Post-conflict approaches to citizen participation in governance – the case of Rwanda

Chapter 9: POST-CONFLICT APPROACHES TO CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE – THE CASE OF RWANDA

Dr. Allan T. Moore, Associate Professor of Criminology, *University of West London*

Abstract

This chapter focuses on the post-genocide nation of Rwanda and poses the question '*With citizen participation generally argued to be a precondition for a free and democratic society, how can this be managed through the lens of a state where such citizen participation has been a factor in mass violence and the breakdown of society?'*. Through consideration of a context where direct citizen participation may have the potential to re-escalate violence, as well as designing approaches that balance top-down and bottom-up participatory mechanisms this chapter argues that it is not desirable to adopt a 'one fits all' approach to the implementation of citizen participation. In such situations the chapter asserts that more creative indirect modes of participation, or citizen participation focused on specific *aspects* of policy for citizen participation, where the voices of citizens *need* to be heard the most, should be prioritised.

Keywords

Rwanda, Genocide, Development, Reconciliation, Homegrown, Imihigo, Ubudehe, Umuganda

Introduction - Rwanda and the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi

Following a century of instability through eras of colonialism, autocracy and discriminatory politics, prior to 1994 pockets of violence had erupted in the small East-African nation of Rwanda several times in the twentieth century. Due in a large part to ethnic divisions created through colonisation then later embraced and amplified by former president Juvenal Habyarimana's MRND government over the course of two decades from 1973-1994, when Habyarimana was assassinated in targeted attack on his private airplane in April 1994 this signalled the beginning of a hundred days of strategic, targeted massacres perpetrated by extremist members of the Rwanda's ethnic Hutu population against the nation's minority Tutsis as well as anybody who was perceived to be supporting them. While establishing a precise number of victims of this genocide is fraught with difficulty for a myriad of methodological reasons (Meierhenrich, 2020) and no one claim can be proven with complete accuracy, the most quoted figures for all victims range from seven hundred thousand to over a million dead in the space of just one hundred days. The dark events of 1994 were subsequently labelled "The Genocide against the Tutsi" (United Nations, 2003, 2018, 2020). Of greatest significance to this

chapter is that due to this genocide and its decades-long build-up in Rwanda, the social capital referred to in the introduction to this book had been completely destroyed, and over the past three decades such social capital has had to be rebuilt from the ground up.

The central question to be addressed in the chapter is therefore as follows: *With citizen participation generally argued to be a precondition for a free and democratic society, how can this be managed through the lens of a state where such citizen participation has been a factor in mass violence and the breakdown of society?* The chapter considers the conceptual aspects of citizen participation related to nations at different stages of development before outlining Rwanda's position as a post-conflict state and the consequent issues that need to be considered before adopting a 'one fits all' approach to such citizen participation. There is an examination of circumstances in which *direct* citizen participation may not be appropriate, where instead participation in a more indirect form through civil society organizations and home-grown initiatives are shown to have been more beneficial to previously divided communities to bring them together in the spirit of reconciliation. Conclusions will synthesize the areas covered and outline the lessons learned which may be considered not only in the case of Rwanda but may also be applicable to other nations recovering from violent episodes.

Citizen Participation in Governance

Concepts relating to citizen participation in governance have been prominent areas of focus in political commentary throughout the late twentieth and into the twenty-first century. Cuthill and Fine (2005) explain that "citizen participation is a basic building block for contemporary democratic society and sustainable communities" (p.64), illustrating the perceived importance of such participation being embedded centrally within the democratic setting. In earlier seminal works such as Arnstein's *A ladder of citizen participation* (1969) issues of power dynamics between the state and its citizens were included when defining citizen participation in governance. Arnstein's definition regards this as:

> a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the politics and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled benefits of the affluent society. (p. 216)

Beyond the broad nature of *governance* and on the more specific subject of *governmentality*, Blakely (2010) explains the origins of the term "Foucault invented the neologism of governmentality by combining the verb 'to govern' with the noun 'mentality'… Governmentality refers to both the rationality underpinning different forms and practices of government and the techniques, tactics and strategies used to govern." (p. 132) According to Blakely's adopted position governments will rationalize the differing ways, or different mentalities that they believe they need to adopt in order to govern the society in question to enable ongoing maintenance and development.

In considering the issue that different nations around the world are at different stages of development, Nwapi and Andrews (2017) discuss the requirements that must be fulfilled for a country to be correctly categorized as being a developmental state, explaining that it must be

demonstrating "a commitment to pursuing national development with a clearly defined ideological and institutional commitment." (p. 277) The authors argue that simply having an ideological stance on developmentalism is not enough to be categorized, and the ideology must be accompanied by a clear and tangible evidence-base showing the ongoing pursuit of development. The authors' explanation mirrors Mkandawire's (2001) earlier work that identifies two crucial components of the developmental state: the *ideological* and the *structural*, which are both required for a state to have the potential to develop since not only must they have a clear vision of where they want to be and why, they must also have institutions, organizations, systems and policies in place that can practically facilitate the achievement of development goals.

Crucially, for a state vision to succeed in its development goals there must also be a sufficiently high level of buy-in from its citizens, and one way to achieve such buy in has frequently been argued to be through either direct or indirect citizen participation. However, even with a clear state vision this may not be enough to ensure meaningful citizen participation in its realization. The level of citizens' buy-in to that state vision may also be crucial in terms of their future participation in governance. As one report for the United Nations Development Programme makes a key finding that the *willingness* of citizens to participate in a country's governance is often much greater than their *actual* participation would indicate (Mihailov et al., 2001). The report offers a detailed analysis of the underlying reasons for this and concludes that one of the main obstacles is often citizens' doubts as to the real impact they can have on the decision-making processes that are made within governance structures (p. 63). In the case of Rwanda, the concept of development is one that is repeated consistently in sources focusing on the governance of the nation, frequently being cited as a contemporary model for other African States to follow. Even sources that are heavily critical of the political or governance systems of Rwanda often acknowledge the developmental successes achieved since 1994, and the reasons for that will become clear as this chapter continues. The central outstanding consideration under examination is to what extent citizen participation has influenced those perceived successes.

Kweit and Kweit (2004) argue that a policy or practice might appear on paper to be theoretically well-constructed but may still be received poorly by the citizens in question if they feel detached from its content, and especially so in times of crisis or disaster. In further research conducted by the same authors (2007) the analysis deepens, explaining that it can be difficult to draw clear conclusions on the specific direct impacts that stem from citizens' participation in government. Indeed, then considering possible negative consequences of such participation the authors note that some participants may engage in bad faith when pursuing an individual agenda, using citizen participation as a tool to achieve goals unrelated to the intended purpose of such participation. Going further still, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) investigated the benefits often repeated by academics and practitioners of citizen participation that such policies and initiatives increase legitimacy of the political system in question, that they result in better decisions, and that they improve people. Their conclusions were clear in that not only were those benefits often not achieved, but in fact a badly designed citizen participation model might of the opposite effects by exposing citizens to a political system that they dislike. Importantly, the authors also argue that this can result in increased frustration amongst the state's citizenries. Consequently, it is crucial to not fetishize the concept of citizen participation as some sort of panacea that will positively transform society in all contexts; as argued by Blakely (2010) "even when governments genuinely appear to do all they can to facilitate citizen participation, these efforts do not necessarily empower citizens." (p. 131)

Some governments may be cautious when hearing suggestions to increase direct citizen participation with a perception that such initiatives would be devolving power away from the state and its elected or appointed representatives, however this should not be viewed as an accurate interpretation. Blakely (2010) explains that citizen participation is not so much about transfer of power away from the State, rather it should be viewed as a "transformation of power whereby the state, through new formal and informal techniques, continues to exercise control 'at a distance'." (p. 132) Marinetto (2003) presents a similar explanation adding in the notion of governments being able to free up their time to deal with other matters by noting that "ideas of community and active citizenship operate as strategies, enabling the state to govern more effectively." (p. 117)

Synthesizing the contrasting viewpoints on citizen participation in its full context then, whilst there are clear benefits to a citizen participation approach to policy and practice it is equally clear that this is something that must be carefully planned and prepared. Genuine consideration must be given to the context and what is at stake should citizens *lose* confidence in the state's handling of the issues should a citizen participation model ultimately becomes unable to facilitate any initially intended benefits. It is arguable that citizen participation in governance linked to reconciliation should be a logical focal point for the Rwandan state. In the aftermath of the genocide against the Tutsi, Rwanda was a broken country with massive division between its people; even describing those divisions as a gulf, would have been an understatement in the initial years after 1994. Reconciliation was of paramount importance and is an area still an area of ongoing development more than thirty years later.

Evidence from Rwanda

Eight years after the Genocide against the Tutsi, in 2002 the Rwandan Government began to roll out an extensive decentralization initiative, designed to encourage citizen participation at the local government level, with donors including the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (Nichols-Barrer et al., 2015, p. 4). The detail of the initiative included accountable government, improved service delivery, and increased citizen participation and satisfaction related to development (World Bank, 2014, Executive Summary p. iv). The program, being rolled out gradually, can be reviewed in its amended form as part of Rwanda's second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS2), which set within its initial priorities to "strengthen citizen participation and demand for accountability by using home grown initiatives to promote citizen participation" (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2013, p.22), and, "strengthening the media and civil society organizations to better fulfil their developmental role and strengthening administrative decentralization." (ibid) As part of the strategy, unity and reconciliation as well as security and stability were explicitly cited as being further key priority areas for citizen participation and development. Further to the priority areas being given, the policy goes on to note how the main aims would be achieved through citizen empowerment.

When considering the potentially transformative effect that citizen participation has had on participants in the decentralization program and to highlight the culture change that has been required in order to achieve growth of the concept, Nichols-Barrer et al. (2015) explained what participants reported to the research team:

> As one implementer elaborated, the "culture doesn't permit people to often say what they think and what they don't like." Another stressed that "civic participation is a new and sensitive concept in Rwanda." Framing it differently, one CSO respondent suggested that program activities helped "enlighten citizens on the roles and responsibilities of the cell, sector, and district leaders…I am now free to communicate with our leaders in the district. The same applies to the citizens—now they aren't afraid of asking about things that are going wrong." (p. 27)

Historical-cultural barriers are therefore acknowledged as challenges, however importantly the participants were not stating that citizen participation was discouraged, more that due to the recent shift in this regard it may take time and explicit encouragement for citizens both to engage and to feel comfortable in critiquing any actions of the state in a genuine manner.

In particular, reliance on the lived experience and direct observation is important when attempting to evaluate Rwanda's context. Some authors choose to write about the nation from afar, rarely directly engaging with its citizens and creating narratives or drawing conclusions based on questionable data (Beloff, 2017; Hitchcott, 2015). Wielenga (2014) agrees that this is indeed one of the main problems uncovered through reviewing literature authored on Rwanda's governance structures:

> This is the difficult transitional phase Rwanda seems to be in: In order to build and modernise the nation state, it is argued that a particular kind of identity, namely citizenship, needs to be prioritised at the expense of all other identities. But by-and-large, scholars have continued to analyse the paradoxes in Rwanda through this 'liberal democratic' lens, and have offered solutions that again reflect a liberal democratic understanding of identity, primarily through citizenship, instead of through the lens of the lived experience of ordinary Rwandans. (p. 132)

These arguably neo-colonial understandings of what may and may not constitute legitimacy in terms of approaches to governance are a typical hallmark of many western commentators not only relating to Rwanda but also when writing of a great many non-western nations, frequently demonstrating a lack of understanding of different epistemic realities and cultures. Wielenga further explains that the westernized viewpoint of single political party domination being a wholly negative mode of governance is not necessarily a universally held belief. An argument is presented by the author that although some studies that suggest resistance to government intervention in general life, other studies in the African context, and Rwanda in particular, do not perceive that a lack of political plurality meaningfully signifies control, coercion or exploitation. Instead, it is argued, many citizens value order and stability, viewing these as positive and valuable (p. 130-1). In this regard, direct citizen participation may require a significant culture shift in some nations to be well-received, and it is for the specific country to decide whether or not to embark upon such a necessarily lengthy and uncertain process when it could have a destabilizing rather than a positive developmental effect in reality. Again, a very real danger is carried with the neo-colonial imposition of western ideologies and practices if this has the practical effect of invalidating the lived experience of those citizens in the nations in question.

Further focus on existing research relating to Rwanda elucidates additional inconsistencies. Bozzini (2013) argues that when a nation is seeking to control and maintain low

levels of state corruption "accountability, transparency and citizen participation" (p. 5) are the key ingredients. Whilst the three components may or may not be correct this may be true, particularly accountability and transparency, the author does not evidence the assertion of citizen participation. Interestingly, Bozzini goes on to provide significant set of sources and metrics that each make similar consistent claims that corruption in Rwanda is indeed low, yet accountability and direct citizen participation are also argued as being low. Following the logic presented by Bozzini this leaves two obvious possibilities; either the initial claim of low corruption requiring all three pillars of accountability, transparency and citizen participation is incorrect; or given the claim of low corruption is both made and evidenced, there may be higher levels of accountability and transparency in Rwanda than initially concluded. Alternative consideration may be given to the possible existence of more indirect modes of citizen participation not necessarily captured within research that focuses on more direct forms, this will be expanded upon further in this chapter.

In terms of transparency and decentralization of state power, Brinkerhoff et al. (2009) discuss the national implementation of *imihigo* contracts; performance contracts that were introduced for public sector institutions both nationally and locally where activities and targets are set and measured in a manner where all information and progress is visible and accessible to citizens. These have since also been rolled out at the local business and at household level. Effectively, the *imihigo* contract is the mechanism for practical implementation of required transparency and accountability for state departments at both national and local levels in Rwanda. Brinkerhoff argues that the implementation has "helped galvanize local support" (p. 5) for previously centralized powers. Brinkerhoff's assertions are reinforced by Abbot et al. (2017) who summarize that:

> Decentralization and community development policies ensure that the Government is able to hold local government accountable, and the Government has skilfully incorporated citizens into the development effort through Imihigo (performance contracts). These contracts are used at every level to hold public institutions and even ordinary citizens accountable for their contribution to the county's development priorities. The same contracts, in principle, enable citizens to hold district councils responsible for service delivery. (p. 110)

According to the process, citizens can see the targets that have been set and then whether they have been met, then initiate or participate in local community dialogues in order to feed into the national conversation on those issues. Redifer et al. (2020) explain that at the local level, the Rwanda Governance Board introduced Citizen Report Cards in 2010, alongside a four-yearly household survey whereby all citizens can voice their experience of service delivery in all aspects of state service delivery. In research conducted in 2015 by Transparency International Rwanda research involving 1,173 participants covering both urban and rural areas (p. 9), on the subject of impact of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) the areas of *empowering citizens*, *influencing public policy*, and *responding to membership needs*, were scored as 70.6%, 72.3%, and 75% respectively, results classified by the researchers as high in terms of overall level of civil society effectiveness and impact (p. 65). Whilst the section on meeting *societal needs* was ranked lower at 58%, this lower score was the result of a single question in that section being rated lower at 25% as compared to all others rated between 64% and 70%.

Overall then the research conducted to date evaluating the impact and effectiveness of *imihigo* contracts as a form of citizen participation has yielded positive results. This is not to say however that praise is universal or that there have not been criticisms. For example, Purdekova (2011) has argued that the process may lead to deeper permeation of the state rather than decentralization and transfer of power away from it. Building on this, Hasselskog (2016) finds that "While not strengthening downward accountability as intended, household imihigo rather implies that residents are closely monitored by leaders and officials, in an apparent institutionalization of upward accountability." (p. 193) In contextualizing this, Hasselskog explains that as the results of local *imihigo* contracts are published and publicly available, this may lead to citizens monitoring each other and social pressures at the local level. These would clearly be negative impacts, however what is not necessarily agreed amongst critics is if these impacts are by design i.e. as part of a broader surveillance strategy, or unintended and unavoidable through implementing a system whereby all results must be transparent. Regardless which may be the case however, results such as those published by Transparency International Rwanda appear to show that overall, the system is perceived as positive and successful by citizens of Rwanda.

One size does not fit all

Previously when discussing the concept of the development state, it was noted that *ideology* was one of the key components that should complement structural aspects. The notion of ideological importance is shared by Nwapi and Andrews (2017), who argue that the vision of the state and its leaders are equally as important as the practical steps they take and that they "must champion a vision of development that is citizen-participatory: it must connect the state with its citizens." (p. 233). The World Bank (2014) in this regard stated that "National civil society advocacy is relatively underdeveloped in Rwanda, perhaps as a corollary to the firm Government presence" (p. 13) They go on further in the same report to carefully note that there have been clear successes in terms of development whilst emphasizing that Rwanda's government "recognizes that much remains to be done to reach the country's goals in terms of democratic, participatory, local governance and effective citizen-centered service delivery." (p. 35) The World Bank are not alone in making a contention of this nature relating to Rwanda, however there is arguably an issue in that such a claim often ignores the untypical context in which the country's state has grown and developed.

It is often the case that statements such as the one from the World Bank present a narrow or restricted view of what is classed as citizen participation, including solely economic or direct participatory democracy processes within their definitions. This interpretation overlooks the complex issue that in a rebuilding post-atrocity nation, economic and democratic developments can only succeed where there is stable and durable peace and security (Stewart & O'Sullivan, 1998). Peace and security development must therefore remain of paramount concern to the development state. In Rwanda's case, it would be a mistake to believe that the prioritization of issues such as reconciliation, peace and security should be reduced prematurely (Hayner, 2010). On the contrary, it is important to continue developing strategies in these areas to ensure that the dangers of transgenerational division are maintained at as low a level as possible. Continued focus on survivors, perpetrators and youth is required. Appropriately therefore, in Rwanda it is citizen participation in these areas that has been a clear focal point of national and local government policy.

A clear example of this is on the subject of gender and participation. Prior to and during the genocide in 1994, women held or were forced to play certain roles. Gallimore (2008) explains that in pre-colonial times Rwandan society maintained traditional gender norms for men and women. *Itorero* military camps and traditional *ibyivugo* poetry were activities reserved for men only, with women not permitted to take part in these or a great many other areas of societal life. During the build-up to the genocide against the Tutsi there were "misogynistic images of Tutsi women present in the pre-genocide media propaganda" (Ibid, p. 17) including their reduction in media and public discourse to that of immoral seductresses and sex objects. During the events of 1994 systematic rape and other form of sexual and gender-based violence were used by perpetrators "as a weapon of genocide." (Cherry & Hategekimana, 2013, p. 100) In short, until and during 1994 there were clear power dynamics in both public and political life in Rwanda whereby women were treated lower in hierarchy than men.

Since 1994 Rwanda has been one of the global leaders at ensuring historically victimized or marginalized groups are more appropriately represented through contemporary governance structures. For example, on addressing the problematic gendered issues seen previously, Hudson (2009) explains that the Rwandan constitution enshrines a requirement that a minimum of thirty percent of those in state decision-making posts must be women, and that the governance decentralization approaches discussed previously have facilitated further localized enhancements in the participation of women in decision-making. Cherry & Hategekimana (2013) document clear examples of how this indirectly, but crucially feeds into policymaking and governance:

> In addition to the changes in political representation of women at national level, a number of institutional changes have been implemented in Rwanda at the district, local and grassroots level to address GBV and monitor policy implementation. Firstly, a community policing network of the local community works with a unit of the police to fight GBV. Secondly, the *Conseil National des Femmes* (CNF) (National Council of Women) has formed councils whose main duty is to monitor implementation of gender policy, and GBV in each district. Thirdly, there is a gender desk in the police station of every district in Rwanda. Fourthly, there is *Imboni ya jenda* (The Open Eye of Gender), constituted by *inyangamugayo* (The Council of the Wise) which also deals with GBV. The councils are elected by the community and by law the percentage of women must be at least 30%. However, it was observed in the Mayaga region that women's representation is always above 50% in the councils. (p. 103)

Hudson (2009) believes that it is specifically through the journey of post-genocide societal reconstruction and development that Rwanda has achieved this success, explaining that "women started participating in Rwandan society as community leaders, heading households, rebuilding homes, caring for orphans and survivors, and occupying non-traditional jobs" (p.306), thus through a partially essentialist and partly developmental lens the role of women and opportunities to participate have grown significantly over the past thirty years in Rwanda compared to the pre-1994 landscape.

The issues associated with gender outlined here exemplify that individual approaches to citizen participation based on the specific challenges faced by a nation should be considered prior to applying a broad-brush approach. Some writers on the subject of citizen participation in governance show a more complete appreciation of these complexities and accept that there is no universally applicable model of citizen participation that would be fit for all contexts. For

example, Roberts (2004) highlights that there are numerous often argued benefits of direct citizen participation whilst also pointing out legitimate criticism can be levied. In explaining that as in certain contexts similar to the ones faced in Rwanda in the aftermath of 1994 direct citizen participation may be viewed negatively by citizens, Roberts argues that:

> Representative democracy, or indirect citizen participation, has its advantages. It protects citizens from the dangers of direct involvement. It buffers them from uninformed public opinion, it prevents the tyranny of the majority, and it serves as a check on corruption. It also meets the needs of a complex, post-industrial society that requires technical, political, and administrative expertise to function. (p. 316)

This viewpoint would appear to be a clear justification for indirect citizen participation to be preferred to direct citizen participation in two contexts in particular. The first of these is at the general level when considering areas of policy development or decision-making that require expertise in complex areas. Roberts describes the concept of citizen participation as fundamentally being a social experiment i.e. an issue that is not yet settled as to its true benefits or drawbacks and initially discusses what stage we may be at in terms of the experiment. In attempting to establish this, Roberts then goes on to try to identify what "what has succeeded and what has not, and under what conditions" (Ibid, p. 316), a task that she sees as being difficult to complete with certainty, noting:

> Suppose we find failure in some of these social experiments, either in terms of outcomes or in terms of the process. What exactly would that mean? There could be at least two interpretations. On one hand, failure could prove that critics were right in their cautions about direct citizenship participation. Citizens should not be directly participating in administration any more than they should be directly involved in setting legislative or executive policy. Citizen involvement cannot work and does not work as predicted and the consequences for participation are not good for the long-term health of the democracy. On the other hand, failure could document the success of those who have structured a system in such a way as to limit direct citizen participation. Because the system discourages or, as some would say, to a large extent prevents substantive citizen involvement, it would be reasonable to conclude that when asked to participate, citizens either do not know how to, do not want to, or do not even care to try. Thus, failures in direct participation could be attributed to learned helplessness and the success of a system that prevents their substantive participation in the first place. (Ibid, p. 317)

Whilst it is difficult to argue with certainty which of the two interpretations might be true, and indeed there may be elements of truth from both interpretations in some contexts, certainly in response to the first perspective, we can point to the mass participation and engagement with the 2016 Brexit process in the UK i.e. the referendum on the UK remaining in or withdrawing its membership of the European Union, whereby direct citizen participation was strongly encouraged. Yet despite achieving extremely high levels of sought participation it would not be credible to proportionately argue that the results to the UK have been anything other than a combination of fundamentally negative impacts economically (Hassan et al., 2024; Latorre et al., 2020; Bloom et al., 2019), politically (Davies, 2023; Baldini & Chelotti, 2022; Mustafa et al. 2020) and socially (Kerr & Śliwa, 2020; Stewart et al., 2019; Corbett, 2016). Consequently, it is

clear that the issues associated with membership of the European Union required not generalist but expert knowledge and understanding of the issues at stake, an understanding that a large proportion of the population understandably did not have (Walter, 2019; Clarke et al., 2017). This would appear to add credence to Roberts' argument that particularly when dealing with issues of such a complex and technical nature, direct citizen participation may not be beneficial to the long-term health of the state in all cases.

The second of the context Roberts mentions is the one that may initially appear controversial but using the example of Rwanda becomes more understandable. This is when reference is made to 'the tyranny of the majority'. In the context of Rwanda's pre-genocide history, it could barely be a more appropriate discussion point whereby this was exactly the case in that one large majority group was the master of the other minority group and over a period of decades weaponized this power resulting in genocide and waves of citizens fleeing persecution between the 1950s and 1990s. Roberts' perspective asks for consideration of pertinent questions on how various minority groups could be protected from decisions of a prejudicial majority under a system of direct citizen participation, referring to this as being "the dilemma of excluded or oppressed groups" (p. 326), a dilemma that has not been adequately addressed within the literature on citizen participation to date. Roberts explains that although conflict can arise in any context, one of the most prevalent root drivers of conflict is when there is historical power imbalance between different groups, resulting in the exploitation of the minority group or groups. Stemming logically from this, in Rwanda's case the risks may go beyond simply political or social disagreement into the realm of the possibility of re-escalation of violent conflict that the citizens of Rwanda have worked so hard to avoid.

In the context of ongoing development within Rwanda there has been a drive to to reduce the significance of historic ethnic identity in favor of the creation of a contemporary national identity for all Rwandan citizens. (Paradis, 2020) This strategic direction taken by the state has the objective that a homogenous reconstruction of identity within Rwandan citizens will in the long-term have the effect of equalization of perceived power. In a practical sense, initiatives originating from both top-down and bottom-up sources have targeted this goal through collaborative activities at grassroots level across the country. However, this must be understood to be a long-term goal and not one which has been fully realized yet, as research by Blackie and Hitchcott (2018) found that youth in Rwanda who were not yet born when the 1994 genocide took place still look for signs to categorize their peers along ethnic grounds. The authors note that although "this evidence does not seem to prevent the younger generation from forming inter'ethnic' friendships, it nevertheless does demonstrate that 'ethnicity' is still a prevalent factor in the social construction of identity in Rwandan youth." (p. 34) The question of direct citizen participation then becomes whether the potential positives of such citizen participation outweigh the potential risks at this moment in time? Answering with certainty is simply not possible at this stage given the complex findings from recent research.

The arguments presented by Nancy Roberts above may be in a minority within the literature on citizen participation in terms of criticizing and illustrating flaws with the belief that approaches to direct citizen participation should be universal, but the arguments are not unique. Indeed, those arguments reflect some examples found within earlier authored works including from Cornwall and Coelho (2007) who explain that the positives "do not add up to a one-size-fits-all recipe. Context matters… more attention be paid to the contingencies of political culture… set within the histories of state–society relations that have shaped the configurations and contestations of the present." (p. 22) Rebecca Roberts (2015) discusses that many macro and

meso-level reports focus on the grand large scale perceived benefits of national citizen participation but argues that there are areas that are likely to fail if the existing national structures are not already set up to facilitate such participation practices. Roberts recommends that it would be more appropriate for several states to focus not on broad citizen participation in governance, but more on specific *aspects* of policy for citizen participation, where the voices of citizens *need* to be heard the most. Areas where goals may be challenging but feasible and can actually be achieved through the participation of the citizens in a way that they feel genuinely valued, respected, and can witness the evidence that their participation is having direct impact in terms of positive development relating to the area in question.

Roberts is not alone in holding this viewpoint. Putnam (1994; 2000) has argued that citizen participation does not necessarily have to be in terms of governance to still have a positive political effect. The arguments presented by Putnam are that horizontal participation at community level through society-building activities results in the effect of building relationships of trust and confidence in a manner that is then reflective of the state in the minds of participants. King and Stivers (1998) also identify the broader significance of citizen participation, describing "a sense of connection with other people, a perception that the fates of individual human beings are intertwined, a feeling of the possibility of community." (p. 197) Drawing on the literature then it can be argued with confidence that for citizen participation to achieve meaningful positive impact it does not have to be focused on or restricted to traditional governance issues. Indeed, it may be actively harmful to create such a system in some contexts including that of Rwanda. Instead, a consideration ought to be that citizen participation can still be beneficial, having positive effects on overall governance when directed at more focused areas of policy and using indirect methods that have the potential to have greater impact on communities.

Civil Society Organizations in Rwanda

One approach in Rwanda to inclusion of citizens in such focused areas has involved citizen participation being devolved to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) when working with communities on specific issues and goals. Bozzini (2013) presents a case that existing CSOs in Rwanda are not particularly strong, are not sufficiently independent from the state, and do not challenge the state on meaningful areas. Bozzini is undecided on whether the argued position is due to intentional government repression or simply CSOs remaining weak of their own accord but asserts that "Rwandan civil society's impact on community living conditions is minimal" (p. 6) and "it is a fact that a vibrant civil society has yet to develop in Rwanda." (ibid) In an interview with an executive director of one CSO in Rwanda conducted in 2018 this point was put forward for response and the counterargument was presented that:

> You can't build peace single-handedly and you can't build peace in isolation, so you need to work with the state, because the state has the main responsibility of making sure that it creates peace for its citizens. So, in that manner, you need to have close relationships with the government, but also maintaining your space, because if you don't do so your space will be taken. (Respondent A, interview conducted 29th June 2018)

The same point was put to a second CSO representative in Rwanda in 2020 with no knowledge of the answer given by the first respondent. They explained:

> It doesn't make sense to me to say there should or even can be a total separation of the state and civil society. In the area we operate in we can't ignore the law or those that make it, and to negotiate improvements with those people we need to also show that as an organisation we can operate within the current laws. That doesn't mean to say that we cannot say we disagree with aspects of the current law, and indeed we do not have any concerns about raising such issues, this is something we have done in the past. (Respondent B, interview conducted 18th February 2020)

From the responses of the interviewees, they each hold an agreed acceptance that given the issues related to peace and security at stake there is a required level of state consultation, collaboration and buy-in that must be achieved for the CSOs work to achieve maximum impact. However, importantly the statements are also clear and unambiguous that there should be at least a degree of separation between the state and the CSO due to their differing roles and responsibilities.

Further rebuttal of Bozzini's overall assertions can be found documented elsewhere, for example Hudson (2009) highlights the CSO *Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe* (All Together), an umbrella collective for more than thirty women's organizations in Rwanda that was formed in 1994 following the genocide "to promote social justice, respect for women's rights, and to campaign against impunity for those responsible for the mass killings." (p. 307) Such was the success and international recognition of their work; the organization won the 1996 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non- Violence in 1996. Specifically on the issues of strength and independence of Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe, the later events of 2003 can be considered. In that year the Rwandan government made a preliminary decision to ban two specific political organizations, MDR and LIPRODHOR. Pro-Femmes supported the government perspective on MDR, but actively disagreed with them on their LIPRODHOR stance. Following Bozzini's arguments on civil society weakness and lack of independence then such public dissent on the part of a CSO relating to a government stance would be unlikely. However, the given example is as clear one of civil society carrying out their role in scrutinizing and critiquing the decisions of state authority without fear of being punished or subsequently disadvantaged by the state. Whilst space for civil society in Rwanda may still be growing then as the country itself continues to develop, the evidence suggests that the sector is not weak to the extent suggested by some authors.

Reconciliation through Citizen Participation

King and Stivers (1998) argue that to have a sense of fulfilment people need to be able to have impact on challenges to wider society that extend beyond their own personal situation. In the Rwandan context this is particularly important when considering strategies that aim to address and improve reconciliation between the nation's previously divided people. This is further emphasized when considering Kweit and Kweit's (2004) assertions that citizens can help to shape policies in ways that are reflective of their needs, and that as a result of feeling they have been adequately consulted and involved, the value of citizen participation can be seen to be symbolic giving ownership over policy in such a way that can help to prevent future political conflict. This is even the case when the eventual substance is not fully reflective of the citizens' input as Kweit and Kweit argue it is the feeling of involvement and consultation itself that creates the perception of value as opposed to the specific results of that consultation. The work

of Nwapi and Andrews (2017) contains similar findings. As explained by Hasselskog and Schierenbeck (2015), the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi had "…a detrimental impact on the social structure, with trust among the population as well as between residents and the state severely damaged." (p. 950) In other words, the damage caused was both vertically between citizens and the state, and horizontally between different citizen groups. Logically then, citizen participation activities must be initiated both vertically and horizontally to maximize the chances of success for the country, extending beyond the simple consideration of citizen participation in a vertical sense.

In terms of the vertical relationship, when considering the issue of citizen participation vis-à-vis the State, indirect participation can be evidenced when looking to the make-up of the Rwandan Parliament, an institution that has been significantly reformed over the past three decades. As explained by Nwapi and Andrews (2017) the Rwandan Government and parliament used to be divided on and defined by ethnic identity. Such division on ethnic grounds is not permitted today, and every registered political party has representation in the Rwandan Parliament "which provides each party an opportunity to contribute to public policymaking and implementation." (p. 254) In adopting such an approach, the Rwandan parliamentary representative composition shows that when policy is framed which requires technical or expert political knowledge, representatives from a large cross-section of society are feeding into its design and implementation. It is not possible for there to be any ideological or ethnic dominance over any area of state policy. As explained through research by Nahmias (2011) "when you have one party you have one idea. The same person makes all the decisions. Parties represent the people, and different people have different ideas. When they allow multiple parties, they have multiple ideas and they bring these ideas together and get better ideas." (p. 31) In theory with the approach to representation in the Rwandan Parliament, national interest is the driving concern as opposed to party political agenda, and this approach ensures that all sections of society are afforded a representative voice at a national level.

Brinkerhoff et al (2006) discuss Rwandan homegrown citizen participation initiatives and policies that combine both vertical and horizontal citizen participation including *ubudehe* and *umuganda*, explaining that:

> The government's unity and reconciliation agenda accords a prominent place to citizen engagement and participation. Rwanda's Government of National Unity has operationalized citizen participation through decentralized consultations for needs assessment and planning at a variety of levels. Participatory planning is a hallmark of district development plans, which build from bottom-up consultations at the cell and sector levels… traditional community practices and structures have been incorporated into governance and service delivery. (p. 6)

Different authors have focused further on the named initiatives. On *ubudehe*, Hasselskog and Schierenbeck (2015) discuss that in keeping with the Rwanda Government's approach of utilizing non-mainstream homegrown solutions, "a pre-colonial tradition of mutual support and collective action, *ubudehe* currently refers to community based and participatory efforts towards problem solving." (p.953) Then on *umuganda*, beginning with a morning of community service for all citizens once a month on the last Saturday, immediately at the conclusion of the community service element a series of community meetings are held simultaneously across the whole country, presenting as "a forum for leaders at each level of government to inform citizens

about important news, and for community members to discuss problems that they or the community are facing and to propose solutions." (ibid) Through a series of both vertical and horizontal dialogues during *umuganda*, the purpose is to ensure that citizens are informed on national developments, and to ensure that any community issues or challenges do not linger or worsen. It is in this context then that these programs and others have encouraged and invited citizen participation to gradually repair those relationships of trust and respect that had been broken in 1994 and through the decades preceding it. It should not be overlooked that these initiatives are forms of citizen participation driven by the specific context that Rwanda has found itself in. As explained by Hudson (2009), "For Rwanda, the challenge in general is to create safe spaces within which to develop an alternative value system as a precursor to sustainable peace." (p. 302)

Wielenga (2014) believes that although it may not be commonly documented, ordinary Rwandan citizens are in fact doing a lot more in terms of horizontal citizen and community participation than is understood within most literature. The author does not present a specific assertion or examples, rather explains that not enough has been done to truly understand what is happening at community level, reasoning that (at that time) twenty years had passed without re-escalation of violence but with still acknowledged divisions and complex societal relationships. Wielenga believes that communities must be already acting in ways that have allowed peaceful coexistence beyond the mainstream state policy implementation, suggesting that more in-depth research would be worthwhile. This "might bring to light some surprising and significant ways in which Rwandans are participating in their own progress, which in turn might lead to more helpful policies for governments through which to enhance what communities are already doing." (p. 133) In considering Wielanga's arguments, it may not be that more needs to be done in terms of developing citizen participation in Rwanda, rather it may be that further research that is required to properly document accurately what types of citizen participation *are* happening effectively at community level.

Conclusions and Next Steps for Rwanda

This chapter has sought to address the question: *With citizen participation generally argued to be a precondition for a free and democratic society, how can this be managed through the lens of a state where such citizen participation has been a factor in mass violence and the breakdown of society?* Through the evidence that has been examined throughout the chapter where the message has clearly been that there is no 'one fits all' solution here. Instead, it is evident there is a level of context dependency that must be acknowledged and accepted. At the time of writing in 2017, Nwapi and Andrews' contention was "that patrimonialism must gradually give way to popular participation if development is to be sustained over the long term." (p. 255) This is a sensible contention to make in line with the general literature on citizen participation on governance. However, caution is suggested with the crucial word in the authors' contention being 'gradually'. The notion of giving a post-conflict nation time to evolve is not just applicable to state institutions, it is equally as relevant in the context of the citizens of a state and citizen participation in particular. Discussing implications for citizens Cornwall and Coelho (2007) explain that:

> Simply creating spaces does little to rid them of the dispositions participants may bring into them… citizens who have been on the receiving end of paternalism or prejudice in

> everyday encounters with state institutions may bring these expectations with them into the participatory sphere. (p. 12)

In other words, the transition from pre-1994 division and state abuses to a contemporary state that is fully trusted by its people is just that – a transition, rather than a single event. There is no magic switch that citizens who suffered at the hands of an abusive state in the past can flick to become free of suspicion or distrust of the state with immediate effect, and rebuilding social capital from nothing takes time. What may be a lengthy process of development and rebuilding must be handled with care and in full understanding of the context today's Rwanda has emerged from. In this regard, one of the main reasons that Rwanda has been successful thus far in its post-genocide reconstruction has been its consistent assertion that citizens must be involved in the nation's development, but in a way where new spaces cannot be created, and existing spaces cannot be abused if the risk may be that such spaces could facilitate or accentuate past fatal divisions. As stated by the International Centre for Transitional Justice on their website (n.d.) "How far along and how quickly a society travels along this path depends on the resolve, tireless effort, and collaboration of many stakeholders from government actors and politicians to victims, civil society organizations, and ordinary citizens." All the components outlined here are areas that have been discussed and evidenced throughout this chapter, and crucially, all involved some degree of citizen participation, whether direct or indirect, vertical or horizontal, all working in conjunction with each other to feed into Rwanda's national unity and reconciliation strategy.

That said, it is important to emphasize that Rwanda's approaches to citizen participation should not be free from criticism. Whilst it is important to understand that approaches to governance correctly should be context driven, and even more importantly that a traditionally westernized or universal approach will not always appropriate, neither should it be argued that every strategy past or present adopted by Rwanda is perfect. For example, as discussed it may not be enough to simply want ethnic identity to disappear even if it can be argued strongly to be desirable in the Rwandan context. Whilst the strategy of replacing such ethnic identity with a common national identity may be laudable, as noted there is at least some clear evidence that this is not yet a reality. Yet little evidence has been uncovered to say what the next steps might be should there be common resistance amongst citizens to the state objective, will this be overlooked or might public sentiment be disregarded? This is not a purely academic matter, as Hudson (2009) points out:

> While today it is no longer permissible to refer to another Rwandan in terms of his or her ethnicity, ethnic belonging remains important in the minds of people. Policies of nonidentification do not stifle ethnic tension and in fact make it more difficult to identify cases of discrimination. (p. 308)

This is an important point as if people feel uncomfortable discussing issues of ethnic identity openly, then this does not mean that the issues do not exist, rather it makes accurate analysis and resolution of those potential conflict issues difficult to achieve and therefore resolve. The prediction that through passage of time and introduction of new forms of identity to replace the old might reduce or wipe out any residual ethnic tensions could be argued to be a gamble that might or might not pay off in the long-term. It has been identified that at least some CSOs in Rwanda have been permitted to introduce discussion of ethic division or conflict within safe spaces through confidential group dialogues to identify and address such issues at the grass

roots level, and hopefully this signals an acceptance at state level that working with citizens through participation is necessary to complement the existing top-down political objectives.

What is important is that the Rwandan government and state institutions are open to dialogue and critique from their own citizens, and open to development or redevelopment of their existing initiatives. Citizen participation linked with unity and reconciliation, which is in place and working at many levels of society within Rwanda as evidenced through this chapter, has been an evolutionary process, which can be shown through the phased introduction of a great many homegrown initiatives and various CSOs at different points over the past thirty years. Though it is true to say that greater citizen participation in *governance* might be desirable in the long term, two areas must be carefully understood. The first is that Rwanda remains a developing nation that will continue to evolve in its own developmental journey in the decades ahead. Secondly, citizen participation must be driven by Rwanda's own context, and not by external pressures placed upon the country by donors, other nations or international bodies. To ensure that peace, security and stability continue to be durable and stable as they have been since 1994, the issue of direct citizen participation is one for Rwanda to develop at a pace that feels organic to its people and greater implementation should not be rushed to appease a 'universal' democratic norm. Of further importance, although the case of Rwanda is the one in focus within this chapter, the principle of context dependency can be transferred and applied to other nations where mass conflict, particularly that involving discrimination or oppression of a minority, has been a fundamental historical issue. Any nation in this situation should take care to evaluate their own citizens' requirements and plan their own journey to peace and stability accordingly.

References

Abbott, P., Sapsford, R. and Binagwaho, A. (2017). "Learning from success: how Rwanda achieved the millennium development goals for health." *World development*, 92, 103-116.

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). "A ladder of citizen participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35(4), 216-224.

Baldini, G., & Chelotti, N. (2022). "The Brexit effect: Political implications of the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union." *International Political Science Review*, *43*(3), 319-328.

Blakeley, G. (2010). "Governing Ourselves: Citizen Participation and Governance in Barcelona and Manchester." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Volume 34.1, 130–45

Beloff, J. (2017). "The limitations of research space for the study of Rwanda." *The SOAS Journal of Postgraduate Research*, 10, 48-60.

Blackie, L. E., & Hitchcott, N. (2018). ""I am Rwandan": unity and reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda." *Genocide Studies and Prevention*.

Bloom, N., Bunn, P., Chen, S., Mizen, P., Smietanka, P., & Thwaites, G. (2019). "The impact of Brexit on UK firms (No. w26218)." *National Bureau of Economic Research*.

Bozzini, A. (2013). "Successes and limitations of a top-down approach to governance: the case of anti-corruption in Rwanda." *Instituto per gli studi di politica internazionale*, No.164.

Brinkerhoff, D.W. Fort, C. & Stratton, S. (2009). "Good Governance and Health: Assessing Progress in Rwanda." *TWUBAKANE Decentralization and Health Program Rwanda*.

Cherry, J., & Hategekimana, C. (2013). "Ending gender-based violence through grassroots women's empowerment: Lessons from post-1994 Rwanda." *Agenda*, *27*(1), 100-113.

Clarke, H. D., Goodwin, M., & Whiteley, P. (2017). "Why Britain voted for Brexit: An individual-level analysis of the 2016 referendum vote." *Parliamentary Affairs*, *70*(3), 439-464.

Corbett, S. (2016). "The social consequences of Brexit for the UK and Europe: Euroscepticism, populism, nationalism, and societal division." *The International Journal of Social Quality*, *6*(1), 11-31.

Cornwall, A. and Coelho, V.S.P. (2007). "Spaces for Change? The Politics of Participation in New Democratic Arenas." In A. Cornwall (Ed.), *Spaces for Change? The Politics of Citizen Participation in New Democratic Arenas*. (4th ed., pp.1-29). Zed Books.

Cuthill, M. and Fine, J. (2005) "Capacity building: Facilitating citizen participation in local governance." *Australian Journal of Public Administration* 64(4), 63-80.

Davies, C. (2023). "The impact of Brexit: polity, politics, policy." *Journal of European Integration*, *45*(6), 963-969.

Gallimore, R. B. (2008). "Militarism, ethnicity, and sexual violence in the Rwandan genocide." *Feminist Africa*, (10), 9-30.

Hassan, T. A., Hollander, S., Lent, L. V., & Tahoun, A. (2024). "The global impact of Brexit uncertainty." *The Journal of Finance*, *79*(1), 413-458.

Hasselskog, M. (2016). "Participation or what? Local experiences and perceptions of household performance contracting in Rwanda." *Forum for Development Studies* 43(2) 177-199.

Hasselskog, M. & Schierenbeck, I. (2015). "National policy in local practice: the case of Rwanda." *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 950-966.

Hayner, P. B. (2010). *Unspeakable Truths 2e: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*. Routledge.

Hibbing, J. R., & Theiss-Morse, E. (2002). *Stealth democracy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Hitchcott, N. (2015). *Rwanda Genocide Stories: Fiction After 1994* (Vol. 38). Oxford University Press.

Hudson, H. (2009). "Peacebuilding Through a Gender Lens and the Challenges of Implementation in Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire." *Security Studies*, 18(2), 287-318.

Kerr, R., & Śliwa, M. (2020). "When the political becomes (painfully) personal: Org-studying the consequences of Brexit." *Organization*, *27*(3), 494-505.

King, C. S. & Stivers, C. (1998). "Conclusion: Strategies for an anti-government era." In C. S. King, C. Stivers, et al. (Eds.), *Government is us: Public administration in an anti-government era*. (pp.195-204). Sage.

Kweit, M.G. & Kweit, R.W. (2004). "Citizen Participation and Citizen Evaluation in Disaster Recovery." *American Review of Public Administration*, 34(4), 354-373.

Kweit, M.G. & Kweit, R.W. (2007) "Participation, Perception of Participation, and Citizen support." *American Politics Research*, 35(3), 407-425.

Latorre, M. C., Olekseyuk, Z., & Yonezawa, H. (2020). "Trade and foreign direct investment-related impacts of Brexit." *The World Economy*, *43*(1), 2-32.

Marinetto, M. (2003) "Who wants to be an active citizen? The politics and practice of community involvement." *Sociology*, 37(1), 103–20.

Meierhenrich, J. (2020). "How Many Victims Were There in the Rwandan Genocide? A Statistical Debate." *Journal of Genocide Research*, 22(1), 72–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/14623528.2019.1709611

Mihailov, D. Vladimirov, Z. & Ivanov, A. (2001) "Citizen Participation in Governance: from Individuals to Citizens." *National Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Programme.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. (2013). "Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (EDPRS2) 2013-2018: Shaping Our Development." Government of Rwanda.

Mkandawire, T. (2001). "Thinking about Developmental States in Africa." *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 25(3), 289-313

Mustafa, G., Hussain, M., & Aslam, A. (2020). "Political and Economic Impacts of Brexit on UK." *Review of Politics and Public Policy in Emerging Economies*, *2*(1), 1-8.

Nahmias, G. C. (2011). "Relative democracy: Rwandan perspectives on representative government." *Independent Study Project Collection*. 1348

Nichols-Barrer, I. Protik, A. Berman, J. & Sloan, M. (2015) "Impacts of Supporting Civic Participation in Local Governance: Experimental Evidence from Rwanda." Annual Bank Conference on Africa.

Nwapi, C., & Andrews, N. (2017). "A "New" developmental state in Africa? Evaluating Recent state interventions vis-a-vis resource extraction in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda." *McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law/Revue de droit du développement durable de McGill*, *13*(2), 223-267.

Paradis, R. M. (2020). "The Intersectional Experience of Ndi Umunyarwanda: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Identity & Removing Ubwoko in Rwanda." *Undergraduate Journal of Global Citizenship*, *3*(2), 3.

Purdeková, A. (2011). "'Even if I am not here, there are so many eyes': surveillance and state reach in Rwanda." *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* 49(3), 475-497.

Putnam, R. D. (1994). *Making democracy work*. Princeton University Press.

Putnam, R. D. (2000) *Bowling alone*. Touchstone.

Redifer, L., Alper, E., Meads, N., Gursoy, T., Newiak, M., Thomas, A., & Kwalingana, S. (2020). "The development path less traveled: The experience of Rwanda." International Monetary Fund.

Roberts, N. (2004) "Public Deliberation in an Age of Direct Citizen Participation." *American Review of Public Administration*, 34(4), 315-353.

Roberts, R. (2015, March 31). "Citizen Participation for Good Governance in Africa." *Future Foreign Policy.* https://web.archive.org/web/20180406100633/http://www.futureforeignpolicy.com/citizens-participation-for-good-governance-in-africa

Stewart, K., Cooper, K., & Shutes, I. (2019). "What does Brexit mean for social policy in the UK? An exploration of the potential consequences of the 2016 referendum for public services, inequalities and social rights." SPDO research paper 3, The London School of Economics and Political Science.

Stewart, F., & O'Sullivan, M. (1998). "Democracy, Conflict and Development-Three Cases." QEH Working Paper Series QEHWPS15. University of Oxford.

Transparency International Rwanda. (2015). "Rwanda Civil Society Development Barometer."

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 58/234, International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, December 23, 2003.

United Nations General Assembly Decision 72/550, Designating 7th April as the International day of reflection on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda, January 26, 2018.

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 74/273, International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, April 20, 2020.
Walter, S. (2019). "Better off without you? How the British media portrayed EU citizens in Brexit news." *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *24*(2), 210-232.
World Bank Group. (2014.) "Country Partnership Strategy for Rwanda FY 2014-2018."
Wielenga, C. (2014). "'Lived' Identities in Rwanda Beyond Ethnicity?" *Africa Insight*, 44(1), 122-136.