Two which suggest that gender policy agendas have largely instrumentalized women for developmental purposes (Goetz 2006 and 2009). However, it is important to note that within the governmental documents explored above, there is simultaneous discussion on the unequal status of women and the need to ensure that policies mainstream women; this would imply that there are deeper rationales behind a gender policy focus than merely instrumentalizing women for reconstruction or developmental purposes. These propositions are not necessarily in complete contention with one another: inequality could be a key factor behind a PCR gender policy focus whilst the linkage to development may be based upon pragmatic notions of reconstruction and development.

The strategic link between female participation and development also resonated beyond the governmental level. An interviewee working for an NGO indicated that gender policies

¹⁷¹ UNIFEM Learning-Oriented Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming and Women’s Empowerment Strategies in Rwanda 2002: 2

were developed, ‘...in order to help women participate in national development,...’ continuing ‘...government realizes women are needed for development...’ (interview, 9 October 2009).

Political Will: If It Is a Priority, It Can Be Implemented

Above I suggested that the historical role of the RPF (primarily in exile), as well as the acknowledgement that within the PCR period women were perhaps viewed as a force for development, are factors behind political will within the PCR gender policy context. An additional rationale regarding the RPF and efficient policy implementation is explicitly linked to current suggestions that the President, Kagame, is essentially an authoritarian who dictates policy priorities. There are, of course, power structures at many levels that uphold this political structure that ensures Kagame retains significant power. Baker, for example, has shed light on how governing structures work in practice:

Rwanda is a highly ordered and supervised society. A strict discipline permeates all government structures. Here the president’s sharp rebuke of ministers in closed sessions are leaked to the press to keep them under pressure; here the senate committees thoroughly question government ministers and civil servants concerning proposed bills and current performance; here the Ombudsman, though not independent, has real power and political support; and here the police disciplinary procedures work. (Baker 2007: 347)

However, though many are working to uphold these structures, little in-depth information exists regarding who retains significant power beyond Kagame. Discussions during field work into this issue granted no real insight.

Whilst the ‘political will’ story is the primary, contemporary story on Rwanda and its PCR trajectory, this needs to be re-contextualized in terms of 1994 realities; in so doing, it becomes evident that the contemporary explanatory argument regarding political will (largely as a concept that pertains to intentions and actions of the RPF and Kagame) largely over-emphasizes its role in terms of the PCR gender policy focus. This again, is not to suggest that political will was not a factor, it simply better contextualizes this factor as *part* of the story and not the *whole* story.

It has been suggested that historically, ‘Rwandans have a strong tradition of vertical and authoritarian government,’ (Unsworth and Uvin 2002: 4) and this type of governing structure has persisted since the genocide. Even though Rwanda is officially a democracy (The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda 2003: 1), there is indeed evidence to support these claims; Baker (2010: 347), for example, describes how Rwanda is a highly supervised state where everyone is under surveillance via a tight monitoring structure.

Given this context, contemporary propositions often suggest that Rwanda is an authoritarian state under the RPF and Kagame¹⁷². As Straus and Waldorf have argued, ‘Since 1994, the RPF-led government has practiced a deft authoritarianism that justifies its restrictions on political parties, civil society, and the media as necessary measures to guard against a recrudescence of ethnic violence.’ (Straus and Waldorf 2011: 4) Similarly, Burnet states, ‘...the Rwandan state has become increasingly authoritarian under the guise of ‘democratization’...’ (Burnet 2008: 363). *Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship* (Reyntjens 2004) explicitly engages with the notion that Kagame in particular is an all-powerful ruler.¹⁷³ Current policy examinations (and reflections on post-conflict processes) thus mainly suggest that President Kagame and the RPF are the drivers behind PCR policies.¹⁷⁴ As such, political will is often utilized as a key explanatory factor for policy initiatives in Rwanda.¹⁷⁵

References to ‘top down’ structures also feature frequently in analyses of Rwanda’s governing structure. Whilst this is not explicitly indicative of an authoritarian or dictatorial regime type, it does provide insight into how policy making and implementation processes work within Rwanda. Newbury and Baldwin (2000) have argued:

...the Rwanda state is now, as it was in the past, unusually hierarchical, with a tradition of top-down decision-making and little tolerance for people or groups who challenge the hegemonic discourse of those in power. Although the people holding power in Rwanda have changed since the war and genocide, these features have not. (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 10)

Further analysis on a plethora of policies and laws, for example land reform, genocide denial, ethnicity and political organization, also point to strong governmental power in setting policy agendas. Ansoms, in an examination of rural policies for example suggests, ‘The Rwanda government’s social engineering ambitions reflect a very top-down developmentalist agenda that leaves little room for bottom-up feedback mechanisms’ (Ansons 2011:248).

This sentiment of ‘top-down, state-centered’ (Ansons 2011: 241) policy agendas reverberates loudly throughout contemporary analysis of the Rwandan state and its

¹⁷² See Straus and Waldorf 2011 and Burnet 2008.

¹⁷³ Swedlund, Loyle, and Smith (2012) suggest that Rwanda is more of a *restrictive* state than one that is overtly authoritarian.

¹⁷⁴ See Straus and Waldorf 2011 for further details on the goal of the edited volume.

¹⁷⁵ Numerous examples demonstrate that *authoritarian* is increasingly being used as a label to describe President Paul Kagame within these critiques (Longman 2011 and Burnet 2008). Phrases such as, ‘...authoritarian tendencies of the regime...’ (Beswick 2011: 1911), ‘...authoritarian characteristics displayed by the Rwandan regime...’ (Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1113-1114), or newspaper headlines such as, ‘Paul Kagame’s Rwanda: African success story or authoritarian state?’ (Smith 2012) are frequently employed to describe Kagame’s leadership style and the political context of Rwanda today.

institutional mechanisms for implementing policies. Zorbas similarly describes the current government as implementing, ‘...top-down authoritarian governance...’ (Zorbas 2011: 103).

Notions of an authoritarian state imply, from a policy perspective, that policy priorities are dictated from above; thus the authoritarian ruler is credited with policy advances. Longman suggests that political leadership (or what is often described as political will) has retained an overwhelming position in explaining Rwanda’s PCR trajectory:

Rwanda’s supposed remarkable recovery is generally credited to the post-genocide government led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Many observers heap particular praise on Paul Kagame, president of Rwanda since 2000. (Longman 2011: 25)

If Rwanda is indeed an authoritarian state¹⁷⁶ (or Kagame a dictator) then granting significant credit to the PCR gender policy focus is certainly justifiable because in an authoritarian context, policies can be identified and implemented with little contestation.¹⁷⁷ Whilst there is substantial evidence that policy measures are indeed dictated from the highest political level, i.e., President Kagame, there is a need to question whether this ‘authoritarian’ label was actually applicable *during* the PCR context.

Theoretically, there are two ways in which an ‘authoritarian’ regime would have an impact on Rwanda’s PCR gender policy focus; firstly, if it is accepted that Rwanda is an authoritarian state and that the ‘authoritarian’ structure was in place in the immediate PCR period in 1994, then it could be said that an authoritarian ruler, Kagame, prioritized gender policies in the PCR period and was able to ensure that this was indeed a PCR priority. This would give credibility to arguments that political will was the key factor behind Rwanda’s gender policy focus. It could also be argued that, from a gender policy perspective, this is not necessarily bad (gender policies were prioritized and implemented, therefore this is a positive trajectory). This argument would tangentially map onto arguments advocating for ‘women’s inclusion’¹⁷⁸ within PCR processes; this is not to say that arguments advocating for women’s inclusion in PCR processes would advocate for authoritarian regimes, it is simply to point out that it presents a theoretical challenge to arguments regarding inclusion if an authoritarian ruler prioritized gender policies within the PCR period.

Secondly, if it is accepted that Rwanda is ruled by an ‘authoritarian’ and that this was unquestionably the case in 1994, then one would have to grant almost sole credit for the gender policy focus to Kagame and the RPF, which would render most other applicable

¹⁷⁶ See Scott 1998 for further reading on authoritarian states.

¹⁷⁷ See Easterly 2011 for discussion on how ‘benevolent autocrats’ have an impact on policy-making processes in developmental states.

¹⁷⁸ See Cockburn and Zarkov 2002, Mazurana 2005 and Castillejo 2011 for example.

factors invisible (factors such as grassroots action on the part of women). Problematically however, whilst there is mounting evidence¹⁷⁹ that Kagame has tightened political space in Rwanda since 1994, the utilization of an ‘authoritarian’ imagery is not necessarily particularly instructive for analysis on the *post-conflict period*.¹⁸⁰ Indeed as Verhoeven has suggested, in the immediate PCR period, ‘...RPF rule was by no means consolidated’ (Verhoeven 2012: 268). I would argue that the gender policy focus has largely been *sustained* since the PCR period primarily because of political will. However, this is a different argument to one which suggests that gender policies were a PCR focus primarily *due to* political will.

From Genocide to PCR: The RPF Viewed with Scepticism

Above, I have established that political will was very much a factor in the PCR gender policy focus for various reasons (a number of which are directly related to the actions of women). I now turn to examining the *extent* to which political will could be the primary explanatory factor in regard to this policy focus. It should be noted that I am not attempting to discredit (or indeed, undermine) my argument that political will mattered; I am, however, attempting to contextualize this factor within the larger PCR context in 1994. This examination suggests that contemporary arguments which primarily credit (or criticize) the RPF and Kagame for Rwanda’s PCR trajectory (especially as they pertain to gender policies) are over-determined and decontextualized.

The gender policy priority was just one component of a larger post-conflict reconstruction agenda. Examining this agenda more broadly helps to further contextualize the larger policy-making framework at play within the immediate post-conflict period. The power of the RPF and Kagame, while militarily significant and indeed critical in ending the genocide, was more politically tenuous in 1994 especially in terms of relations with international actors which is in substantial contrast to contemporary narratives which unquestionably establish the RPF as all-powerful.

Retrospective analysis of the post-conflict context largely demonstrates that donors were perhaps a bit wary of the RPF, especially given its previous status due to the civil conflict beginning in the early 90s. Given this context, international aid directed to the RPF was moderate. Though a substantial amount of aid was directed to the humanitarian and

¹⁷⁹ See Longman 2011, Gready 2011, Muhumuza 2014 for example.

¹⁸⁰ This will be examined in further detail in following chapters.

emergency response to the genocide,¹⁸¹ and the RPF was almost entirely reliant on aid,¹⁸² foreign aid was not necessarily going to the RPF as Sellström and Wohlegemuth suggest:

The international community, however, so far has not, with some exceptions, delivered any substantial aid to fund the new Rwandese government. At the same time, donor organizations in Kigali have all the equipment necessary for implementing their programmes, while the government has very little. This contrast has further exacerbated relations between the government and the donors. Lacking the means to establish a functioning civilian administration and a judicial system, the government cannot respond to the wishes and requirements of either the international community or its own population. (Sellström and Wohlegemuth – Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda – 57)

This particular passage indicates that *substantial aid* was not immediately channelled to the RPF. Though aid to the RPF government has increased significantly since 1994, allocations to the new government in the initial post-conflict period were slow. This suggests that the RPF had to prove itself to donors; thus, unlike present-day Rwanda, Kagame and the RPF were not necessarily as internationally powerful as current analysis of post-conflict reconstruction in Rwanda would suggest.

A 2003 study conducted by The African Capacity Building Foundation further indicates that resources were not being directed to the RPF in the immediate aftermath of the genocide and instead were being directed to international agencies:

Strangely enough, even with the transition of the Rwandan Patriotic Front into the government and the consolidation of civil society organizations, donors were frequently reluctant to recognize the legitimacy of the government and to provide it with the resources necessary to rebuild its institutional capacity and to establish modalities of mutual policy dialogue and coordination. Although it acknowledged the resiliency and territorial control of the new regime, the donor community remained reluctant to provide substantial funds to the resource-starved government. (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 14)

These arguments however seem largely decontextualized from the complexity of post-conflict Rwanda. The report noted above, written almost a decade after the genocide, implicitly suggests that months after a military and political group, the RPF - a group largely viewed as a rebel force by the international community prior to the genocide - should have been given significant amounts of foreign aid.

Literature written during the immediate post-conflict period illustrates the depoliticized nature of the developmental arguments suggested above. Given the chaotic nature of the genocide and the period immediately following, donor documents provide an interesting source of material to draw upon to examine international opinion of the RPF and Kagame at that time. Donor documents written during this period provide particular insight into this

¹⁸¹ See Relief and Rehabilitation Network June 1996 for more information.

¹⁸² See Ezemanri et al. (2008), Gervias (2003), and OECD DAC 2012 for more information.

issue as they were written based on the immediate context. Because current debates on political power in Rwanda primarily play out at the international level, these documents provide a starting point for the examination of how international narratives on the RPF have changed over the past two decades.

The RPF was comprised of primarily Tutsi refugees who had left Rwanda between 1959-1963, and prior to the genocide they were largely viewed as a rebel force that had invaded Rwanda (see for example, Uvin 1998: 60). A USAID memo written during the genocide illustrates this point:

USAID/Rwanda has had experience over the past two year[s] both working in and observing others working in and helping others coordinate the aid to the displaced and refugee camps that existed in Rwanda since the October 1990 *invasion of the country by the Rwandan Patriotic Front*. (My emphasis, USAID 16 June 1994)

Here, we see that the RPF was seen as an invading force. While the RPF and Kagame are now very much credited with ending the genocide, that recognition was not exactly immediate on the side of the international community. Politically, the situation was tenuous as illustrated in an 18 July 1994 USAID memo written by Dirk Dijkerman: ‘Due to the recent USG announcement that we recognize no group or parties as the legitimate representatives of the Rwandanese people, we can not obligate these funds bilaterally’ (USAID 18 July 1994).

However, even at this point in time when USAID was not officially recognizing any power in Rwanda as legitimate, it seems that operationally, USAID viewed the RPF as a *somewhat* legitimate entity. It was, in fact, liaising with the RPF officially and making recommendations to the RPF regarding the emergency response. A 23 June 1994 USAID document titled *Talking Points for Meeting with Gerald Gahima¹⁸³, Special Representative, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)* indicates that USAID was in fact working with the RPF at this time:

It seems that some NGOs have been assigned project sites around which they have developed plans, secured funding based upon those plans, and purchased the necessary equipment. Upon completion of these steps, the NGO arrived on site to begin work *only to be advised by the PRF* that because they did not respond quickly enough they are being reassigned to another site.

While we can appreciate the need for a timely response by the NGOs, the reassignment process may actually result in a waste of time and money. After an assignment is made, perhaps the RPF could discuss with the NGO a timeline. If the NGO encounters difficulty in meeting the timeline, then the NGO could discuss with the RPF what the difficulties are and decide together on the next steps. In other words, an open line of communication would alleviate this problem. (my emphasis USAID 23 June 1994: 3)

¹⁸³ Gerald Gahima had been very close to Kagame and served as the prosecutor general following the genocide; however, he is no longer part of the regime and has been a critic of Kagame (Straus and Waldrof 2011: 11)

Again, this suggests that USAID viewed the RPF, to some extent, as a legitimate power with which they were going to work in order to facilitate emergency/development work. However, USAID was not necessarily enthralled with the RPF:

The lack of full cooperation from the RPF resulted in the cancellation of the UN/NGO assessment mission scheduled for June 21-22. This activity was arranged at the highest levels of the UN and the PRF. The cancellation unfortunately, will delay the delivery of humanitarian assistance due to the inability to assess needs and access vulnerable populations – a necessary precondition to the delivery of assistance. We hope that the RPF will immediately renew steps towards arranging for an assessment of the needs in all RPF territory. (USAID 23 June 1994: 2)

There are many analytical ways in which to dissect the above passages. A few months before ending the genocide, the RPF was viewed as an invading force, however in the immediate PC period, power dynamics were shifting and the RPF was gaining some legitimacy within the international community as a powerful entity within Rwanda. This is important to note, because again, contemporary narratives on Rwanda largely portray the RPF and Kagame as saviours who stopped the genocide, (Pottier 2002) yet as the statements above suggest, they were viewed with a certain degree of scepticism during that period.

Dallaire's account of meeting with Kagame early on in the genocide helps shed additional light on the complexities of dealing with the RPF and with Kagame (again, at a time when contemporary narratives had yet to have been shaped):

...I had a chance to meet with Kagame regarding the ceasefire and the airport. He had promised to keep his guns clear of the runway, but not only had some of his rounds fallen on the runway, but the terminal housing the Ghanaian battalion had suffered deliberate artillery and mortar assaults, and we had established that the firing had come from RPF positions. (Dallaire 2005: 341)

This brings to light the inherent contradictions in relations between the RPF and the international community at that time; contradictions that are largely lost within PCR analysis. I am not attempting to suggest that the RPF was pursuing a *right or wrong* strategy, however, this suggests that contemporary discourses which now posit the RPF and Kagame as those who stopped the genocide, too easily glide over the political and military realities at the time. To clarify, I am not suggesting that the international community was on the 'right' side of the conflict, indeed significant evidence suggests that foreign aid was contributing to the rearming and reorganization of genocidaires,¹⁸⁴ however, this perhaps suggests that calls for fast, efficient policy responses to genocide or conflict are severely unrealistic and reductionist in nature even though this has become a central feature in current discussions on post-conflict Rwanda (Melvern 2008). There have also been suggestions that the RPF was not necessarily the unified force (Reyntjens 2004: 182) that contemporary analysis suggests.

¹⁸⁴ See Straus 2004, Milner 2000, ODI 1998, and Melvern 2004 for further information.

Further to this, interestingly Kagame does not make a meaningful appearance in post-conflict literature emerging from the development community immediately following the genocide. Report after report either fails to mention or makes only fleeting references to him, whereas contemporary literature frequently uses Kagame as the point of analytical emergence. These narratives concerning the RPF demonstrate a more tenuous position of the RPF and Kagame in the immediate post-conflict period, which goes largely unnoticed in contemporary post-conflict analysis as described earlier in the chapter.

Even as the RPF was viewed with some scepticism by the international community, international agencies were engaging with it during the genocide and the RPF was increasingly directing international activity during the immediate PCR period:

In the RPF-controlled areas in the north and east, ICRC, UN agencies and NGOs had greater access and were able to deliver quite substantial volumes of assistance, though their freedom of operation was closely controlled by the RPF and many agencies were not allowed to remain in Rwanda overnight. (Relief and Rehabilitation Network June 1996: 4)

This suggests the RPF had military control over geographic areas in Rwanda and was also able to direct various international community activities in the country. This means that although there may have been scepticism on the part of the international community regarding dealings with the RPF, it was indeed gaining power in the immediate post-conflict period (Pottier 2002).

I suggest that while current discourses on the RPF and Kagame employ an over-reaching narrative that is predicated on an over-deterministic approach to the role of Kagame within Rwanda, it is important to realize that immediately following the genocide in 1994, the RPF and Kagame did not necessarily have the power that they presently do. Current literature implicitly seems to take the RPF and Kagame's power as given once the genocide officially ended. However, that is certainly not the case as Kagame's power base and international legitimacy grew over time.

There is also some evidence that during the PCR period, the government did not prioritize women to the extent that current discourses suggest. In 1996, Human Rights Watch attempted to document how the genocide had had an impact on women and they indicated:

Virtually every woman interviewed by Human Rights Watch/FIDH noted the fact that while women make up some 70 percent of the population, government policies and international aid programs have not allocated adequate resources to deal with the particular problems facing Rwandan women. (Human Rights Watch 1996 no page)

Here, it is implied that women did not think that the government was necessarily prioritizing their needs within the PCR period.

I delve into the factor of international influence and aid in the next chapter, but here, I highlight how segments of the international development community perceived the RPF and Kagame in order to demonstrate that arguments which primarily attribute the gender policy focus to Kagame, are reductive in nature. To reiterate, leadership did indeed play a role in the PCR gender policy focus, however, given the extent to which the RPF and Kagame were part of a post-conflict context riddled with complexity and fragmented interests, to utilize a variable of leadership as *the primary component* within the gender policy focus too easily dismisses the contextual realities present in Rwanda at the time.

'Political Will': An Important, But Not Sole, Factor

Within this chapter I demonstrated that political will, as it pertains to the actions of Kagame and the RPF, clearly mattered in ensuring that gender policies were prioritized during the post-conflict period. Many interviewees unequivocally indicated that political will was a prime reason for the gender policy focus. Given this, contemporary arguments suggested by people such as Burnet (2008), or those who focus on Rwanda more generally such as Straus and Waldrof (2011), and Reyntjens (2004, 2011) who rightly centralize the role of the RPF and Kagame within Rwanda's PCR trajectory, have significant merit.

However, the reasons for this are not as simple as attributing the policy focus to macro-level political leadership. The evidence suggests that political will was imbued with factors concerning the actions of women within the RPF (as part of the struggle, for example). The historical experience of the RPF in Uganda may have partially set the stage for its focus on women but this linkage is tied into the refugee experience, ways in which Ugandan women were shaping the local policy context in Uganda, and experiences of rebel warfare; it is not solely about the relationship between the two leaders, Kagame and Museveni. Political will (when denoting top-down power) may have helped establish the foundation for Kagame and high level RPF representatives to ensure gender issues were a priority, but even political will cannot be explained by simply examining macro-level leadership dynamics.

Given this, is the academic focus on the RPF and Kagame actually justified when analysing the PCR period and particularly the gender policy focus? Certainly, it is if examining how policies have been *sustained* over the past two decades particularly in a tightly controlled state. However, as I have demonstrated while political will on the part of political leadership

mattered, the context in which the RPF and Kagame operated during the post-conflict period was much more fractured than it is now and contemporary post-conflict reconstruction analysis on Rwanda too easily dismisses the political complexities in play in 1994. During this time, the political capacity of Kagame and the RPF was not sufficient to drive the gender policy focus alone. Other factors contributed to creating and perpetuating the country's gender policy focus during the PCR period, particularly in the early stages.

Thus far, I have demonstrated that a majority female population, women's grassroots action, and political will were all critical factors in the PCR gender policy focus within Rwanda. In the last section of this chapter I began to touch upon ways in which international actors and organizations featured within the 1994 dynamics of Rwanda. I now turn to ways in which international factors (specifically aid and the Beijing Conference on Women) influenced the PCR gender policy focus.

Chapter Six

International Influences: Aid and the Beijing Conference on Women

Within this chapter I explore the final factors that help explain the puzzle as to *why gender policies were a PCR priority in Rwanda*. Specifically, I demonstrate how international factors fed into Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus and argue that both international aid and the Beijing Conference on Women were instrumental components in the post-conflict gender policy prioritisation. Firstly, I explore how international aid flooded Rwanda's conflict/post-conflict context. Secondly, I demonstrate how aid supported women's initiatives. Lastly, I consider how the Beijing Conference on Women provided essential policy support and international backing for women's issues in Rwanda during the post-conflict period. The Beijing Conference on Women has featured minimally in the gender policy analysis of Rwanda, despite its importance in influencing Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus.

International Aid in Post-Conflict Rwanda

Considerable amounts of international aid were being directed to the emergency response for the genocide in 1994.¹⁸⁵ Rwanda, and the refugee camps in surrounding states, were a magnet for emergency aid and international activity in the conflict and post-conflict period. An evaluation conducted within two years of the genocide indicated that from '...April to December 1994, approximately US\$1.4 billion was allocated by the international community to the response' (RRN June 1996: 3). The international response to the genocide (both inside and outside of Rwanda) was on a massive scale, as suggested by the RRN (ODI):

The overall response involved an unprecedented number of agencies and organisations operating in Rwanda and the four neighbouring countries. At least seven UN agencies and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the IOM, approximately 250 NGOs, at least eight military contingents, the ICRC, IFRC and various National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies were involved in the response in either an implementation or support role. In addition, the system was resourced by over 20 donor organisations... (RRN ODI 1996: 18)

In the immediate post-conflict period, much of the funding was directed to refugee camps (Kumar et al. 1996: vi). As Keen (2008) indicated:

...the humanitarian aid operation for those who fled from Rwanda to Zaïre and Tanzania was one of the largest in history. A major Danish-led evaluation of

¹⁸⁵ The primary aim of emergency (or humanitarian) aid is to, '...save lives, alleviate suffering and enable those suffering to maintain (or retain) their human dignity during and in the aftermath...' as Riddell suggests (Riddell 2007: 311). This conceptualization of aid is very much applicable to the emergency response to the Rwandan genocide; it is particularly applicable to the rationales behind directing significant amounts of resources to refugee camps.

interventions in Rwanda concluded that the provision of large-scale humanitarian aid to the (predominantly Hutu) refugees in Zaïre and Tanzania served to disguise the international inaction in relation to the preceding 1994 genocide. (Keen 2008: 118)

The United Nations was a key player within this response. As of 1996, the United Nations alone had directed \$2.5 billion dollars to refugee camps (Human Rights Watch 1996: no page). Much of the UN funding materialized during the initial post-conflict period and was largely in the form of emergency aid, the largest amounts of funding being allocated between 1995-1997 (UN 2004: 1).

Whilst significant resources were dispatched to refugee camps, most of the genocide 'survivors'¹⁸⁶ were within Rwanda's borders and thus not receiving this international aid. Numerous critiques¹⁸⁷ have been levelled against the international community for largely misreading the political and refugee context in which they were working. A study on Rwanda's PCR process illustrated this dynamic:

...the international response to the Rwandan refugee emergency was swift. International agencies delivered the much-needed assistance with remarkable speed. However, assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction inside Rwanda was seriously constrained by donors' administrative procedures and by political conditionalities that often delayed aid for several months or even years. (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 11)

The above passage is indicative of how aid was allocated in the immediate post-conflict period; aid primarily went to refugee camps outside of Rwanda whilst funding directed to the victims inside Rwanda, as well as to the RPF, was more limited. Problematically, the refugee camps were a haven for the people who had organized and carried out the genocide (the *génocidaires*) (Mamdani 2001: 254, Douma 2000: 47). Even worse, the camps were being used as a site for the *génocidaires* to rearm (Eriksson 1996: 54, RRN ODI 1996: 27-28). It is estimated that in 1996 (two years after the genocide) support to refugees in camps was extremely high, costing one million dollars a day (Relief and Rehabilitation Network ODI 1996: 13).

Given that international funding was directly supporting the perpetrators of the genocide, and much less funding was spent within Rwanda during the immediate post-conflict period, relations between the international community and the RPF were tense (Human Rights Watch 1996: no page).¹⁸⁸ Hayman (2009) illustrates this:

...limited resources were provided to fund directly the government's own reconstruction and reintegration programmes, leading to considerable bitterness and anger on its part at what it saw as neglect by a donor community which had let Rwanda down during the genocide. (Hayman 2009: 584)

¹⁸⁶ *Survivors* are primarily Tutsis within Rwanda who were not killed during the genocide.

¹⁸⁷ See Melvern 2004 and Dallaire 2005 for further information.

¹⁸⁸ The refugee situation largely destabilized the Democratic Republic of the Congo (then Zaïre) leading to a protracted conflict in the region (Mamdani 2001).

Further to this the Ministry of Planning also suggested that donor priorities were not necessarily aligned with the government's agenda:

...donor support to Rwandan refugees was global (*sic*) more important outside than inside Rwanda before their massive return (Note that some donors include their "regional" assistance to Rwandese refugees into their financial support to Rwanda. This explains the large discrepancies between figures provided by donors and those recorded by the GOR). (Ministry of Planning 1997: no page)

Whilst the majority of aid was going to refugee camps,¹⁸⁹ the RPF-led government in Kigali was receiving limited international funding.

Funding directed to the RPF was slow in the immediate aftermath of the genocide, however international funds were nevertheless reaching them. British donors for example had directly committed resources to the government by late July 1994, just weeks after the genocide had officially ended (Pottier 2002: 158). This funding was indeed critical; in the immediate post-conflict period, almost 100% of the Rwanda's budget was funded by international aid (Gervais 2003: 543).

Within a few months, increasing levels of aid were allocated to Rwanda in the form of trusts overseen by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); one such trust was established in July 1994 (by the Secretary-General) and a second in November 1994 (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 58). These funds were created in order to ease the constraints concerning disbursement and implementation:

The Netherlands had promoted the idea and had proven to be its principal backer. Nearly one year after the war had ended, The Netherlands and the UK together provided US\$12.9 million to the UNDP Trust Fund (US\$10.8 million and US \$2.1 million respectively). By November 1995, the contribution of The Netherlands alone amounted to US\$16 million. These funds were largely for providing administrative support to the government, rehabilitating the judicial system, and refurbishing the city of Kigali. (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 58 – their citation, DANIDA 1997; ICG, 2002)

Relations between donors and the new RPF-led government began to improve during this period.¹⁹⁰

The commitment to longer-term development came in January 1995 when donors and the government came together to create the *Program of National Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Socio-Economic Recovery* (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 65). The conference led to a total of more than \$1 billion in aid pledged to Rwanda although there were subsequent delays in disbursements to the government (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 65, Kumar et al.

¹⁸⁹ For more information on this, also see Keen: 126-127 and 140-141 and Relief and Rehabilitation Network ODI 1996.

¹⁹⁰ Whilst relations with donors began to improve, the slow disbursement process meant the new government was still not happy with donor actions (Hayman 2009: 584).

1996: 9, Hayman 2009: 584).¹⁹¹ Demonstrating the difficulty in actually tracing levels of aid directed to emergency responses however, the estimated amount of aid pledged during this conference has been cited as ranging from US\$600 million (Reyntjens 201: 34) to the one billion dollars cited. The Ministry of Planning further indicated that only \$350 million (of the approximately \$1 billion pledged) had been directly disbursed to the government in 1995 (Ministry of Planning 1997: no page).

Kumar et al. suggested that there were multiple reasons for the delays including strained donor relations due to limited absorption capacity on the part of the government, donor conditionality, and questions concerning the viability and legitimacy of the new government (Kumar et al. 1996: 9). Additional issues concerning vengeance killings on the part of the RPF also concerned the international community at this time (Pottier 2002: 158).¹⁹² Donor/RPF relations were extremely complex in the post-conflict period. Though the genocide had ended in July 1994, the conflict persisted and there is debate over whether the RPF engaged in human rights abuses within Rwanda in the years following the genocide (World Food Programme 1999: no page) and this was one reason that the international community was slow to provide funding. Because those who were responsible for the genocide were using force to move back into Rwanda during this period, the RPF excused their actions by suggesting any potential abuses were part of the conflict.¹⁹³

Though relations between the RPF and the international community were strained, this did not prevent some funding from reaching the new government. Partly motivated by guilt for not preventing the genocide from unfolding (Reyntjens 2004), and increasingly influenced by rhetoric from the new government to the effect that ‘the international community watched whilst the RPA saved’ Rwanda (Pottier 2002: 159), donor support to the new government continued to rise in the post-conflict years. According to the Rwandan Ministry of Planning, approximately two years after the 1995 donor meeting, donor pledges¹⁹⁴ had more than doubled and reached US\$2.5 billion (Ministry of Planning 1997: no page).¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ See Rugumamu and Gbla (2003: 65-66) for more information on how pledges did not materialize in practice and the confusion over time-frames in which funds were to be allocated.

¹⁹² In subsequent years conflict between Rwanda and then Zaire, now DRC, became increasingly problematic (Douma 2000: 28).

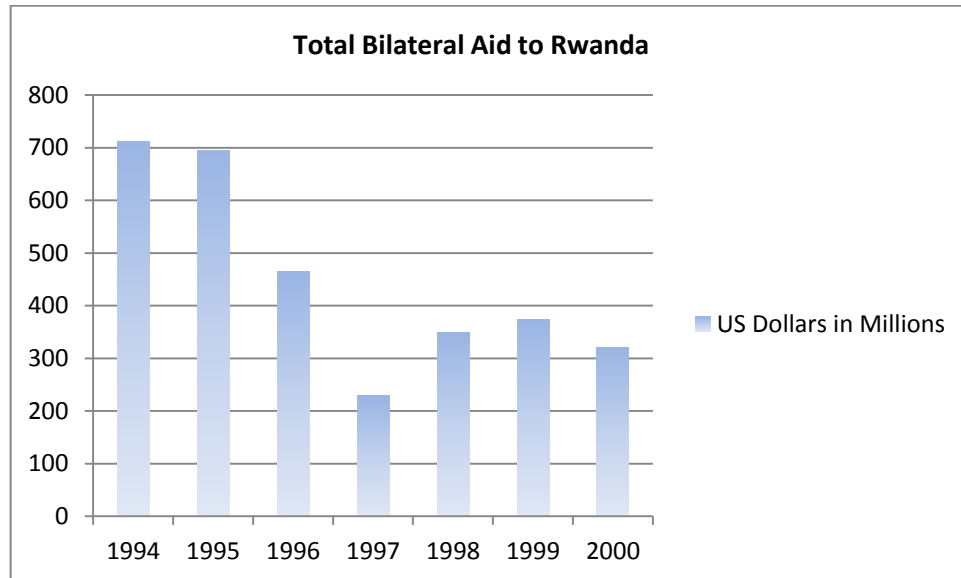
¹⁹³ See Melvern 2006 and Pottier 2002 for further discussion on these issues.

¹⁹⁴ UNDP (1999) indicated that between 1995-1998 multilateral pledges totalled \$1.69 billion and bilateral assistance totalled \$1.154 billion (UNDP 1999: 10).

¹⁹⁵ Again, however, these pledges did not necessarily translate into actual disbursements. Reflecting the slow disbursement process, Hayman (2009: 584) further indicated that general budget support only reached the government in 1998 (a few years after support had been pledged). See ODI 2008 for further discussion on funding mechanisms such as general budget support or basket funding.

Though there were challenges with aid disbursement to Rwanda, significant levels of funding were still reaching the country as the chart below illustrates. The chart depicts total ODA (in millions) that was targeted to Rwanda in the post-conflict years.¹⁹⁶

Figure 1: Total Bilateral ODA to Rwanda



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Development Assistance Committee* (2014)

The high 1994-1996 funding levels were particularly allocated to emergency efforts though funding for reconstruction efforts also began to materialize at this time (Kumar et al. 1996).¹⁹⁷ The UNDP explained the breakdown of all ODA directed to the response in the two year period following the genocide:

During the immediate post-crisis period (1994/95), 54 percent of all funding was channelled through NGOs, 32 percent through UN agencies and 14 percent directly to the Government. With the establishment of government institutions, the channel of resources began to shift away from NGOs. The UN agencies then became the main conduit of funds, accounting for about 76 percent of donor assistance to the public sector in 1997. (UNDP 1999: 10)

The United Nations had given \$572 million directly to programmes in Rwanda by 1996 (Human Rights Watch 1996: no page). The level of funding began to drop noticeably in 1996, largely due to the transition out of the emergency phase and into longer-term development initiatives (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 59). Much of the UN funding materialized during the initial post-conflict period and was largely in the form of emergency aid; the World Food Programme spent the largest amount at \$820 million (UN 2004: 1).

¹⁹⁶ This was funding targeted directly at Rwanda and thus does not capture all the aid that was directed to the international emergency response to the genocide.

¹⁹⁷ This was also determined from OECD DAC 2014 data (my analysis).

1995-1997 also represented the years that the most money was spent by the UN, much of this in emergency aid (UN 2004: 1).¹⁹⁸

The level of aid directed to the new government was significant in helping it move ahead with daily governmental operations as well as allowing for longer-term planning for post-genocide Rwanda. Indeed, as the Ministry of Planning indicated these resources were vital for the government to function and were primarily used for three broad categories of activities:

(a) Financial (including Balance-of-Payments) Support, to rapidly deploy funds totalling some US\$ 200 million for macro-economic stabilization and budgetary support : (b) Resettlement of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), to facilitate a rapid and orderly return of refugees and IDPs, preferably to their home communes. (c) Rehabilitation and recovery, *to restore productive capacity and state administrative functions, especially Government's ability to deliver basic social services.* (my emphasis, Ministry of Planning 1997: 3)

International aid used within Rwanda's borders contributed to the improvement of the overall post-conflict context particularly in regard to economic recovery:

The economy subsequently rebounded, growing by 70 percent between 1994-97, and 8.9 percent in 1998, fueled by large inflows of external resources for relief and reconstruction and supported by the stabilization and liberalization of the economy. (Rugumamu and Gbla 2003: 39)

It is highly likely that these levels of growth would not have been realized had it not been for international aid. This is not to say that aid directed to PCR activities was necessarily 'good' or 'positive'; indeed there is a growing base of literature that suggests aid to PCR contexts is contributing to protracted conflicts as Uvin (1998) has pointed out in regard to the pre-genocidal context in Rwanda. Keen (2008) and Duffield (2007) have similarly demonstrated how aid can negatively impact post-conflict contexts. However, the point highlighted here is that given the post-genocidal context in 1994, aid contributed to economic stabilization of the country, especially given that donor funding provided the vast majority of governmental resources.¹⁹⁹

Attempting to illustrate the impact of aid on individuals is a complicated task however. Identifying and tracing clear and concise data on aid within emergency responses is riddled with difficulties particularly when government infrastructure was extremely weak (to almost

¹⁹⁸ UN figures also indicate that UNIFEM, the UN agency whose mandate is to direct funds to women, received \$1.26 million over a ten-year period, whilst UNICEF had an allocation of over \$100 million (UN 2004: 1). Much of the UNICEF funding was directed to reuniting children with their families, but it also assisted families who took in orphans; given that so many households were female headed, women would have partially benefitted from this funding.

¹⁹⁹ Again, this is not to say aid had a *positive* impact necessarily; as Ferguson (1994) has suggested it is critical to examine the effects of aid versus attempting to assess aid as a 'success' or 'failure'. Here, I simply point out that hundreds of millions of dollars flowing into a particular context will have an impact on that context.

non-existent) immediately following the genocide. An evaluation conducted on the emergency response suggested, ‘Even basic data of staff, finances and activities were difficult or impossible to obtain from a number of NGOs’ (RRN June 1996: 25). A USAID report released in 1996 also indicated, ‘Because of varying financial-costing methods employed, there is no consensus on the total value of resources used in response to the Rwanda crisis’ (USAID July 1996: 7). In attempting to trace specific funding levels, I encountered the same challenges.²⁰⁰ Whilst the current government is funded by high levels of aid, government ministries and offices were not clear as to what per cent of their programmes were government versus donor funded.²⁰¹ The intermingling of donor and government funds meant that it was difficult to discern how ministries and government programmes were actually funded, even more so in terms of the PCR period.²⁰²

These challenges make it difficult to quantify and disaggregate between *who* benefitted from aid and *how* they benefitted.²⁰³ Aid was not necessarily benign in the post-conflict period; certainly not everyone would have benefitted equally in the post-genocidal context.²⁰⁴ Inequalities (specifically between Hutus and Tutsis)²⁰⁵ had been embedded in many aspects of the political system before 1994 (Uvin 1998) and given that Rwanda was emerging from a genocide where the one group attempted to eradicate the other, certain Rwandans would have benefitted more from post-conflict aid than others.

Particularly relevant to any attempt at disaggregating data is that feminist arguments indicate that men tend to be the majority recipients of reconstruction aid efforts and this is indeed at the heart of propositions that argue for the inclusion of women into PCR processes.²⁰⁶ Attempting to quantify these arguments is a challenge in terms of PCR Rwanda; the immediate emergency context made it difficult to capture data that would help disaggregate

²⁰⁰ Obtaining detailed programmatic and financial data on gender-specific programmes proved to be almost impossible within Rwanda, even from large institutions that would theoretically be seen to have the institutional capacity, procedures, and records on programmes implemented at the country level. This was exemplified, for example, in email correspondence with one United Nations institution (UNICEF) when I asked if there was anyone still working in the local UNICEF office who had worked directly on gender issues during the PCR period. I received the response, ‘...who are these people...where do we find them...’ (email correspondence with UNICEF representative 22 October 2009). The implication is that UNICEF staff in the UNICEF office in Rwanda lacked either the institutional knowledge or capacity to identify who had worked in the office during such a critical period.

²⁰¹ This came out in numerous interviews with government officials.

²⁰² Donors that provide direct project support, such as USAID for example, are easier to trace however, because they are not contributing to the overall government ‘basket’.

²⁰³ I make this argument in terms of the immediate post-conflict context; contextually the RPF and Tutsis within Rwanda would have most likely benefitted more from aid that was directed to the government, however, again, because the context was changing rapidly, the data to demonstrate this is minimal. Current analysis of data trends within Rwanda (based on DHS data) suggests that there are uneven gains being made by the population but it is difficult to apply this retrospectively to the immediate post-genocidal context.

²⁰⁴ See Keen (2007) and Uvin (1998) for more information.

²⁰⁵ See Chapter Three for more information.

²⁰⁶ See Ní Aoláin et al. for further discussion on this.

between male and female beneficiaries of the emergency aid distributed during the immediate PCR period; the same challenge would apply to other basic indicators on beneficiaries. Issues concerning beneficiary ethnicity would also be particularly pertinent to aid distribution, however quantifying this in terms of the immediate PCR period is difficult.²⁰⁷ An evaluation conducted by the World Food Programme on its emergency operation in Rwanda illustrated some of the data gathering challenges relevant to the post-conflict context:

At the beginning of the emergency operation, the ability to monitor was severely compromised by a lack of security. Most efforts were expended on simply getting food to a delivery point, with very little time to do anything but dump it and depart before the deadline set by the military convoy. The receiving authority, organized through the *Bourgemeistre*'s office, was required to conduct redistribution through Commune Food Committees. These committees comprised members of the local government, women's associations and beneficiary representatives. WFP was however, unable to assess with any degree of sophistication the composition or effectiveness of these committees. (World Food Programme 1999: no page)

Whilst it is clear that the PCR context was not conducive to data gathering²⁰⁸ (in this case regarding food aid), the fact that women's associations were represented within food distribution committees minimally suggests that emergency aid may have taken gender considerations into account in terms of aid distribution.

Within this section, I have illustrated how millions of dollars in aid was targeted directly to Rwanda during the PCR period. Whilst data regarding overall aid funding levels gives little detail regarding the sex of recipients, examining more detailed donor data will help quantify ways in which aid did, in fact, target women directly and issues concerning gender equality more broadly.

Aid Contributed to Gender Issues

International aid was largely directed towards emergency needs during the immediate post-conflict period, but some of this aid was targeted to women. I quantify this further by presenting OECD DAC data that illustrated funding levels of aid directed to women's organizations in the post-conflict period, as well as aid that was explicitly concerned with issues of gender equality.

The argument that funding helped women's organizations has been made by others. Gervais (2003) explicitly argued that international aid during the post-conflict period was targeted to NGOs and supports the notion that NGO aid helped in rebuilding Rwanda (Gervais 2003:

²⁰⁷ I discuss this further in the following sections.

²⁰⁸ Also see Goodfellow and Smith 2013 for further discussion on this.

544). In an examination of women's organizations during the post-conflict period, Newbury and Baldwin (2000) also suggest that international aid was instrumental in helping women's organizations during this time:

A third factor in the re-emergence of women's organizations in Rwanda after 1994 was support from the international community. Rwanda received large quantities of emergency aid after the genocide, and this aid had a major impact, even if it was insufficient to meet all needs. Some bilateral and multilateral donors, influenced by lobbying of Rwandan women's groups and leaders, by the postgenocide government, and by expatriates convinced of the importance of gender, paid special attention to the needs and roles of women. (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2)

Additionally they noted that aid helped encourage women to form women's organizations (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 2).

Responses within interviews I conducted fully supported the propositions made by Newbury and Baldwin (2000) and Gervais (2003); international community support was important in helping to advance a gender policy agenda in the immediate post-conflict phase. A representative of the NGO Duterimbere,²⁰⁹ for example, indicated that after the genocide many donors contributed to gender issues (interview, 11 February 2009).²¹⁰

Evidence supports these propositions and demonstrates that international aid was directed to activities that focused on women. A 1997 report by the Women's Commission, for example, suggested that the United Nations and other donors gave approximately \$60 million to women's and children's programmes over a two year period (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 2). Additional donor reports, such as by USAID for example, also indicated large surges in funding directed at women's activities in the immediate post-conflict years (from 1995-1997) (Baldwin and Newbury 1999).

OECD data analysis allows for a more detailed examination of funding directed to women's initiatives; this database provides substantial information on international aid and it proved a valuable source of data for this particular examination (especially given the challenges in obtaining data at the country level). This data analysis illustrated that international aid was not only directed to women's organizations but aid was also more generally targeting 'women's empowerment'. I examine each of these in turn.

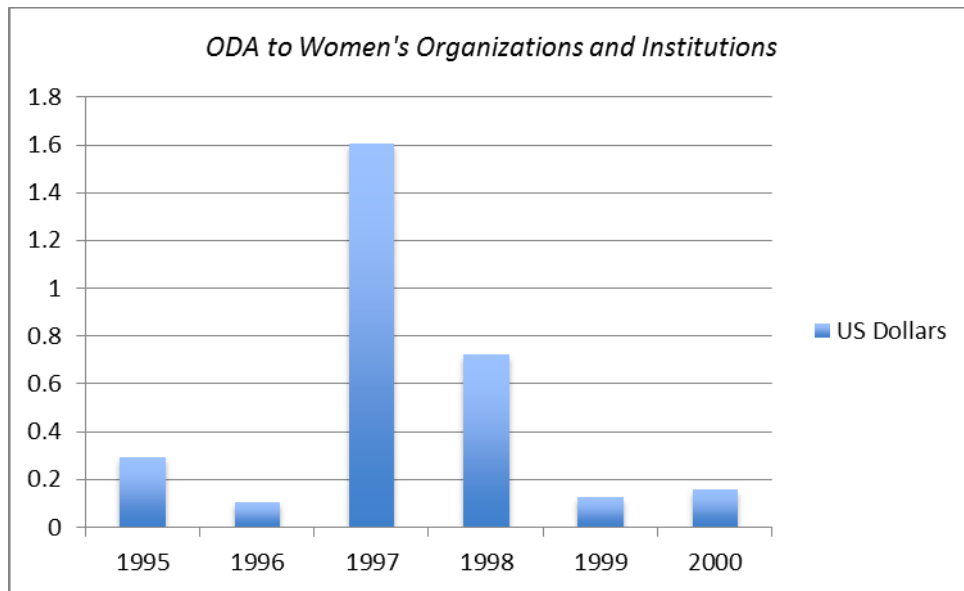
The data suggests that aid was directed to women's initiatives during the PCR period. Using a specific OECD DAC indicator, 'Women's Equality Organizations and Institutes', helps to

²⁰⁹ This NGO was discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

²¹⁰ This interviewee subsequently indicated that because donors now contribute directly to the government, funding primarily comes in the form of government projects (interview, 11 February 2009).

capture bilateral funding flows that were explicitly targeted to women. The dollar amount directed to women’s organizations from bilateral donors rose from approximately \$100,000 in 1996²¹¹ to approximately \$1.6 million in 1997 representing a meaningful surge in the commitment to women’s issues by the international community.²¹² Organizations, such as Duterimbere, would have been recipients of this type of funding. The table below depicts funding amounts directed to women’s organizations during the post-conflict period.

Figure 2: Total ODA (in millions) to Women’s Organizations and Institutions in Rwanda



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (2014)

Whilst this one category in particular does not represent all funding that would have been directed to women's issues, it does help illustrate one way that aid targeted women's issues. Even whilst overall ODA to Rwanda was decreasing in 1997, funding to women’s organizations was increasing.²¹³ This helps support the idea (suggested by Newbury and Baldwin (2000), for example) that funding did help women’s organizations and I would argue that at policy level, this funding contributed to the implementation of a broader post-conflict gender policy agenda. Whilst the overall amounts are not necessarily large, especially when compared to the overall aid levels presented earlier, the funding levels do illustrate that funding was directly targeted to initiatives concerning women.

²¹¹ The fluctuations between 1995 and 1996 are most likely due to the transition out of the emergency phase and into a longer-term developmental phase as well as monetary discrepancies between when donor aid was pledged versus realized.

²¹² This increase can partly be attributed to commitments made following the Beijing Conference, which I explore later in this chapter.

²¹³ This also further verifies interview responses which suggested that international funding was being directed to women’s issues during the post-conflict period.

Examining funding beyond that which was solely directed to women's organizations also demonstrates that there were additional components to aid that were attempting to target gender issues during the post-conflict period. I was able to quantify this further by analysing OECD DAC data on donor programmes that had *gender equality* as a central component. Captured within this analysis are projects or programmes²¹⁴ that donors have identified as having a goal of gender equality (O'Neill 2012: 2):

To qualify as "gender equality focused" the activity has to explicitly promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The gender equality focus can be classified as: a **principal** objective, a **significant** objective or **not targeted**. (Author's emphasis, O'Neill 2012: 2)

These classifications are further defined as:

Principal (primary) policy objectives are those which be identified as being fundamental in the design and impact of the activity and which are an explicit objective of the activity. They may be selected by answering the question "would the activity have been undertaken without this objective?"

Significant (secondary) policy objectives are those which, although important, are not one of the principal reasons for undertaking the activity. (Author's emphasis, O'Neill 2012: 3)

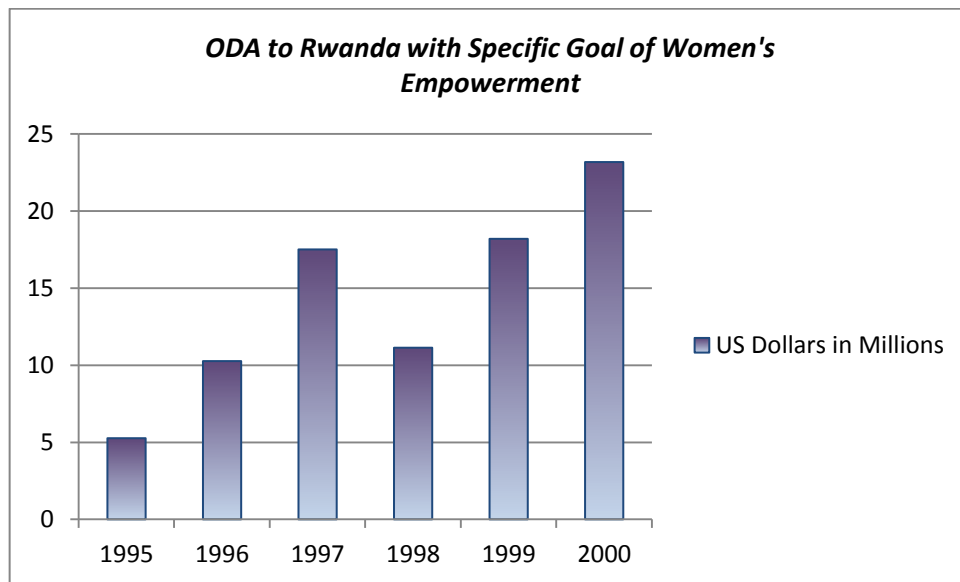
This level of reporting is particularly helpful in terms of capturing the larger sphere of funding that had a direct gender equality object. This analysis illustrates that tens of millions of dollars in aid were directed to initiatives concerned with women's empowerment, a much more significant figure than that which solely pertained to funding directed to women's organizations. Within this analysis, a wide array of sector level activities is captured, including housing, health, education, and civil society generally,²¹⁵ but within the confines of each initiative, women's empowerment was explicitly a *principal* or *significant* goal.

The following chart illustrates total levels of ODA funding that contained an explicit gender equality objective (this includes funding directed to women's organizations):

²¹⁴ Also see OECD DAC October 2012 for further information on coding.

²¹⁵ OECD DAC 2014.

Figure 3: ODA to Rwanda with Specific Goal of Women's Empowerment



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (2014)

In the three years following the genocide, more than \$33 million was targeted at activities that had gender equality as a key goal. Belgium and the Netherlands were the key donors behind the earliest initiatives (in 1995) to fund activities with an explicit gender equality goal.²¹⁶ Beginning in 1996 the pool of donors concerned with gender issues in Rwanda increased; whilst Belgium and the Netherlands continued to support gender-related activities, donors such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany also began targeting funds to gender-related activities.

The levels of funding depicted here suggest that international aid was playing a direct role in contributing to the overall PCR gender policy focus.

Whilst the OECD DAC data reflects specific project-level initiatives (within Rwanda) that were concerned with issues of gender equality, there were also two large international initiatives in place during the post-conflict period specifically targeted to women's issues. These initiatives were the Women in Transition (WIT) programme run by USAID²¹⁷ and the Rwanda Women's Initiative (RWI) administered by UNHCR. USAID's WIT programme was funded for \$5.2 million over a period of five years whilst UNHCR's RWI programme was funded for approximately three years with a total of \$4.2 million (Women's

²¹⁶ OECD DAC 2014 (my analysis).

²¹⁷ This programme was run out of USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Response (BHR), Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2000: 13).

Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2000: 14-15). Activities supported by this funding included credit programmes for women's associations (which provided opportunities to purchase goats or pigs for example), house building, and increasing women's political participation (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2000: 14-15).

Aid Directed to Women Largely went to 'Rebuilding'

In returning to the earlier chapter on the impact that grassroots women's organizations had on post-conflict reconstruction and laying the foundations for a larger gender policy focus, it was clear that women's grassroots organizations were a vital component in Rwanda's reconstruction phase; a fact largely glossed over in contemporary analysis of Rwanda. International funding was vital to ensuring these initiatives were funded and implemented. However, in dissecting how this funding was allocated, it seems that the funding contributed to helping individuals as well as helping to rebuild a nation.

In a discussion on the impact of women in post-conflict Rwanda, Gervais (2003) suggests:

In the aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan war and genocide, aid programmes were concentrated on reconciliation activities, rehabilitation of the legal system, and economic and social recovery. Over and above the funding from international financial institutions and bilateral organisations, external aid was offered mainly by UN agencies (WFP, UNHCR, and UNICEF) and by foreign NGOs that seek to involve beneficiary populations directly. These interventions sought to counter the consequences of war and genocide by providing help to displaced people, food aid, *reconstruction of infrastructure, services for genocide orphans*, institutional support to local NGOs, and reconciliation projects. (My emphasis Gervais 2003: 543)

Gervais further suggests that the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) collaborated with Canadian NGOs and local people in Rwanda to rebuild houses and notes that, '[w]idowed heads of households made up 35 percent of beneficiaries...' (Gervais 2003: 546) continuing:

Before this, house building was the domain of men, who alone held title to the property. By giving priority to the most vulnerable and by making this a condition for funding, NGO projects promoted the taking into account of women's needs in housing programmes. In many cases, women signed individual contracts recognised by communal authorities. (Gervais 2003: 546)

Gervais highlights the linkages between aid, women's issues, and the physical rebuilding of Rwanda.

The \$60 million (mentioned earlier) that the UN and donors were directing to women's programmes were, '...helping widows *build shelters* and separated children find their families' (my emphasis, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 2).

The report further indicates that because of the majority female population women were responsible for many 'community building activities' (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 3). This links back to the earlier chapter suggesting that grassroots efforts played a key role in both ensuring a larger gender policy focus and also the rebuilding of the nation. Critically, of course, whilst shelter was an absolute necessity for women, here we can see a convergence between post-conflict reconstruction and a gender policy agenda.

The USAID WIT initiative was another funding body that directed substantial resources to women's issues during the post conflict period. According to one report, almost 300 projects received grants and the project allocation included shelter (the largest budget allocation), income generation activities, and livestock (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 11). Of particular interest in light of the earlier findings presented demonstrating that grassroots efforts played a key role in rebuilding Rwanda, is the fact that the majority of funding through this initiative was allocated to housing. The report indicated that if groups of women in associations,²¹⁸ '...decided they want to do a shelter project WIT provides the materials and the women *are expected to build the houses*' (my emphasis, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 11). Whilst the international community was funding the physical rebuilding of destroyed infrastructure, women were required to undertake the physical labour.²¹⁹

In an analysis of the USAID/WIT Initiative, Baldwin and Newbury (1999) described how funds were directed to shelter:

WIT has provided funding for shelter, particularly for the vulnerable, that includes women-headed households, the elderly and handicapped. WIT provided tin roofing, wood framing, doors and windows, adobe and assistance with labor, but no cement, kitchens or latrines. Shelter projects consumed 42% of total funds, but represents only 5% of WIT projects. Seventy-one women's associations with 11,568 beneficiaries have received housing grants, resulting in 100% occupancy rates for completed houses. (Baldwin and Newbury 1999: 10)

There are additional indications that women were working to rebuild communities. The World Food Programme (WFP) was a key player in terms of providing emergency food within Rwanda. In the PCR period, a food-for-work component was integrated into their programming and women played a role in this:

²¹⁸ Interestingly, USAID would only grant funds to associations with a minimum of seven people (Women's Commission 1997: 11). As indicated in earlier chapters, there was a proliferation of women's groups following the genocide; part of the rationale behind the creation of many of these groups may have been linked to international funding structures that directed aid via these types of associations.

²¹⁹ Donors also directed funds to women who were looking after orphaned children and this often fell under the mandate of initiatives that were targeting women.

Apart from fulfilling the basic mandate of WFP in providing food to nearly 941,000 needy people, these food-for-work projects had a noticeable impact on the rehabilitation of different sectors of Rwandan society, by supporting over 9 million person-days of community-based work. Women, who have been participating in half of all schemes, represent a third of the overall labour force engaged in community-based activities. (UN General Assembly A/51/353 1996: 11)

This suggests that women were working on reconstruction efforts. Further to this, in 1998, a funding crisis meant that funds directed to RWI initiatives were cut substantially and women had to fill the gap:

Women's associations that anticipated RWI funding had to streamline activities and run on a bare minimum. As a result women worked longer hours voluntarily in order to make activities work. (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 2001: 39)

There is also an indication that women were 60 per cent of the labour force during the post-conflict period (UNDP CCA 1999-2000: 7). Taken together, this seems to suggest that women were a vital force for reconstruction activity.

RPF Relations with International Players

International aid directed to women's organizations contributed to helping individual women rebuild their lives and it also culminated in the physical rebuilding of Rwanda. MIGEFASO was a direct recipient of international aid during the PCR period,²²⁰ receiving over \$1.5 million from the Canadian development agency, CIDA, in 1995 for education-related activities (OECD DAC 2014). DFID was another bilateral donor who targeted funds to MIGEFASO beginning in the post-conflict period (Watkins 2004: 16);²²¹ this included funding activities for gender mainstreaming initiatives (OECD DAC 2014).²²² The provision of resources to this ministry was instrumental to funding daily operations. MIGEFASO was much more than a token ministry, a fact possibly unique to Rwanda given that most gender ministries globally have very limited real power. Of particular importance to policy implementation, MIGEFASO was a key player in retaining responsibility for determining how resources were channelled to women within Rwanda.²²³

The Women's Commission posited that MIGEFASO's power primarily rested upon two key factors: firstly, the Minister, Aloise Inyumba, was an important leader in the RPF and secondly, because of '...the availability of funds from UN and bilaterals for this ministry. Eighty per cent of MIGEFASO's budget is from international donors' (Women's

²²⁰ A large number of funds directed to MIGEFASO were targeted at efforts to reunite unaccompanied children with their families (Williamson 1997).

²²¹ See Beswick 2011 for further discussion on how DFID has directed aid to Rwanda.

²²² In 1997 DFID had directed approximately \$2.7 million to gender mainstreaming programmes in Rwanda (OECD DAC 2014).

²²³ This is still the case: see Baines 2005 for further information.

Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 10). Given the high percentage of international funding to MIGEFASO, it is likely that had this funding not been available, funding for the gender ministry would have been much more limited if solely coming from internal resources (especially in light of data presented earlier). This is not to say that funding would not have been directed towards initiatives that were concerned with gender equality, however, the ministry itself may have been a weaker institution without international funding providing the necessary resources.

During the post-conflict period, the RPF began to place a greater emphasis on centralizing international aid and activity and required that government ministries approve aid projects before they could be implemented. This meant that donors had to work with MIGEFASO to receive approval for all initiatives that were targeted to women; it also meant that MIGEFASO had a fair amount of power over international aid allocations. As the Women's Commission noted in a report assessing progress of UNHCR initiatives:

One of the reasons for the slow start of the program is that UNHCR has *ceded control of the funds* to the Rwandan Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Affairs. This ministry has been unable to review and approve proposals in a timely manner. (My emphasis, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children 1997: 12)

Given the post-conflict context and the dearth of human resource capacity within the country due to the death or absence of former civil service members, it should perhaps be no surprise that MIGEFASO was not expedient in approving donor or NGO proposals. However, what is particularly interesting in terms of the passage quoted above is that donors were willing to cede control over funding to a fairly new government. This is integral to the overall context in which the gender policy priority can be assessed and is a point to which I will return later. Numerous other programme evaluations also demonstrated that MIEGEFASO played a role in programme implementation (IFAD 1998, Williamson 1997, Doná 2001, and Baldwin and Newbury 1999).²²⁴

As indicated in the previous section, issues concerning who benefited from aid are indeed critical to PCR policy analysis. The RPF (via MIEGEFASO) control over aid meant they were able to determine who benefited from this aid. The new RPF-led government was largely comprised of Tutsis who had been in exile and this historical context shaped policy decisions by the government (Longman 2011). Even though the government has currently implemented a very strong agenda aimed at eradicating ethnic differences (everyone is *Rwandan*) and overt discussion of ethnicity could potentially fall under laws banning *divisionism* within Rwanda (Zorbas 2004), this does not mean that ethnicity does not play a

²²⁴ This dynamic applies to the PCR period; however, in subsequent years donors may have been more directive in terms of how funding was allocated (UNIFEM 2002: 3 – briefing paper).

role in shaping the policy context in practice and this would be especially true within the PCR period.

Again, quantifying how this works in terms of aid allocation within the immediate PCR period was a challenge. More recent analysis of these dynamics helps provide some indication as to which issues would have been pertinent in 1994. It has been suggested that the current policy of ‘one Rwanda’ simply hides (and prevents analysis of) ethnic dynamics within Rwanda (Thomson 2012). These dynamics would have had an impact on decision-making processes for allocating aid. Baines (2005) has examined ways donor funds have been distributed via the gender ministry and suggested that disbursement was biased:²²⁵

...the Unity Club, formed by the wives of cabinet members in Kigali in 1996, has enjoyed greater access to resources from MIGEPROFE, a government branch largely composed of “old caseload returnees,” than do rural women’s associations (composed of survivors and “new caseload returnees”). (Baines 2005: 231)

Baines further indicates that the RWI, a central initiative for women’s issues discussed earlier, may have been directed to organizations based implicitly on ethnicity: ‘Several organizations in RWI complained about the opaqueness of funding decisions made by MIGEPROFE, and their desire to find new funding sources outside of the government to pursue “alternative methodologies” to that government’ (Baines 2005: 231).

A government official interviewed suggested that the international community, ‘was useful in [the] beginning, but now they have left it to the government’ (interview, 5 November 2009).²²⁶ Because the international community has less direct control over how funds are allocated (as discussed earlier), the government has more power to implement its own agenda.

It is evident that, like all reconstruction efforts in Rwanda at the time, efforts targeted to women were also mired in complexity. This does not, however, undermine the point demonstrated thus far within this chapter, that aid directed to Rwanda (both generally and to women’s issues) contributed to a sustained focus on gender issues with post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Tens of millions of dollars were directed to initiatives that had gender equality as a key objective. This supports the positions of respondents interviewed (as well as work done by Newbury and Baldwin 2000 and Baines 2005) that suggested that international aid was a key component of the gender policy focus. Interestingly, and indicative of larger trends within post-conflict literature, most PCR evaluations of Rwanda

²²⁵ The name of the ministry had changed so Baines (2005) is using the name at the time of publication which was the Ministry for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (MIGEPROFE).

²²⁶ This statement alluded to the fact that donors now often give basket level funding, funding that goes directly to the government to programme, rather than to local agencies.

rarely recognized the relationship between aid, women's organizations, and the actual reconstruction of Rwanda.

The fact that aid contributed to the PCR gender policy focus underlines propositions made by Uvin (1998) and Ferguson (1994) that the *effects* of aid must be examined in order to truly understand its impact; for the purposes here, this means that aid directed to gender equality initiatives helped ensure that gender policies stayed on the PCR agenda. It also leaves the door open to a larger examination into what impact this had in a larger sense; this will be examined further in the following chapter and in the conclusion. I now turn to the other international component that was integral to Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.

The Beijing Conference on Women: A Largely Invisible Factor

Post-conflict literature rarely examines the role of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China (referred to going forward as the *Beijing Conference*). Whilst there was significant feminist debate²²⁷ surrounding the themes and the language it utilized, the conference was recognized for injecting momentum into the movement for the advancement of women's issues. Interestingly, this conference occurred in the midst of Rwanda's post-conflict phase yet very little attention is given to it in Rwanda's post-conflict literature. A key finding emerging from my primary research was that the Beijing Conference on Women was instrumental in laying the foundation for Rwanda's gender policy priority. This conference occurred in September 1995 and was a key moment in the shaping of Rwanda's gender policies.

Interestingly even literature that explicitly engages with women in post-conflict Rwanda does not make connections between the Beijing Conference on Women and Rwanda's emerging gender policy priority. Baldwin and Newbury, for example, in a 1999 USAID Women in Transition Initiative in Rwanda²²⁸ did not mention it (Baldwin and Newbury 1999). Whilst this was a USAID initiative, and so the nod to that particular conference may have been outside the scope of the evaluation, it was nonetheless an interesting omission given implementation of the programme followed the Beijing Conference and the commitment to the Platform for Action at national level in Rwanda. A subsequent working paper written by Newbury and Baldwin also overlooks the role of the Beijing Conference in

²²⁷ See, for example, Baden and Goetz 1997.

²²⁸ This was a key programme targeting women in the post-conflict period.

helping to shape Rwanda's gender policy agenda with the exception of one footnote (Newbury and Baldwin 2000: 15).

Policy documents emerging from Rwanda suggest that the Beijing Conference was a critical factor in the post-conflict gender policy focus. Rwanda's National Gender Policy demonstrates that the Platform for Action was instrumental as a foundational policy for the national gender policy (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion 2010: 10). As indicated in the previous chapter, whilst political will and Kagame are set forth within the National Gender Policy as key drivers behind change in Rwanda, the Beijing Conference was also highlighted as a critical factor that drove changes in terms of gender policies. This indicates that the Rwandan Government explicitly recognizes the Beijing Conference as an important event in Rwanda's post-conflict context, and further, an event that led to substantial change in Rwanda. It is all the more surprising, then, that the Beijing Conference rarely emerges in literature concerning PCR analysis. Given the developmental trajectory that Rwanda has followed (Hayman 2009 and 2011, and Zorbas 2011), it could perhaps be argued that the government is appeasing donors by crediting the Beijing Conference for advancing the gender policy focus in Rwanda.²²⁹ However, before delving into this issue, I first establish ways in which the Beijing Conference was a factor within the PCR gender policy focus.

In a meeting of the *Expert Group Meeting on Democratic Governance in Africa* Mutamba further illustrated the importance of the Beijing Conference:

...Rwandese women vigorously participated in the fourth International Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. The establishment of the Beijing Plan of Action and the Beijing Permanent Secretariat were strategic outcomes of this conference. *This generated momentum* for women's empowerment and progress towards gender equality. *This was a turning point for women in Rwanda* at a critical moment which marked the beginning of partnership among women and between government and civil society. They were empowered by being connected to the global commitment to gender equality. (my emphasis, Mutamba 2005: 13)

Within this particular report, the connection between the Beijing Conference and the post-conflict gender policy agenda is made explicit. It is interesting that the conference was said to be a driving factor behind gender equality as indicated by phrases such as 'generated momentum' and 'turning point' because again, these factors are often ignored within the larger body of literature on PCR in Rwanda. The idea that the conference also strengthened the linkages between grassroots action and government is important and further suggests that the platform provided a concrete mechanism for grassroots action and the government to come together on gender policy issues.

²²⁹ Whilst this could be the case, for the direct purposes of this section, I would argue that the evidence suggests that regardless of *why* the government may specify this as a critical driver of gender policy agenda, it *was* a critical factor (and one that has largely been ignored within analysis on gender policy issues in Rwanda).

The sentiments expressed here, that the Beijing Conference was a key driver of the post-conflict gender policy agenda, were also expressed in the research interviews. The importance of the Beijing Conference was mentioned by a number of interviewees in Rwanda who had been working on women's issues and they indicated that the conference had a significant influence on the PCR gender policy focus; these were interviewees who primarily worked for the government or NGOs. A female parliamentarian noted that the Beijing Conference encouraged international attention to focus on the plight of Rwandans and the implications of the genocide. She further noted that many women had mobilized to create organizations and that a lot had been achieved in Rwanda because of the conference (interview, 8 October 2009). One NGO representative also suggested that the Beijing Conference helped [Rwandan] women to create better networks and learn more about being active in politics, especially as members of parliament (interview, 7 February 2009). Encapsulating some of the overall sentiments concerning the conference, a representative from the World Bank indicated that the Beijing Conference was the: '...beginning step for women to heal from war. Woman can improve herself [which is a] good thing. *That time was so early*, but really helped people to open and see they can better themselves' (my emphasis, interview, 15 October 2009).²³⁰

Additionally, the conference was described by a local regional consultant who worked on women's issues as 'a victory' for women that allowed for a larger focus on gender (interview, 25 February 2009).

Aside from increasing awareness of gender issues, the Beijing Conference also had a very concrete outcome in terms of Rwanda's policies; the conference and Platform for Action provided an actionable policy road map. A representative from Profemmes, an umbrella organization for NGOs that focus on gender issues, noted that the Beijing Conference, '...stimulated Rwandan women's empowerment' and that the Platform for Action was integrated into the organizational action plan (interview, 9 October 2009). Another NGO representative similarly suggested that the Beijing Conference was instrumental in providing an action plan for Rwanda and he indicated that this plan (the Platform for Action) was implemented by the government (interview, 26 October 2009).

²³⁰ I have highlighted this because the interviewee was referring to how soon after the genocide this conference was held. I have argued elsewhere that many of the PCR gender policy initiatives may not have been largely visible within the PCR period due to the complexities of a nation emerging from a genocide; this particular quote is suggesting this.

The notion that the Beijing Conference provided an impetus for government action on gender issues was also highlighted by another interviewee who noted that the Beijing Conference was helping to reinforce the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)²³¹ and that these international instruments provided a basis for the government ‘...to put in place best practices...’ that emerged from these instruments (interview, 12 October 2009). A government representative working on the Commission for Reconciliation claimed that the Beijing Conference was ‘very important’ and specifically that ten points which emerged from the Platform for Action were being implemented in Rwanda. She also suggested that the Platform provided an overall guidance tool for Rwanda in order to evaluate progress (interview, 21 October 2009). Another government official echoed these sentiments and indicated that Beijing was important – for example, the quota for female politicians – and that ‘...we didn’t have to think about it, just had to apply [it] here...[we] borrowed the strategies’ (interview, 5 November 2009).

National policy documents help verify the fact that the Beijing Conference played an instrumental role in shaping Rwanda’s national policies. The Beijing Platform for Action contained twelve key focus areas and Rwanda integrated nine out of the twelve areas into its national policy (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion National Gender Policy: 10). The Gender Monitoring Office specifically indicates that the nine of the twelve critical areas that Rwanda focused on following the Beijing Conference are:

1. Equal share of power and responsibilities;
2. The fight against poverty;
3. Improvement of access for women to social services (education, health, management of the environment);
4. Promotion of peace and the fight against violence against women;
5. Improvement of the judicial status of women;
6. Promotion of women in the media;
7. Support to women in particular situations;
8. Strengthening of mechanisms for the promotion of women;
9. Promotion, protection, and development of the female child. (Gender Monitoring Office 2011: 35)

The following table illustrates the twelve critical areas from the Beijing Platform and shows the areas that are explicitly reported on in Rwanda’s National Gender Policy.

²³¹ See UN Women 2014 for further information.

Table 4: Comparison of Beijing Platform for Action Policy Themes and Rwanda's National Gender Policy Themes

Beijing Platform for Action (as listed in the Platform for Action)	Rwanda's Nation Gender Policy
The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women	√
Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to education and training	√
Inequalities and inadequacies in and unequal access to health care and related services	√
Violence against women	√
The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation	
Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources	√
Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels	√
Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women	√
Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women	(human rights is integrated into the national policy though it does not serve as a stand-alone category)
Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all communication systems, especially in the media	
Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment	
Persistent discrimination against and violation of the rights of the girl child	

Whilst there is a slight difference in wording of the critical areas between Rwanda's policies and the Beijing Platform for Action, the above nonetheless suggests that the Beijing Conference played an instrumental role in shaping Rwanda's post-conflict gender policy focus, not as a factor in and of itself, but combined with the other factors examined within this research.

Though the Beijing Conference surfaced as an important component of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus, my research also uncovered that those who were very familiar with gender issues in the immediate post-conflict period, (i.e., people who were actively involved in women's organizations at that time), had a greater tendency to highlight the role of the Conference whilst those who did not have first-hand insight, did not mention it. Perhaps it is not surprising, however, that people who were very aware of gender policy issues during the immediate post-conflict period were much more likely to highlight the significant impact of the Beijing Conference in influencing Rwanda's policy. For example, a World Bank representative indicated that whilst some of the overall gender policy initiatives may have been initiated within the international community, the government has implemented these initiatives in 'a very practical, not political way' and the respondent further indicated that the President put gender equality measures in the constitution (interview, 26 February 2009).

At the very local level, the Beijing Conference did not resonate with community members as a critical component of Rwanda's gender policy focus. Whilst community members I spoke with were very animated when it came to discussing gender issues, people had rarely heard of the Beijing Conference on Women or the Platform for Action. Given the post-conflict complexities that people were dealing with, it is understandable that people had not heard of this conference or did not know about the policy impact it had on Rwanda's gender policies. Yet, community members seemed to be aware that gender was a large policy issue in contemporary Rwanda. This is a central focus of the following chapter.

Putting international aid and activity in context

Within this chapter I have argued that aid and the Beijing Conference on Women contributed to setting the stage for Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus. Funding directly targeted to women's organizations as well as funding that encapsulated a gender equality goal was significant (tens of millions of dollars during the post-conflict years). This is not to say that this aid was benignly and apolitically utilized; scholars including Ferguson (1994), Uvin (1998), Duffield (2007), and Keen (2008) would argue that it is critical to examine the instrumental effects of this aid. This examination will largely be saved for the conclusion; at this point I simply argue that significant funding was directed to PCR activities and this funding was critical to advancing a gender policy agenda in the post-conflict period.

The larger universe of aid targeted to post-conflict Rwanda was indeed vast (in the billions as demonstrated earlier) and feminist development theories (such as those discussed by Kabeer 1994) would suggest that the majority of aid was most likely gender neutral or

gender blind and developmental theorists would further highlight that this aid had clear political effects. I would not argue against either of these propositions; there is a challenge however in terms of disaggregating between the effects of this within the context of a *PCR gender policy agenda* versus the larger developmental trajectory of Rwanda. Before further exploring how this aid worked within a larger PCR context (and post-conflict trajectory more broadly), I (in the following chapter) examine the current status of gender attitudes in Rwanda in order to obtain a better indication of the policy impact of the PCR gender policy focus. This will shed significant light on the *effects* of policy and provide further insight into *why gender policies were a PCR priority*.

To this point I have empirically demonstrated the five key factors which set the stage for a PCR gender policy agenda in Rwanda. These are: 1. a majority female population, 2. grassroots efforts on the part of women, 3. political will, 4. international aid, and 5. the Beijing Conference on Women. I have argued that it was the confluence of these factors that allowed for a gender policy agenda. It is perhaps important to again return to the context – this occurred in a nation where over half a million people were killed, where a rebel army gained control of the government, and where the nation was just about completely devastated socially, economically, and politically.

To fully analytically understand the central research question however, requires some examination of Rwanda's current context in terms of gender policies. This does not mean that I will decontextualize these findings and theoretically apply this analysis *ex-post*; indeed, I have argued that this is a central weakness of contemporary analysis on PCR Rwanda and contributes to the re-imagining of Rwanda that Pottier (2002) has brought to light. However, this type of policy analysis helps arrive at a larger conclusion which places the five components I have examined in context in terms of the *impact* of PCR policies; it also potentially helps to further understand *why* particular factors I have highlighted, specifically political will and international aid, worked the way they did in the PCR period. It is only by reassessing the current context in Rwanda that the PCR gender policy puzzle in its entirety can be better (and more fully) explained. The tension between *political* outcomes and a gender policy *success* story becomes much more evident.

Chapter Seven

Contemporary Gender Issues: Effects of the PCR Gender Policy Focus

As I argued in Chapter Two, there is a central tension (or paradox as Burnet 2008 has suggested) in examining gender issues within Rwanda; the country has largely been viewed as a ‘success’ even though there is increasing evidence that the government is increasingly implementing an authoritarian-style agenda. In this chapter I attempt to examine whether there has been a policy impact in terms of the PCR gender policy focus that was initiated during the post-conflict period. Arguments made by theorists such as Uvin (1998) and Ferguson (1994) have rightly demonstrated that in order to fully assess policy impact, it is necessary to examine *the effects* of those policies. Here, I attempt to do just this. Whilst a number of developmental indicators (such as school enrolment or access to maternity-related health care services) suggest that *women* (broadly speaking) are benefiting in particular ways, here I examine gender attitudes in order to capture the broader societal effects of the PCR gender policy focus. This will help better assess the implications of the PCR gender policy focus and focus explicit attention on the interests actually served by these policies. This will also help answer whether the gender agenda has largely sat at the rhetorical policy level or if it has been meaningfully implemented.

As indicated earlier, significant discussion exists regarding the gender policy advances that Rwanda has made and indeed numerous policy statements, laws advancing women’s rights and increases in female political representation have supported this notion. However, measuring policy impact at the level of gender attitudes (or at least stated attitudes) helps quantify policy reach of the government as well as capture whether PCR gender policies have had an impact on a micro-level (or individual level). In turn, this helps grant more insight into whether the PCR gender policy focus has gone beyond the *lip service* stage, where many PCR gender policy agendas have remained.²³²

There are two main findings that emerge from this examination: firstly, PCR gender policies that were put in place almost two decades ago have permeated (stated) gender attitudes. This largely speaks to policy penetration by the government. Secondly, international policies (specifically the Beijing Platform for Action) have seemingly permeated gender attitudes via national policy mechanisms, though what has permeated is largely connected to the actual policy rhetoric as opposed to the overall policy intent behind the Beijing Platform. This means that some noticeable gains for women in Rwanda have been realized due to the

²³² This was discussed further in the introduction.

PCR gender policy focus, though the impact on gender attitudes beyond codified policy statements is more tenuous.

Gender Attitudes Survey – Overview

Much of the current analysis of Rwanda's gender policy focus has centred on female political representation. The thirty percent allocation for decision-making positions as outlined in the Beijing Platform and Rwanda's Constitution for example, has had a substantial impact on the numbers of women in political positions. Sentiments such as, '...Rwanda has demonstrated noteworthy dedication to empowering its women,' (Polavarapu: 102) demonstrate that the government has received much credit for the gender policy focus. Further to this point, a recent investigation conducted by British newspaper, *Independent on Sunday*, argued that gender policy gains in Rwanda have clearly contributed to a developmental story that illustrates positive achievements for the government. In an analysis conducted in the run-up to International Women's Day, the Independent found that Rwanda was the best location to be a female politician:

Rwanda is the only nation in which females make up the majority of parliamentarians. Women hold 45 out of 80 seats. The UK comes in at 45th place, behind Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates. The worst countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, Oman and Belize, have no women in parliament. (Morrison 4 March 2012)

However, the misconception that large numbers of women is all that is needed to create a positive context for women is often replicated in analysis of Rwanda.

Concepts of 'inclusion', 'participation', or 'representation' (Castillejo 2011: 2-3, Seckinelgin and Klot 2013) often dominate gender agendas as they pertain to post-conflict reconstruction efforts. As part of this, contemporary praise for Rwanda's focus on gender issues often goes hand in hand with the statistic citing the number of women in parliament. This, however, is too simplistic a notion of gender equality; indeed Seckinelgin and Klot (2013) argued that much of the focus on gender policies within conflict-affected areas is in regard to demonstrating the 'importance' versus the 'achievement' of *gender equality* (Seckinelgin and Klot 2013: 38). Examining whether gender equality has been *achieved* beyond the level of representation or inclusion was critical in order to help contextualize whether the gender policy agenda has been implemented in a meaningful way in Rwanda.

Whilst people such as Duffield (2007) and Uvin (1998) explicitly locate the role of the international community within larger PCR processes and help to broaden the field of inquiry into PCR Rwanda, little empirical evidence explicitly speaks to direct PCR policy influences on either the micro or macro levels. Though Burnet (2008) and Baldwin and

Newbury (1999) highlight the role of the international community and aid in promoting particular gender issues in Rwanda, the Beijing Conference did not arise as a critical factor in setting the stage for gender issues within PCR Rwanda. In contrast however, local level analysis conducted by Mutamba (2005) as well as national level documents, such as the National Gender Policy, highlighted the Beijing Platform as a key policy influence as indicated in the previous chapter. This international policy document not only provided a guide for Rwanda's National Gender Policy, but it largely provided the policy language that was to be implemented at the national level.

Ferguson (1994) has argued that the language of international aid plays a particular role in development processes; not only does language permeate local contexts but it can also contribute to a depoliticization of aid within a given context, which in turn contributes to ways in which local political dynamics work.²³³ To help gain insight into whether the gender policy agenda has permeated individual attitudes and to examine whether gender policies can have traction within PCR contexts, I created a survey that focused on a comparison between gender issues which are incorporated into the National Gender Policy (and have their roots in the Beijing Platform for Action) and gender issues that do not explicitly appear in the Beijing Platform or the National Policy.

The gender attitudes survey I developed thus attempts to capture information on some of these larger dynamics. The survey helped reveal descriptive statistics that suggest there has been a policy impact that extends beyond issues of representation in Rwanda. The findings help demonstrate policy reach but they do not speak to issues concerning causality. Attempts to quantify or prove one particular causal mechanism within complex social processes are often critiqued for their lack of nuance.²³⁴ Given these types of critiques, it is important to emphasize that the survey is not intended to prove *causality* or disaggregate results from the contextual factors in which they exist. The survey results speak to the longer-term tractability²³⁵ of gender issues within PCR and women's development initiatives that are debated within feminist literature.

The survey was implemented in five market places throughout urban and rural areas of Kigali; a redistricting exercise conducted in 2006 (National Unity and Reconciliation Commission 2008) resulted in the boundary of the city being expanded and rural areas were

²³³ See Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion on Ferguson's arguments (Ferguson 1994).

²³⁴ Schimmel (2008) and Backer (2008) for example took issue with Scott Straus' (2006) quantitative work in *The Order of Genocide* and Straus' attempts to prove why so many people engaged in genocidal killing. Fischer (2003) also largely critiques the focus within social science (and more specifically, policy analysis) to reduce social complexity to quantifiable variables.

²³⁵ See Cornwall et al. 2004 for a larger discussion on the intractability of gender issues within development.

incorporated into Kigali, thus allowing the urban/rural comparisons. As discussed in the introduction, surveys are a useful tool for capturing a large sample of people. Whilst there are, of course, limitations to surveys, I used them in order to obtain an overall sense of where gender attitudes currently stood within this area. I chose to focus on Kigali because this is largely the site of national policy implementation bodies and theoretically, would be a site where gender policies would most resonate.²³⁶

I identified three volunteer research assistants for this phase of the research. They were all university students who wanted to learn more about gender issues and they spoke both English and the local language of Kinyarwanda; of course, given ways in which ethnicity provides a backdrop for many aspects of life in Rwanda, the fact that the researchers came from a similar background could have been problematic and there could have been potential issues in terms of respondents' willingness to answer questions or concerns that we were working for the government. Given that there are extremely high levels of mistrust in Rwanda (as captured by the World Values Survey 2009), this was a concern. However, in both my research and professional experience, I had observed that people were quite animated about gender issues. Within Rwanda it seemed that gender issues were not viewed to be overtly *political* and people seemed to discuss these issues more in terms of male/female relations than governmental policy.

As addressed in earlier chapters however, there were indeed limitations regarding what could be included in the survey. I was not able, for example, to ask questions regarding ethnicity; even an indicator querying whether someone had been a 'survivor' of the genocide was rejected on the basis that it would make respondents feel very uncomfortable. In discussions with researchers, I was also advised to remove a question on abortion because, it was explained, abortion was illegal in Rwanda and this question could potentially be seen by respondents as a trick question that could get them into trouble with governmental officials. Given these sensitivities as well as sensitivities that emerged earlier in the fieldwork, I was very careful not to include background indicators or questions that would increase levels of suspicion of respondents.

I had to go through an arduous permission process and this had an impact on whether I was able to implement the survey in particular market places. The permission process required that I receive authorization at the national level, through the Ministry of Gender and Family

²³⁶ Given that I was hoping to capture governmental policy reach as well as policy effects, choosing a site close to policy-making mechanisms was important as this would maximize the opportunity to capture ways policies may have permeated individual attitudes.

Promotion, at the district level, and at the market place. This process took weeks with multiple trips being made to follow-up with individuals at every level before I was able to receive the proper authorizations and begin implementation. Interestingly, this type of survey would most likely not be approved in Rwanda now; new laws have been put into effect that tightened the rules on survey implementation (Republic of Rwanda 2011). One of the stipulations, for example, is that the government would have to approve anything that was written on survey findings, which is not a condition a PhD researcher would be able to agree to.

The survey was created based on interview and focus group findings and field-tested prior to implementation. Methodological challenges regarding selection bias and generalizability are often inherent to any survey design as well as analysis. Issues of selection bias were tricky to address within this type of survey implementation; as indicated earlier, I deemed the survey strategy to be useful in terms of obtaining a general sense of gender attitudes within Kigali but, of course, there are limitations and challenges in terms of implementation.

Whilst the market places were selected based on geographic location to capture urban and rural respondents I could only implement surveys in those locations where I received the full set of authorizations. The initial strategy for identifying respondents was to interview sellers and market goers based on identifying every other market stall. In practice this was not feasible due to the realities of the context; issues of crowding, for example, meant researchers were not always able to capture every other person. The researchers conducted the surveys whilst I closely monitored and I conducted daily checks on the survey responses to ensure quality control. As it was important to obtain responses from both men and women, I monitored the sample and adjusted accordingly. In total 225 questionnaires were fully administered; approximately half the sample was female, half male and half urban, half rural. I consistently monitored the sample distribution based on sex, age, and geographic location and advised researchers on a daily basis as to what cohort needed to be interviewed.

A key point noted earlier demonstrated that, because political space is tightening within Rwanda (Straus and Waldorf 2011, Beswick 2010, Purdeková 2011), respondents may have attempted to answer questions in ways they perceived as being aligned with government policies. Though I use the word, 'response' throughout the discussion below, it is important to note that I am not necessarily suggesting that responses indicate how a respondent may feel about particular gender issues - especially if they feel that they may be under watch by the government.

The survey was designed based on policy statements included in the National Gender Policy; these statements were largely rooted in the Beijing Platform for Action as Rwanda focused on nine of the twelve key themes that emerged from the Platform. In order to test whether the themes from the Platform resonate in terms of current gender attitudes, I created simple statements that were linked to either the Beijing Platform/National Gender Policy themes or statements that targeted issues which were not explicitly linked to gender policies. I created the non-policy related statements based on findings from interviews as well as group discussions; what seemingly emerged from interviews and group discussions was that gender dynamics within the household may have been less affected by gender policies than dynamics that pertained to the public sphere. For example, discussions suggested that people were open to having female political representatives, but women's autonomy was still restricted in terms of more micro-level issues. This is explored in more depth in the following section.

Within the following sections, I frequently refer to the gender policy themes as Beijing Platform themes and this is because the Beijing Platform served as the foundation for the National Gender Policy. The actual mechanisms for policy implementation rest at the national, not international level; however, because the Beijing Platform was a key policy document utilized within the PCR gender policy focus, referring to these themes as Beijing Platform themes means I am referring to the policy roots within the text below. The full version of the survey can be found in Appendix B; key questions are highlighted below.

Survey Results

The survey findings suggested that gender issues which are addressed explicitly within gender policies are largely resonating within the survey sample. Examining particular policy themes helps shed light on how reported attitudes closely link to policy statements; at times however, agreement with policy-related statements did not necessarily translate into agreement on issues of gender equality that were not targeted by policy statements. Findings suggest that whilst agreement on policy issues tended to be high, people still retained more conservative gender attitudes on issues outside of the gender policy sphere.

There is significant debate regarding how particular gender policy themes are categorized (Baden and Goetz 1997 and Razavi and Miller 1995); here, I use the word *conservative* to represent relations between men and women that are not necessarily reflective of the more *progressive* gender constructs initially conceptualized in 1995 when the Beijing Platform for Action was created. Indeed, many of the gendered constructs embedded in the Platform are

problematic, but, here, I attempt to capture policy reach and impact so this is beyond the scope of this particular analysis.

Issues of *gender equality* are a central feature of gender policies (Beijing Platform for Action 1995 and National Gender Policy 2010). Whilst there is significant discussion within feminist circles regarding what is actually meant by *gender equality*,²³⁷ this is not explicitly defined within policies. The Beijing Platform for Action, for example, integrates the word *equality* into its fundamental objects (as outlined within the mission statement) but does not define what is meant by this. Phrases such as, ‘Determined to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women,’ (Beijing Platform for Action 1995: 2), ‘...common goal of gender equality around the world...’ (ibid: 7) or ‘...issues of women’s empowerment and equality...’ (ibid: 7) are integrated into the Platform though it is unclear how this is specifically conceptualized. Similarly, Rwanda’s National Gender Policy uses the word *equality* without providing deeper discussion as to its meaning. Again, phrases including, ‘...promotion of gender equality and equity...’ (National Gender Policy 2010: 7), or ‘...achieve gender equality objectives...’ (ibid: 10) appear in the policy.

Given the general way that *equality* features prominently within these gender policies, I attempted to capture whether this general notion of *gender equality* has permeated attitudes. I asked questions regarding the private sphere (i.e. the household) in order to capture the linkages between *equality* more generally and micro-level male/female relations. When asked to provide an answer to, ‘Men and women are equals in the household,’ over 60 per cent of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with that statement. This would superficially suggest that the word *equality* is resonating with respondents. However, when presented with, ‘Men are the head of the household,’ over two thirds of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. This seems to indicate that whilst a notion of *equality* (as it was constructed within policies) loosely resonated, it does not necessarily mean that people view men and women as *equals* (as constructed within the Beijing Platform) given that a significant majority of people seem to also believe that men are the head of the household. This suggests that the policy rhetoric has permeated, though gender issues that are not explicitly addressed within policies are not necessarily being affected by gender policies.

Concepts concerning equality were also measured through the use of other gendered statements. For example, when asked if, ‘A woman must get permission from her husband

²³⁷ See Razavi and Miller 1995 and Baden and Goetz 1997.

before going out at night,' an overwhelming majority agreed; approximately two thirds of respondents *strongly agreed* and almost everyone else *agreed*, thus demonstrating that notions of equality within a formal policy may not necessarily be individually internalized in the same way that policy themes have been.²³⁸ These types of discrepancies in reported attitudes suggest that policy discourses initiated at the international level and implemented at the national level have permeated reported attitudes whilst, simultaneously, gender issues that rest outside of the policy arena may be less influenced by formal gender policies. Or perhaps, people are fully aware of the policy rhetoric within Rwanda and are able to state particular policy-oriented attitudes even if they do not necessarily believe them. Examining additional policy areas helps provide further insight into this.

Development and Household Level Relations

Developmental narratives in Rwanda have been rife since the PCR period (Hayman 2006, 2009, and 2011). Indeed as demonstrated earlier, many of the accolades for the current government have been directly attributable to advancements on development indicators such as poverty reduction and economic growth (Collier 2012). A critical theme within the Beijing Platform is that gender equality and development are explicitly linked and this serves as an underlying mandate of the Platform. This linkage also features predominantly in the National Gender Policy. The association between gender equality and development appears centrally and early on in both policy documents. The Beijing Platform mission statement argues:

Equality between men and women is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development and peace. A transformed partnership based on equality between men and women is a condition for people-centred sustainable development. (Beijing Platform for Action: 7)

Similarly, Rwanda's National Gender Policy asserts this linkage:

...the Government of Rwanda attaches great importance to the promotion of gender equality and equity as a prerequisite for sustainable development. This ideal is a fundamental principle within the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003.

The centrality of gender equality in national development is underpinned by President Paul Kagame who reaffirmed his conviction that "gender equality is not just women's business, it is everybody's business and that gender equality and women's

²³⁸ I discussed the word '*permission*' at length with research assistants and it was confirmed that as used within the survey *permission* means getting a husband to consent to a wife going out, and if that consent was not given, a wife would not go out. A husband, in turn, did not need permission to go out at night. Interestingly, there were some missing responses; a research assistant noted that the responder thought women going out at night was simply impossible which illustrates that women are more limited than men in terms of freedom of movement. It seemed that women's ability to go out in the evening was largely related to gender constructs. An example of this was observed when I attended an early evening meeting of professional women in Kigali and at the end of the evening most of the attendees had to leave in order to assist with nightly family-related activities because husbands would not necessarily be able to seamlessly oversee the evening routines. This is simply one example which illustrates how women's mobility may be more limited than men's due to household level expectations.

empowerment are critical to sustainable socio-economic development²³⁹. (National Gender Policy 2010: 7)

We can see that both the international and the national policy use very similar language, such as gender equality being a ‘condition’ or ‘prerequisite’ for development. The link between gender and sustainable development has been integrated into a number of national level policy documents (GoR Ministry of Gender: June 2010).

Given that Rwanda’s National Gender Policy explicitly stated that the Beijing Conference was a key policy influence (2010: 10) the association between the international and the local policy is rather concrete. As such, in order to capture attitudes on issues concerning gender and development, the following survey statement was used as a proxy indicator: *The promotion of women in Rwanda has been very good for the development of the nation.* Almost the entire sample of respondents agreed with this statement.²⁴⁰ Seemingly the policy imperative of *equality and development* is permeating attitudes within the survey sample.

Because national level *development* may not necessarily resonate however in terms of the micro-level impact, capturing intra-household dynamics concerning livelihood issues provides a loose proxy to gain insight into how macro-level gender policies concerning larger concepts of development may have an impact on women within households. Given that women are viewed as a key locus for *development* it seemed important to attempt to capture how the macro-level linkage between development and women may have an impact on women at the household level; this rationale largely stemmed from discussions with people in Rwanda. These discussions indicated that there was a link between the word ‘development’ and individual issues concerning livelihoods. In discussing the overall economic status of women in Rwanda, one government official noted: ‘Women without husbands work harder. Development comes first because people do not have anyone to depend on’ (interview 19 February 2009).

This linkage between *development* and the family is regularly utilized within Rwanda. A newspaper article on International Women’s Day for example, cited the Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, Aloysea Inyumba, as making this link: ‘Inyumba says woman (*sic*) empowerment should start at family level because recent experience has shown that the family is “vital element” in national development’ (All Africa 23 March 2012). Inyumba

²³⁹ National Gender Policy footnote 1, ‘Opening address by President Paul Kagame, Gender, Nation Building and the Role of Parliament conference report, 2007.’ (National Gender Policy: 7)

²⁴⁰ Whilst agreement levels for particular statements are high and could suggest that there is an agreement bias, high levels of ‘disagree’ responses occurred for additional statements suggesting that there was not necessarily an agreement bias.

was further quoted as saying, ‘When you look at Rwandan society, a single family is [the basic unit] for national development,’ (ibid).

Given this linkage, the following survey statement was used to capture ways concepts of development may intersect with household level gender issues: *Women in the household are more respected if they bring in an income to help the household than if they do not.*

This statement attempts to capture both individual dynamics between men and women as well as larger developmental dynamics that map onto policy agendas; in particular, gender policy initiatives often seek to increase women’s labour force participation and this, of course, has an impact on individual women. If national development is partly predicated on women’s role in the economic sphere, then women (as individuals) must participate in income-generating activities that contribute to both individual level conditions within the household as well as national level dynamics concerning economic growth.

Well over 80 per cent of respondents agreed that women were more respected if they earned an income. Again, policy statements appear to have permeated. However, when examining whether this has had a larger impact on power relations within the household, a disjuncture can be seen. When asked: *The man alone should have final say over money in the household*, almost half of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Respondents largely thought that women should economically contribute to the household, while a significant percentage still thought that men alone should control resources. This suggests that policies are having an impact in terms of making linkages between the role of women and economic progress (using the household level as a proxy indicator) though underlying power dynamics are not necessarily reflecting the contributions of women.²⁴¹ This largely mirrors gender policy statements: women are critical to the overall economic development of a nation, yet power relations between men and women within the household are often outside the purview of policies.

These statements help encapsulate many of the debates in the wider gender and development literature which hypothesizes that women are being instrumentalized or utilized for economic gain which results in increasing their burden (Baden and Goetz 1997, Razavi and Miller 1995). I attempted to capture this more explicitly. Whilst women are more respected if they contribute monetary resources to the household, policies that encourage women to

²⁴¹ Whilst there are indeed significant differences between economic development at the national level and ways people maintain their livelihoods at the household level, the connection I make here is that if women are economically contributing to the *development* of the nation this can partially be captured by examining how they are perceived in terms of earning an income.

work outside of the home have resulted in increasing burdens on women without necessarily challenging notions of equality between men and women. *If a woman has to bring in an income from outside the home it means that she has more burdens than men because she also has to cook, clean, and take care of the children.* The vast majority (approximately two thirds) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. This suggests that the burden on women (both within the household and by extension at the national level) has increased, yet individual dynamics between men and women may not necessarily have shifted which would result in this burden equalizing.

In regard to the most of the statements addressed above, there was less variation between responses that closely tracked policy themes versus themes not directly addressed within policies. This suggests that responses to issues raised in the gender policy rhetoric reflected more similarities than responses concerning issues not covered by the policy rhetoric. This suggests that policy tenets are permeating, which speaks to strong policy mechanisms in place by the government. Yet, critical issues regarding gender dynamics at the micro-level (particularly in terms of equality and household burdens) may not be penetrating gender attitudes and practices in the same way as broad policy themes.

Women in Decision-Making

As indicated, the high level of female political representation serves as one of the most predominant reasons as to why Rwanda receives such positive attention in terms of its advancements on gender issues, thus attempting to capture attitudes on this seemed important (Devlin and Elgie 2008). The Beijing Platform prioritized addressing '*Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels*' (Beijing Platform for Action 1995: 16) and more specifically, reiterated that women should retain 30% of decision-making positions (Beijing Platform for Action 1995: 79). As Tinker explains, 'The 30% target quickly became a goal at the 1995 Beijing conference' (Tinker 2004: 531). However, this was not the first time this quota appeared within an international context. An earlier commitment to the 30% quota had appeared in ECOSOC Resolution 1990/15:

Governments, political parties, trade unions and professional and other representative groups should each aim at targets to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions to at least 30 per cent by 1995, with a view to achieving equal representation between women and men by the year 2000, and should institute recruitment and training programmes to prepare women for those positions. (ECOSOC 1990: 15)

While the ECOSOC resolution for female representation outlined both a 30% and a 50% goal, interestingly, the 30% was the one highlighted within the Beijing Platform for Action.

In turn, the 30% quota is also codified in Article 9 of Rwanda's constitution: '...equality of all Rwandans and between women and men reflected by ensuring that women are granted at least thirty per cent of posts in decision making organs...' (Rwandan Constitution: 4).

There is a clear linkage here between international standards in regard to female representation and the new (post-conflict) constitution of Rwanda. It could be argued that Rwanda's Constitution could have specified a higher quota for female political representatives, but the 30% quota suggests a clear linkage to international standards especially as set out in the Beijing Platform for Action.

In order to obtain insight into attitudes on female decision-making in Rwanda, the survey included the following proxy indicators:

- *It is good that there are many women in decision-making positions in Rwanda.*
- *Women in decision-making positions are better leaders than men.*

The vast majority (approximately 90 per cent) of people strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that it is good that women are in leadership positions. The notion that women were *better* leaders than men emerged from a number of interviews and discussions in Rwanda; many people thought that men had largely orchestrated the genocide and therefore women were inherently better leaders. This argument largely falls along the essentialist lines of thinking that assume women are more peaceful than men.²⁴² Interestingly, approximately half of respondents agreed that women were better leaders than men. This suggests that part of the rationale underlying the promotion of women as political leaders is not necessarily resonating with respondents; this further indicates that essentialist notions of women as leaders in Rwanda (which are predicated upon ideas that women are more peaceful) are not necessarily resonating given the responses.

If we look at *decision-making* more broadly, meaning beyond the political sphere in which this concept largely applies, women's decision-making on the micro-level is seemingly not as affected by policy statements. For example, over 70 per cent of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that women should be able to go out with their friends at night (in the same way as men are able to go out). Particular gender policy sentiments concerning issues such as *equality* or *decision-making* resonate on a macro or public sphere level, but not necessarily in terms of individual gender relations that pertain to dynamics within the home. This speaks to how policies may permeate (reported) attitudes and whether

²⁴² See Chapter Two for further discussion on women in PCR.

constructs put forth in policies have an impact beyond the actual stated policy directive. If people are in agreement with policy statements but not in agreement with other issues that reflect *the spirit* of the policy, then the policy has a more limited impact on changing the larger sphere issues that pertain to gender equality.

Rights

Whilst human rights issues explicitly appears as a category within the Beijing Platform, they are not a separate category within the National Gender Policy, rather themes concerning a rights discourse are integrated throughout the policy. Survey questions regarding rights issues included:

- *It is good that women have more legal rights now than ever before.*
- *If a man and a woman are getting divorced is it good that a woman has rights to half the land.*
- *It is good that woman can now inherit land.*

Because land issues were so contentious following the genocide and land laws were revised to ensure women could inherit land, using land as a proxy indicator was one way to attempt to capture attitudes regarding ‘rights’ (Goodfellow and Smith 2013, Daley et al. 2010, Rose 2004, Mushara and Huggins 2004, Uwayezu and Mugiraneza 2011).

On all statements regarding *rights* the vast majority agreed that it is good women had more rights generally and more rights to land. With the exception of the approximately ten percent disagreeing that ‘It is good that a woman can now inherit land’, there are low levels of disagreement on these statements. The theme of *rights* overall also had the lowest levels of variation in responses. These statements primarily pertain to the international rights discourse (explicitly highlighted within the Beijing Platform) that has permeated local contexts. Again, we see here that policy themes are resonating within the survey sample and this particularly suggests that the *rights* discourse has been a strong policy component of the gender policy agenda. This is especially true given that land reform was a central component of PCR policies.

Interestingly, within the overall survey findings there was little variation between urban and rural respondents, thus also suggesting that policies are reaching a population beyond the urban area of Kigali. Perhaps unsurprisingly, over 80 per cent of respondents thought gender issues were a priority because of governmental efforts. The Beijing Conference on Women did not resonate at all as a gender policy impetus within the survey sample; this suggests that people largely link gender policy issues to the national government without

fully realizing that the national gender policy is based upon an international policy document.

The survey findings point to two key points: the evidence indicates that gender policy messages are reaching individuals, which suggests that the government has institutionalized gender policies; it also suggests that international policy discourses (as illustrated by use of the Beijing Platform for Action) have permeated individual gender attitudes via national policy implementation mechanisms. I first examine the implications of these findings in terms of feminist policy debates and then turn to policy implementation within Rwanda.

Feminist conflict literature that prioritizes gender mainstreaming and representation of women (Cockburn 2002) indicates that on one level, the reported survey responses demonstrate a successful post-conflict gender policy trajectory for Rwanda - one where gender issues are prioritized and implemented and policies have influenced particular aspects of negative gender attitudes. Solely on the surface, the *intractability* of gender issues that Cornwall et al. (2004:1) discussed appears not to be the case in Rwanda. The evidence suggests that gender issues have become salient, gender policy initiatives have indeed been implemented, and policy imperatives are resonating. Rwanda very much serves as a case where gender policies which emerged from PCR processes have been sustained over a longer-term period and largely gone beyond the PCR agenda setting stage. The survey results capture the dynamics of this and demonstrate that PCR gender policies can have a long-term impact, at least at the discursive level as it pertains to gender attitudes.

If we view the survey results through a lens that prioritizes gender outcomes, a feminist lens, we may, perhaps, arrive at the conclusion that an international gender policy, the Beijing Platform for Action, made fairly significant contributions to Rwanda's PCR policy context, both in terms of setting a framework for concrete policy initiatives as well as the subsequent impact on (stated) gender attitudes at the local level. From a gender policy perspective, one may also conclude that Rwanda has made substantial gains on a number of gender issues over the past decade and a half as measured by both standard developmental indicators and the survey results presented here.

The gender policy agenda however, has not necessarily shifted some of the challenging gender constructs that oversee power relations between men and women; relations and dynamics that are at the heart of many feminist agendas.²⁴³ Government officials

²⁴³ See Cornwall 2007 for further discussion on this.

interviewed had viewed the improvement in the status of women as a mechanism for developing Rwanda (interview, 20 October 2009) but this does not necessarily address issues of women's empowerment. The survey data presented earlier illustrates that on a number of indicators which can be used as proxy measures for *women's empowerment*, a feminist agenda has not necessarily been realized.

The survey results suggest that there is a link between the language that was integrated into the Beijing Platform for Action and the way in which gender attitudes within Rwanda are currently conceptualized. Via national policy implementation mechanisms, which have strong governmental backing, a particular international policy has permeated individual attitudes. As Baden and Goetz (1997) illustrated, the language of the Beijing Conference and the resulting Platform for Action was one of the most contested debates in international policy circles. Many feminists argued for a more politicized Beijing Platform for Action that would challenge unequal power relations; the resulting Platform, however, did not reflect this. Within a discussion regarding the heated debates that framed the Beijing Conference on Women, Baden and Goetz (1997) argued that the gender discourse has usurped a feminist agenda that sought to overturn power relations:

The variety of ways in which 'gender' has come to be institutionalized and operationalized in the development arena presents a contradictory and ironic picture. There is a disjuncture between the feminist intent behind the term and the ways in which it is employed such as to minimize the political and contested character of relations between women and men. A problem with the concept of 'gender' is that it can be used in a very descriptive way and the question of power easily removed. (Baden and Goetz 1997: 10)

The results of gender mainstreaming in Rwanda very much reflect this dynamic: if we examine the overall policy framework, gender has been 'institutionalized and operationalized' but this agenda is not necessarily one which challenges existing power structures. Baden and Goetz further elaborated on the depoliticized gender agenda: 'It is ironic that a concept which was engineered to carry a political message can be so depoliticized in its use as to be rejected by some of the people most committed to gender redistributive change, such as feminist development activists' (Baden and Goetz 1997: 10) .

At the root of this rejection is the dynamic illustrated in Rwanda; gender issues can be operationalized via gender policies and *progress* can be measured based on policy particulars, but this does not necessarily mean policies are targeting underlying power dynamics. This has had an impact beyond the larger sphere of policy documents. In Rwanda the international policy was integrated into the national policy and this was effectively implemented beginning in Rwanda's PCR period. Policy language has permeated; themes of equality, development and rights, for example, are resonating, whilst

the impact on power relations which negatively impact women is less visible as determined by the survey results. The reach of the government in terms of policy implementation thus appears to be fairly deep given that policy discourses resonated with respondents (and conversely that non-policy related topics reflected wider response variation). It also supports the propositions by Thompson (2011), for example, that Rwanda has an effective policy implementation framework. I now turn to exploring this point.

Why Is This The Case?

The government has created a fairly robust gender policy machinery within Rwanda. Governmental bodies at the national level, including a Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, a Gender Monitoring Office and the Women's Parliamentary Forum, all signify that gender issues are an imperative for the government.²⁴⁴ Further to this, the National Women's Councils also serve as a mechanism which links the local level (including grassroots) to national level institutions; these councils work at the lowest administrative levels in Rwanda including the village level.²⁴⁵ These bodies serve to create, implement and monitor efforts aimed at improving the status of women within Rwanda. Governmental structures (beyond those which are explicitly part of the gender policy machinery) reach deeply into all levels of Rwanda (Thomson 2012, Thomson 2011, Waldorf 2011, Longman 2011). Governmental oversight of the population is a key political strategy that is strongly rooted in a justification focused on 'genocide prevention'. Government structures exist at the national, district, sector, cell and village level; it is through these avenues that gender policies are disseminated and swiftly implemented within Rwanda.

Societal penetration by the government reaches beyond the village level however; the government has also established mechanisms that directly oversee households. In an examination of policing at the local level in Rwanda, Baker (2007) describes a 'highly supervised society':

At the neighbourhood level, tens of thousands of local leaders keep watch over, manage and assist very small units of the population. Until early 2006, there were two levels below the lowest elected local government officer, the *responsible*. These were the *nyumbakumi*, who was in charge of 10-15 households, and the *chef de zone* who was in charge of about 200 households. The two have now been merged to *umukuru* and, as a committee of four, are responsible for 50 households or perhaps up to 200 in the towns. (Baker 2007: 347)

What emerges here is a society where the government has strong administrative structures that extend down to the lowest levels of society.

²⁴⁴ Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Cluster Strategic Plan 2010: 8.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

Examining policy implementation mechanisms helps illustrate how these structures could have an impact on gender policies. The government largely disseminates policy information via sensitization efforts. The Rwandan government is consistently trying to direct the trajectory of the country; Rwandan citizens are often *sensitized* to or *re-educated* on this trajectory. *Reeducation camps* are one mechanism the government uses to disseminate governmental policy or messages. I do not suggest that the re-education camps are a specific mechanism for conveying information on gender policies, however, the way in which these camps are used is instructive for providing deeper insight into how the government attempts to advance governmental agendas. Susan Thomson detailed her experience in, ‘...*ingando* reeducation camps...’ (Thomson 2011: 332) and explains that these are for, ‘...ex-combatants, ex-soldiers, confessed *gènocidaires*, released prisoners, prostitutes, and street children,’ (Thomson 2011: 334). According to Thomson:

I argue that *ingando* does little to re-educate confessed *gènocidaires* on how to reconcile with family, friends, and neighbors. Instead of promoting a sense of national unity and reconciliation, it teaches these men, the majority of whom are ethnic Hutu, to remain silent and not question the RPF’s vision for creating peace and security for all Rwandans. For us, *ingando* was an alienating, oppressive, and sometimes humiliating experience that worked hard to silence all forms of dissent – something that may, paradoxically, crystallize and create stronger dissent in the future. (Thomson 2011: 332)

This is demonstrative of ways in which the current government attempts to create a uniform mentality within Rwanda. These educational exercises can have the effect of ensuring that citizens know government policies, but may be less effective in embedding a commitment to the values and power relations behind them.

Whilst ‘sensitization’ programmes for most citizens in Rwanda are not necessarily as intensive as this, monthly meetings following mandatory works called *umuganda* provide opportunities for government officials to *sensitize* community members about policies (interview, government official 18 February 2009 and Goodfellow and Smith 2013).²⁴⁶ These meetings are compulsory and absence does not go unnoticed (Baker 2007: 346). It has also been suggested that these meetings allow for community input into policy issues (interview, local consultant 17 February 2009), though conversely they seem to provide more of an opportunity for community members to be sensitized on new policies that are to be implemented. Gender policies concerning issues such as violence against women are regularly communicated to community members in these meetings. This is one forum where respondents received information on some of the gender issues captured in the survey and

²⁴⁶ The notion of *sensitizing* the public is one that is frequently used in Rwanda. Newspaper headlines such as ‘Sensitisation on health issues intensifies’ (The Sunday Times, 18 March 2012) or ‘Teachers sensitised on EAC political federation’ (New Times, 29 February 2012) help illustrate the common usage of the term in Rwanda.

these sensitization efforts may have contributed to high levels of reported agreement with gender policy issues.

Gaining insight into current policies and policy implementation mechanisms was much less of a challenge than gathering information on the PCR period. As has been suggested by many, most of the current policies are government driven (perhaps this is why the story about the PCR period has largely focused on the current context). Whilst some interviewees suggested that policy-making and implementation was both top-down and bottom-up (interview 13 February 2009, interview 14 February 2009, and 9 October 2009), other interviewees (both within and outside of the government) indicated that there was substantial top-down policy implementation throughout Rwanda. There is further suggestion that policy making was ‘non-participatory’ (interview, international donor 10 February 2009). Civil society is even largely viewed as an extension of the government (Adamczyk 2012), and, particularly in terms of ‘sensitization’ efforts, NGOs and civil society organizations seem to be a useful conduit for policy distribution (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion December 2010).²⁴⁷ The need for strong coordination of these organizations is made explicit by the ministry:

A high number of CSOs²⁴⁸ and development partners are operating in the area of gender in Rwanda. This is clearly an opportunity to achieve progress in the area of gender equality and women’s empowerment, but at the same time poses a coordination challenge for the Government of Rwanda and for the NGC²⁴⁹ in particular, concerning targeted and result-oriented interventions. (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Cluster Strategic Plan 2010: 8)

Under the banner of coordination, this suggests that the government requires oversight of gender-related activities.

This overall context has meant that *political will* has played an important role in the dissemination of the gender policy agenda: a government official indicated that change is happening in Rwanda because of ‘...the strong government at the top, there is political will straight from the president on issues such as gender and governance...’ (interview, 18 February 2009). Many of the substantial policies are government driven (for example Vision 2020) and interviewees noted, specifically in regard to recent policy creation and implementation, that the government was largely behind policy agendas. Another governmental representative indicated, ‘People are changing their mind-set due to vision of

²⁴⁷ The linkage between the government and civil society can be problematic if civil society is no longer able to put pressure on the government for change. It can also have an impact on an organization’s funding stream. Ryan (2010) for example has suggested that rural women’s NGOs do not have governmental support and this is having an impact on their ability to obtain funding.

²⁴⁸ Civil society organizations.

²⁴⁹ National Gender Cluster.

the government' (interview 13 February 2009). Perhaps the notion that, 'When the government decides, we follow only,' (16 February 2009) encapsulates much of the current sentiment regarding Rwanda's governing structure.

Those who worked on gender policy efforts also indicated that policies were initiated from above: '[The] national level is [for] decision making and the district level is for implementing' (interview, government official 16 February 2009). Whilst the respondent also indicated that the government is putting significant effort into improving the status of women (interview 16 February 2009), I want to explicitly highlight the drivers behind policy here which indicate that policy is largely being initiated at the highest levels of government. The same respondent also indicated that women's associations report to the district level of government and the local government in turn advocates for them at higher levels - which does suggest there is a bottom-up feedback mechanism (interview 16 February 2009).

Further to this, another government official discussed ways in which mechanisms were in place to receive community feedback before policies were formalized; these included neighbourhood opinion leaders disseminating information throughout villages, receiving feedback regarding those efforts, and passing that information along to higher levels of government (interview 18 February 2009). However, top-down processes featured more prominently within interviews. It was suggested that civil society is not presenting a credible challenge to government policies that may not be deemed fair (interview, international donor 10 February 2009); it was suggested that this was partly due to the historical legacy of 'obedience and acceptance' (ibid).

Distinguishing between a politicised instrumentalization of gender policies for political gains and a more principled promotion of gender policies to promote the interests of women is difficult in a context where substantial policy measures have been meaningfully implemented. Numerous government officials I interviewed placed emphasis on gender issues. This, in conjunction with the fact that gender policies continue to be created and implemented, indicates that there has been a sustained momentum behind the gender agenda. A women working at the national women's council suggested that representatives on these councils wanted to change the situation of women: 'Women who are representatives of others are fighting for the rights of women and changing laws so women are not vulnerable. They have changed laws including matrimonial inheritance laws on land and gender based violence' (interview 19 February 2009).

Other government officials also suggested that the government's gender policy agenda was very much about improving the status of women (interview 8 October 2009). The same respondent indicated that there was strong political will behind the policy agenda: 'The President is gender sensitive. He's behind us and this has mobilized other men to understand women should be involved in building our nation...Gender is a priority. When you involve women in communities you can achieve success easily' (ibid).

Particularly important here is that many women who now work within the gender policy machinery in Rwanda had previously been working on women's issues even before the genocide (Burnet 2012). This suggests that individuals may very well be advocating a gender equality agenda even if that agenda is wrapped in a larger political trajectory being advanced by the RPF. Thus, disentangling political motivations from more principled motivations regarding the status of women is a particular challenge.

What emerges is that there are multiple sides to the policy implementation story; one where top-down is negative, and one where top-down is positive. Baker has suggested that Rwanda is a strong state with deep societal penetration (Baker 2007: 347), but this is not necessarily viewed as a negative structure by government officials. If policies are *improving* people's lives then this is a positive outcome: as one governmental official indicated, there is '...confusion with the word dictatorship...' (interview 18 February 2009) because any decisions that are taken by the government that benefits citizens are deemed to be dictatorial (primarily by the international community). He pointed out the quandary regarding the gender policy agenda – if women are benefiting but within a context of strong governmental control, is this necessarily a negative dynamic? This requires further examination.

The Intersection of Gender Policies, Rwanda's Political Context, and Aid

Thus far within the chapter I have indicated that gender policies have had an impact on gender attitudes in that current attitudes reflect gender policy rhetoric. This could be viewed as a positive developmental outcome; aside from developmental indicators suggesting that some gains for women have been realized, policy themes focused on gender issues, such as equality, are permeating attitudes.²⁵⁰ I have also argued that tightly controlled policy implementation mechanisms within Rwanda have contributed to the effective implementation of these policies. The gender policy agenda, however, is not being

²⁵⁰ This is not to say that the gendered constructs embedded in these policies are completely positive. As indicated in the previous chapter, there was substantial debate over the final language included in the Beijing Platform for Action (Baden and Goetz 1997); however, I have illustrated that the policy language of the National Gender Policy (and the Beijing Platform) has permeated gender attitudes which speaks to some of the larger effects of these policies.

implemented in isolation; it is necessary to examine how these policies work within the context of the government's larger political agenda.

As discussed in earlier chapters, it has been suggested that the overall PCR trajectory taken by President Kagame and the RPF has been one with power consolidation and retention at its centre (Longman 2011 and Reyntjens 2004). The discussion above illustrated numerous mechanisms used by the government to implement its policy agenda (which is, indeed, a heavily political agenda); the rhetorical motivation behind the tight oversight of the population is based on the government's goal to prevent a future genocide (Waldorf 2011). Under the policy umbrella of 'genocide prevention' the government imposes strict limitations on political parties as the government argues that opposition parties are simply platforms for ethnic hatred. Problematically, this political agenda has been largely financed by the international community.

In the previous chapter I explored ways in which aid was instrumental to the PCR context and suggested that aid was a central factor within the PCR gender policy focus. Whilst perhaps this aid could be viewed positively as advancing this policy trajectory, it is necessary to examine how aid has worked over the longer-term. The role of aid was indeed critical in helping the new RPF-led government emerge from the post-genocidal context that they faced in 1994 and it has continued to play an imperative role in advancing the government's trajectory in Rwanda. This inquiry helps further capture the *effects* of the gender policy focus, particularly the dynamics between the gender policy focus, aid, and political consolidation.

The developmental agenda (and the 'success' linked to this agenda) has served as a justification for the government's political agenda as Purdeková has suggested: 'Developmentalist initiatives are being used to justify an authoritarian, high-control and exacting political system, while the results are questionable at best' (Purdeková 2012: 206).

Whilst the academic community has increasingly criticized the government of Rwanda for tightening political space (Beswick 2010), the donor community has been more measured in its criticism as Hayman (2011) has suggested.²⁵¹ Though donors do recognize that the political context in Rwanda may be problematic, this has not necessarily translated into substantial limits on aid. In an analysis of the impact of its aid to Rwanda, DFID for example, one of Rwanda's largest donors, recently described the context:

²⁵¹ See also Pottier 2002 and Zorbas 2011.

Rwanda's current political stability is rooted in the strong leadership provided by the President and ruling party. But there is central concern about the degree to which **power is centralised**; about **restrictions on political space**; and about the strength of institutional provisions to ensure **accountability and citizen participation** in the decisions that affect and concern them. (Author's emphasis, DFID July 2012: no page)

Interestingly, this account of the current political context did not prevent the author from arriving at an overall conclusion that £111 million in either GBS or sector budget support (SBS) would be beneficial to Rwanda. Whilst there have been limited instances of aid suspensions since 1994, particularly in 2012 by donors including the Dutch (Financial Times July 2012) and the United Kingdom (BBC News November 2012),²⁵² these have not resulted in a significant, long-term reduction of aid. The 2012 aid suspensions were primarily due to international criticism of Rwanda's role in the DRC rather than the government's practices within its own borders.

In the post-conflict years (1994-1999) almost \$3 billion in ODA was disbursed to Rwanda (OECD DAC 2014). Even after Rwanda transitioned out of the emergency phase and into a development phase, billions of dollars in aid continued to reach the country; between 2000-2012 close to \$9 billion was disbursed (OECD DAC 2014). With the exception of a few years in the early 2000s, almost half of the Rwandan government's budget has been financed by international aid (DFID July 2012: no page). Zorbas (2011: 103) has indicated that much of this was in the form of general budget support, i.e., funding that is not specifically targeted by donors and thus contrasts with other types of aid (such as project funding) that ensures donors have a larger say over how funds are spent.²⁵³ The high levels of aid and the government's strategy of political consolidation raises questions about the PCR gender policy focus and the possibility that it is being used to meet other political goals.

Using the same methodological approach outlined in Chapter Six, I conducted further analysis of OECD DAC data (2014). For this examination, I captured aid that was targeted at women's issues during the 2000-2012 period (the period after Rwanda had transitioned from the emergency phase to a greater focus on long-term development). My analysis found that, of the overall \$9 billion in ODA received by Rwanda during that time, approximately \$2 billion went to gender-related initiatives.²⁵⁴ Whilst these funds targeted a wide range of activities, including educational initiatives, health projects and agricultural projects,²⁵⁵ almost all of this aid (approximately \$1.7 billion) directly and explicitly targeted gender-

²⁵² These aid suspensions were primarily due to a United Nations report that indicated Rwanda was involved in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

²⁵³ See Hayman 2011 for further discussion on GBS.

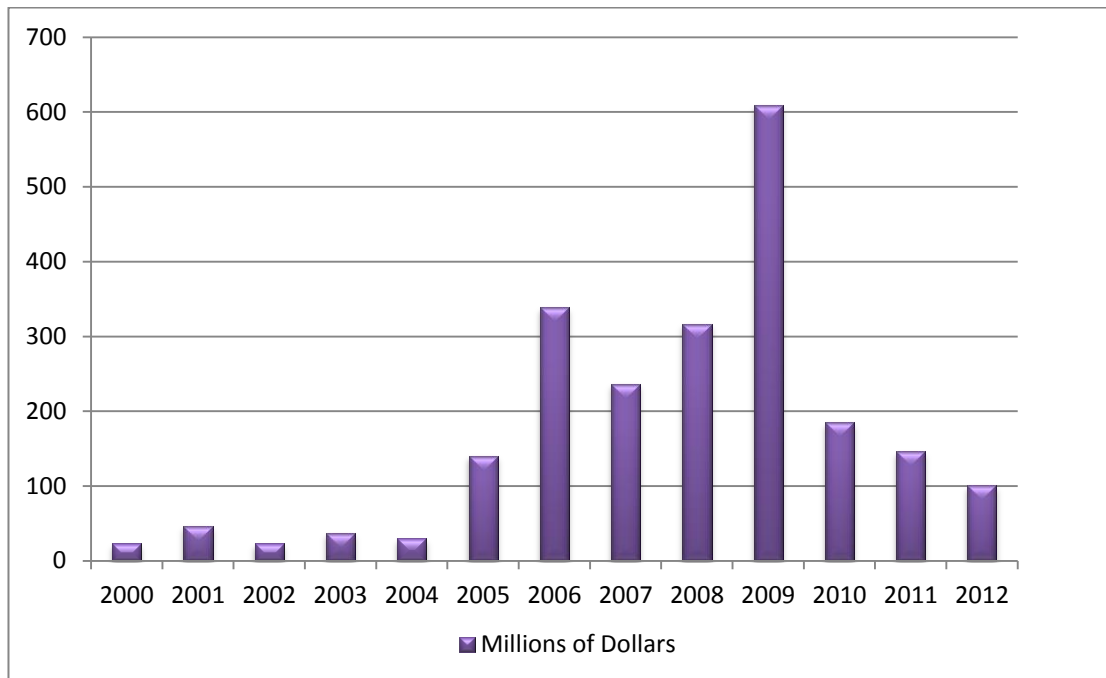
²⁵⁴ This figure reflects primary analysis using OECD DAC data (2014).

²⁵⁵ As detailed within the OECD DAC dataset (2014).

related activities where gender equality was the primary goal; in other words, these activities were explicitly designed with gender-equality at their core.²⁵⁶ The following chart illustrates the annual funding levels of this aid.

²⁵⁶ See Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion on coding. See also O'Neill 2012: 2.

Figure 4: Aid Targeted to Rwanda for Activities with Specific Goal of Women’s Empowerment (2000-2012)



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (2014), my analysis

The significant increase in aid in 2009 is primarily due to an allocation of approximately \$165 million in DFID funding for general budget support and approximately \$52 million of USAID funding directed to HIV/AIDS activities. Though the descriptions of these line items do not necessarily illustrate that these activities are gender-related, their coding indicates that gender-equality related policy goals were a central component of the allocation; gender equality was a primary aim of this funding. This is largely reflective of the overall integration (or mainstreaming) of Rwanda’s gender policy focus into all aspects of government and it further indicates that donors are providing financial backing to the gender policy focus. This could very much be viewed as a success in terms of the gender policy focus; gender equality has featured prominently within Rwanda since the PCR period. This also partially reflects a success for feminists who have advocated for increased integration of women’s issues into PCR (as well as subsequent development activities).²⁵⁷ However, examining the data in more detail presents a more nuanced picture regarding the effects of this aid.

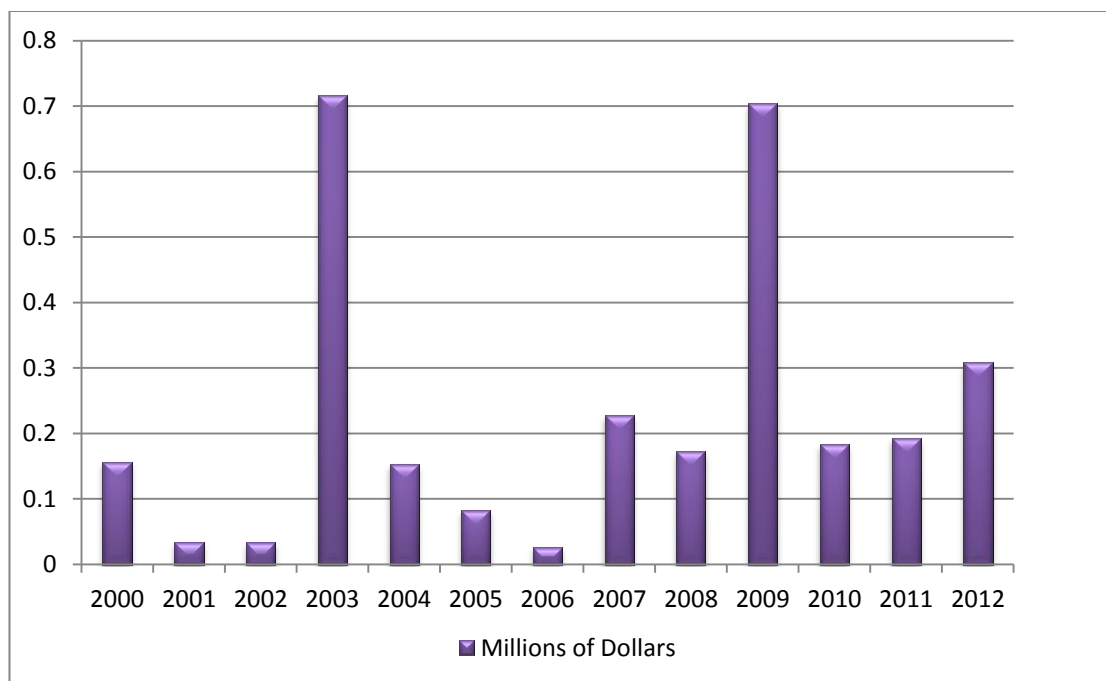
Further analysis indicates that, in total, only \$3 million was directly coded as targeting ‘women’s equality organizations and institutions’ during the same period (2000-2012).²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ See for example Cockburn 2002.

²⁵⁸ See Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion on this aid allocation.

This does not represent the entire allocation of aid that reached women’s organizations however; this reflects aid that was specifically identified as being *directed* to women’s organizations. What this indicates is that, whilst aid directed to initiatives which are centrally concerned with gender equality has amounted to almost \$2 billion, women’s organizations are not necessarily a significant recipient of this aid. Rather, much of it is allocated to the government and the government then has control over how these funds are allocated. The chart below illustrates funding levels directed to women’s organizations over a twelve-year period.

Figure 5: Aid Targeted to Rwanda for Women’s Organizations or Institutions (2000-2012)



Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (2014), my analysis

The aid data presented here illustrates that gender related activities are a significant component of all aid directed to Rwanda; approximately a quarter of all ODA within a twelve year period has either explicitly been targeted to gender related activities, or activities where gender equality was a primary concern. The gender policy focus has been linked to a substantial amount of money directed to the government. However, organizations focusing on women’s issues are a very small, direct, recipient of this aid.

As I have argued, women's organizations were a primary factor behind the PCR gender policy focus (and were a foundational factor behind PCR reconstruction efforts overall),²⁵⁹ though current aid allocations to Rwanda do not reflect the roles of these organizations in the overall reconstruction and longer-term development of Rwanda. Rather, what has occurred is that the gender policy focus has been successfully integrated into many aspects of development aid and in turn, this has largely contributed to the government's budget and overall policy implementation capability.

However, against a backdrop of political consolidation, women's organizations have not necessarily benefitted. The government also has significant control over this aid (Zorbas 2011 and Hayman 2011). Paradoxically, the success of the government's gender policy focus has limited the real power of women's organizations. Civil society organizations in Rwanda are not in a position to challenge the government, thus governmental control of gender equality initiatives is even more problematic. As Gready (2011) has argued in regard to this: 'The current regime's preferred modus operandi for civil society remains service delivery and gap filling. A "you're with us or against us" rationale prevails' (Gready 2011: 89). These organizations are a component of the overall policy implementation mechanisms I described earlier.²⁶⁰ Gready further suggests that umbrella organizations in Rwanda, including PROFEMME, the organization which serves as an umbrella for women's organizations, have been 'co-opted' by the government (Gready 2011: 90). There are indications that women's organizations are not independent (Longman 2011: 31 and Debusscher and Ansoms 2013: 1129). This is particularly problematic as funding directed to these organizations is determined by the government. Adamczyk argues this point:

It is likely that the boundaries between civil society and the state will blur further due to reporting structures, the increase in budget funding for civil society channelled by the state and the state's tendency to equate streamlined macro-level organizations with civil society. (Adamczyk 2012: 72)

Interviews I conducted in Rwanda reflected a similar dynamic; numerous organizations were heavily reliant on governmental resources.

In a context where a small elite rules over the majority, issues of ethnicity also play a role in terms of the power structures of organizations; dynamics between Hutus, Tutsi survivors, and Tutsis who returned to Rwanda following the genocide have not been eradicated despite official policies which suggest otherwise. Longman has also suggested that Tutsi returnees who ran civil society groups were largely favoured by the government:

²⁵⁹ Also see Newbury and Baldwin 2001 for more information.

²⁶⁰ See Adamczyk 2012 for further discussion regarding civil society in Rwanda.

A group like the women's network Profemmes Twese Hamwe, founded in 1991 but relaunched in 1995 under the leadership of several dynamic women returnees from Congo, could freely demand reform on issues such as inheritance rights, because the government trusted that in the end, the group shared its vision for Rwanda society and supported its leadership. However, groups led by Hutu, while initially tolerated under the RPF's strategy of appearing to promote national unity and embrace diversity, gradually faced increased limitations on their actions and pressure to change their leadership. (Longman 2008: 28)

Further to this, Longman for example indicated that:

Even the Association des veuves du genocide (Association of Genocide Widows, AVEGA-AGAHOZA) is now led by a Tutsi returnee rather than a genocide survivor. The government has sought to make its relationship with civil society increasingly corporatist in nature, using civil society groups to carry out official policy rather than allowing civil society to represent public interests. (Longman 2011: 31)

Notions of differences amongst women emerge here; the experiences of Tutsis who lived through the genocide in Rwanda and those who were out of the country were vastly different so the fact that a Tutsi returnee is leading an organization for survivors (women who lived through the genocide) may be problematic.²⁶¹ One result of this is the limiting of the power organizations have to advocate for agendas that counter official government policy.

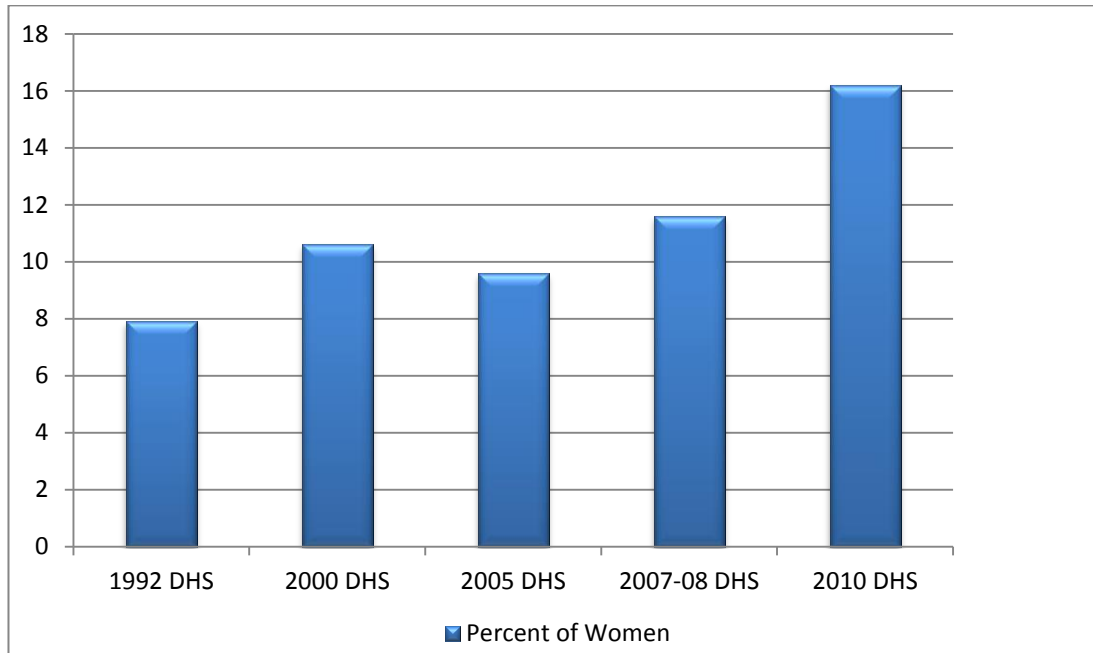
The question of *who* is benefitting in Rwanda is a critical one given the violence that it has endured since the 1950s. Gathering data to answer this question is difficult because Rwandese regulations do not permit overt examination of ethnic identity (Eltringham 2011). However, examining indicators that are disaggregated by wealth and geographic patterns (specifically, urban or rural) helps illustrate who in Rwanda has benefitted most from RPF policies. In the introduction, I presented data illustrating developmental gains for women particularly in terms of health and education; these figures illustrated aggregate data. As these indicators are often utilized to suggest that Rwanda is a PCR 'success', it is important to examine them in more depth. Here, I examine disaggregated data in order to capture further data regarding who is benefitting from the gender policy focus.

The chart below illustrates impressive gains for women in secondary or higher education between 1992 and 2010 in terms of the per cent of women attaining secondary education or higher; there was a doubling from eight per cent to approximately sixteen per cent during that period.²⁶²

²⁶¹ Burnet (2012) further explores dynamics between women in women's organizations.

²⁶² See Assan and Walker 2012 for further discussion regarding dynamics of the educational system in Rwanda.

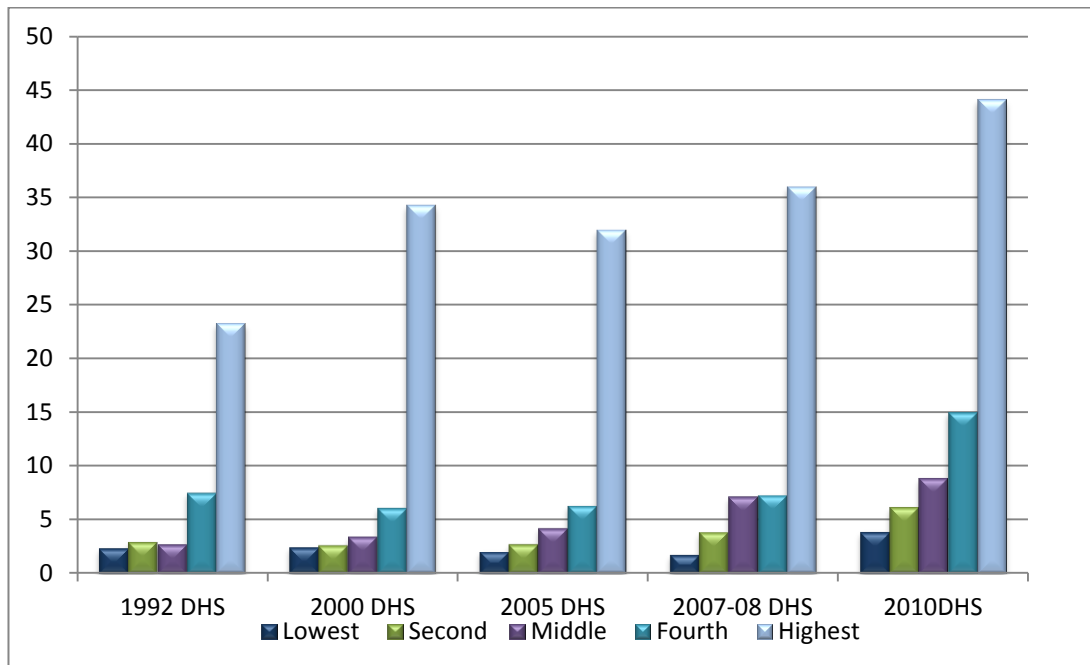
Figure 6: Total Percentage of Women in Rwanda with Secondary Education or Higher, DHS Data 1992-2010



Source: Measure Demographic and Health Survey, Stat Compiler 2014.

Whilst an overall positive trend can be observed, disaggregating the data by wealth quintiles allows for a more nuanced picture to emerge. The chart below details the percentage of women who have achieved secondary or higher education, disaggregated by wealth quintiles.

Figure 7: Total Percentage of Women in Rwanda with Secondary Education or Higher by Wealth Quintile, DHS Data 1992-2010



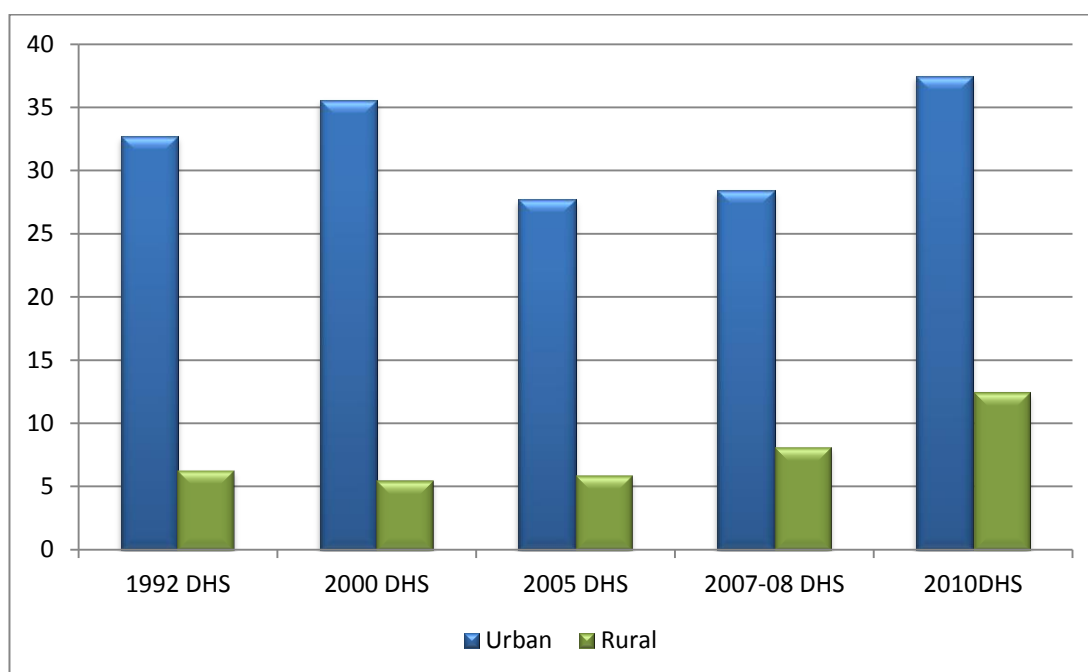
Source: ICF International, *The DHS Program STATcompiler* (2012)

This data reflects that women in the highest economic quintile are achieving the highest levels of educational attainment. In fact, the overall trend has been similar for the last twenty years. Though some improvements have been made over the last two decades, the underlying data uncomfortably mirrors that of 1992, the period prior to the genocide.

Disaggregating the data by urban and rural locations also illustrates a very different picture to that presented by examining aggregate data.²⁶³ Women in urban areas are benefitting at much higher levels than women in rural areas. Whilst some gains have been made for rural women, urban women have continually outpaced their rural counterparts for almost two decades.

²⁶³ Urban data is largely reflective of trends that occur within Kigali.

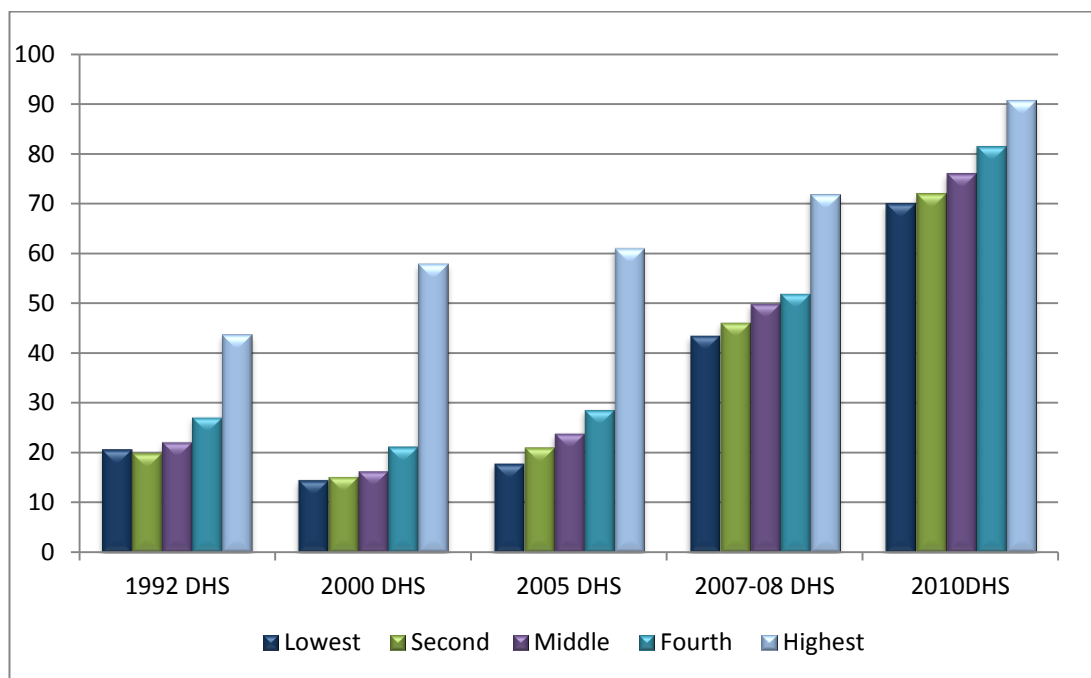
Figure 8: Total Percentage of Women in Rwanda with Secondary Education or Higher by Urban or Rural, DHS Data 1992-2010



Source: ICF International, The DHS Program STATcompiler (2012)

Though the distributional outcomes for women in higher education are mixed, data on health care suggest that significant improvements can be observed for women across economic quintiles as well as in both urban and rural areas. The following figure illustrates the total per cent of women who gave birth in a health facility (versus at home, for example). The data demonstrates that vast improvements can be seen for women within every economic quintile and the gap between women in the highest and women in lower quintiles is much narrower than those observed in the data on secondary or higher education.

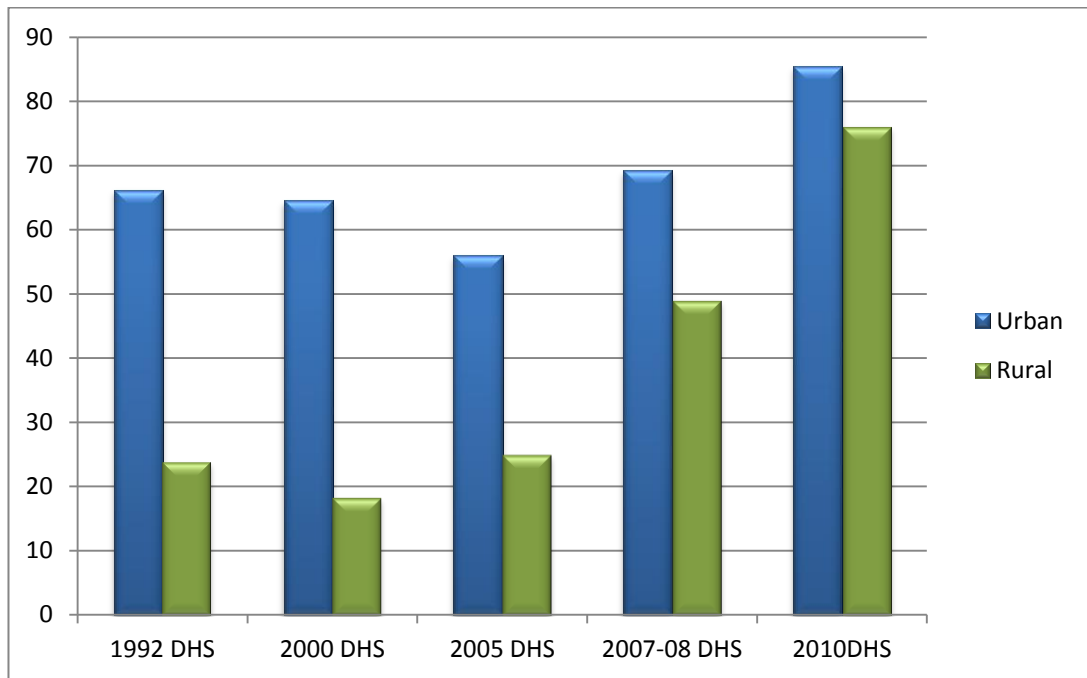
Figure 9: Total Percentage of Women in Rwanda who Gave Birth in a Health Facility Within Last Three Years by Wealth Quintile, DHS Data 1992-2010



Source: ICF International, *The DHS Program STATcompiler* (2012)

The gap between urban and rural women is also much narrower within this indicator as Figure 10 depicts. Urban and rural women are currently benefitting at similar rates in terms of delivering in a health facility. Particular gains for rural women occurred between 2007-08 and 2010.

Figure 10: Total Percentage of Women in Rwanda who Gave Birth in a Health Facility Within Last Three Years by Urban or Rural, DHS Data 1992-2010



Source: ICF International, *The DHS Program STATcompiler* (2012)

This data indicates that women across Rwanda are seeing improvements in health, though interestingly, the health care sector has largely been funded by USAID in the form of direct project funding (meaning USAID has retained primary control over targeting funds versus giving aid to the government via basket funding). As USAID indicated:

Over the last 10 years, annual funding to USAID/Rwanda had increased from about \$48 million in 2004 to over \$150 million in 2012. The bulk of the increase was due to the launch of several new U.S. Presidential Initiatives including the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI), and the Feed the Future (FtF) food security initiative. (USAID 2014)

USAID also targeted funding more broadly throughout the healthcare sector in Rwanda:

Health programs constitute about two-thirds of USAID/Rwanda’s assistance and span a wide-variety of issues including: health systems strengthening, HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention, family planning and maternal and child health. (USAID 2014)

The USAID budget appropriation for Rwanda in the 2012 fiscal-year illustrates how the health care sector receives the largest allocation with \$145.2 million directed to the sector (US Government 2014).

The more-even gains made in maternal health (versus education for example) may be partly attributable to the fact that a particularly prominent donor, USAID, oversaw the spending of hundreds of millions of dollars within the health care sector versus directing those resources to the government via basket funding. Meaning, hundreds of millions of dollars in health care spending was largely programmed by USAID (whereas had the resources been allocated via basket funding, the government would have had more substantial control).²⁶⁴

The above examinations illustrate that some women are doing better than others are particular developmental indicators: urban women and women with access to more financial resources are significantly ahead of other women in terms of educational gains, though gains are more evenly distributed within the healthcare sector. This does not necessarily reflect a trend that is substantially different to other developing countries, however it provides a more detailed picture of the overall gains women have been achieving in Rwanda; it suggests that larger narratives, those that deem Rwanda to be a gender success story, are not capturing underlying dynamics regarding how particular segments of the female population may be gaining at higher rates than others.²⁶⁵

Whilst the RPF government has largely attempted to eradicate ethnic differences, the developmental indicators examined here illustrate that there are indeed noticeable differences amongst women in Rwanda especially pertaining to economic and geographic divisions. Because data concerning ethnicity is so elusive there is not a methodologically sound way to demonstrate that gains are being realized by women of one ethnic group versus another, however, it is clear that gains are not being evenly realized amongst women. Uneven distribution of developmental gains is particularly an issue in a country which has seen genocide (Uvin 1998). Given current indications that the Tutsi elite in Rwanda are benefitting more than the general population (Reyntjens 2011), this is a cause for concern, primarily because it has been argued that one of the main reasons for the 1994 genocide was structural inequalities amongst the population (Uvin 1998). In a country where 83 per cent of the population lives in rural areas (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda 2014: xv), gains need to be realized by the rural population to ensure that these structural inequalities are not perpetuated.

²⁶⁴ Breakdowns on specific costs such as contraceptives illustrate this dynamic; of total spending on public-sector contraceptives for example, the government accounted for approximately forty percent of costs where-as donations from donors accounted for the remainder (USAID/DELIVER 2011: 9).

²⁶⁵ As discussed in earlier chapters, differences amongst women do exist in Rwanda even though much of the literature on the country groups women together as one cohesive entity. This data also supports propositions that differences amongst women in Rwanda continue to exist following the genocide.

Conclusion

This chapter has largely spoken to the *effects* of Rwanda's PCR gender policy focus. I have argued that gender policy messages as constructed within the Beijing Platform for Action and the National Gender Policy have permeated gender attitudes (though gender issues outside of the policy realm are seemingly less affected by policies). I have also illustrated that gender policies have been implemented through a very strong policy implementation structure within Rwanda. This system reaches deeply into society and allows policy messages to reach individual citizens.

The numerous development indicators as well as the gender attitudes survey results suggest that some of the *effects* of gender policies have been positive - at least on the surface or perhaps, discursive level. In examining the effects of these policies within the wider political context in Rwanda, the *successes* that have emerged, prove tenuous. Examinations of disaggregated data based on economic and geographic factors suggested that gains are also not evenly distributed amongst women and this is particularly worrying given the structural inequalities that lead to the 1994 genocide (Uvin 1998). The gender policy focus has also been linked to almost \$2 billion in international aid; indeed, almost a quarter of Rwanda's aid over a twelve-year period has focused on gender equality as a key goal. Again, from a feminist theoretical proposition that advocates for gender issues to be integrated into PCR processes, this may be viewed as positive, however, given that the real power of women is mediated by a 'strong' government that has been identified as dictatorial or authoritarian, how successful is this policy focus in a context where individual freedoms are being restricted? I will now turn to the conclusion and attempt to answer this by reengaging with the theoretical propositions explored earlier.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The initial point of this inquiry was to examine *why gender policies were a post-conflict reconstruction priority in Rwanda* and *what was the long-term impact of this policy focus*. Contemporary analysis²⁶⁶ has primarily focused on the role of the RPF and Kagame (particularly as it has been conceptualized under a banner of *political will*) within Rwanda's PCR trajectory, and whilst this appeared to be an important factor, it was not sufficient to explain the gender policy focus. Others, such as Newbury and Baldwin (2000) and Burnet (2008 and 2012), who primarily focused on the role of women in Rwanda however, provided critical insight into some of the factors underlying this policy focus including the roles of grassroots women and international aid.

This research has contextualized five critical factors that emerged which more fully explain the PCR gender policy focus: 1. a majority female population, 2. grassroots action by women, 3. political will, 4. international aid, and 5. The Beijing Conference on Women. Whilst none of these components in and of itself is sufficient to explain this particular policy trajectory, taken together, they provided the key foundational factors that allowed the policy agenda to flourish. As Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998) have demonstrated, examining policy *effects* is also critical to more fully understanding the impact of policies. I therefore examined gender attitudes as well as development indicators in order to further contextualize this policy trajectory over the past twenty years. The findings that surfaced spoke to both the potential for a PCR gender policy success as well as an uncomfortable politicization of this agenda. These research findings speak to theoretical propositions on Rwanda and feminist propositions on PCR, as well as the larger effects of aid in PCR contexts.

Some Promising Findings Emerged

A key finding emerging from this research is that multiple factors contributed to the PCR gender policy focus in Rwanda; this largely contrasts with current readings of Rwanda's PCR trajectory which mainly credit the RPF and Kagame with the policy advances made from 1994 onwards. By attempting to examine the PCR context as it existed in 1994 (versus utilizing the current context as a starting point) I was able to highlight, not just the role of political leadership in this policy trajectory, but also the role of women as well as that of the

²⁶⁶ This is not to say that contemporary analysis advanced by people such as Waldorf (2011), Reyntjens (2004) or Thompson (2011) is arguing that the entire PCR trajectory can be explained by examining political will; it is to point out that the current frameworks of critical analysis concerning Rwanda primarily engage with political factors which can skew an understanding of the factors that were particularly pertinent to the context in 1994.

international community. These factors are largely side-lined, minimized, or rendered invisible in mainstream PCR analysis on Rwanda.

More specifically, this research suggests that gender policies can indeed be implemented into larger PCR efforts and can be sustained for decades following a conflict. In contrast to dominant trends globally (Ní Aoláin et al. 2011), gender policies do not have to solely remain in the agenda setting stage of PCR processes. Feminist propositions argued by people such as Cockburn (2007) and Moser and Clark (2001)²⁶⁷ for example, have largely called for a greater focus on women in conflict and PCR. Theoretically, this falls under a feminist framework that emphasizes the *inclusion* of women in PCR processes. Rwanda stands as a case where gender policies were not only fully integrated into the PCR policy agenda, but have led to meaningful integration in larger national policy agendas over the longer term. Whilst Rwanda may serve as one individual case in terms of the conditions that were needed for this policy focus to emerge, particular factors that were highlighted here are inherent to many conflict and PCR contexts globally and the findings regarding these factors are generalizable beyond the case of Rwanda.

A majority female population, as well as the actions of women, have surfaced as critical driving factors behind the gender policy focus. Evidence from interviews particularly touched upon the role of women in ‘rebuilding’ Rwanda. Whilst I suggested that the female population was most likely not as high as 70 per cent, I still argued that there was a female majority following the genocide. This majority resulted in women having to assume roles that had traditionally been filled by men and this meant that women had a substantial responsibility for rebuilding their lives and those of their families. Women shouldered a significant burden during this period especially in terms of having to physically rebuild their homes.

Trajectories of other PCR contexts globally have suggested that these types of efforts by women in the PCR phase are instrumental to the improving the overall post-conflict context, however these efforts are frequently ignored and rarely contribute to a sustained, long-term gender policy focus. The factors of a majority female population, as well as the actions of women, were indeed an important driver behind the *initial* gender policy focus in Rwanda, though this was not necessarily the key reason why these policies were sustained over the longer-term. In addition, though the factor of a majority female population was important to the gender policy focus, it is insufficient on its own to fully explain the policy trajectory and

²⁶⁷ See also Enloe (2005, 2008), Cockburn (2002), Beall (2006), Mazurana (2005), Caprioli (2003, 2005), Daley (2007), and Parpart (2002, 2008).

therefore would not serve as a necessary condition for a PCR gender policy focus in other contexts. There were critical differences amongst women, especially in 1994, which would have limited their ability to stand as a united (or homogenous) group.²⁶⁸ Rwanda was emerging from a situation where one segment of the population had attempted to eradicate another and women were part of this dynamic. Women were both killers (African Rights 1995) and victims (Des Forges 1999). Just because women were subsequently a majority at the end of the genocide, does not mean that they could ignore these differences to act as one cohesive body within reconstruction processes.

What this suggests is that the numbers of women in a PCR context is not necessarily *the* factor that will help advance a gender policy agenda (though it may be one of several) so therefore, this is not a necessary condition for a PCR gender policy focus. Rather, the actions of women within that context are a more critical factor than the numbers of women. Grassroots organizations were able to provide both a support for women as well as a mechanism for rebuilding. A number of these organizations had been in existence prior to the genocide and new ones emerged following the genocide. In the initial PCR period women had to primarily rely on themselves, however, the international community soon provided limited financial resources.

By providing assistance to women's grassroots organizations, the role of the international community emerged as a critical factor; this materialized in two ways, via aid and the Beijing Conference on Women. Aid was directed to women's organizations as well as the government and this aid contributed to reconstruction efforts, especially in terms of rebuilding houses for women and providing social support (Newbury and Baldwin 2000). Had aid not been directed to these efforts, it does not seem likely that the gender policy focus could have been sustained. I would argue that aid provided the financial backing to this policy focus and though this aid was limited, it was still critical to setting the foundations for the policy focus. Evidence of this funding however, was primarily found by exploring OECD DAC data as well as examining documents that were written in the late 1990s to early 2000s. Interviewees mentioned international aid as a component of the PCR gender policy focus, however, details were rarely revealed. This was the case because the complexity of the post-conflict period meant individuals were not necessarily focused on technicalities (such as which donors were funding particular programmes) and because donors now direct significant amounts of funding to the government via basket funding so people are not aware of what is donor versus government funding.

²⁶⁸ See Des Forges 1999 and Prunier 1995 for further accounts of the genocide.

Aid played a critical role in funding gender-related initiatives in the PCR period, but it has perhaps played an even more critical role in ensuring that these initiatives were sustained once Rwanda transitioned out of the PCR phase and into a longer-term development phase. In Rwanda, over \$2 billion (over a period of almost two decades) was allocated to policies which focused on gender equality; I will explore the political implications of this in a moment, but here I am arguing that the international community has funded initiatives on gender equality and, given that the international community plays a role in PCR context globally, sustained funding could be directed to these types of efforts if it was deemed an aid priority.

The additional international factor that helped set the stage for the gender policy focus was the Beijing Conference of Women as well as the subsequent policy document that emerged from the conference, the Beijing Platform for Action. Because the conference was approximately one year after the genocide, this conference provided an opportunity for Rwandan representatives to tell what had happened on a global stage. This resulted in bringing attention to the plight of women who had lived through the genocide (survivors). I would argue however that whilst the conference highlighted the horrific violence that many Rwandan women had experienced, the Platform for Action had a larger impact in shaping the actual National Gender Policy. The Platform provided both the policy language as well as a larger implementation mechanism (via the United Nations) to help support the policy trajectory at the national level.

This factor was primarily captured by examining gender attitudes in Rwanda; the *language* of the Platform and the National Gender Policy are largely reflected in current gender attitudes as demonstrated by the survey results. This illustrates that international policies may play a role in advancing particular gender constructs if those constructs are integrated into national policy mechanisms. Whilst the evidence suggests that policy language has permeated attitudes, policies did not necessarily have an impact on gender equality issues that were outside the scope of the actual policies. The central point of this, however, is that there was a noticeable similarity between stated gender attitudes and national and international policy documents. This demonstrates that both national and international policy rhetoric has the potential to permeate gender attitudes (even if solely at the rhetorical level). This largely speaks to the effects of policy language and indicates that gender policies initiated during PCR periods can have a long-term impact if they are supported and implemented.

The final factor that emerged as a critical component of the PCR gender policy focus was the role of political will. The historical experience whilst in exile was a primary reason as to why the RPF's was concerned with issues of gender equality. The fact that early considerations of gender equality were central to the RPF (before the genocide) helped contribute to the focus on it as they took control of the government of Rwanda. However, I also illustrated that whilst political will was indeed an important driver behind the PCR gender policy focus, the RPF and President Kagame were not as powerful in the late 1990s as they are now, thus explanations which primarily highlight political will as the primary factor behind Rwanda's PCR trajectory, do not adequately reflect the realities of the early PCR context. Political will has had a much more prominent place in sustaining the policy agenda in Rwanda than it did in laying the foundation for the policy focus in the PCR period.

There were indeed different dynamics occurring at each point of the PCR period. During the immediate PCR period (approximately 1994-1996) a majority female population, grassroots action on the part of women, and the Beijing Conference were critical components of the gender policy focus. The culmination of advocacy (as well as project work) on the part of women in Rwanda (and largely women who had been in Rwanda prior to the genocide and lived through the genocide) and international attention to the situation many Rwandan women were facing helped to ensure that gender policies were a key PCR priority. Women's grassroots efforts were particularly instrumental at this time for helping to (literally) rebuild Rwanda.

This is not to say that political leadership on the part of the RPF did not matter during this period; however, as the reconstruction advanced, the RPF was simultaneously amassing more power and legitimacy. This meant that as Rwanda transitioned from an emergency context to one where reconstruction of the country could be a focus (approximately 1996-1998), the RPF government was gaining a larger foothold in governing the state of Rwanda. During this period, riding on the momentum of the Beijing Conference, international donors also began to more explicitly target women's organizations.

During the 1996-1998 period the RPF also began to have a much larger say over where international aid was directed. Controlling aid flows increased both the legitimacy as well as power of the RPF and this process meant that women's organizations lost some autonomy as the government now mediated funding. This put groups led by Hutus (Longman 2011) at a further disadvantage.

The final few years of the post-conflict period, approximately 1998-2000, saw the RPF gain substantial credibility internationally and this resulted in international donors directing resources to the government in the form of general budget support (versus project funding). Whilst the government previously had a role in directing project funding, general budget support gave the government much more control over where directing resources. This meant that the government had more power to determine who would receive funds and in turn in practice meant that women's organizations largely had to appeal to political entities in order to obtain funding.²⁶⁹ Burnet echoed similar sentiments in her research:

For a period of time between 1994 and 2000, women's civil society organizations were able to operate in relative freedom even when they were engaging in activities related to these sensitive issues. By 2001, however, government authorities began to watch women's organizations closely as well and occasionally intervened in their operations. (Burnet 2012: 148)

This suggests that as the government gained greater legitimacy internationally (as seen, for example, in the increased level of aid directly targeted to it), it was able to exert more control over women's organizations, or perhaps more specifically, women's organizations that did not fully comply with political agendas.²⁷⁰

Differentiating between the initial PCR period and the longer-term trajectory was thus a key part of this analysis. Generally speaking *women* who were advocating and contributing to the rebuilding of people's lives in Rwanda were much more critical to the initial stages of this policy agenda than to its long-term success, primarily because as Rwanda emerged from its emergency phase the new RPF government began to obtain more power. I will now turn to this issue.

Larger Negative Dynamics Pose a Theoretical Challenge

Though the above findings perhaps signal a more positive reading of the PCR gender policy focus in Rwanda, challenges to this reading exist. One such challenge is centred upon notions of inclusion and exclusion. The above narrative is largely advanced through the inclusion/exclusion framework that feminists have constructed regarding women in PCR; again, viewed through this lens, Rwanda has served as a successful case of inclusion, particularly in regard to women who were part of, or close to, the ruling, RPF elite. However, examining this policy success in more depth leads to a more complex

²⁶⁹ As indicated previously, restrictions placed on overt discussions of ethnicity meant that it was not possible to determine whether particular women were benefitting more from this funding, however, theoretically, if the RPF-led government was controlling funding, it is highly likely that funding was directed to organizations which supported versus challenged the government.

²⁷⁰ Longman (2011) also explored this issue.

understanding of how inclusion works beyond factors such as women's representation in these contexts.

Paradoxically, as Rwanda serves as one of (if not the) most significant cases to date concerning the importance of gender issues within PCR, the role of women is largely *excluded* from much of the mainstream analysis on Rwanda's PCR trajectory. I have identified this as a central problem with the majority of PCR analysis on Rwanda; women are largely missing from the equation even though they were central to the PCR trajectory. This also reflects an overall 're-imagined' Rwanda that Pottier (2002) has discussed; women have been 're-imagined' out of the analysis. The primary way that women are *included* in mainstream analysis on PCR Rwanda largely pertains to their political representation.²⁷¹ This presents a particular challenge to propositions advanced along the lines of inclusion; whilst women have been *included* in the PCR process as well as longer-term government policy agendas, they have largely been *excluded* from the larger story concerning this trajectory.

An additional way that notions of *inclusion* have resulted in a problematic dynamic is that inclusion has resulted in the instrumentalization of women (Goetz 1997) in Rwanda. Gender issues have been successfully integrated into many policy objectives advanced by the government, but beyond advancement on particular developmental indicators, the underlying, unequal relations between men and women are not necessarily being targeted. This is perhaps a case where the arguments by Seckinelgin and Klot (2013) are applicable; the mere inclusion of women in both the PCR context as well as the longer-term developmental process in Rwanda is utilized to suggest that gender equality has been achieved even though actual *equality* has not been realized, especially when viewing this through a feminist lens that seeks to address underlying gender dynamics that actually set the stage for conflict in the first place (Caprioli 2005 and Caprioli et al. 2008).

Further challenges materialize when examining the PCR gender policy focus through alternative theoretical lenses. Larger political dynamics, that have significantly limited political freedoms in Rwanda, cast a shadow over a more positive reading of the PCR gender policy trajectory. Whilst perhaps some developmental gains have been achieved, particularly in terms of female political representation,²⁷² advances in health, and meaningful

²⁷¹ This is particularly referencing analysis that focuses on PCR in Rwanda more broadly, not analysis on gender issues in Rwanda.

²⁷² See Longman 2005, Burnet 2008, and Debusscher and Ansoms 2013.

integration of gender issues into broader, governmental policy agendas, there are indications that women have been ‘instrumentalized’²⁷³ for political gain.

This is not to say that developmental gains have not been seen within many aspects of Rwanda - and these gains deserve recognition; however, it is difficult to disaggregate a gender policy success story from the political agenda currently underway in the country. Kagame and the RPF have been limiting the power of individuals in Rwanda to affect real change in government and this agenda has been pursued under a larger rhetorical umbrella of ‘genocide prevention’. Given the overall personal limitations imposed on the Rwandan citizenry, it is difficult to simultaneously argue that women’s real power is increasing when the overall backdrop is one where personal freedoms are being severely limited. This is partly at the crux of what Longman (2005) and Burnet (2008) have argued in terms of the real power of female parliamentarians.

The linkages between the RPF’s political trajectory and the gender policy focus materialize within the National Gender Policy itself. A comparison between the 2009 draft National Gender Policy and the 2010 final version suggests that the RPF is attempting to credit the gender policy focus to RPF efforts. The passage below contains, in italicized and bold print, the addition of language to the final version of the policy:

The post-independence period was characterised by male domination in power. Very few women participated in decision making. Progressive changes took place after multiparty [*sic*] system was legalised in 1991, which opened a window of opportunity for women’s involvement in decision making. ***Due to the starting of liberation [*sic*] war led by Rwanda Patriotic Front INKOTANYI which triggered the introduction of multipartism and the involvement of women in all development areas, most*** political parties had at least one woman among their leaders. (My emphasis, National Gender Policy Comparison of 2009/2010, p10)

Following this, another passage indicated ‘[t]he ***political will of the Rwandan leader after*** 1994 and the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing (China) in 1995 were the key factors that underpinned important changes in the Rwandan society’ (My emphasis, National Gender Policy Comparison of 2009/2010, p10).

Interestingly, the integration of language that emphasizes the RPF government’s role (both before the genocide and now) raises the issue as to whether the policy is being politicized in Rwanda. Given that Rwanda often serves as a success global case for female political representation, linking the national gender policy directly to RPF efforts may help advance the notion that the RPF was a significant driver of the policy. This opens the door to question whether developmental agendas may be subject to political capture even if they

²⁷³ The concept of instrumentalization was discussed in Chapter Two. Also see Goetz 1997 and Debusscher and Ansoms 2013.

start out as grassroots (or even international grassroots) movements. As I argued, women, were a key driver behind the gender policy focus (and international backing helped to support this) however, the fact that aid is now largely directed to the government to implement initiatives targeting gender equality versus to women's organizations, suggests that the RPF has successfully incorporated this policy agenda into a larger developmental trajectory. In fact this is highly reflective of feminist political arguments which suggest that developmental measures can be depoliticized from a feminist political agenda (Baden and Goetz 1997, Cornwall et. al. 2004) and reveals the tenuous nature regarding the use of gender policies within these processes.

As demonstrated, the international community has largely funded this trajectory. As argued, almost a quarter of all aid to Rwanda over a twelve-year period was primarily directed to efforts to advance gender equality. Given that the RPF government is reliant on aid to fund almost half of its national budget (DFID July 2012: no page) aid targeted to gender equality is a critical component in the government's ability to implement its larger policy agenda; an agenda where political consolidation is a key goal (Reyntjens 2004). My research illustrated that because aid is reaching the government instead of directly being allocated to women's organizations within Rwanda, the government is able to oversee the gender agenda and, whilst from a policy perspective this allows for a coordinated and efficient implementation mechanism, it simultaneously draws power and autonomy away from women's organizations. This, in turn, has the effect of contributing to the powerbase of the RPF.

Again, an uncomfortable dynamic appears; the integration of gender equality within government policies can serve as a successful example of gender mainstreaming, however, the political shadow of the government calls into question the overall intent behind these initiatives. The linkages between the aid agenda, the gender policy agenda, and the political trajectory of Rwanda continually surface.

Re-centralizing the positions of Uvin (1998) and Ferguson (1994) sheds light on how this dynamic can be particularly problematic, especially in a nation attempting to emerge from a legacy of extreme violence. Uvin's analysis of the 1994 genocide clearly implicated international aid in helping to set the foundations for the genocide to occur in the first place (Uvin 1998). Perhaps most unsettling in his account is the extent to which his theoretical proposition is extremely pertinent to contemporary Rwanda:

...all development aid constitutes a form of political intervention. This holds as much for bilateral and multilateral aid as for nongovernmental development aid. It is also the case at all levels, from the central government to the local community. Ethnic and

political amnesia does not make development aid and the processes it sets in motion apolitical; it just renders these processes invisible. (Uvin 1998: 232)

If this particular position is used as a lens to analyse the interaction between international aid and the gender policy focus, it becomes clear that PCR aid directed to women's issues rests in a problematic space where micro-level outcomes that could have positively impacted the lives of many in Rwanda, have been subsumed under macro-level political processes that have subsequently resulted in an authoritarian-leaning state. Indeed, Hayman, in her work on contemporary relations between donors and the political system in Rwanda, suggests that donors are quite aware of these tensions: '...donors in Rwanda do not appear naïve to the underlying political problems in Rwanda, but they do get caught up in the development success story that Rwanda represents (at least on the surface)' (Hayman 2011: 127).

The dichotomous positions of 'developmental success' and 'political oppression' simply render the complexity inherent in the PCR gender policy focus invisible and unnecessarily reduces women's achievements during that period to a political objective; a political objective largely funded by the international community.

This largely mirrors the macro-level development trends underway in Rwanda; developmental agendas can easily be co-opted for political gain as argued by Ferguson (1994) and Uvin (1998). Here the confluence between the theoretical propositions of feminist agendas and these arguments can be seen. As Ferguson has indicated in his analysis of development projects in Lesotho:

...we have seen that "development" projects in Lesotho may end up working to expand the power of the state and while they claim to address the problems of poverty and deprivation, in neither guise does the "development" industry allow its role to be formulated as a political one. (Ferguson 1994: 256)

If we replace Ferguson's exploration of 'projects' with the larger PCR gender policy context, we can see that a similar trend has emerged: the gender policy agenda has become depoliticized and aid has supported this with little attention to the underlying power relations that are resulting in limited political freedoms for its citizens.

In Rwanda, these arguments point to the fact that the gender policy agenda has been conceptually removed from the political context in which it operates; meaning the gender policy success story is advanced without an acknowledgement that this agenda is firmly intertwined with a political agenda with power retention at its centre. The gender policy agenda is not one that is transforming existing power relations especially at the political level. Other feminist theoretical propositions capture this dynamic further by examining ways gender and power intersect. Baden and Goetz (1997) articulated this as: 'A problem

with the concept of 'gender' is that it can be used in a very descriptive way and the question of power easily removed' (Baden and Goetz 1997: 10), whilst Cornwall (2007) further described this process: 'That which lay at the heart of the 'gender agenda' – transforming unequal and unjust power relations – seems to have fallen by the wayside' (Cornwall 2007: 69). These dynamics largely reflect the gender policy agenda in Rwanda in that challenging unequal power relations is not possible given the political context.

Feminist propositions on the inclusion of women in PCR processes may have been realized in Rwanda, however, the *effects* of this policy agenda have served to advance a political agenda (one that has attracted billions of dollars in aid) where underlying power relations not only remain unchallenged, but may, perhaps, be getting worse in terms of societal relations more broadly. As Rwanda largely serves as *the case* to illustrate that gender policy issues can be a meaningful part of a PCR agenda these lessons are critical in order to understand PCR contexts globally.

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Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Organization or Institution	Interview Date
Rwandan Women's Network for Rural Development	07 February 2009
UNIFEM	10 February 2009
DFID	10 February 2009
Local Consultant	12 February 2009
Duterimbere (women's organization - two interviews)	11 February 2009
COOJAO (youth organization)	12 February 2009
Private Sector Federation	12 February 2009
National ID Project	13 February 2009
Ministry of Gender	13 February 2009
Ministry of Local Government	14 February 2009
National Institute of Statistics	16 February 2009
National Women's Council	16 February 2009
Kigali City Council (two interviews)	16 February 2009
Local Consultant	17 February 2009
AVEGA	17 February 2009
Kigali City Council (three interviews)	17 February 2009
Kigali City Representative	18 February 2009
National Women's Council	19 February 2009
Gasabo District Representative working on women's issues	20 February 2009
AFRICARE	20 February 2009
UNECA (three interviews)	23 February 2009
Global Grassroots	23 February 2009
Kigali City Representative	24 February 2009
AVEGA	24 February 2009
MINECOFIN	24 February 2009
Local Consultant	25 February 2009
Rwandan Men's Resource Centre	26 February 2009
World Bank	26 February 2009
HAGURUKA	06 October 2009
National Youth Council	07 October 2009
Rwanda Women's Parliamentary Forum	08 October 2009
Rwandan Women's Network (two interviews)	09 October 2009
Profemmes (two interviews)	09 October 2009
Haguruka	12 October 2009
Duterimbere	13 October 2009
UNIFEM	14 October 2009
World Bank (two interviews)	15 October 2009
Gender Monitoring Office	20 October 2009
National Unity and Reconciliation Commission	21 October 2009
DFID	21 October 2009
USAID (two interviews)	22 October 2009
DFID	23 October 2009
Men's Resource Centre	26 October 2009
Gasabo District Representative	27 October 2009
Gender Monitoring Office	28 October 2009
GTZ (two interviews)	02 November 2009
Supreme Court Representative	05 November 2009
Market place interview (six interviews)	26 November 2009

Appendix B: Gender Attitudes Survey

Researcher Name: _____

Date: _____

Survey Number: _____

Location of Survey: _____

Mwiriwe,amazina yanjye ni..... Nkaba ndimo nkorana n'umunyeshuri wo mu cyiciro cya gatatu cy'amashuri ya kaminuza(PHD)mw'ishuri ry'ubukungu n'ubumenyi mu bya politike riri I Londres mu Bwongereza.Ubu ndimo ndakora ibarura ku byerekeye gender mu muryango nyarwanda.Twahawe uruhushya na ministeri ishinzwe iterambere ry'abagore ndetse n'akarere kugirango dukore iri barura. Ibisubizo bizavamo bizakoreshwa mu gusesengura uburyo gender ihagaze mu Rwanda.Amazina yanyu ntabwo azakoreshwa ndetse n'ibisubizo byanyu nta ngaruka bizabagiraho.Ibizava muri iri barura bizakoreshwa nk'igice cy'ubushakashatsi bwa PHD bushobora gushyirwa ahagaragara.Ubu bushakashatsi bukaba buzafasha mu gushyiraho amategeko arebana na gender.

Mufite uburenganzira busesuye bwo kutagira uruhare muri iri barura mubaye mutabishatse;uruhare rwanyu ni ubushake.Niba muhisemo kugira uruhare muri iri barura riramara iminota cumi n'itanu.Mushobora kandi guhagarika ibarura igihe icyo ari cyo cyose,ku mpamvu iyo ari yo yose.Tubashimiye igihe cyanyu muduhaye.

Mwaba mufite ikibazo kuri iri barura?Murifuza kurigiramo uruhare ? 1. Yego 2. Oya

K'umukarani w'ibarura: Ese urabona yumvishe kandi akemera kugira uruhare muri ubu bushakashatsi? 1. Yego 2. Oya

Mwaba mwarigeze kugira uruhare muri iri barura. 1. Yego 2. Oya
Have you already participated in this survey?

001. Igitsina: 1. Gabo 2. Gore
Sex: 1. Male 2. Female

002. Imyaka _____
Age

003. Aho yavukiye(igihugu) _____
Place of Birth

004. Imyaka amaze mu Rwanda _____
Years lived in Rwanda

005. Aho atuye(akarere) _____
Current District of Residence

006. 1. Mu mujiyi 2. mu nkengero z'umujiyi 3. mu cyaro
1. Urban 2. Semi-Urban 3. Rural

007. IDINI: 1. Gatolika 2. Protestanti 3. abadivantiste b'umunsi wa karindwi
4. abayisilamu 5. Andi _____ 6. Nta dini
Religion: 1. Catholic 2. Protestant 3. Seventh Day Adventist 4. Muslim 5. Other _____ 6. None

008. Amashuri wize: 1.P1 2.P2 3.P3 4.P4 5.P5 6.P6 7.S1 8.S2 9.S3 10.S4
11.S5 12.S6 13. University Level: _____ 14. None
Last Year of School Completed

009. Umwuga _____
Profession

010. Uko abona ikimutunga _____
Source of Income

011. Ese mufite ibi bikurikira mu rugo rwanyu:

Do you have the following in your house:

A	amazi mu rugo	Piped water	1. Yego	2. Oya
B	umuriro	Electricity	1. Yego	2. Oya
C	radiyo	Radio	1. Yego	2. Oya
D	televiziyo	Television	1. Yego	2. Oya
E	imisarani yo mu nzu	Flush Toilet	1. Yego	2. Oya
F	sima mu nzu	Dirt Floor	1. Yego	2. Oya

012. 1. Arubatse 2. ingaragu 3. umupfakazi 4. yatandukanye n'uwu bashakanye

1. Married 2. Single 3. Widowed 4. Divorced

013. Umubare w'abana: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 abandi _____

Number of Children

Ngiye kubabaza ibibazo ku bitekerezo byanyu. Ibisubizo kuri buri nteruro nsoma ni « ndabyemera cyane », « ndabyemera », « ntabwo mbyemera », « simbyemera na gato », « simbizi ». Urugero, ninsoma interuro wemeranya nayo cyane, usubize: « ndabyemera cyane » cyangwa ninsoma interuro ukaba utazi neza uburyo uyumva, usubize: « simbizi ». Niba kandi wumva udashaka gusubiza interuro, mwabivuga igasimbukwa. nta gisubizo nyacyo cyangwa kitari cyo, muri make musubize uko mubitekereza kuri buri nteruro nsoma. Mufate igihe cyo gutekereza kuri buri nteruro mbere yo gutanga igisubizo kandi mushobora guhagarika iri barura igihe mushakiye.

1. Abagore barubahwa iyo bazana igitunga urugo kurusha iyo ntacyo bazana.

Women in the household are more respected if they bring in an income to help the household than if they do not.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

2. Nibyiza ko abagore bashobora kuzungura ubutaka.

It is good that a woman can now inherit land.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

3. Abagabo nibo bategeka ingo.

Men are the head of the household.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

4. Umugore ashobora kuvugira umuryango mu ruhame iyo ari kumwe n'umugabo we.

It is ok for a wife to speak on behalf of the family when in the presence of her husband in public.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

5. Abagore bari mu myanya ifata ibyemezo ni abayobozi beza kurusha abagabo.

Women in decision making positions are better leaders than men.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

6. Abagabo bakwiye kugira uburenganzira bwo gukubita abagore babo iyo babarakaje.

Husbands should have the right to hit their wives if wives do something to anger the husband.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

7. Abagore n’abagabo barangana mu ngo.

Men and women are equals in the household.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

8. Abagabo bakwiye kugira uruhare mu mirimo yo mu rugo kimwe n’abagore babo, urugero: guteka ,kuhagira abana no kubahindurira imyenda.

Men should participate in domestic activities such as cooking, washing children, and changing children’s nappies.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

9. Umugabo wenyine niwe ufite ijamba rya nyuma ku mafaranga y’urugo.

The man alone should have the final say over money in the household.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

10. Abagore bashobora gusohokana na bagenzi babo b’abagore ninjoro mu gihe abagabo basigaranye n’abana mu rugo.

Women should be able to go out with their female friends at night while men stay at home and take care of the children.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

11. umugore akwiye gusaba uruhushya umugabo we mbere yo gusohoka ninjoro.

A woman must get permission from her husband before going out at night.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

12. Ni byiza ko hari abagore benshi mu myanya ifatirwamo ibyemezo mu Rwanda.

It is good that there are many women in decision-making positions in Rwanda.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

13. Gender ni gakondo mu muco nyarwanda.

Gender is natural in Rwandan culture.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

14. iyo umugabo n’umugore batabyaye, ni ukuvuga ko umugore aba afite ikibazo.

If a man and a woman do not have a child it is because there is a problem with the woman.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

15. iyo umugabo n’umugore batandukanye ,ni byiza ko umugore agira uburenganzira ku gice cy’ubutaka.

If a man and a woman are getting divorced it is good that a woman has rights to half the land.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

16. Umugabo niwe wenyine ugena igihe imibonano mpuzabitsina hagati ye n’umugore we ibera.

Only a man can initiate sexual intercourse.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

17. nta kibazo iyo umugore atabyaye ku mpamvu iyo ariyo yose.

If it is ok if a woman does not have children no matter what the reason.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

18. Iyo umugore agomba kuzana ibitunga urugo n'ukuvuga ko aba afite inshingano nyinshi kurusha umugabo kuko aba agomba guteka, gukora isuku no kwita ku bana.

If a woman has to bring in an income from outside the home it means that she has more burdens than men because she also has to cook, clean, and take care of the children.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

19. Umugabo ashobora kujya mu kabari n'inshuti ze k'umugoroba.

It is acceptable for a man to go out and drink with his friends in the afternoon.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

20. Nubwo abakobwa bafite amahirwe angana abahungu yo kujya ku ishuri, haracyari imbogamizi nyinshi zibabuzza kwiga.

Even though girls have equal access to school many barriers still exist that prevent girls from attending school.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

21. Impamvu Gender itera imbere ni uko Leta yayigize ingenzi.

The focus on gender is a priority because the government prioritizes it.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

22. Abana b'abakobwa bafite inshingano zo gukora imirimo yo mu rugo kurusha abana b'abahungu.

Little girls have more domestic responsibilities than little boys.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

23. Ni byiza ko abagore bafite amategeko abarengera ubu kurusha mbere.

It is good that women have more legal rights now than ever before.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

24. iterambere ry'umwari n'umutegarugori ryagize uruhare rukomeye mu iterambere ry'u Rwanda.

The promotion of women in Rwanda has been very good for the development of the nation.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

25. Amasezerano y'i Beijing yo muri 1995 yagize uruhare rugaragara mu iterambere ry'umugore mu Rwanda.

The 1995 Beijing Conference for Women played an important role in gender policies in Rwanda.

1. Ndabyemera cyane 2. Ndabyemera 3. Ntabwo mbyemera 4. Simbyemera na gato 8. Simbizi

26. Ufite umwana w'umukobwa n'umuhungu ariko ufite ubushobozi bwo kwohereza umwana umwe ku ishuri ;wakohereza nde ?

If you have a girl and a boy but you can only send one to school who would you choose to send?

1. Umuhungu Boy 2. Umukobwa Girl 3. Simbizi Don't Know

27. Ni inshingano ya nde muri aba bakurikira yo kumenya ko hakoreshejwe uburyo bwo kurinda inda zitateganyijwe mu gihe cy'imibonano mpuzabitsina?

Whose responsibility is it to ensure contraception is used during sexual intercourse?

1. umugabo man 2. umugore woman 3. bombi both

28. Ni nde ufite inshingano yo guhindurira imyenda umwana?

Whose responsibility is it to change baby nappies?

1. umugabo man 2. umugore woman 3. bombi both

29. Gender ikigera mu Rwanda wumvaga ari iki?

What did you understand of 'gender' when it first came to Rwanda?

30. Gender wayumviye bwa mbere hehe?

Where did you first hear about 'gender'?

Musubize ibibazo bikurikira mukoresheje Yego /Oya, turifuza kumenya icyo mutekereza ku ijambo Gender.

Please answer the following with a 'yes' or a 'no'. We would like to know your opinion on what the word 'gender' means to you.

31. Ese ijambo "GENDER" wumva risobanuye iki?

Does the word 'gender' mean?

A. Abagabo n'abagore bafite uburenganzira bungana mu rugo. 1. Yego 2. Oya

Men and women have equal rights in the household.

B. Abagabo n'abagore bafatira hamwe ibyemezo. 1. Yego 2. Oya

Men and women make decisions together.

C. Abagabo n'abagore barangana mu bice byose by'ubuzima. 1. Yego 2. Oya

Men and women are fully equal in all aspects of life.

D. Abagore bahabwa agaciro cyane kurusha abagabo. 1. Yego 2. Oya

Women are valued higher than men.