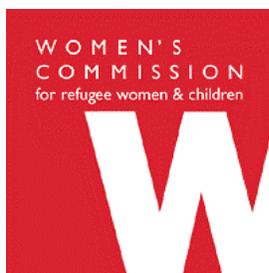


You Cannot Dance If You Cannot Stand

**A Review of the Rwanda Women's Initiative and the
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees'
Commitment to Gender Equality in Post-conflict Societies**

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

April 2001



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MISSION STATEMENT

Since its founding in 1989 under the auspices of the International Rescue Committee, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children has sought to improve the lives of refugee women and children through a vigorous and comprehensive program of public education and advocacy. The Women's Commission is the only organization in the United States dedicated to speaking out solely on behalf of women, children and adolescents uprooted by war, violence or persecution.

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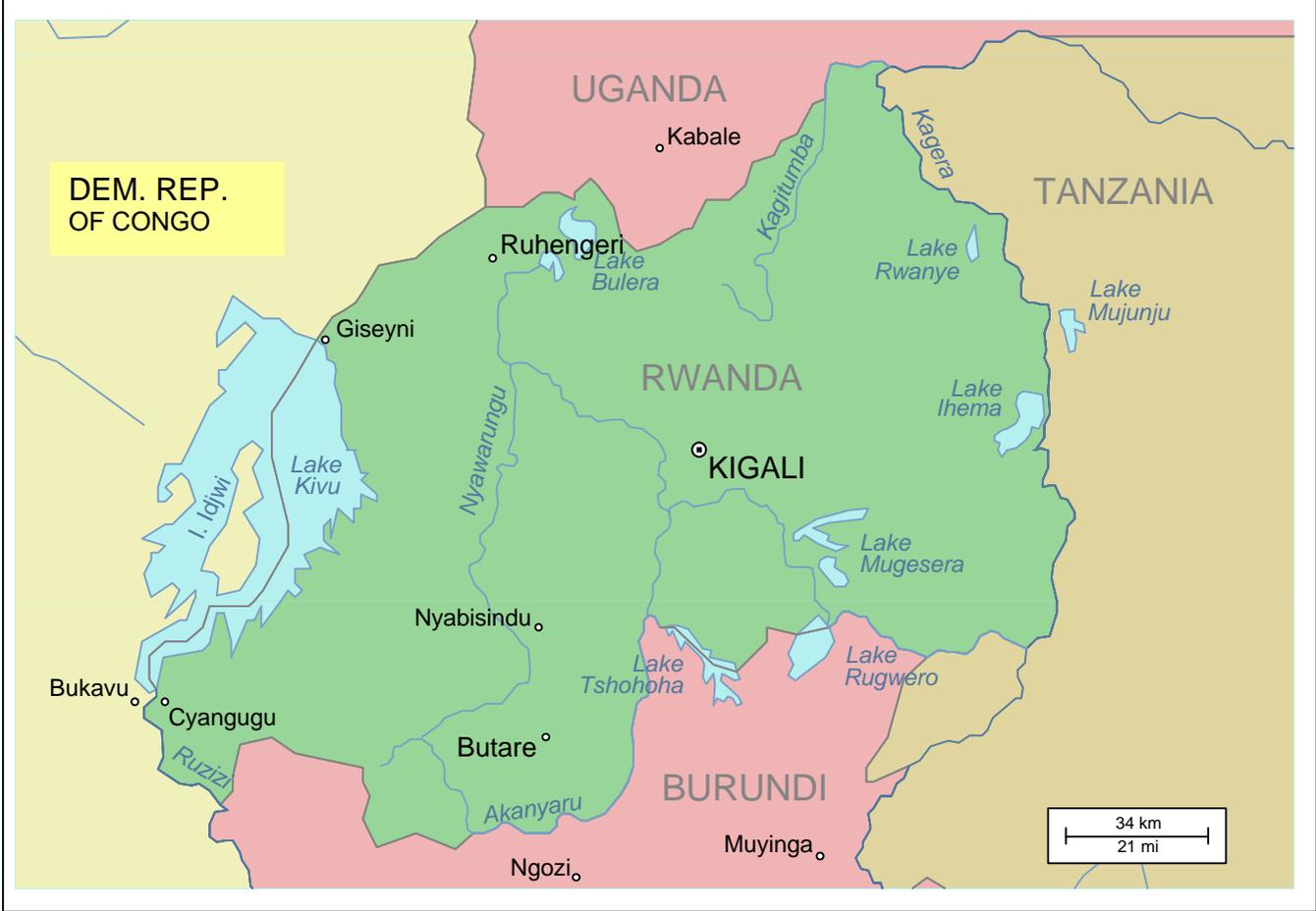
This report was researched and written by Erin K. Baines, Ph.D., consultant to the Women's Commission in collaboration with Women's Commission Deputy Director, Maha Muna. It was edited by Mary Diaz and Diana Quick of the Women's Commission. The research of the report was greatly facilitated by the time and commitment of Ms. Chantal Gatama, RWI focal point in Rwanda. Esmeralda Francisco, Gender Unit UNHCR, contributed to the research and editing of the report and her support in Kigali was greatly appreciated. The Women's Commission would also like to express gratitude to: UNHCR Rwanda, especially field offices in Cyangugu, Kibuye and Byumba; the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development, ProFemmes, Rwandan Women's Associations and the rural women and girls we interviewed. At UNHCR, thanks to Katharina Samara, Gender Unit, Joyce Mends Cole, Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Refugee Women and Chansa Kapaya, Regional Coordinator for Refugee Women. Thanks to Guenet Guebre-Christos, Cindy Burns and Paul Ndaitouroum for their support and advice and to all the representatives of international organizations that met with us. To Liz McBride, IRC-Rwanda, Veronique Dusabiand John Bosco, a warm thank you for their kindness and help.

A Note on the Title: During a field visit, I asked a Rwandan woman if RWI had made a difference in her life, to which she replied in Kinyarwanda, "Udashinga Ntabyina"—"you cannot dance if you cannot stand." The Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children thought this was an appropriate title for the report, where RWI provided critical resources to women at a time of an extreme emergency, and has contributed to the foundations for sustainable gender-related changes in the future through institution building.

Erin K. Baines, Ph.D.

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The Multiple Challenges Facing Rwandan Women

Traveling over an hour outside Kigali, often on winding dirt roads, one reaches the site of RWI-constructed houses in Rwamatamu. 114 families benefited from this project in this region, where widows and child-headed households represent 64 percent of the population. Ana* was one of them. Ana fled the genocide in 1994, finding refuge in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She lost two of her children. She returned in 1997 to discover her home had been destroyed, and was relocated to an *imidugudu* (government created villages) in Rwamatamu shortly thereafter. She now lives in an RWI-supported home with her husband and three children. The *imidugudu* where Ana lives is a two-hour walk from the field where she grows food for her family. She also has a piece of land with coffee plants on it; she had planned to sell the coffee to raise money for her family.

Ana began to cry as she told us that her uncle had recently burned her coffee crops to use the land for his cows. Ana inherited the land from her parents, and with assistance she may be able to legally battle her uncle, but with little knowledge or experience in legal issues, Ana must depend on a paralegal some distance from her home.

Ana also talked about the fear she had for the safety of her daughter. She must take her young daughter with her to the field each day—a four-hour walk there and back—as girl children left at home had been raped in the area. She touched her stomach as she told us she was once again pregnant. Ana is 42, and has never been to a doctor. She is painfully thin. She had attended women’s council meetings, but stated she had no time to organize locally with other women, as the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROFE) had encouraged them to do. She did apply to the communal fund, but after eight months she had still not received a response to her proposal to buy a cow for fertilizer. She stated she felt her time was better spent working in her fields than applying for any more loans.

“Ana” represents the multiple challenges rural women face in the areas of income, agricultural work, health, shelter, land title, childcare and gender-related violence. RWI strives to address these multiple challenges by taking a holistic approach, one that is both strategic (combating discrimination in legal institutions) and practical (meeting basic needs) in orientation. However, as Ana’s case demonstrates, RWI forms only one part of an ongoing effort to promote gender equality, and the challenges remain.

* Ana is a pseudonym

Executive Summary

In 1994, genocide shattered the foundations of the small Central African country of Rwanda, unleashing violence and hatred; more than 800,000 were murdered. The global media and reports by human rights and humanitarian organizations¹ helped communicate the tremendous pain endured by Rwandan women and girls targeted by gender-related violence during the genocide, and by women and girls left solely responsible for their families as female-headed households—a position 34 percent of the population found themselves in after 1994.² What has been less well communicated is women's and girls' struggle to move on, to redefine gender roles and relations in order to participate alongside men in the rebuilding of Rwandan society.

The remarkable courage of Rwandan women and girls gives reason for hope again after the tragic events in Rwanda. Rwandan women and girls have formed thousands of grassroots associations connected by networks throughout the country.³ Through this social organization, they have begun to rebuild their lives: reconstructing their homes, building centers for survivors of genocide and rape, learning to read and write, returning to school, acquiring new skills, participating in political life and forming local businesses. This work is reinforced by the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROFE), where Ministry representatives in each prefecture and commune work with local government officials to raise awareness of women's issues. MIGEPROFE also works to support the organization of women in the grassroots, where 15,400 groups have formed since 1994.⁴

The international community played a key role in supporting women and their organizations in Rwanda through the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Trust Fund for Women, the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) Women in Development program and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) Rwanda Women's Initiative (RWI). Launched by High Commissioner Madame Ogata during the emergency phase of mass returns and a time of completely depleted national resources, the RWI was established to promote the "empowerment of women" in economic, social and political life. Working across the country in partnership with women's associations and MIGEPROFE, the RWI has supported grassroots, "needs-based" projects in literacy and education, income generation and skills training, provided support to psychosocial centers and helped rebuild important infrastructures for women, including women's centers and shelter. The RWI has also had a longer-term, more strategic focus. The Initiative works to raise public awareness of gender issues (media campaigns, workshops and conferences) and builds the capacity of the Ministry for Gender and women's associations (training, fundraising and networking) as they work for Rwandan women and men today and in the future. The importance of this international role should not be under-

¹ For example, the Human Rights Watch report "Shattered Lives" documented the plight of Rwandan women who had survived the genocide and rape. Campaigns and lobbying efforts based on reports such as this resulted in the inclusion of rape as a war crime in the International War Crimes Tribunal for Rwanda.

² A demographic survey by the government taken in 1996 estimated that 54 percent of the population was female, with 34 percent heads of household—of which widows head 60 percent. See Catherine Newbury and Hannah Baldwin, "Aftermath: Women in Post-genocide Rwanda," Center for Development Information and Evaluation, USAID, Washington. Working Paper No. 303, July 2000, p.6.

³ Catherine Newbury & Hannah Baldwin. "Aftermath: Women's Organizations in Postconflict Rwanda." Center for Development Information and Evaluation, USAID. Working Paper No. 304. July 2000, p.2.

⁴ *Ibid.*

estimated: as one member of a woman's association stated, "This was one of the only projects specially for women, we took enormous encouragement and strength from the belief and investment UNHCR made in us."⁵ This report reviews the implementation of RWI and is also the story of what the international community can do and has done to promote gender equality in post-genocide, post-conflict Rwanda.

This report highlights the strengths and weaknesses of RWI, providing lessons learned for future women's initiatives and specific recommendations for the future of RWI. The report concludes that:

- UNHCR has a powerful emergency response apparatus, and is among one of the best UN agencies to quickly mobilize resources on the ground, throughout a country. Women's initiatives can enhance the agency's protection and assistance functions by:
 - (1) fostering closer relations with return communities, where experience has demonstrated that women are more often willing to become involved in inter-ethnic activities;
 - (2) promoting women's participation in political institutions and the peace process (Beijing Platform for Action); and
 - (3) supporting women's work that directly benefits the family and community.
- The role and scope of the Rwanda Women's Initiative is still not fully recognized or valued by senior managers within UNHCR headquarters. RWI was not prioritized at the headquarters level, where most resource decisions are ultimately made. While the RWI held much promise by the end of 1997, funding was cut by up to 90 percent of the requested amount in the wake of country-wide funding losses. This had devastating impacts on rural women's associations that had submitted proposals with raised expectations. It also led to a reduction in UNHCR staffing resources, including that of the regional advisor for refugee women based in Kigali. The original vision of the Initiative then, had to be revisited and revised, limiting its scope and reach within rural areas.
- As the government of Rwanda began to move the country from a state of emergency toward long-term developmental goals, and as UNHCR and other UN organizations struggled to fill this transitional gap, RWI and other internationally sponsored women's projects represented an innovative step during the post-conflict period. As this report documents, RWI worked toward meeting not only the immediate needs of Rwandan women, but also toward building the capacity of government ministries and associations working with Rwandan women. Many of these efforts represent an important, although perhaps under-estimated, foundation to the future of development in that country. UNHCR's work in post-conflict countries is enhanced when there is coordination with other UN agencies in this area.
- Articulation and communication of clear objectives and achieved results under the Rwanda Women's Initiative can be strengthened and better mainstreamed. Lines of responsibility for implementing and monitoring the objectives of RWI, as well as reporting on the impact of this initiative, have been weak in the past four years. This indicates not only the need for further capacity building activities with local women's associations and MIGEPROFE, but

⁵ This was stated to the author at a workshop held at the end of the review in Kigali. Paraphrased by the author. November 3, 2000.

also the inability of UNHCR-Rwanda to adequately provide such skills building in the short term. It also suggests the need for greater coordination and collaboration at the UNHCR field level and between the field and headquarters.

- UNHCR is well situated to carry out Women's Initiatives in post-conflict societies. These initiatives offer UNHCR field projects creative options for upholding the agency commitment to gender equality and to improving UNHCR's protection and reintegration capacities by involving local women and men, girls and boys. However, it should be recognized that in the context of evolving roles and responsibilities in the 1990s and into this century, UNHCR is still learning from experience. In order to improve future women's initiatives, lessons learned from past initiatives must be addressed. Key areas of improvement involve clarifying the goals and objectives of Women's Initiatives in relation to UNHCR's mandate and that of the country context and meeting the specific resource and technical needs of such Initiatives.⁶
- Lessons learned from RWI also highlight a number of both normative and technical questions that must be addressed regarding the relationship between women's initiatives and gender mainstreaming in post-conflict settings. This review finds that gender analysis was implicitly applied in women's projects, but not explicitly articulated in planning, reporting or evaluation.

⁶ For a thorough discussion of these areas, please see in this report Part Two, "Future Directions," section B "UNHCR and Women's Initiatives: Promoting Gender Equality in Post-conflict Societies?"

Introduction

THE RWANDA WOMEN'S INITIATIVE: UNHCR'S COMMITMENT TO WOMEN IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

The genocide left in its wake more than 800,000 dead, an impoverished economy, a traumatized society and a destroyed infrastructure. Internal displacement, the mass return of over one million refugees after decades in exile and the repatriation of more than a million refugees displaced in 1994, translated into enormous social, political and economic turmoil. It also provided room for redefining traditional gender roles and relations.

By the end of the genocide and war and before the return of refugees, the government estimated that close to 70 percent of the population was female. Today that number stands at 54 percent, with women constituting 60 percent of the workforce. Female-headed households comprise 34 percent of the population, and in some areas of the country this percentage increases to 64 percent.⁷

Women, historically confined to agricultural and domestic work, suddenly had to assume traditionally male roles such as construction of their homes, generating and managing income for their families and interfacing with local institutions. Rwandan women organized to form associations and networks to support each other, and to assert their rights.⁸ With their actions, Rwandan women have begun to challenge traditional gender roles and relations. As women rebuild their houses, they also transform the taboo that women should not work in construction. As widows organize into associations to collectively help each other, they begin to challenge the traditional idea that a widow is either vulnerable or incapable. As women engage the political institutions and political process by demanding and slowly assuming positions of political decision-making, they have begun to transform the notion that a woman's place is "in the home and field." Indeed, as a 1999 report by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children on Rwanda states, this is "a struggle men cannot do alone."⁹

In recognition of this struggle, UNHCR launched the Rwanda Women's Initiative (RWI) in 1996. In doing so, the organization reinforces the value of Rwandan women and strived to support their work to rebuild a new Rwanda. As the Deputy UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Fredrick Barton, stated:

In post-conflict countries it is not enough to simply go back to the status quo. It is important to produce change and to do so, it is important to locate agents of change. Women generally have strong social voices but no political power. UNHCR must provide ways of widening political spaces available to women. Whereas in the past,

⁷ See UNHCR-Rwanda "Refugee and Returnee Women in Rwanda." Kigali, Rwanda. January 2000.

⁸ Although a number of important women's organizations and networks were formed prior to the war in the 1990s, many were decimated during the genocide. Some re-formed in the post-genocide period, and new ones formed because of the events of 1994, such as associations of widows of the genocide.

⁹ Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, "Rebuilding Rwanda: A Struggle Men Cannot Do Alone." June 2000.

peace talks could rarely move past the ethnic divide, a focus on men and women could be a starting point for moving forward.¹⁰

The UNHCR is valued amongst other UN organizations as a rapid response organization, one that is well connected to refugees, returnees and the internally displaced “on the ground.” The organization is therefore well situated to support women at the grassroots level, but also women working within newly emerging civil organizations and government ministries. Women’s initiatives are one means of catalyzing the kind of changes in gender and power relations required to ensure the secure return of refugees, and promote peace and greater gender equality in post-conflict countries. This is well within the organization’s mandate, where reintegration and protection are promoted through women’s empowerment and the promotion of gender equality in areas such as shelter, legal issues, income generation and skills building.

UNHCR’s involvement in the transition from war to peace derives from its mandate to ensure that the return and reintegration of refugees take place in safety and dignity, and in a sustainable manner. In most cases, however, these returns are undertaken in environments of fragile peace, volatile security, continued resentment between divided communities, and virtually non-existent basic physical and socio-economic facilities. The reintegration and rehabilitation challenges call, therefore, for a range of initiatives, not only humanitarian, but also developmental and political. The challenge of ensuring a stable transition from war to peace in a particular society goes far beyond the mandate and capacity of any single agency.¹¹

This report explores organizational commitment, responsibility and approach to the RWI. The view that women’s initiatives are an essential part of UNHCR’s work is not shared among all UNHCR staff. Because women’s initiatives are still in the early stages of development in the organization, roles and responsibilities of different actors are not yet clearly defined. As a result, communication and a shared understanding of the goals of such initiatives need strengthening. Furthermore, the debate between the need for women’s initiatives to promote gender mainstreaming and the opposite view that women’s initiatives lead to the marginalization of women’s and gender issues needs urgent clarification. The RWI provides an important set of lessons learned in this regard.

Objectives of Review

The Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children (Women’s Commission) and the Office of the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Refugee Women at UNHCR wanted to document the achievements of RWI and reflect on lessons learned. A consultant was hired to review the initiative over a four-week period, traveling to UNHCR headquarters and Kigali to meet with different actors involved in the initiative. The terms of reference stated that the review should analyze RWI policy and process, and to assess the impact on gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment generally. It should consider other UN efforts to promote women’s participation in social, economic and political life in the country. The review should draw lessons learned from these analyses and consider the potential of a Great Lakes Women’s Initiative.

¹⁰ Fredrick Barton, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR debriefing on Key Findings of Rwandan Review, November 7, 2000, Geneva, Switzerland.

¹¹ Amelia Bonifacio, Former Director of the Division of Operational Services (DOS), UNHCR 2000.

Outline of the Report

Part One of the report supports key findings with descriptive evidence, and a set of recommendations intended to strengthen existing approaches in UNHCR-Rwanda. It recognizes that recommendations advanced are based on the assumption that RWI should continue despite limited resources and the scale-down of UNHCR-Rwandan operations. Moreover, it recognizes that the future of RWI was in question at the time of this review, and depending on decisions made regarding the role of RWI, these recommendations may or may not be applicable. However, these recommendations do provide important “food for thought” for RWI and other women’s initiatives in post-conflict settings, and should therefore be useful to a wide audience.

In Part Two, “Future Directions,” the report prompts UNHCR staff in Rwanda and at the level of headquarters to think of “what next.” It begins with specific steps for RWI to follow to rethink current strategic and structural approaches to the Initiative. It then turns to larger questions relating to UNHCR’s overall role and commitment to gender equality in post-conflict settings. Finally, the report explores the potential of a Great Lakes Women’s Initiative, where it is argued that UNHCR or other UN agencies would need to develop alternate models and methodologies than those currently applied for women’s initiatives. However, consideration should be given to the potential of supporting the emergence of peace networks in the region through an inter-agency effort. This section ends with a list of Lessons Learned to guide future UNHCR initiatives with women.

Appendix A provides a Chronology of events relating to RWI, and should be read by anyone interested in a more detailed account of the history of the initiative and the political-economic context it has evolved in. Appendix B shows the structure of MIGEPROFE. Appendix C is an interview schedule and Appendix D is a table of projects supported by RWI.

Methodology

The review was a documentation of lessons learned, to outline what has been accomplished to date, and to learn from these experiences. This required a performance analysis, based on a participatory and consultative process. In this regard, the review was informed by the UNHCR document “Planning and Organizing Useful Evaluations.”¹²

Consultative and Participatory

A wide range of persons was consulted in both individual and group interviews, including: former UNHCR staff in Rwanda (such as protection, fundraising staff and the former Regional Advisor on Refugee Women); current UNHCR program, protection and field officers, as well as senior program staff and the head of office; the Ministry for Gender and Women’s Development (MIGEPROFE); the Ministry of Labor; the Ministry of Unity; implementing partners; RWI focal points in MIGEPROFE, UNHCR and the umbrella organization, ProFemmes; UN staff working on gender and women’s issues in Rwanda; beneficiaries of RWI projects and survivors of the genocide who had received indirect or no assistance from RWI; rural women’s associations involved and not involved in RWI. For a comprehensive list of interviews please see Annex C, “Interview Schedule.” The review ended with a debriefing and workshop bringing together different stakeholders.

¹² UNHCR Inspection and Evaluation Service, January 1998

Performance analysis

This review focuses on the performance (impact, structure, process) of operations set up within the policy framework. The mechanisms through which RWI activities are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated are considered to illustrate the process through which such activities are realized and framed. It was not possible to assess the impact of such activities in any quantifiable manner (baseline data was not documented, nor does statistical information exist). A systematic qualitative analysis was also not possible given time constraints and limited resources. However, an analysis of how structure and process led to certain outcomes is possible and was undertaken in this review.

Part One: Review of the Rwanda Women's Initiative

This review of the Rwanda Women's Initiative considers results achieved, as well as the strategy and structure put in place to implement the program. This chapter also considers how gender analysis was used to shape the initiative and offers a discussion on RWI within the context of gender mainstreaming. Recommendations follow at the end of each chapter on these specific topics.

A. ASSESSING RESULTS

Over 50,000 Rwandan women and girls benefited from the RWI,¹³ most directly in meeting basic needs in housing, agricultural assistance or income generation. It is more difficult to measure qualitative changes RWI produced, particularly with regard to the symbolic purpose, gender mainstreaming, reconciliation and empowerment process. Such an impact assessment is complicated given a lack of baseline data gathered at the start of the Initiative (during the emergency). It is difficult to measure whether the stated objective of empowerment of women was achieved through RWI because indicators of sustainability, empowerment or gender mainstreaming were not clarified in the original concept and strategy paper. The broadly defined objectives meant that reporting and evaluation did not link activities clearly to objectives, nor question whether or not such activities were the most suited to the defined objectives.

RWI furthered UNHCR's protection mandate because it provided opportunities for and supported reintegration. RWI enabled UNHCR to support local organizations with access to grassroots networks that could report on the condition of returnees and the impact of war on women (e.g., regarding sexual and gender-based violence and the condition of adolescent girls). With cuts in funding, UNHCR Protection Officers took the lead in modifying the RWI objectives and overseeing the implementation of the project.

In meeting basic needs and building the capacity of Rwandan women's associations and government ministries working for women, RWI contributed in part to filling the relief-development gap, establishing a foundation for future development endeavors. It is important to analyze the impact of RWI from this perspective, as the debate on the relief-development continuum continues in Rwanda as in other post-conflict countries.

Concretely, the RWI accomplishments included:

1. Providing food, shelter and income to rural women
2. Contributing to the development of the Women's Communal Funds
3. Developing responses to acts of violence against women
4. Providing a focus on the situation of adolescent girls
5. Increasing visibility of gender concerns
6. Promoting the role of women in politics

¹³ UNHCR-Rwanda, "Refugee and Returnee Women in Rwanda." Kigali, Rwanda. October 1999.

Providing Food, Shelter and Income to Rural Women

At the height of RWI implementation in 1997, women were provided with critically needed clothing and shelter. RWI also provided livestock and agricultural tools so women could grow food to feed their families. A number of beneficiaries stated that the income generated from small economic projects enabled them to buy basic foodstuffs and, importantly, to send their children to school. Nearly all of the beneficiaries interviewed had aspirations to make their businesses larger, and many had done so with loans from small credit schemes, such as women's communal funds. While most RWI projects initially were emergency related, today RWI supports a number of potentially replicable income generation or education projects. Unfortunately, due to lack of capacity within local NGOs, few of the available reports of implementing partners provide information on impact that could provide useful case studies for a Good Practice database.

Contributing to the Development of the Women's Communal Funds

In 1997, women's committees across Rwanda called council meetings in each commune to inform women of Women's Communal Funds (WCF). Women were asked to contribute a nominal, personal amount of money into the funds to demonstrate will and commitment. Once a certain amount was collected (the amount differs from commune to commune), the committee could request an infusion of funds from the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development. WCF were established to channel resources to the local level: women (individually or in organizations) can apply for small grants to start or build micro-enterprises or to purchase essential agricultural tools or livestock. The funds are generally revolving. MIGEPROFE is currently undertaking a comparative analysis of different WCF, funded by different international agencies such as USAID or UNHCR. This analysis will help identify strengths and weaknesses in methodology across different communes.

UNHCR, through RWI, funded 42 WCFs in 1999 and continued to provide management training to committees in 2000. In one commune, the consultant visited a small grocery opened by members of a local women's association in a hospital, made possible by the WCF. The women were doing well with the business, but argued that the limit to the size of the loans posed problems; the amount of the loan was not always enough to maintain a store, or to expand in directions that could generate more profit.

Developing Responses to Acts of Violence Against Women

RWI has funded studies on the prevalence and nature of violence against women in Rwanda, critical to develop policy and strategies to combat violence. Other activities include the training of paralegals, radio programs and psychosocial counseling. However, some women's associations providing counseling have found it difficult to reach women in rural areas, where travel is made difficult by poor roads or a lack of working vehicles. Women's associations also pointed to the frustration of not having the resources to follow up on the studies they conducted. But the difficulties of combating violence against women are not only found in lack of resources. Most RWI activities are reactive, responding to acts of violence after they occur. Preventive measures are required.

The local organization, Haguruka, provides an example of an RWI-funded local organization which played a key role in legislative changes in women's rights, as well as in the

implementation of legal changes at the grass roots level. Haguruka was one of the first local associations to be funded by UNHCR in the post-genocide period. Originally, Haguruka was funded as a standard UNHCR protection activity, to promote women's rights. It was later funded by RWI, but affected by funding cuts in 1998. Despite funding difficulties, RWI has supported important Haguruka projects since 1997. These projects include the publication of key legal reforms and the training of Rwandan women from different prefectures to assist women on legal matters.

Providing a Focus on the Situation of Adolescent Girls

A large number of RWI projects involve adolescent girls as beneficiaries of education, literacy and vocational programs. As many studies on the subject of gender and conflict/post-conflict point out, girls are often the most marginalized groups in humanitarian work.¹⁴ Investing in girls is a critical way of protecting this group, as well as promoting their rights. However, RWI reports did not disaggregate beneficiaries by age or sex to discern the number of girls and women who benefited from projects, or were involved in decision-making.

Club Mamans Sportives (CMS) is an organization of Rwandan women founded in exile, with the idea of promoting women's role in development. RWI provided CMS funding to construct the first women's center in Kigali. Today, CMS continues to draw support from RWI to teach adolescent girls how to read and write. The consultant attended a "graduation" ceremony of around 80 girls and some boys in Cyangugu, where the graduates sang and danced about the importance of literacy. "We must fight ignorance, women learn to read and write!" they jubilantly sang. During the ceremony, girls read—from their own handwritten papers—speeches to give thanks to CMS, RWI and local authorities. The UNHCR field officer in attendance encouraged the girls to continue to learn, to put their new skills to use. CMS continues to support girls by also providing vocational training. As the international community debates what should fill the "relief-development" gap in Rwanda, CMS forges ahead to prepare Rwandan young women for their future roles in the development of their country.

Increasing Visibility of Gender Concerns

Many representatives of women's associations and beneficiaries stated that RWI was one of the only initiatives *for women*, and that they drew encouragement from the confidence UNHCR showed in their activities. RWI helped raise awareness amongst a variety of actors and was therefore an important advocacy tool. For instance, RWI has raised the awareness of other international and bilateral organizations of the importance of including women in their programs, and investing in local women's associations and structures. RWI raised awareness within government ministries and local authority structures about the role of women in the reconstruction of the country:

- RWI supported the construction of the first center built for and by women (Club Mamans Sportives)
- RWI funded media programs on gender issues, the first of their kind to be aired on Rwandan radio

¹⁴ Carolyn Nordstrom, "Girls and War Zones," in D. Indra (ed), *Engendering Forced Migration*. New York: Bergahn Books. 1999, pp. 63-82.

- RWI supported the passage of legislation on gender mainstreaming and inheritance law, providing legal expertise on the drafting of the law. This is a significant achievement, especially given women’s lack of legal standing before the genocide—see box below.
- RWI raised awareness of the importance of involving women in public sphere jobs (construction and street cleaning)

Finally, it can be argued that the RWI has raised awareness of men and women about the roles they could play in society and politics. In one interview, a man involved in an RWI income generation project stated that at first he had been skeptical, but was now convinced that woman could “do anything they want to.” A number of RWI beneficiaries stated they had gained tremendous confidence through their involvement, and that their husbands were supportive of their work.

Passage of the Inheritance Law

Prior to the genocide, Rwandan women did not have the right to inherit property, a major obstacle in a country where over 90 percent of the population depends on subsistence agriculture for their livelihood. Recognizing the difficulties female heads of household encountered as they returned and attempted to reclaim their land, the Government of Rwanda took steps to change the law on this issue. UNHCR protection officers, the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development and RWI-funded local organizations were actively involved in the drafting of this legislation, and RWI supported its passage by promoting public awareness and providing forums for consultation with women in the grassroots on the law. RWI has also provided forums for women parliamentarians to meet and exchange experiences, critical to build a political presence of women in the country, but also to pass important laws on gender equality.

Promoting the Role of Women in Politics

Originally, the Ministry for Gender, Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) created women’s councils to advocate on behalf of women to local authorities and eventually the national government. The women’s councils also provided a means of decentralizing associations based in the capital, where women’s associations, national ministries or international organizations could now contact women’s councils at the cell, sector or commune level to discuss potential projects or collect important information regarding the status of women. RWI funding has been used to strengthen these structures and train women to participate in national-level political institutions. Today, resources are being channeled through women’s structures in the form of women’s communal funds (WCF) and humanitarian assistance. But challenges still remain. Women’s committees require resources, and women are constrained in the time they have to participate. Sometimes women’s committee members face intimidation when working in local authorities. Finally, there is a possibility that women’s committees will be marginalized in political structures—where women’s issues are relegated to the committees instead of “standard” local authority structure.

Recommendations:

1. A clearer set of objectives needs to be defined in RWI and communicated, with measurable indicators established for tracking results.
2. The RWI should be periodically monitored and evaluated to consider what impact it has on the daily lives of women in terms of meeting basic needs, but also in relation to the more strategic interests of promoting gender equality in various institutions. Questions to promote a results-based analysis could include: Are women and girls able to meet their basic needs? What institutions affect their lives negatively or positively? How is their work valued in the community? What is their relationship to men? What activities can integrate both a basic needs and institutional approach?
3. Performance indicators should be integrated into each project proposal, and implementing partners given the appropriate resources to do so.
4. Good Practices should be identified and documented, paying attention to protection aspects and how RWI contributes to filling the relief-development gap.
5. RWI took a largely reactive response to violence against women, focusing on medical and psychosocial care of survivors and legal issues after the fact. A greater emphasis should be placed on prevention, such as awareness raising through RWI-sponsored radio programs. Moreover, both men and women should be engaged in solving the problem of violence against women. RWI could support creative mechanisms to prevent violence against women and challenge aspects of traditional gender relations which increase women's vulnerability to abuse.
6. A strength of RWI is a focus on adolescent girls, and yet this is not well recognized or promoted in reporting or funding appeals of the Initiative. Future reports and appeals should highlight the role RWI plays in adolescents' and young girls' lives.
7. Disaggregated data on age can help improve projects by taking into consideration the needs and resources of different age groups. It is recommended that this disaggregation and analysis start in RWI.
8. UNHCR-Rwanda should follow the results of MIGEPROFE's evaluation of different communal funds, and devote resources to conduct a comparison with other UN agencies working in the area to assess what is needed, or whether or not it should continue in the vein it has to support these funds.

B. STRATEGY: STRUCTURAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The war and genocide led to a mass disruption of traditional gender roles and relations, which led to women and girls assuming greater public-sphere roles in politics, economics and social life. Rwandan women – in national women’s NGOs, grassroots associations, government ministries and local councils – have increasingly taken an active role throughout Rwanda, seeking to assert their rights to participate in the reconstruction of the country. RWI projects and activities sought to support this work of Rwandan women. RWI involved Rwandan women in government and non-governmental associations in the decision-making, planning, implementation and reporting process of RWI. In other words, RWI drew on pre-existing resources of Rwandan women, and supported them in their work. In this sense, it is an initiative that took and continues to take its lead from the Rwanda context, and what women are doing there.

A holistic strategy was articulated at the start of RWI, encompassing both practical interests (basic needs) and strategic interests (institutional change). This involved a range of issues relating to women’s lives: economic autonomy, violence, political participation and legal issues. This strategy informed the structures that were put in place to implement the Rwanda Women’s Initiative. A steering committee consisting of MIGEPROFE, UNHCR and ProFemmes (umbrella organization for women’s associations) was established to decide upon proposals.

However, after the second year of funding, the implementation of the original RWI strategy was adversely affected by funding cuts, loss of human resources and structural reorganization. The Steering Committee consisting of UNHCR senior managers, the government Ministry for Gender, Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) and the umbrella organization ProFemmes, took the decision to revise the strategy to reflect these changes—shifting focus onto capacity building and sustaining existing projects. However, this shift was not well articulated to UNHCR headquarters, UNHCR-Rwanda field and sector staff, donors or the Rwandan women who had been mobilized under the initial strategy.

RWI beneficiaries are grassroots women most in need of support—survivors of the genocide and their families, orphans and returnees. However, many RWI activities also support women’s associations and government institutions that seek to work with and for women. In this way, indigenous structures are strengthened to support and assist women throughout Rwanda. With shortfalls in funding and staff, the holistic approach would have meant that funding would be spread thinly across different issue areas and to different groups. A strategic decision was made to focus on capacity building and to work with local organizations to strengthen their outreach to rural communities.

Some ongoing projects were sustained but the focus was placed on promoting long-term sustainability and operational capacity. As was evident in the consultant’s meetings with grassroots women’s associations, many were unable to manage already existing projects, and had little time left for addressing capacity building. Women’s associations and the government ministry suffer from high staff turnover and their management is relatively weak, impacting on monitoring and strategic planning. This has in turn hampered the overall implementation of the initiative.

Capacity building activities were undertaken with MIGEPROFE and women's associations. These included proposal writing, fundraising, report writing and book-keeping. For example, in one project, working with the Rwandan Girl Guides Association, RWI followed up the successful implementation of a tailoring training school by providing modest infrastructure resources, such as sewing machines and sewing materials. This enabled graduates to set up their own business afterwards and obtain a level of independence.

Difficulties in Resource Mobilization

RWI Funding 1997-2000

1997—\$2,600,000
1998—\$ 350,000
1999—\$1,600,000
2000—\$ 300,000

The RWI was launched with a pledge of US \$7 million dollars, of which over US \$4.8 million has been received. However, funding amounts have fluctuated from year to year—from as high as \$2.6 million in 1997, to as low as \$300,000 in 2000. This is in part due to a lack of a shared understanding and agreement within UNHCR about the potential and role of women's initiatives in post-conflict societies. RWI was a priority for high-level and field-level UNHCR staff, however when funding for Rwanda aid dramatically decreased in 1998, key decision-makers elected to instead fund core, sector programs (e.g., water and sanitation). Field-based management was able to continue RWI projects under the sector funding (i.e., housing construction), however unpredictable funding levels made strategic and long-term planning and implementation of RWI difficult. At the same time, without a formal revision of strategic approach or good reporting mechanisms, the RWI was not able to attract new funding sources.

The desire to implement the fund as quickly as possible in late 1996 was met with raised expectations of Rwandan women's groups and the government. Originally, the RWI coordinator anticipated that over \$4 million would be spent in the first year. However, it was noted by the former Steering Committee members that in fact the target amount of \$4 million exceeded the local capacity to spend in that year—suggesting the need for realistic assessments of local capacity and coordinating mechanisms at the outset of any Initiative. Despite the constraints on local capacity, the RWI Steering Committee did a remarkable job distributing \$2.6 million.

The funding crisis, staff turn-over and subsequent dissolution of mixed working groups meant that UNHCR field office staff were quickly marginalized from RWI activities: field officers were no longer encouraged to develop proposals with rural women's associations (due to a lack of funding), and increasingly fell out of touch with nationally based women's associations implementing projects in their areas. This in turn affected the ability of the RWI focal point to advocate for gender mainstreaming within UNHCR activities. Moreover, it was a loss of an additional resource to follow up on the activities of national women's associations in different prefectures.

Different UNHCR actors at a headquarters level play complementary roles in women's initiatives. In the case of RWI, a breakdown of communication around these roles was evident. Fundraising and public information were not able to generate donor interest in RWI, in part due to a lack of understanding of the issue. Senior UNHCR headquarters officials responsible for the Great Lakes region did not consider RWI a priority and allocated budgets accordingly. They failed to take an active interest in the potential of the initiative.

The Impact of RWI Funding Cuts in Kibuye

Kibuye is nestled between beautiful Lake Kivu and a mountainous region distinguished by terraced slopes, banana trees and local crops. Before the genocide, Kibuye was extremely isolated, separated by a long succession of switchback mud roads that made travel between Kigali and Kibuye long and difficult—up to 12 hours in the rainy season. It has been suggested the road to Kibuye was a low priority because of the large number of Tutsi who once lived there: some estimate as many as one in three people before the war.¹ Most were killed during the genocide. Survivors returned shortly after the war. Because Kibuye was difficult to travel to, and because the presence of militias until 1999 in the region made it unstable, the international community has invested a minimal amount, providing basic services such as shelter, water and food where possible.

In this context, RWI brought a promise of hope to survivors of the genocide. In 1997, the UNHCR regional community services officer was told to contact local women's associations with the assistance of national women's networks, and ask women to organize and prepare projects for submission to RWI. This was done, and as the officer stated "optimism was extremely high." As funding failed to be delivered to UNHCR-Rwanda in 1998, Kibuye was to receive no funds for any of the project proposals submitted. For the women who had developed the proposals, this was both discouraging and frustrating. Field officers, also discouraged with RWI, stopped their efforts to follow up on projects carried out by women's associations with their RWI funding. The consultant met with several women's associations that voiced their concern with follow-up, where projects such as a poultry initiative had failed, or where the women's center was not able to generate enough funds to keep going.

¹Philip Gourevitch, "We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed with Our Families." Picador: NY. 1998, p. 29

Roles and Responsibilities - Performance Management

UNHCR-RWI internal and external organizational and coordination mechanisms are weak in a number of areas, particularly when it comes to communication of objectives and results in decision-making and reporting. Where UNHCR field staff did not play an active role in the RWI, field offices lost an opportunity to also provide protection and assistance to those communities through RWI activities. In turn, RWI lost the opportunity of involving UNHCR field staff in monitoring and follow-up of projects. Finally, UN and bilateral funding programs each supported separate gender projects without strong coordination or collaboration between them.

The Role of UNHCR Staff

In 1997 the Regional Advisor received authorization to spend a budget of \$4.2 million for the RWI and spent \$2.6 million that year. She anticipated that the \$1.6 million not spent in 1997

would be carried over into 1998 and be available for program implementation. In addition, it was anticipated that some portion of the balance of the \$7 million target set at the launch of the RWI program would be secured in 1998. Instead, when the entire Rwanda country program was dramatically cut in 1998, RWI only received an earmarked \$350,000 from the US for 1998 programs.

RWI was originally structured so that different “stakeholders” worked together towards women’s empowerment. In the early years of RWI, local authorities, government ministries, women’s associations, beneficiaries and UNHCR worked together in *Mixed Working Groups* to identify and implement project proposals based on an assessment of the needs and resources of beneficiaries.

Cuts to RWI staff positions in 1998 resulted in a loss of resources to the overall initiative. High staff turnover in 1998 meant that the internal core constituency around gender issues was lost. New staff entering the organization have not been “brought on board” in the absence of a special advisor and an adequate number of RWI staff. In addition, the post of senior regional advisor for refugee women was also cut in 1998, which had a negative impact on the gender mainstreaming focus.

As a result of funding shortages, proposals developed in field offices in 1998 were not funded. UNHCR field officers became disillusioned with RWI and perceived it as a Kigali-based initiative. From that point on, UNHCR sector and management field staff played a minimal to non-existent role in the monitoring and evaluation of projects.

On the other hand, since decision-making on RWI included the protection officers and most senior, experienced staff, some creative initiatives were planned and implemented under RWI, including an important reporting and advocacy role for Haguruka. Also, what little shelter funds were available were used to support RWI implementing partners.

Different Levels of Coordination: Coordination between headquarters and the field is essential to the success of carrying out this strategy. A steering committee composed of country-level staff is useful, but planning and reporting must involve headquarters, branch office and field office staff. The relative lack of communication between fundraising, senior management and UNHCR field staff regarding RWI led to negative outcomes during ensuing years. RWI suffered financial difficulties that had an impact on the initiative’s structure and strategy. With inadequate resources, the positive accomplishments were under-reported, and under-reporting meant that RWI accomplishments were not recognized by those who develop and allocate budgets.

Monitoring and evaluation of the RWI were largely conducted by implementing partners themselves, involving few UNHCR field staff in a systematic manner, with the exception of the RWI focal point and key program/protection staff based in Kigali. Considering that only one UNHCR staff could devote her entire time to follow-up and field visits, external monitoring and evaluation was not as extensive as required. This, coupled with the fact that most reports are “process oriented” (rather than impact assessment) renders a broader evaluation of the impact of RWI projects difficult. Process oriented reporting focuses on activities, expended resources or particular “products” (booklets, trainings, events) delivered by the project. While important, this

information does not fully explain the actual impact such activities have on Rwandan women and men.

Some associations did benefit from trainings on management and evaluation, evident in their reports that have begun to document impact as well as process. A performance indicator should be integrated within project descriptions to alert coordinators of which associations need capacity building in this area. Furthermore, UNHCR staff should also be responsible for monitoring and evaluation, meeting on a regular basis with RWI staff to feed into the overall process.

Inter-agency Coordination: Several UN and bilateral development agencies—such as USAID’s Women in Transition Initiative or UNDP’s Trust Fund for Women—have implemented women’s initiatives in Rwanda, but coordination between them is limited. While agencies have begun to coordinate on gender mainstreaming (the Gender Thematic Group), women’s projects largely work in isolation from each other in different regions.

Bringing Civil Society and Government Together

A strength of RWI is that it works with both women’s associations and the Ministry for Gender. RWI helped to foster relations between the two in the post-war period by articulating a common vision. Some women’s associations voiced the concern that they must compete with the Ministry and women’s councils (and communal funds) for scarce international funding. In the case of RWI, the “common vision” fostered between the Ministry and women’s associations blur the differing roles of civil society and the “state.” As one woman noted “It is good that the Ministry and women’s associations share the same vision, but we should not necessarily share the same methodology, too.”

Communication and coordination between women’s associations under ProFemmes (the umbrella agency), MIGEPROFE and the UNHCR-RWI focal point are strong, but require greater transparency and decentralization. To a large extent, the RWI is perceived by field offices and some Rwandan women’s associations as a government-sponsored and MIGEPROFE-led initiative, focused on a Kigali-based constituency and with undefined criteria for project selection.

Disbursement of funds, particularly during the first phase of RWI, was often slow as proposals passed from the Ministry to UNHCR for approval, or when relevant, through ProFemmes. Slowness of dispersion had a negative impact on the planning and management of associations. An alternative is to decentralize the approval process to field office levels, to increase the human resource base involved in the decision-making process and to ensure that national coverage is reached.

Women’s initiatives are an important advocacy tool, raising awareness within communities and local authorities, as well as in government agencies and international organizations of the importance of including women in any planned activity or event. Some projects displayed stickers positively reinforcing women’s role and position. However, the majority of projects viewed did not display stickers or posters. Identification of projects with posters, stickers and signs is an important tool to promote both visibility and transparency.

Criteria for selecting implementing partners and projects are broadly based and not clearly defined or articulated. As a result, there is no systematic analysis of which are the best associations to work with, or activities to support. A number of respondents argued that decision-making on proposals is an opaque process, without clear justification or rationale.

Within ProFemmes, associations that received RWI funding met to decide how funds would be allocated on a consensual decision-making basis, but funding was largely distributed on a priority basis to sustain existing activities. This action did not necessarily lend to sustainability of associations or projects in the long term. Nevertheless, a consensual, decision-making basis promoted transparency, which could provide a model for the rest of RWI.

The same groups of associations tend to receive RWI funds from year to year, often renewing the same projects. Criteria could help to assess which associations and projects to fund, given overall objectives and the relative strengths and weaknesses of associations applying for them. *Capacity building* has been an important objective of the RWI, providing trainings on project management and monitoring, as well as the provision of infrastructure. However, projects selected did not always lead to capacity building of the association. With limited funds, this might have been a criteria for deciding which projects to support or to continue to support.

The Role of ProFemmes

All of RWI implementing partners are Kigali-based NGOs or the Ministry for Gender. One-seventh of the population of Rwanda lives in Kigali. Implementation of projects or activities to the rural areas relies on networks throughout the country. However, weak capacity of implementing partners, poor infrastructure and insecurity in rural areas have resulted in the concentration of activities in the urban and peri-urban areas.

RWI funding cuts in 1998 meant that expansion of RWI to women's associations in rural areas was not perceived to be possible by RWI decision-makers. Rural women's associations—although generally part of a national network—tend to receive less concrete or direct funds from RWI. As a point of contrast, the USAID/OTI-funded Women in Transition program shifted strategy in the second phase of implementation to focus away from the urban-based NGOs to promotion of informal, rural women's groups and associations. The investment was made at the grassroots with an eye to supporting capacity building at that level, and leadership.

Where national associations implement projects in rural areas, there is often a lack of concrete follow-up necessary to sustain the project. For example, in Kibuye, a number of rural women were sent to Kigali to receive training in poultry husbandry—an RWI-sponsored program. The women received chickens upon return, but disease destroyed the flock. No follow-up was provided, and the project died.

Sustainability of the ProFemmes structures are critical to the long-term impact of the RWI investment and moving the country from a state of emergency to development. The umbrella organization has identified clear objectives for continued improvement, including developing Rwanda-relevant gender indicators, implementing and monitoring a multi-year, multi-agency Action Plan, and diversifying its donor base.

Political Neutrality: It is important to involve governments in women's initiatives and to support specific ministries devoted to gender. However, UNHCR must also strive to ensure its programs are politically neutral. It must be remembered that the Ministry for Gender is part of the Government of Rwanda, and therefore influenced by political interests. A counter-balance must be created to ensure that decision-making includes all women in such initiatives, particularly in places like Rwanda, where ethnic divisions are serious. This is also essential to move towards unity in post-conflict societies.

There is no identification of beneficiaries in RWI monitoring and evaluation. This in part is due to the sensitive political context, where the Rwandan government is attempting to promote a culture of unity to fight discrimination on the basis of ethnic identity. To do so, all Rwandans have been issued universal identification papers and are encouraged to identify as Rwandans rather than Twa, Tutsi or Hutu. However, discrimination continues to exist, as do ethnic tensions. *RWI cannot purport to override discrimination through an unwritten policy of non-identification of beneficiaries.*

Recommendations:

At this critical juncture in RWI program planning, it is not clear whether the initiative will continue or be folded into a new Imagine Coexistence Initiative.

Related to Strategy and Structure:

1. The RWI strategy should continue to be revised on a yearly program basis, in consultation with implementing partners. This strategy should take into account objectives reached in the previous year, changes in resources, political, social and economic contexts, and the evolving needs and interests of beneficiaries.
2. A periodic review committee could be established to measure mid-term progress. Performance indicators should be a part of each sub-agreement, aiding the process of evaluation and assessment.

Related to Difficulties in Resource Mobilization:

1. One of the greatest challenges facing RWI is the lack of resources and funding. The articulation of a clear strategy and improved reporting mechanisms might attract new funding.
2. Public information and fundraising should be informed and consulted in the revision of RWI, and assume responsibility for generating funds.
3. Senior management must be held accountable to RWI, where spending decisions resulted in cutbacks to RWI: an accountability framework should be established.

Related to Roles and Responsibilities – Performance Management:

1. The present steering committee should be enlarged to include representatives of UNHCR field offices, protection and program staff, as well as a broader range of women's associations, identified by field offices. This committee should meet on a regular basis, keeping minutes as a record of decision-making.
2. A set of criteria should be drawn up, based on what the revised objectives are and the types of associations RWI supports. Equal access to the fund by all women and women's associations should be factored into the criteria, as well as identification of beneficiaries against a clearly articulated and widely disclosed standard.
3. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be integrated into the overall strategy. Field staff should participate in this on a periodic basis. A periodic review should be held with actors involved to assess and revise accordingly. Training should be provided on results-based monitoring and evaluation, following UNHCR's new approach to operational management systems (OMS).
4. UN and other international humanitarian or development agencies should devote resources to review their respective projects to identify areas of overlap, commonality, strengths and weaknesses. This evaluation could then be used to strategically plan for future collaborative work in the area. A preliminary inter-agency working group could be created with women's associations to facilitate planning in this regard.

Related to the Role of ProFemmes:

1. A renewed visibility campaign should be undertaken, to ensure all beneficiaries and their communities are aware of RWI and that they know that the fund is intended for them and that they could have the potential to access it.
2. A set of criteria should be identified and agreed to by various involved parties. These should be adhered to in decision-making, and a justification of positive or negative decisions shared with submitting agencies or associations.
3. Involve UNHCR field officers as a means of identifying grassroots women's associations in rural areas that could be encouraged to submit for funding and of decentralizing RWI funds. Involve such field-staff in decision-making on proposals at the national level to ensure representation in the rural area.
4. Projects and outcomes should be assessed on the basis not only of gender and age, but ethnic representation to reinforce the political neutrality of RWI to involved actors and interested international partners.
5. Given adequate resources and commitment, UNHCR should consider a decentralization of the Initiative, involving UNHCR field officers in follow-up.

C. GENDER-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the report reviews the degree to which gender analysis was used to develop the project and the extent to which gender mainstreaming was addressed through the Initiative.

Gender Analysis

Reports did not provide an analysis of the gender impact of RWI projects, nor were criteria developed to assess the impact of projects and activities on gender roles and relations. While a number of women reported that their position in the home or community had improved greatly through their participation in RWI projects, in other projects it was not evident how men and women were being engaged to think or act outside of traditional gender roles and relations (e.g., cooking, cleaning, collecting wood and water). The following case study shows the need to apply gender and age analysis, and devise strategies for getting men and women involved in the re-negotiation of gender roles and relations.

Vocational Training of Adolescent Girls, Association of Rwandan Guides (AGR)

The consultant visited the Association of Rwandan Guides project, located in a large basement room where girls were busy at their sewing machines learning how to produce beautifully sewn blankets, dresses and bags. AGR, in association with RWI and other international support such as the Girl Guides in France, were able to provide orphan girls with the opportunity to learn a skill and, in many instances, a new sense of optimism about the future, and in their standing in society.

AGR organizers describe the experience of starting up the vocational school: “Many orphan children were placed with foster families when the government closed orphanages. AGR wanted to help them learn new skills and find work. Some of the girls were exploited or neglected in their new homes, and so they would start the course, but then fail to attend classes. We went to their homes to talk to their foster families, to convince them of the importance of permitting and encouraging the girls to stay in school. We talked to the girls too, to build their confidence and get them to think about the future. To provide incentive, girls are paid a percentage of every item sold, and then asked to save some of it for the future. AGR, with the assistance of RWI, follows up with graduates, helping them to start their own tailoring stores.”

“Chantal,” an orphan of the war and a recent graduate of AGR’s vocational program, described how she started school very shy and lonely. RWI helped her buy her own sewing machine for the store she now owns, and she proudly told us of her growing business in the area. “Chantal” now has a husband and has taken in an orphan to care for. She reported that her husband respects her achievements.

Woman's Worth: The Price of Volunteer Work

The majority of RWI projects and activities rely on the voluntary work of women in associations, committees and organizations. Often RWI depends on women's networks to reach beneficiaries in rural areas in activities such as psychosocial counseling, political mobilization, income generation, literacy and rights awareness training. While this is an ingenious way to reach a broad base of people, the traditional gender roles of women pose obstacles to their ability to carry out activities and implement skills acquired through training. What is more, it raises the question as to whether women are more often assumed to do unpaid work than their male colleagues do.

Allocation of Time: Training of Trainers

RWI has financially supported extensive trainings with women representatives at the commune and prefecture level on political participation, legal issues, rights awareness, health (HIV/AIDS), sanitation and project development, management and monitoring. Training was provided to women's committee members and national women's associations who were then expected to train women in their communes and at the grassroots level. Many women interviewed stated they did not have time after trainings to begin training others, or that travel in the communities was made difficult by poor infrastructure. Furthermore, some women felt their volunteer work jeopardized their ability to provide for their families, and hampered follow-up or application of new skills acquired in training.

For instance, the consultant attended the last days of a two-week training of 80 paralegals in Kigali by Haguruka. Most of the women participants hold jobs as schoolteachers or in local government, and many also sit on local women's committees. In order to attend the training, most women had to take leave from their jobs and bring their children with them. The cost of travel was borne by them. At the training, women formed different committees to organize food, childcare and cleaning. Interestingly, the president of these committees elected by the trainees was one of the very few men who attended the training. When the consultant asked him what he would do when he returned to his community, he replied "First, I will teach my family and then my community about the law." When asked if he would also teach local authorities, he replied, "When I teach my community, then they will teach the authorities." Although most shared this man's optimism regarding their role as paralegals, many were also anxious—past trainees have been intimidated by men in their communities, including by local authorities. Most others typically face time constraints, trying to balance their workloads with the volunteer commitment to Haguruka.

Capacity: Women's Committees

A number of Rwandan NGO workers expressed concern that women's committees are being overburdened. Women's committees are being approached by various government ministries, women's associations and international organizations that view them as a means of reaching women at the grassroots level. According to the former Minister for Gender, women's committees were never intended to act as implementing agencies, but rather as advocates and a catalyst for change. They lack basic resources and therefore the capacity to act as project implementers.

Gender Mainstreaming

Special projects for women are intended to widen their choices and ability to act. Special initiatives should also lead to a gradual transformation of institutions so that they promote gender equality. The RWI was an important tool to empower Rwandan women and institutions working on their behalf. However, the degree to which RWI promoted gender equality in UNHCR and perceptually “gender-neutral”¹⁵ government ministries is not discernable given the lack of a clearly defined set of objectives in RWI to this end, and a lack of baseline data at the start of the Initiative. Despite the fact that gender awareness and a mandate for change is demonstrated by UNHCR-Rwanda and in the highest levels of the Government of Rwanda, improvement in the area of measuring the impact of this commitment, and dedicated resources such as that of RWI, are required.

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns, resources and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and program in all political, economic and social areas. Gender mainstreaming is also the process through which one is learning and analyzing the power relationships, and the weaker position of a social category is recognized and addressed.

Statement by UNHCR Office of the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Refugee Women, 2000.

Measuring Performance in Gender Mainstreaming:

The original intention of RWI was to raise awareness of the importance of including women in the reconstruction of the country and in humanitarian assistance.¹⁶ However, this was not a clearly articulated objective, but rather an inferred one, and no impact indicators were identified in the original concept paper regarding gender mainstreaming. In fact, a “situational analysis” of UNHCR was never conducted to assess the degree to which gender was integrated, or how this has changed to date. As a result, it is difficult to assess whether core UNHCR activities such as shelter, protection or refugee status determination were affected by RWI. In other words, it begs the question as to whether gender was a more significant factor in these areas after RWI began implementation. For example, UNHCR already had an extensive shelter program by 1997 falling within reintegration activities: was it necessary to design specific shelter programs for women, and what impact did RWI shelter programs have on addressing any inequalities that had existed prior to the Initiative?

As other sections of this report discuss, RWI soon became the responsibility of a sole focal point in UNHCR, and lost the engagement of different field, protection and program officers. As a

¹⁵ Often programs, projects, policies or institutions that do not make explicit mention of women or women’s issues are assumed to be “gender neutral.” It is further assumed that gender-neutral approaches promote gender equality – giving men and women the same opportunities. This assumption overlooks the fact that where socio-economic inequalities exist, women are limited in their access to services or programs and/or have differing needs or interests based on gender roles and expectations. Therefore no project or program can assume to meet the needs and interests of men and women equally without gender analysis. It is in recognition of this that ECOSOC passed a resolution on gender mainstreaming, requiring all UN agencies to integrate gender analysis into every step of a policy or program life cycle, at all levels and in all areas.

¹⁶ Personal interview with former regional advisor on refugee women, A. Arakelian, 2000.

result, there was limited ownership or buy-in of the initiative, counter to the objective of gender mainstreaming.

Most of RWI was concentrated within the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development. On the one hand, this approach strengthens this Ministry's capacity to mainstream gender in other government bodies. On the other hand, it raises the question as to whether or not RWI maximized its influence in other ministries. Future women's initiatives must weigh the relative strengths and weaknesses of working through a ministry for gender, against mainstreaming in different ministries according to the activity involved. For example, would RWI have more effectively promoted gender equality had shelter programs been carried out with the ministry responsible for UNHCR general shelter programs, or should RWI economic projects have been carried out with the ministry for economic affairs?

Recommendations:

Related to Gender Analysis:

1. RWI should consider the relative merits and drawbacks of providing a stipend to women who volunteer to carry out RWI objectives. In planning, consideration should be given as to whether men in similar positions (such as in government institutions) are receiving pay for the same work as women in volunteer positions.
2. In decision-making, planning and implementation, consider any negative impacts on women and the project involved in volunteer work.
3. Re-examine RWI projects and their relation to local government and the women's committees.

Related to Gender Mainstreaming:

1. A clearly articulated gender mainstreaming strategy should complement RWI objectives and vice-versa. UNHCR's Regional Coordinator for Refugee Women and other UNHCR staff must play an important role in developing and monitoring this strategy.
2. To measure performance in gender mainstreaming strategies within the context of women's initiatives, a situational analysis should be conducted, gathering baseline data. A periodic review of the impact of the strategy should be carried out to assess the degree to which awareness within different areas of both UNHCR and partner institutions has increased.

At a UNHCR Headquarters-Regional Level:

3. To promote gender mainstreaming in the context of the "logical framework" recently introduced into UNHCR planning and evaluation by the operational management system (OMS), it is appropriate that RWI be integrated into: a) the broader operational planning of UNHCR-Rwanda; b) UNHCR program activities in general; and c) the wider strategic planning cycle of the Office of the Regional Advisor for Refugee Women and Gender Equality and the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Refugee Women. This would enable UNHCR to better assess how women's initiatives could facilitate a wider

organizational effort to promote gender mainstreaming and, likewise, how global efforts promote and support operational efforts on the ground.

- 4 Regarding UNHCR's wider efforts to promote gender mainstreaming, women's initiatives should be referred to within the context of "standard" UNHCR program and protection activities in the future. For example, women's initiatives could be referred to and explained in UNHCR's Repatriation and Reintegration Operational Framework, and in other sources of importance to field officers such as UNHCR guidelines and the knowledge information management system (KIMS).
- 5 RWI must be assumed as a shared responsibility among different actors within and outside the organization. As such, it requires further "in-house" reflection to promote a deeper understanding of the role UNHCR wishes to undertake in post-conflict countries, with women's initiatives. Workshops could take place at the country, regional and headquarters level to clarify what is to be achieved with women's initiatives and what needs to be done to ensure they are a success.

Part Two: Future Directions

A. RECOMMENDED “NEXT STEPS” FOR RWI

It is recommended that different partners in RWI work together to determine new roles and relationships, as well as to define a new strategic approach. Currently a lack of donor and in-house interest, and the low impact and visibility of results means that keeping the RWI the same will not generate further interest or funding. On the other hand, by revitalizing the strategy, UNHCR, MIGEPROFE and women’s associations can potentially attract new donor interest and revitalize RWI as an activity.

UNHCR and the Harvard Law School recently launched an initiative named “Imagine Coexistence.” This project seeks to promote coexistence among returning and local populations, rather than the more distant goal of reconciliation. UNHCR will support Imagine Coexistence pilot projects that enrich the lives of returning refugees and their communities in Bosnia and Rwanda. It falls under the responsibility of the Reintegration and Local Settlement Unit of UNHCR headquarters.

Recent discussion between UNHCR-Washington and the Women’s Commission revealed that RWI will be folded into the Imagine Coexistence Initiative. In this case, RWI activities could be revitalized while taking on a new direction. Should this be the case, it is still important to draw upon lessons learned from RWI’s past experiences, and to take steps to protect the strengths of RWI, the needs and resources of Rwandan women’s associations and MIGEPROFE. Moreover, lessons learned in this report should inform this merger with respect to areas of weakness.

The following steps should be taken:

Immediate Actions:

- Develop a monitoring plan in coordination with the Ministry Focal Points and RWI partners of 1999-2000 activities (e.g., community funds) to take stock of quality and level of implementation.
- Establish a temporary RWI Task Force (Protection, Program and Finance) to prepare a work plan to give follow-up to the implementation of RWI 2001 activities; develop a framework to integrate RWI activities in UNHCR’s repatriation activities in 2001 and ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels of activities. This should not be done without the input and agreement of women’s associations, to ensure complementarity between UNHCR’s objectives and those of Rwandan women.
- Clarify RWI objectives and activities in relation to those of the Imagine Coexistence program, preserving the gender-based approach and improving areas of technical and normative weakness.
- Branch Office Kigali should convene a working group with all field officers, program and protection staff to decide on the monitoring plan and develop indicators to measure impact of selected projects.

Mid-term Actions: Transforming RWI's Concept and Strategy

Branch Office Kigali should engage in a phased consultation process with RWI partners, Imagine Coexistence staff in the Reintegration and Local Settlement Unit, MIGEPROFE, and then open the debate to UNDP, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and other civil society groups. The objective of the consultation will be twofold. First to strategize in-house what UNHCR wants to see happening with the RWI in 2002-2003:

- Redefine and formulate a new strategy for RWI (and in the context of its changing role in Imagine Coexistence).
- Set new objectives and guiding principles in line with the above.
- Initiate an inter-agency exchange of information and experiences.
- Explore the possibility for a strategic partnership with other international organizations and UN agencies to diversify funding sources.
- Use this consultation process to strengthen UNHCR's partnership with women's organizations with a view to involving them in other areas of UNHCR's operation.
- Galvanize UNHCR's staff commitment and understanding of RWI's added value to the efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.
- The monitoring exercise should inform the consultation process about the institutional capacity and role of MIGEPROFE to lead and coordinate the program. In addition, this monitoring exercise could help UNHCR field staff to gain ownership of RWI projects and revitalize the field involvement in the 2002 program.

Second, the consultation should be opened up to include input from Rwandan women's associations and the Ministry for Gender and Women in Development.

Key Steps:

- The UNHCR Regional Advisor on Refugee Women/Gender should facilitate a two-day workshop. The first day of the workshop should be an internal UNHCR discussion to present monitoring findings and agree on a way forward based on the Review's lessons learned and recommendations. This should be done in coordination with the Imagine Coexistence team, including the Reintegration and Local Settlement section. The second day should be an open discussion with women's organizations, the Ministry and selected UNHCR staff to present the outcome of the first day's discussion and agree on a new strategy (new model of partnership, thematic focus, priorities, funding strategy). Preparation of the workshop should include provision of this report to relevant stakeholders, as well as background information on Imagine Coexistence.

B. UNHCR AND WOMEN'S INITIATIVES: PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES?

During this review, many people raised the question as to whether or not UNHCR was the appropriate organization to undertake women's initiatives, or even if women's initiatives were the best way to promote gender equality within the context of UNHCR operations. It quickly became evident that not everyone shared the same understanding of the purpose of women's initiatives. In fact, a large number of UNHCR field staff were not engaged and even felt resentment towards RWI. Others were strong supporters and advocates, but felt marginalized from RWI activities. At the level of headquarters, debate surrounded the very nature of women's initiatives.

This report finds that in order to be successful, women's initiatives must be a shared responsibility, one that is considered a priority and connected to broader UNHCR objectives in the country of operation, but also to the normative foundations of UNHCR's mandate. The Bosnia Women's Initiative, created in 1996, has since led to the development of similar UNHCR initiatives in Rwanda, Kosovo and potentially in Sierra Leone. It is therefore important to implement such initiatives in relation to UNHCR's commitment to promote gender equality, and in the organization's work in post-conflict societies where return is taking place. Central questions include:

Are Women's Initiatives Part of UNHCR's Mandate?

UNHCR is currently redefining and expanding its mandate, stemming from the organization's increasing involvement in post-conflict countries where mass return is taking place, large numbers of internally displaced persons are located and where UNHCR is often called upon to address the relief-development gap (UNHCR 2000). In order to find durable solutions to the problems of refugees in these cases, the organization has increasingly engaged in reintegration activities traditionally outside its scope of work: shelter construction, democratic institution building and support to civil society.

After a conflict, women assume more responsibility and find themselves in new roles. Women must be offered equal access to resources to support this new role. Women's initiatives are one means of empowering women, through capacity building and meeting basic needs.¹⁷ The RWI experience illustrates that women's initiatives are potentially excellent reintegration tools since:

- Gender roles very often mean that women are responsible for care of the family, sending children to school, health, food and the like—therefore to specifically support her work is to directly benefit the family and community.
- Promotion of women's participation in political institutions and the peace process is incorporated in a country's commitment to the Beijing Declaration. Traditionally, women have been marginalized from formal peace talks and political arenas, but have been active in grassroots organizations that promote peace and work to find common solutions to basic problems women share. Return and reintegration fall under the purview of most

¹⁷ Interview with Guenet Guebre-Christos, Former Head of Office, UNHCR-Rwanda

contemporary peace agreements, and increasingly gender is being recognized as an important component of such accords.

- Women’s initiatives are a potential way of fostering closer relations with return communities, where experience has demonstrated that women are more often willing to become involved in inter-ethnic activities at a community level (e.g., Bosnia). Through women’s networks, women paralegals and centers for women, UNHCR’s protection and program activities are strengthened in areas such as shelter, property rights, violence against women and sexual violence.
- UNHCR has a powerful emergency response apparatus, and is among one of the best UN agencies to quickly mobilize resources on the ground, throughout a country. It is an implementing agency, and as such complements the work of other agencies such as UNIFEM. UNHCR’s work in post-conflict countries is enhanced when there is coordination with other UN agencies.
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (October, 2000) mandates all UN agencies to promote women’s participation in peace negotiations and peace support operations.

Women’s initiatives are one means of channeling resources and adding value to the work of women and girls, holding the potential for empowerment. As this report documents, such initiatives are a way of raising awareness about the roles women and girls can assume, and the importance of including women and girls in relief and development projects, peace talks and decision-making. Women’s initiatives are needed to empower women (via specific resources) until gender equality has been achieved.¹⁸

On the other hand, women’s projects can potentially lead to marginalization, where such projects are not deemed a priority or assumed to be “additional” to “central” programs. There is a need to design women’s initiatives with the goal of gender mainstreaming in mind.

What needs to be in place in order to ensure that women’s initiatives promote gender mainstreaming and do not result in the marginalization of women or gender-related issues into “special projects” handled by “gender specialists”?

Women’s initiatives should raise awareness and lead to gender mainstreaming and, eventually, gender equality. If this is not achieved, they run the risk of marginalizing women into “special programs.” Resources are generally concentrated in “standard programs” or “mainstream” government ministries. Special women’s projects are important to safeguard gender issues, women’s right to access resources or women’s right to participate, where mainstream programs or agencies exclude women. However, women’s initiatives or projects should be accompanied by a gender mainstreaming strategy, to transform “mainstream” institutions so that men and women, girls and boys, have equal/complementary access to resources, ability to control resources and the right to participate.

Based on the experiences of RWI, **a set of guidelines should be developed to guide future initiatives.** Some points might include:

- a team of staff with expertise of gender analysis is required to form a steering committee, including local NGOs, the government, UN agencies;

¹⁸ Joyce Mends-Cole, UNHCR Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Refugee Women (informal interview, October 2000).

- adequate human resources/management;
- commitment to the initiative over a realistic time period;
- strategic approach for gender mainstreaming;
- realistic assessment and support of local mechanisms;
- adequate funding strategies;
- shared responsibility across different levels and sectors of UNHCR—program, protection, human resources, management, fundraising and public information;
- shared understanding and coordination amongst actors involved of what is to be achieved;
- Performance indicators and evaluation frameworks established at the start of the initiative;
- An accountability mechanism involving senior management and field staff;
- Periodic revision of the strategy according to accomplishments and challenges;
- A consultation mechanism with women’s associations;
- A gender mainstreaming strategy.

C. THE POTENTIAL OF A GREAT LAKES INITIATIVE

A Great Lakes Initiative (GLI) could play an important role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding by supporting emerging women's peace movements and networks throughout the region, where women from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Kenya have already taken steps in this direction. The potential of inter-agency cooperation should be considered where UNIFEM has already begun to promote women's participation in peace processes in the Great Lakes region.

Human security and national security make up two sides of the same global security coin... Without international action, women caught in conflicts will have no security of any kind whatever the definition. And without their full participation, the peace process itself suffers for there will be neither justice nor development ... Women are half of every community, are they therefore not half of every solution? How can we, in good conscience, bring warlords to the peace table and not women?

Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM, 2000

A Great Lakes Initiative that resembles a coordinating mechanism could be considered within the region, but generally falls outside traditional UNHCR activities. It therefore would take a substantial situational analysis and consultation of proposed actors to further develop this initiative.

Challenges:

1. The countries that constitute the Great Lakes region are diverse culturally, politically and economically. Each country is experiencing a different level of (in)security. Therefore any regional initiative would need to respect the unique situations in each country. The Rwandan experience cannot be assumed to be replicable within different countries. At the same time, all the factors contributing to refugee movements, and the cross-border character of forced migration in the region indicate that no single country situation can be tackled without incorporating regional considerations.¹⁹
2. One response to the inquiry surrounding a Great Lakes Initiative was that UNHCR and donor countries had been unable to follow up on promises made in 1996 regarding the RWI. Funding dwindled in Rwanda when the potential of supporting nascent grassroots networks and national governmental and nongovernmental institutions was at its optimum. UNHCR and donor commitments to the long-term process of moving a country from a state of emergency to reconstruction and development must be transparent and followed through.
3. Given the challenges of working across different socio-political and economic contexts with diverse groups of women, a comprehensive coordination mechanism would have to exist with adequate and knowledgeable staff.

¹⁹ The consultant would like to thank Marguerite Garling from UNIFEM for her comments on this section of the report, some of which were integrated within.

4. To promote accountability and ownership, governments, as well as women's associations, would have to endorse and develop the concept of the Great Lakes Initiative together, identifying common visions and working relations.
5. Different actors consider different countries to be a part of the Great Lakes region. Criteria would need to be developed to assess which countries would be included, based on factors such as the level of organization and the interest of women.

Opportunities:

1. As one Rwandan woman said, "Boundaries do not separate the commonalties women face everywhere in this region such as poverty, violence against women, feeding their children and shelter." They also do not, and have not, prevented women from working together across such boundaries to build peace. The common concerns of women in the region, displaced or otherwise, form a common platform that transcends the cultural and ethnic divisions among them. This in turn potentially provides a foundation for peace and social justice.

The ProFemmes Twese Hamwe Campaign for Peace is one example of a grassroots campaign already underway in the region. This campaign responded to and built upon grassroots initiatives where women worked together to find common solutions to common problems despite their different backgrounds. ProFemmes has provided assistance to women attempting to form local associations, training programs on tolerance and conflict resolution, counseling services, public education services and media campaigns. ProFemmes was awarded the UNESCO Mandajeet Singh Prize for Tolerance and Nonviolence in 1996.

2. Women throughout the Great Lakes region have already begun to make their own initiatives to build peace in the region, forming informal networks, meeting to exchange experiences and reaching out to support each other's work. Examples include the Women in Peace Initiative (WIP) and Women as Partners for Peace in Africa.

For example, the international Women as Partners for Peace conference was held in Kigali in June 2000. Women from different parts of Africa, as well as other conflict-ridden areas of the world, deliberated on tangible strategies to include women in more substantive ways in the peace-building processes. The conference aimed to produce a tenable blueprint for the active involvement of women as partners in the entire peace process, from the local level to the decision-making of international negotiations, and to equip women with the requisite skills and tools to mobilize for lasting peace in their respective countries.²⁰

3. Potentially, a Great Lakes Initiative could support the objectives of repatriation by reaching out to refugee women in different countries and identifying reasons they are reluctant to return. The Rwandan Women's Network (RWN) has already begun work to this end. For example, RWN is planning to start a newsletter that documents the stories of Rwandan women inside the country and in exile. The intention of *Visions and Voices: Rwandan Women Speak* is to promote dialogue and raise awareness. Eventually RWN hopes to air their stories on the radio.

²⁰ UNIFEM Newsletter, July 2000.

4. Should a Great Lakes Initiative be created, the coordinating role of an organization such as UNHCR (possibly in partnership with UNIFEM) would be simply to facilitate networking and consolidation of existing and evolving mechanisms. Each organization offers different and complementary expertise—UNIFEM in leadership on gender issues,²¹ UNHCR in implementation. An existing Memorandum of Understanding could be revised in this respect.

²¹ UNIFEM shapes its activities for women in conflict situations around five fundamental points:

1. Understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls
2. Improving protection and assistance for women and girls
3. Supporting women's leadership in peace-building
4. Bringing a gender perspective to inter-governmental peace and security initiatives
5. Supporting gender justice in post-conflict reconstruction

Statement by Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of the UNIFEM to the Security Council's Open Debate on Women and Peace and Security, October 24, 2000

Conclusion and Lessons Learned

UNHCR programs such as the Rwanda Women's Initiative, implemented during post-conflict situations, are directly related to the agency's central mandate of promoting safe and durable return. The RWI was implemented with the recognition that women's roles within their families and communities often change when they are refugees, and those roles are again reexamined upon their return. RWI furthered UNHCR's protection through support to local women's organizations that have access to grassroots networks that can monitor the status of women and their families upon their return (e.g., regarding sexual and gender-based violence and the condition of the adolescent girl).

This report explored UNHCR's organizational commitment, responsibility and approach to the RWI. Because women's initiatives are still in the early stages of development in the organization, it is critical that communication and a shared understanding of the goals of such initiatives be strengthened. Furthermore, the debate between the need for women's initiatives to promote gender mainstreaming and the opposite view that women's initiatives lead to the marginalization of women's and gender issues needs urgent clarification. The RWI provides an important set of lessons learned that can guide program development and implementation, be it within UNHCR or other organizations and UN agencies undertaking programs that promote gender equity in post-conflict settings.

1. **Gender mainstreaming:** Women's initiatives should promote gender equality in existing institutions, not create "marginalized" women's projects or structures. Ideally, gender should be mainstreamed within existing institutions and women's initiatives should aim toward this. Indeed, women's initiatives are vital to achieve gender equality in the long term. In this respect, a strategic framework with timelines and performance indicators is critical, and must be coordinated within the organization, as well as with external partners.
2. **Strategic gender planning in an emergency situation is necessary and possible:** The RWI was planned in a post-genocide, post-conflict period when massive returns were still occurring. Civil society and government structures were only beginning to rebuild during this period. This was a catalytic moment where the international community acted to support Rwandan women in their own efforts to recover and participate in the rebuilding of Rwanda, for example in the matter of land ownership. *Strategic gender planning is necessary in an emergency situation.* With the creation of a senior regional post for refugee women, it was possible to articulate a strategy and establish appropriate mechanisms for RWI. The post helped to address operational confusion that often accompanies an emergency situation. It also helped protect women's projects that often become marginalized when viewed as "secondary" priorities in emergency contexts. With adequate human resources, *strategic gender planning was possible.*
3. **Situational analyses:** At the start of any UNHCR women's initiative, a situation analysis of the *country context* is essential to identify local mechanisms to facilitate the design, planning and implementation of the initiative. A people-oriented planning (POP) approach is useful

for this analysis.²² A similar situational analysis should be made of *UNHCR activities*, to link the women's initiative to existing UNHCR activities from a gender perspective. The original RWI strategy involved and built upon existing women's mechanisms; however, analysis of UNHCR activities relating to standard UNHCR programs was also required to facilitate gender mainstreaming.

4. **Articulation of a strategy** with both long- and short-term goals, objectives and performance *indicators* must be made in consultation with the involved actors, including implementing partners and beneficiaries. Revision of the strategy should be made at the start of each planning cycle. This revision should be based on an analysis of what was to be achieved and whether or not the strategy was appropriate to achieve it.
5. **Partnerships:** The involvement of government ministries, women's associations and UNHCR is a strong aspect of the RWI that promotes a shared understanding around gender issues and responsibility for gender mainstreaming. It is critical to engage institutions shaping women's lives in this way, as well as to empower women in them. However, it is also important to maintain a balance in this relationship, to ensure political neutrality and provide a check on interested parties.
6. **Funding sources** should be identified at the outset of the initiative and based according to the capacity of local mechanisms to effectively implement and monitor the resources. A realistic timeframe for disbursement of funds should be set accordingly.
7. **Senior management must be accountable:** When funding shortages in country operations occur, women's and children's initiatives and projects are often the first to be cut. For example, it was suggested that senior management at headquarters did not realize the potential of RWI, which may account for the cut to resources in 1998. This results in a "Catch-22"—"women's projects" depend on political will to survive funding cuts, but would not be cut if political will existed. Nevertheless, one way of circumventing this dilemma is to hold senior management and officials accountable for gender mainstreaming and women's initiatives.
8. **Evaluation frameworks and performance management:** the strategic and planning framework should be guided by a clear set of performance indicators and revised according to planned reviews and evaluations. These in turn should inform management, where changes that arise (intended or unintended) are taken into account and adjustments are made accordingly. Women's associations and beneficiaries should always play a central role in any evaluation and performance review.
9. **Achieving results:** To be successful, women's initiatives must be a *shared responsibility*, one that is considered a priority and connected to broader UNHCR objectives in the country of operation, but also to the normative foundations of UNHCR's mandate.

²² For more on People-Oriented Planning, see A UNHCR Handbook: People-Oriented Planning at Work – Using POP to Improve UNHCR Programming. Anderson, Mary. UNHCR, 1994.

10. **UNHCR is a beneficiary:** It should be recognized that in women’s initiatives, UNHCR also benefits, where projects complement and strengthen UNHCR operations and where gender mainstreaming is also promoted. When possible, base-line data should be collected at the start of any Initiative with respect to gender-integration of UNHCR programs—this can be used to measure (and improve) gender mainstreaming in the country operation.
11. **Gendered priorities:** Patterns in resource allocation in UNHCR-Rwanda’s country operations suggest that gender was not considered a priority by senior management at a headquarters level. This highlights the need to clarify UNHCR’s normative and operational mandate within post-conflict societies today, and the relevance of women’s initiatives within them.
12. **Gender is men and women:** RWI projects worked almost exclusively with women, for the empowerment of women. Men were engaged at an institutional level, within local councils or government bodies. However, the Initiative did not elaborate how to engage men in the process of women’s empowerment.

APPENDIX A

The Origins and Evolution of the Rwanda Women's Initiative: A Chronology of Events

1996

- Human Rights Watch released the report “Shattered Lives” (September 1996) and raised international awareness about the plight of Rwandan women and children who survived the genocide, sexual and gender-based violence and a range of human rights abuses, such as women not being able to own or inherit land.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata visited Rwanda and pledged to support Rwandan women in a project similar to the Bosnia Women's Initiative.
- A \$7 million figure was promised to the Rwanda Women's Initiative; however, no funding sources had been identified, no strategy articulated and no timeframe identified.
- The original concept paper identified the main beneficiaries as “unaccompanied women, survivors of the genocide, as well as unaccompanied minors and vulnerable foster families” (RWI, October 1996).
- UNHCR protection officers worked closely with the Rwandan Ministry of Gender to draft an inheritance law that would recognize the rights of Rwandan women to inherit property.
- UNHCR protection officers advocated for women's inclusion in shelter programs and worked with local authorities to raise awareness of women's rights.

1997

- Desiring to channel RWI resources immediately to female survivors, UNHCR identified implementing partners with the government Ministry of Health (MINISANTE) and women's associations under the umbrella of ProFemmes, Haguruka and Club Mamans Sportives (CMS).
- In early 1997, the Ministry of Family and Women's Promotion (MIFAPROFE) entered into a tripartite agreement with UNHCR and ProFemmes, where the Ministry would counter-sign all project proposals. The Ministry of Health transferred funds and pending proposals to MIFAPROFE.
- The majority of projects approved in the early part of 1997 were relief-oriented, including the construction of 600 houses for women and quick impact projects (QIPs) to rebuild local infrastructure and income generation activities. Long-term projects included the

construction of a woman's center for vocational training in Kigali by CMS. Trauma counseling and legal training were carried out, as were radio programs on women's and gender issues. The more unstable regions of Cyangugu, Kibuye, Gisenyi and Ruhengeri received largely relief-oriented funding.

- Project approval was slow, with funds to women's associations delayed. Projects approved were generally concentrated in the capital, explained by the absence of a decentralized mechanism to channel resources to rural areas. However, the high insecurity of rural areas also stymied decentralization of funds. Slow dispersal of funds might be explained by the reorganization of government ministries responsible for the fund, but also the absence of a senior-level UNHCR coordinator of RWI.
- In October 1997, a post for Senior Regional Advisor on Refugee Women was created for the Great Lakes Region—among her priorities were to develop a regional gender mainstreaming strategy, and to strengthen the existing organization of RWI. To solicit project proposals from across the country and to involve UNHCR staff, the new Regional Advisor created the following: 1.) RWI focal points in each field office; 2.) “Mixed Working Groups” consisting of UNHCR, the newly reorganized Ministry for Gender and Women's Promotion (MIGEPROFE) and ProFemmes; and 3.) a “team approach” whereby UNHCR program and protection staff were “brought on board” the RWI project for consultation and input.
- MIGEPROFE began a process of decentralization in 1997 in order to facilitate the integration of rural women into political and economic life. MIGEPROFE encouraged the creation of *women's councils* (consisting of all women in a particular cellule) that elect *women's committees* (representatives of women).
- RWI focal points were encouraged to meet with women's committees at the cellule level to identify potential projects for the year 1998. Proposals were sent to Kigali for approval for the next program cycle.
- At the end of 1997, \$2.6 million had been dispersed. The final report of the period January to December 1997 identified the following as the **objectives** of RWI, which also act as broad “criteria” for project selection:
 - enhancing integration and active participation of women in economic, social and cultural development process;
 - promoting women's rights and women's role in political, legislative and justice arenas and;
 - combating impunity and violence against women.

Broadly, the objective of the initiative was to “contribute to individual and collective empowerment of women.” Beneficiaries were described as “female survivors of the genocide collectively, with their children born as the result of rape [and] Rwandan women who work in association with them and returnees are also beneficiaries of this initiative.” (UNHCR, December 1997)

- The regional advisor and MIGEFASO prepared for the new project cycle, having received a large number of proposals from rural areas—the mixed working groups had successfully mobilized rural women to organize and develop proposals.

1998

- UNHCR-Rwanda underwent a major funding crisis, severely affecting its ability to carry out program and protection activities. As a result, monies were reallocated to cover standard activities. Only \$350,000 of US earmarked funds were channeled to the RWI, where \$4 million had been requested, including the anticipated \$1.6 million left over from the 1997 RWI budget.
- The Regional Advisor and MIGEFASO decided to sustain existing projects; namely shelter, media projects and poultry training.
- At one level, the momentum of existing projects continued, raising awareness. At another level, the inability to fund new projects was devastating to the initiative.
- The impact of the funding shortage on the RWI and Rwandan women was immense. Grassroots women’s associations in rural areas suffered the most, where proposals developed in 1997 with RWI focal points, MIGEPROFE and women’s committees did not receive funding. Women were frustrated and angry. As one UNHCR staff member stated, “Funding was cut to Kibuye just when we needed it the most.” (See case study “The Impact of Funding Cuts to Kibuye.” page 15.)
- 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.
- RWI was also hurt by cuts to RWI staff. The post of regional advisor for refugee women was cut, leaving the RWI without a senior-level person to spearhead the initiative. One national focal point was responsible for the entire initiative from this point onward.
- A high level of UNHCR staff turnover meant that the constituency forming within the organization on gender issues dissolved.
- Mixed Working Groups more or less discontinued in the prefectures outside of Kigali. UNHCR field staff were disillusioned with the initiative after spending considerable time developing proposals with little or no response from Kigali. A lack of resources meant that the relationship between MIGEFASO and UNHCR staff in field offices lost momentum. Decentralization of the initiative did not occur in 1998 as envisioned in the 1997 strategy.
- Before leaving office, the Regional Advisor on Refugee Women lobbied, together with the Office of the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women, for a reinstatement of funds. Fundraising in headquarters, new to the issue of women’s initiatives and striving to end

the earmarking of funds, was unable to respond to the urgent requests. The office of the Desk Officer at headquarters did not see the RWI as a priority.

1999

- RWI was revitalized by an infusion of \$1.6 million. One factor that might account for the increase in funds was the introduction of a unified budget, where all UNHCR programs within a country are guaranteed a certain amount of funding. However, it should be noted that the overall level of funds continued to decline in Rwanda despite the fact that returnees were steadily entering the country.
- The decision was made to refund past associations and build capacity. Activities included vocational and literacy trainings, livestock distributions, psychosocial and paralegal trainings. The decision was also made to reinvigorate RWI's approach to the Women's Communal Funds. Originally started in 1997 with four communes, RWI expanded to 42 communes in 1999, investing \$500,000. To strengthen women's councils, training was provided, as were funds for meetings and conferences. Management training was also extended to recipients of funding.
- The Association Pour les Batwas (APB) started an innovative project of stove production to raise money for an extremely marginalized group of Rwanda's people, the Batwa. Income generated was used to sustain the association, advocate for the Batwa and to pay school fees for Batwa children.
- National unity and reconciliation was added as a fourth broad objective of RWI in letters of instruction and sub-agreements. However, the criteria for project selection and activities supported were not revised to reflect this new objective.
- After extensive consultations with grassroots authorities and women's associations and many re-drafts later, the inheritance law was passed by the Rwandan Parliament, giving women the right to inherit property. RWI funded Haguruka to once again train paralegals from each prefecture. 80 women were trained in 1999, with the goal of assisting women with various cases in the court system and in their dealings with local authorities. Awareness raising of women's rights was also supported on radio programs funded by RWI.
- Some new partners were funded by RWI, including the Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE), which gives Rwandan girls a chance to study and realize their aspirations to become teachers and doctors.
- Shelter construction continued and finally finished in 1999—nearly 600 homes were built with RWI funds.
- The newly reorganized Ministry for Gender and Women in Development (MIGEPROFE) prepared and published a Country Progress Report on Implementation of Women's World Regional and National Action Platforms.

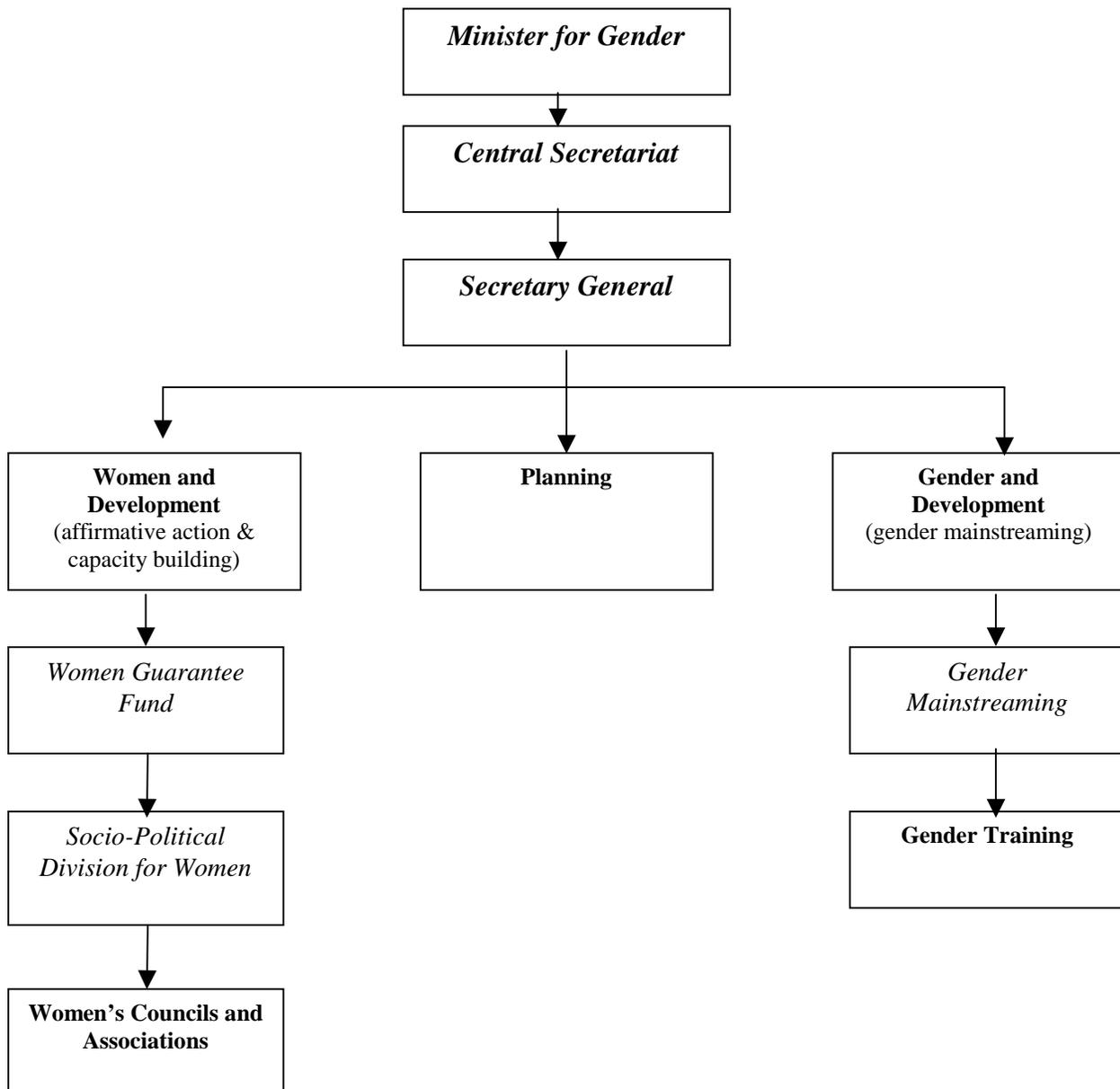
- MIGEPROFE held a one-day gender training with nine government Ministers, with then-Vice President Paul Kagame opening the day.

2000

- Funding again dropped to \$300,000. The decision was made once again to sustain existing projects and build capacity where possible. Women's associations were asked to prioritize their needs. ProFemmes organized a meeting with association members to discuss this prioritization.
- The impact on a number of associations was great. For example, the widows' association of ICYCUZUZU, formed in Kigali to provide support and psychosocial care to women, was unable to meet the enormous demand for counseling throughout the country. Women are often unable to make the journey to the capital to get the counseling they need. Lacking vehicles or resource, counselors are unable to make the trip to the rural areas to meet the women. What is more, the training of counselors ICYCUZUZU planned to run with RWI funds had to be "downsized" considerably.
- In the meantime, MIGEPROFE made significant strides in national politics when the legislature passed a law on gender mainstreaming. The new legislation required all government ministries to mainstream into their departments. Gender focal points were identified in each ministry.
- MIGEPROFE finalized a draft five-year Plan of Action on gender. A policy on gender was also drafted.
- Security in the northwest improved significantly, providing the opportunity to work in this region.
- Despite changes in the national political and social climate, and changes in funding sources and the accomplishments of the Ministry and women's associations, there was no real revision of RWI strategy. Branch Office Kigali made no effort to revitalize Mixed Working Groups on the assumption that field officers were already overworked. This also reflected the perception that RWI was an additional activity that stood apart from UNHCR's core activities. This perception reflected the failure of UNHCR to draw a clear relationship between the work of the organization and RWI.
- In late 2000, UNHCR-Rwanda requested another \$350,000 from headquarters for the 2001 program year. No justification of the amount requested was put forth.

APPENDIX B

Ministry for Gender and Women's Development: (MIGEPROFE) October 2000



APPENDIX C

Interview and Activity Schedule for Rwanda Women's Initiative Program Review October 16 - November 3, 2000

Date	Name	Title / Description	Location
October 9-13	Armineh Arakelian Oscar Mundia Joyce Mends Cole Katharina Samara Esmeralda Franscico Document Review	Former Regional Coordinator for Refugee Women, Great Lakes Former RWI Coordinator Administratuer de secteur pour le Rwanda, Operation des Grands Lacs Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women and Gender Equality Program Officer, Gender Unit Gender Unit UNHCR HQ Archives	Geneva, Switzerland
Monday October 16	Chantal Gatama Cindy Burns Paul Ndaitouroum Draft of Sched. Document Review	UNHCR RWI focal point Country Representative Senior Program Officer UNHCR Rwanda Archives	Kigali, Rwanda
Tuesday October 17	World March of Women US Embassy Reseau des Femmes Haguruka Document Review	Attendance at March Consultation on Political Situation Executing Agency; Met with executive Secretary (Ms Rose Uwagirisa) Attended final debriefing of a 2-week training of paralegals; spoke with beneficiaries at group and individual level UNHCR Rwanda Archives	Kigali, Rwanda
Wed. October 18	Angelina Muganza	Minister for Gender and Women in Development, Government of Rwanda	Kigali, Rwanda Travel to Cyangugu
Thurs. October 19	Club Mamans Sportives MIGREPROFE Local women's association, Hospital Store	Literacy Training, attendance at graduation and certificate distribution Women's Councils Credit Fund Recipient of WCF loan, Met with two members of the association	Cyangugu, Rwanda

	<p>Women's Communal Funds</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Ibrahima Kebe</p>	<p>Met with beneficiaries of fund, members of local women's associations</p> <p>Met with Burgomaster, representatives of councils, including Sous-Prefet of Socio-Economic Affairs</p> <p>UNHCR Field Officer Cyangugu</p>	
<p>Friday October 20</p>	<p>Joel Armand H.</p> <p>Monique Rudacogora</p> <p>MIGEPROFE (1997) Shelter Project</p> <p>3 Local Women's Associations, organized by Reseau Des Femmes (RDF)</p> <p>RDF and Haguruka, Kibuye</p> <p>Local Authorities</p>	<p>UNHCR Field Officer Kibuye</p> <p>UNHCR Community Services Assistant</p> <p>2 beneficiaries of RWI funded shelters 8 beneficiaries of RWI funded shelter</p> <p>Indirect RWI beneficiaries</p> <p>Local branches of national women's associations, representatives and members of women's councils</p> <p>Burgomaster</p>	<p>Kibuye</p>
<p>Saturday October 21</p>	<p>Duterimbere</p> <p>SEVOTA</p> <p>RDF and Haguruka</p>	<p>Executing Agency, Micro-finance projects 6 beneficiaries – RWI contributed to training of the association</p> <p>Newly "independent" association supported by RDF, met with 50 indirect beneficiaries and representative of local RDF association</p> <p>Local branches of national women's associations and women's council members, representatives and members.</p>	<p>Gitarama</p>
<p>Sunday October 22</p>	<p>Notes, Schedule Organization</p>		<p>Kigali</p>
<p>Monday October 23</p>	<p>Review Quarterly & Annual Reports from implementing partners and executing agencies</p> <p>Sylvie Kayitesi</p> <p>Fatuma Ndagiza</p>	<p>Minister for Labor, Government of Rwanda (RWI Focal Point in 1997)</p> <p>RWI Focal Point, MIGEPROFE</p>	<p>Kigali</p>
<p>Tuesday October 24</p>	<p>Mary Balikungiri</p> <p>Diana Opar</p> <p>Joellen</p> <p>Lisa Jones</p>	<p>Program Coordinator, The Rwandan Women's Network</p> <p>Regional Gender Advisor, UNIFEM UN Thematic Group on Gender</p> <p>USAID: Women in Transition</p> <p>UNHCR Protection Officer</p>	<p>Kigali</p>

Wed. October 25	Laetita Kayisire BENISHYAKA ProFemmes AVEGA	Gender Advisor, UNDP: Special Window for Women Executing Agency, Women's Association of Widows – Tailoring School: met with project director, beneficiaries Schedule Executing Agency, Women's Association of Widows, met with members of executive committee	Kigali
Thursday October 26	AGR (Rwanda Association of Girl Guides) ICYUZUZU Haguruka (Paralegal)	Executing Agency of Tailoring School for Girls; Met with Project Coordinator, Beneficiaries of Tailoring School – newcomers and graduates Executing Agency, Widow's Association. Trauma counseling Met with previously trained paralegal Rwandan women activist (Ingabire Marie Immaculée)	Kigali
Friday October 27	APB Aloysie Inyumba	Executing Agency, Association of Batwas Met with project coordinator of stove and pottery making facility. Met with beneficiaries of trainings Executive Secretary of National Unity and Reconciliation Commission	Kigali
Saturday October 28			
Sunday October 29			
Monday October 30	Angelina Muganza ARTCF National University, University Women Students' Association (UWSA) Chansa Kapaya, Regional Coordinator for Refugee Women	Follow-up interview with Minister for Gender and Women in Development, Government of Rwanda Goat rearing project Local association	Kigali and Butare, Rwanda
Tuesday October 31	Mr. Oni Kokouvi Refugee Camp MIGEPROFE Rep. Women's Comunal Fund Local women's associations Local authorities, former MIGEFASO	UNHCR Field Officer, Byumba Tour of Refugee Camp, Refugees from DRC Meet with managers of WCF Not affiliated with RWI	Byumba, Rwanda

	focal point	Sous Prefet of Social and Economic Affairs Former Burgomaster	
Wed. Nov. 1	UN Holiday – review of notes		
Thursday Nov.2	Women’s Communal Fund Rose Gasibirege Preparation for workshop	Met with managers of WCF UNFPA, formerly worked with ARFEM, association funded by RWI to air programs on women’s issues.	Kigali
Nov.3	Participatory workshop to discuss findings of the review ProFemmes	In attendance: Senior Management, UNHCR, Field Officers UNHCR, MIGEPROFE, women’s associations and ProFemmes representatives. Informal discussion with organizing member	Kigali
November	Debriefing at UNHCR HQ	In attendance was the Deputy High Commissioner, Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women and Gender Equality, Representatives from the Bureau, Gender Unit, OMS, Fundraising, Public Information, Protection and Community Services	Geneva
November	UNHCR Protection Officer	Present in Rwanda at start of RWI	Geneva, Switz.
January 8	Debriefing Guenet Guebre-Christos	UNHCR-Washington; Bureau of Population and Refugee Management, US Government, USAID Former Head of Office, UNHCR Rwanda	Washington, USA
January 9	Debriefing	IRC Headquarters, New York	New York

APPENDIX D

Rwanda Women's Initiative

A: Overview

Year	Total Resources	Number of Implementing Partners
2001	US \$ 300,000	4
2000	US \$ 350,000	5
1999	US \$1, 600, 000	12
1998	US \$ 350,000	1
1997	US \$2, 600, 000	8

B: Implementing Partners and Activities

Year	Implementing Agency	Activities/Projects	Site	Type of Activity
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry for Gender and Women's Promotion (MIGEPROFE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination and monitoring ▪ Training and management of communal credit funds ▪ Reinforcement of women's committees ▪ Legal promotion 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity building ▪ Legal Rights ▪ Women's participation in political life
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ProFemmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring, networking, coordination of women's projects, roundtable for funds mobilization ▪ Financial support to women's associations who are members of ProFemmes in the areas of radio, vocational skills building, credit schemes, capacity building, and agricultural production. 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity building ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Income generation ▪ Awareness raising ▪ Vocation skills training
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Club Mamans Sportives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitoring and coordination of CMS projects ▪ Tailoring and literacy classes ▪ Swimming pool construction at women's center 	Kigali Ville, Kigali Rural, Butare, Cyangugu, Umutara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills training ▪ Literacy ▪ Infrastructure
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Haguruka 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training of paralegals ▪ Legal assistance ▪ Promotion of the Law 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal rights
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FAWE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of girls education ▪ Scholarship fund for needy girls 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Girls education
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry for Gender and Women's Promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding of 40 Communal Credit Funds ▪ Training for Women's 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small scale credit ▪ Legal rights ▪ Capacity building

	(MIGEPROFE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Councils ▪ Legal Promotion ▪ Networking ▪ Poultry training projects ▪ Institutional support 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income generation
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ProFemmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity building of member associations ▪ Coordination ▪ Support to radio programs, credit scheme, animal husbandry, agricultural production, vocational and tailoring schools. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity Building ▪ Awareness raising ▪ Income generation ▪ Skills training
1999	Club Mamans Sportives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of 4 literacy and training centers for women ▪ Construction of swimming pool at Gasabo Center ▪ Income generation 	Kigali, Kigali Rural, Butare, Cyangugu, Umutara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Literacy ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Income generation
1999	Haguruka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal assistance ▪ Training and follow-up for paralegals ▪ Production of legal booklets 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Legal rights
1999	Association of the Batwa (APB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income generation ▪ Training and capacity building of Batwa communities 	Kigali Rural Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income Generation ▪ Capacity building
1999	AVEGA (Widows of the Genocide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goat rearing ▪ Credit schemes 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income generation ▪ Credit Schemes
1999	BENISHYAKA (Survivors of the Genocide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grinding mill project for returnees ▪ Quick Impact Projects 	Kigali Umutara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income Generation ▪ Infrastructure
1999	URMULI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crop production 	Kibungo / Rwinkwavu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income generation
1999	Federation of African Women Educationalists (FAWE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of girls' education 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Girls Education
1999	SOS RAMIRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quick Impact Projects for vulnerable women, families with HIV/AIDS orphans 	Kigali Ville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure
1999	ASOFERWA (Widow association)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dairy Project 	Kigali Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income Generation
1999	UNITY CLUB (association of first wives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support to 12 orphanages ▪ Conferences on social issues 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Material donations ▪ Awareness raising
1999	Branch Office Kigali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops on program management, gender mainstreaming ▪ Printing of Training materials 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity Building
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry for Gender and Women's Promotion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction of 600 houses for women ▪ Contribution to the 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Skills training ▪ Awareness raising

	(MIGEPROFE)	<p>construction of a women's center in Gitarama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poultry training ▪ Support to radio programs ▪ Promotion of the Law and Legislation through the Forum for Women Parliamentarians ▪ Operational support cost for Ministry ▪ Distribution of RWI public information material 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of Law
1998	UNHCR Branch Office Kigali	Public information	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness Raising
1997	Ministry for Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO)	<p>Funding of 3 Women's Credit Funds</p> <p>Quick Impact Projects for grassroots women associations</p>	Gitarama Umutara Byumba Gitarama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small credit schemes ▪ Infrastructure
1997	ProFemmes	<p>Support to women's association in projects on:</p> <p>Nutritional centers; animal rearing, small scale agricultural production; distribution of clothing to returnee women and children; grinding mill projects, revolving credit schemes</p>	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income generation ▪ Material donations ▪ Small credit schemes
1997	Association of the Batwas (APB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of school fees, uniforms and materials for 2420 Batwa children ▪ Agricultural inputs ▪ Income generation ▪ Animal husbandry projects 	Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Material donations ▪ Income generation
1997	ARO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional Training for Orphans 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills training
1997	ARFEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Radio Programs on Women's Issues 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness raising
1997	CEFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction of Poultry Training Center 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure
1997	Ministry for Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Midwifery and nursing training 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Skills Training

ACRONYMS

DOS	Division of Operational Services, UNHCR
GLI	Great Lakes Initiative
KIMS	Knowledge information management system
MIFAPROFE	Ministry for Family and Women's Protection
MIGEFASO	Ministry for Gender, Family and Social Affairs
MIGEPROFE	Ministry for Gender and Women in Development
MINISANTE	Ministry of Health
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OMS	Operational management system
QIP	Quick impact project
RWI	Rwanda Women's Initiative
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCF	Women's Communal Funds
WCRWC	Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children