

UNESCO activities for the support to youth centres and cultural groups in post-conflict refugee camps for transmitting intangible cultural knowledge in view of a sustainable repatriation

UNESCO Field Office Dar es Salaam, CLT

Traditional Knowledge in Refugee Camps

The Case of Burundian Refugees in Tanzania

Dr. Marie-Aude Fouéré



Drum performance in Kanembwa refugee camp, Tanzania, at the beginning of a story-telling session

Traditional Knowledge in Refugee Camps

The Case of Burundian Refugees in Tanzania

Table of Contents

Abbreviations	5
Glossary	6
Acknowledgments	7
Introduction	8
1. Traditional Knowledge in Refugee Camps in Tanzania	8
2. Historical Background	9
3. Repatriation and Reintegration of Refugees in Burundi	10
4. Kibondo Refugee Camps in Tanzania	11
I Traditional Knowledge in Burundian Refugee Camps	13
1. The Preservation of Burundian Traditional Knowledge	13
<i>Informal Traditional Knowledge</i>	
<i>Formal Transmission of Performing Arts</i>	
2. Changes in Traditional Cultural Knowledge	17
<i>Oral Traditions and Expressions</i>	
<i>Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature</i>	
<i>Cultural Norms: The Challenge of Male Position of Authority</i>	
3. Roots of Changes in Traditional Cultural Knowledge	20
<i>The Genocide and the Experience of Exile</i>	
<i>Organization and Structure of Refugee Camps</i>	
<i>Humanitarian and Development Programs</i>	
<i>Globalisation in Refugee Camps</i>	
Conclusion	23
II Socio-Cultural Challenges to Reintegration in Burundi	24
1. The First Stages of Return of Burundian Refugees	24
<i>Facilitated Repatriation</i>	
<i>Arrival in the Colline (hill area)</i>	
2. A Two-Faceted Reintegration of Returnees	25
<i>A Smooth Re-Adaptation to the Community</i>	
<i>An Obvious Reluctance to Discuss the Genocide</i>	
<i>Factors of Suspicion in the Colline: Former Rebels, Land Issue and International Aid</i>	
3. The Impact of the Political Situation	29
<i>Ongoing Processes of Ethnic Polarization</i>	
<i>Fears of Ethnic Divisions in Burundi</i>	
Conclusion	32

III UNESCO Story-telling Activities in Burundian Refugee Camps	32
1. Objectives and Methods for the Transmission of Traditional Knowledge	32
<i>Objectives of the Program</i>	
<i>Methods Used in the Program: Story-Telling</i>	
<i>Story-Telling and the Issue of the Genocide</i>	
<i>Secondary Benefit of UNESCO Program for Humanitarian Workers and Refugees</i>	
2. The Organisation of Story-Telling Session	36
<i>Story-Tellers and Selection of Stories</i>	
<i>Story-Telling Sessions</i>	
<i>Cultural Themes</i>	
3. The Implementation of UNESCO Story-Telling Activities in Refugee Camps	38
<i>The Operational Field Partner: SAEU</i>	
<i>Diffusion of Cultural Activities: Radio Program</i>	
4. The Evaluation of UNESCO Story-Telling Activities	39
<i>A Good Attendance</i>	
<i>A High Level of Commitment among Elders</i>	
<i>An Enthusiastic but Unaware Youth</i>	
<i>The unexpected Success of Radio Programs</i>	
<i>A Difficult Assessment of the Impact of Story-Telling on Repatriation</i>	
<i>SAEU Supervision</i>	
Conclusion	43
Conclusions	43
1. General Findings	43
2. General Outcomes	45
3. Key Recommendations	46
<i>Bibliography</i>	48
ANNEX: Fieldwork & Methodology	50

Abbreviations

ACCORD	African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
CNEB	Conseil National des Eglises du Burundi (<i>Burundi National Council of Churches</i>)
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
IDP	Internally Displaced People
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SAEU	Southern Africa Extension Unit
TCRS	Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Funds
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

Glossary

Miscellaneous

Bushingantahe: it is a council of elected wise men (called *bashingantahe*) acting as mediators and arbitrators in local conflicts. This traditional institution has existed since pre-colonial times in Burundi. It has long constituted a structure of local authority, representing both the society and the sacred monarchy, before being controlled and marginalized by the colonial state.

Colline: a French word literally meaning “a hill”; it is the smallest administrative division in Burundi, and roughly corresponds to a large cluster of houses scattered on one or several hills.

Ikiza: a Kirundi term meaning “scourge” or “calamity”, and used to refer to the large-scale ethnic massacres which occurred in Burundi in 1972.

Inyambo: Local cows with large heavy horns, whose possession had long been a sign of wealth and high social status.

Ubugabire (equivalent to *ubuhake* in Rwanda): a Kirundi term designating a relation between pastoralists and farmers which has come to epitomize Tutsi exploitation of Hutu masses. In pre-colonial times, it consisted of a gift, in the form of cattle, by which the giver would show his respect to the recipient. It came to be regarded as a relation of domination between an exploitative cattle owner (supposedly always Tutsi) and a powerless farmer (supposedly Hutu) by which the farmer would obtain the right of usufruct on some of the cows of the pastoralist.

Oral Genres and Cultural Performances

Amazina or *ivyivugogo*: poetry; it can be divided into two sub-genres, war poetry (*amazina y'ubuhii*) and pastoral poetry (*amazina y'urugamba*).

Ibisokwe or *ubupfindo*: riddles.

Ibitito ou *ibitiko*: an oral genre mixing stories and songs.

Igasimbo: a masculine performance consisting of acrobatic dances typical of Buragane region.

Imigani: tales and proverbs.

Imvyino: songs, including cattle praises (*ukuvumereeza*), rural life praises (*ibicuba*), lullabies (*ivyugumbiro*), solos (*indirimbo*), or popular rounds (*imvyino*).

Intore: a masculine performance presented in the form of a warriors' parade.

Urwedengwe, *ihunja*, *umutsibo*, *amarwandama*: feminine performances traditionally linked to body rituals.

Umuyebe: masculine performance.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank individuals, groups and organizations which contributed in one way or another to facilitating the present research and assessment.

First of all, I deeply thank UNESCO office in Dar es Salaam, and more specifically its Program Specialist for culture Timothy Curtis, for designing the present project and giving me the opportunity and all necessary support to carry it out in the field in the best conditions possible.

I am grateful to UNHCR Main Office in Dar es Salaam for its commitment to UNESCO program regarding the transmission of traditional knowledge in refugee camps. Without the support of UNHCR Head of Office Steven Corliss and Associate External Relations Officer Mia Bülow-Olsen, the field research would not have been possible. Thanks are also due to the whole team of UNHCR Sub-Office in Kibondo. I am especially grateful to Edessius Gwera (Kanembwa Field Assistant) for his logistical help and warm-hearted welcome. I also wish to thank the whole staff of UNHCR Ruyigi in Burundi, especially the Head of Office Lino Bordin and Repatriation Officer Lydia Gebrekristos. Both NGOs *Ligue ITEKA* and *ACCORD* will also be remembered for their help in the field, providing transportation to villages, translation from Kirundi to French and explanations of the main issues related to post-conflict Burundi.

Eventually, my gratitude goes to Southern African Extension Unit (SAEU) Head Office in Dar es Salaam and Field Office in Kibondo, to its Project Coordinator Christopher Nkwezi, to its Field Officers in Kanembwa Zulekha Adel and Mzee Beda, as well as to SAEU whole team for its help in identifying interlocutors and their patience in explaining organization of camps and Community Service activities. Sincere thanks also to SAEU refugee Community Workers for demonstrated commitment to actively participate in my research, mobilizing respondent groups and interpreting the spoken language, Kirundi, into Swahili or French.

My final thanks go to all refugees and returnees for their willingness to respond to my questions and to share their life experience.



Children gathered at Mtendeli refugee camp

INTRODUCTION

1. Traditional Knowledge in Refugee Camps in Tanzania

Traditional knowledge and skills related to nature and society constitute the chore of cultural living heritage as stated by the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003). The present project draws on UNESCO guidelines on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) to raise awareness on the need to incorporate traditional cultural knowledge as a vital dimension of humanitarian programs designed at supporting refugees in camps. Social and cultural reintegration of refugees as fully-fledged members of their community is tied up with the preservation and transmission of Burundian traditional cultural knowledge to the extent that such knowledge helps provide a sense of unity and common identity. The identification and implementation of programs and activities aiming at transmitting traditional cultural knowledge definitely need to be part of the holistic approach to the preparation to repatriation as it has been designed and promoted by UNHCR (2003).

In order to provide grounds for highlighting the importance of traditional knowledge for a durable reintegration of refugees in their home country, an extensive fieldwork research was carried out in Tanzania and in Burundi. The research first identified the aspects of cultural traditional knowledge which were preserved, weakened or destroyed in refugee camps in

Tanzania. The second part of the fieldwork consisted in investigating the impact of these ruptures in traditional knowledge on the socio-cultural reintegration of refugees after repatriation to Burundi. The research finally concluded with the design and implementation, in refugee camps, of cultural activities that would contribute to facilitating the transmission of traditional knowledge, therefore fostering a sustainable repatriation to Burundi and a successful reintegration of returnees¹.

The overall assessment shows that, in refugee camps, an effective transmission of past collective knowledge, representations and savoir-faire² has taken place over the years. But the traumatic experience of war and new conditions of life in the camps imperceptibly led to shifts, and even ruptures, in traditional knowledge regarding the representations of nature and society. What is more, they contributed to the fostering of a new consciousness of refugee cultural identity. Indeed, past ethno-political conflicts between the Tutsi and the Hutu in Burundi combined with refugee experience of exile have reinforced *radical polarised forms of ethnic identification* to the detriment of other ways of identifying (clan, socioeconomic categories, professions, or religions). As for life in the camps, the sheer conditions of living perpetuated such polarised ethnic identities but also gave way

¹ For more information on the fieldwork, see Annex.

² Collective knowledge, representations, values and savoir-faire constitute what we call a "culture" or an "intangible cultural heritage" (UNESCO 2003, 2005). They foster a sense of common identity in a given population.

to new cultural representations and assistance-driven behaviours that did not exist in Burundi. Children, teenagers and young adults who have spent a large part of their life in refugee camps are particularly concerned with the issue of alteration of cultural knowledge.



Children in Kibondo refuge camps: main targets of UNESCO activities

2. Historical Background

Present-day Burundi is a conflict-torn country. Generations of Burundians have suffered the consequences of incessant power struggles that have degenerated into bloodshed. Since the first wide-scale massacres of 1972³ remembered as *ikiza*, “the scourge” or “the calamity” in Kirundi (Lemarchand 2002, Chrétien & Dupaquier 2007), hundreds of thousands of refugees have fled their country to escape mutilation, torture and death. Many of them settled for years in Eastern Tanzania, Rwanda and

³ In April 1972, an insurrection led by Hutu policemen led to the killing of Tutsi and Hutu moderates. The Tutsi government retaliated, systematically proceeding to slaughter the Hutu en masse, especially focusing on educated Hutu. Between 100,000 and 200,000 people were killed over 3 months. More than 500,000 people are estimated to have fled the genocide. Other massacres occurred before 1972 (notably 1965) but on a smaller scale (Lemarchand 1996, 2002).

DRC (ex-Zaire). A second wide-scale killing took place in 1993 shortly after President Melchior Ndadaye was murdered in a military coup in October 1993. These massacres produced a second wave of hundreds of thousands of refugees. The peak of the refugee influx was reached at the end of December 1993 with an estimate of 800,000 refugees in surrounding countries. This coup was shortly followed by the death, rumoured to be an assassination, of the newly elected president, Cyprien Ntaryamira. In April 1994, he died on a plane crash with his Rwandan counterpart, President Juvenal Habyarimana, on their way to Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. As Burundi was still in a tense political state – fighting never completely stopped since the end of 1993 – a new radical escalation of violence began. It led to more than 300,000 deaths over the ten following years and about 800,000 refugees.

The 1972 and 1993-94 massacres were the result of power struggles, supported by an ethnic ideology, within the political arena. Ethnic-racial categories of “Hutu”, “Tutsi” and “Twa”⁴ were manipulated by post-independence politicians in their quest for

⁴ The Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa share the same culture and speak the same language, Kirundi. As a consequence, they can not be defined as “ethnic groups” or “races”. In pre-colonial times, these labels reflected flexible and variable identity categories based on socioeconomic positions. A Burundian “nation” came into being under the Baganwa dynasty and its sacred monarch, the *mwami*. It is the biased rereading of the history of Burundi by the colonial powers, as well as the administrative organisation of the territory, which created an ideology of ethnic divisions and domination. This ideology was instilled in educated Burundians and, later on, internalized by the whole population (Chrétien 1985, 1997; Guichaoua 1995). It was then manipulated by post-independence politicians in their quest for popular legitimacy and political power, and transmitted by the media (Dupaquier & Ndarishikanye 1995).

political power. Urban and rural populations, be they Hutu and Tutsi, adopted this ethnic ideology, reading political issues with ethnic lenses. They participated actively in selective massacres after years of ethnic propaganda (Chrétien 1995; Dupaquier & Ndarishikanye 1995; Vidal 1998) and the concrete planning of killings by members of the political power. Both 1972 and 1993-94 massacres were recognized as “genocides” by the international community because victims were selected according to their ethnic origin. The 1972 massacre was a “selective genocide”, “directed at all the educated or semi-educated strata of Hutu society; the aim was to decapitate not only the Hutu rebellion but Hutu society as well” (Lemarchand and Martin 1974). As for the 1993-94 genocide, it affected the whole population regardless of ethnic origin or socioeconomic status.



Day of departure to Burundi at Kanembwa camp

3. Repatriation and Reintegration of Refugees in Burundi

In the past seven years, political stability has been fostered by the signature of various agreements between the government and rebel groups. The number of repatriations has particularly increased since 2003 after the signature of a ceasefire agreement⁵. Other factors such as the will of the government of Tanzania to close the camps and cuts in funds from the international community have also led to increased returns (UNHCR 2005d).

A UNHCR-facilitated process of repatriation has been taking place since April 2002 and reinforced in July 2004 with an 18-month *Supplementary Appeal on the “Return and Reintegration of Burundian Refugees”*⁶. These programs draw on the Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (the 4Rs) component of the High Commissioner’s *Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern* to propose operational tools for the field (UNHCR 2003, 2004). From April 2002 to June 2005, some 226,000 refugees repatriated to their home country. In the area of study, Kibondo refugee camps, 89,849 refugees returned to Burundi between April 2002 and June 2006.

⁵ After the signature of a ceasefire agreement between the main CNDD-FNL Hutu armed rebel faction and the Burundian government in December 2003, security in the country has improved and resulted in increased returns of Burundian refugees.

⁶ This repatriation program concerns registered refugees settled in refugee camps, but not clandestine refugees living in towns like Kigoma (Malkki 1998) and even Dar es Salaam (Sommers 2001b).

In collaboration with its operational field partners (NGOs, local associations) and other UN agencies, UNHCR provides assistance for the return to Burundi. Repatriation programs include the dissemination of information on the political and economic context in Burundi, the registration of voluntary returnees, the transportation of refugees, personal effects and livestock when possible, and the distribution of return packages. In Burundi, implementing partners and UN agencies strive to ensure the transition from humanitarian to development assistance, taking in charge shelter and infrastructure rehabilitation, legal assistance or psychological support and helping for the development of self-reliance projects. The government of Burundi officially declared that it would be committed to a large-scale resettlement and reintegration program for returnees. UNHCR monitoring programs implemented in areas of return provide data on the status of returnees and the community they live in to identify returnees' needs for general assistance and support of their basic human rights.



Day of departure to Burundi in Kanembwa camp

However, as UNHCR's and operational field partners' monitoring reports show, the reintegration of repatriated refugees in Burundi is not an easy task. Hard conditions of life and bad infrastructure are the more frequently cited challenges to sustainable repatriation and reintegration, esp. shortage of food, difficult access to drinking water, conflicts over land properties, lack of tools and livestock as well as lack of vocational training centres, overcrowded schools and both distant and expensive health centres. Resolving material and administrative problems faced by returnees is a crucial step towards the sustainable repatriation of Burundian refugees. But as long as the question of justice for the victims and the issue of national reconciliation are not resolved (Jewsiewicki, Nsanze & Mukuri 2004), the security issue remains a great concern. Central to a renewed national unity lies the question of ethnicity and, in a broader view, of national culture and common traditional knowledge

4. Kibondo Refugee Camps in Tanzania

In 1972, the exile of Burundians led to the opening of refugee camps in the southern part of Kigoma Region. In order to accommodate the second massive influx of refugees between 1993 and 1996, new camps were created in the northern part of Kigoma region and in Kagera region. Kibondo district, situated in Kigoma region, was allocated with four refugee camps at the time of the research (Kanembwa, Mtendeli,

Nduta, and Mkugwa)⁷. At the beginning of 2004, there were 135,000 refugees living in Kibondo camps. By June 2006, the population in Kibondo was reduced to 68,416 refugees of whom 97.5% were Burundians (UNHCR 2006).

Kanembwa was the oldest camp in Kibondo. It was located 20 km from Kibondo town. In June 2006, it accommodated 14,323 refugees among the total 68,416 refugees of Kibondo. The refugee population of the camp mainly came from the north-eastern and central provinces of Ruyigi, Cankuzo and Gitega in Burundi. Children under the age of 17 made up about 57% of the total population of the camps, with 22% being less than five years old. As in any refugee camp, the Tanzanian Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) was in charge of the security and control of entries and exits⁸.



Traditional Burundian fences in Kanembwa camp

Kanembwa camp followed the general spatial and administrative organization of all refugee camps. It was divided into blocks,

which were further divided into household groups or clusters. Blocks were represented by an elected block leader, assistant block leader, secretary and treasurer. Each block appointed people to serve as food committee members, women's group members, security personal and other groups. Cell leaders were elected to represent every ten-house cluster. Camps chairmen and vice-chairmen were elected from among the block leaders. The Ministry of Home Affairs supervised the election while UNHCR and camp managers observed its implementation.

There were three main implementing partners working in Kanembwa camp. Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service was in charge of the management and the provision of basic needs (food and non-food items, infrastructures and Community Empowerment Projects). Southern Africa Extension Unit was responsible for supporting education and community service sectors, especially for vulnerable people. Its objective was to facilitate local capacity building in support of the refugee community and help it gain ownership of community mobilization and education programs with the view to preparing the refugees for voluntary and peaceful repatriation to Burundi. The International Refugee Committee (IRC provided health care. Other NGOs and associations were intervening in Kanembwa camps, e.g. Right to Play which organized the training of refugee coaches to supervise "Play Days" for children.

⁷ Mtendeli and Kanembwa were closed in 2007. Nduta will be closed in 2008.

⁸ The 1998 Tanzania Refugee Act on limitation of movement is applied with greater strictness than in previous years since 2004 (UNHCR 2005b).

I. TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN BURUNDIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN EASTERN TANZANIA

1. The Preservation of Burundian Traditional Knowledge

It has long been assumed that, in crossing international borders, individuals searching for asylum tend to lose connections to their culture and identity (Malkki 1995). Life in refugee camps would be reduced to basic needs of food and physical protection – provided by humanitarian international organisations – while culture, as a non vital aspect of human life in emergency situation, would simply be forgotten.

Contrary to this view, recent studies carried out in refugee camps have shown that the experience of violence and exile does not wipe out culture (Dudley 1999, Baily 1999, Harris 1999). Even under harsh conditions of living, social mechanisms of cultural transmission continue to take place. Some of these social mechanisms work in favour of the preservation of intangible traditional knowledge. Burundi being an “old nation” where political unification dates back from the 17th century (Chrétien & Mukuri 2002, Mworoha 1987), a great number of cultural practices and representations of society are deeply rooted and shared by the whole population regardless of socioeconomic, professional, religious or ethnic distinctions. Moreover, after the 1993-1994 situation of urgency had made way for

a fifteen-year daily routine, it appeared that incorporated social mechanisms of cultural transmission were reactivated among refugees.

Informal Traditional Knowledge

In Kibondo camps, informal ways of transmitting cultural knowledge can be identified. They include use of the national language, Kirundi, for everyday interactions and at school⁹; recounts of historical events to children and teenagers at home; transmission of cooking practices; preservation of female ways of dressing; reproduction of male / female social division of labour; preservation of religious practices, esp. Roman Catholicism¹⁰; transmission of beliefs in spirits, in witchcraft and in the power of traditional healers.

The use of Kirundi in daily interactions is an essential mechanism for the preservation of traditional cultural representations. Language is not simply a tool for the transmission of practical information: words, syntaxes, greetings, and polite phrases deliver messages about social norms and social bonds which tie up a group. Cooking and meals constitute valuable moments in terms of cultural transmission because there are times when parents and grandparents

⁹ Mkugwa camp is an exception: Swahili is the common medium of communication in this mixed camp composed of Rwandese, Congolese and Burundians refugees (both Hutu and Tutsi).

¹⁰ About 80% of refugees are Christians; they follow different branches of Christianity (Roman Catholics; Protestants, among them Methodists and Baptists; Pentecostals; Witnesses of Jehovah; Assemblies of God); only a small number are Muslims or believers in traditional religions.

tell stories about Burundi and about their family to their children or grandchildren. Male / female dressing codes and divisions of labour tend to be preserved as refugees settle in the camp and organize their daily activities: girls help their mothers in cooking and fetching firewood while boys follow their fathers to the fields and help with cattle. Patients continue to consult traditional healers in parallel with doctors provided by international organisations. Finally, witchcraft is a good example of a belief that is well rooted: refugees assert that cases of witchcraft regularly occur, even if only a few are reported to humanitarian organisations¹¹.

The transmission of these cultural characteristics is not an object of conscious practice. It operates through two canals: children imitating their parents' social and cultural practices; and parents implicitly requiring their children to follow their examples in terms of practices and values. Parents insist that by helping them at home and at work, children automatically acquire the important knowledge, skills and values that define Burundian culture. *Therefore, as in any human community, Burundian refugees share orally their knowledge of the world and of society with their young at specific moments of learning and at different stages of life.*

¹¹ Three women accused of witchcraft were killed in Kanembwa camp over the last two years by strangulation or fire.



A little girl tying up a bottle of water on her back as if it were a baby, Mkugwa refugee camp

The informal transmission of Burundian traditional knowledge has been facilitated by the fact that refugees have been settled in the Burundian-Tanzanian borderland, that is to say in a peripheral region where exchange-based interactions have been taking place over centuries between people living on both sides of the border (Kopytoff 1987, Merx 2003, Nugent & Asiwaju 1996). Burundians who fled to Tanzania in the mid-1990's, especially those coming from adjacent provinces to the border, were not complete strangers to the Tanzanian population of the region that hosted them. They used to share similar ways of life (most of them are hoe-farmers cultivating the same kind of crops), cooking practices, social norms (such as gender role), religious practices (Christianity combined with traditional beliefs in spirits and witchcraft), consultation of traditional healers and mutually understandable languages, Kiha

and Kirundi. A great number of Burundian residents of borderland provinces also speak Kiswahili, the national language of Tanzania. As a consequence, the encounter between Burundian refugees and Tanzanian residents has not been a “cultural shock” that could have led to a complete acculturation of Burundians. *Exile in a region where traditional knowledge was similar to that of Burundi made it easier for parents to preserve and transmit important aspects of their culture.*

Formal Transmission of Performing Arts

More formal ways of reproducing and performing Burundian cultural identity also exist in refugee camps.

Cultural Groups were created to promote traditional music, dances, singing and theatre. Dated back from 1996, the formation of Cultural Groups actively involved parents and old people in the selection of adequate traditional performances and the transmission of skills and knowledge concerned with these performances. They selected cultural items that resonated with refugees’ sense of shared identity. Today, cultural activities, which are organized by Kanembwa Youth Centre and supported by Community Services, are mostly performed by the youth. In Kanembwa, there are 39 Cultural Groups, among them 19 traditional dance groups, 11 drama groups, 1 choir and 8 groups of modern music (SAEU 2005). These groups are not permanently active

structures. They are mainly active at the time of the celebration of international days, the most recent ones being the *African Children Day* (20 May) and the *Refugee Day* (30 June), or to start sessions about Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Peace and Conflict Reconciliation Programs.



Traditional drums gathered in a city hall (Burundi)

Drumming of Burundi and traditional dances, which all include singing, constitute the core of these cultural expressions reproduced in refugee camps. Burundi drumming has become a major symbol of Burundian culture. It became famous worldwide after being recorded and broadcast as an example of a typical African tradition. Traditionally played by specialized musician casts in religious sanctuaries or at the king’s court at the time of the old sacred kingdom of Burundi in pre-colonial times (Mworoha 1987), drumming became a symbol of the national Burundian culture. A minimum of 10 drummers play at once on large wooden drums while singing. Drummers alternatively come to the front to perform acrobatic dances. As in Burundi, drums are played at the beginning of

refugee festivities to inform people that time has come to gather together. Singing also constitutes a traditional practice that, in past times, would accompany rituals and celebrations. They are usually divided into numerous feminine performances traditionally linked to feminine body rituals (*urwedengwe*, *ihunja*, *umutsibo*, *amarwandama*, etc.) and masculine performances associated to war (*iagasimbo*, or acrobatic dance from Buragane, *intore* or warriors' parade, *umuyebe*, etc.). Performances vary according to events that are being celebrated but also to regional specificities. Today, in Burundi, drumming, dances and singing are performed for all sorts of events, from private parties to political ceremonies.

The last major formal activity in regards to cultural transmission consisted of the organisation of story-telling sessions. Such sessions were regarded by refugees as a good opportunity not only to pass over Burundian traditional stories and tales on to the youth but also to foster social links between grand-parents/parents generation and the younger generation. Although story-telling programs were stopped two years ago, people remember that they were highly praised by old people and well attended by the youth.

These cultural events are occasions to recall similar events which occurred at the time when people still lived in Burundi. As for Cultural Groups members, they say that drumming, dances, singing and story-telling represent their link to Burundian culture

while they are in exile. *For refugees, perpetuating such traditional cultural skills is considered a way of keeping ties with Burundi.* Yet, cultural activities implemented by refugees have been partly reduced due to both repatriation programs and budget cuts (UNHCR 2005). Voluntary repatriation has led to the departure of many refugees, some of them who had been active participants in these cultural activities. The general atmosphere created by prospects of return has reduced refugee commitment in previously well-attended activities (SAEU 2005). As for budget cuts, they have contributed to the reorganization of the planning of activities and the concentration on programs regarded as vital for refugees: protection of Vulnerable People, HIV/AIDS campaigns or Peace and Conflict Resolution Programs.



Traditional female singing and dances (Burundi)

2. Changes in Traditional Cultural Knowledge

Despite the formal and informal transmission of elements of Burundian traditional knowledge in refugee camps, socio-cultural changes occurred, affecting both elder and younger generations. Elders complain that younger generations lack the knowledge and the skills that epitomize Burundian culture, but they ignore the fact that such changes are, among other things, the result of their loss of authority, especially when it comes to the status of men.

Oral Traditions and Expressions

Although children and teenagers are generally said to have a good knowledge of their mother-tongue, Kirundi, some parents have raised the issue that *teenagers and young adults tend to integrate a large range of Swahili words, or even English words, in familiar discussions*. Kirundi is the language used at home and at school, but Swahili is indeed widely understood by refugees. It is used in various programs on the radio, in songs of East African singers, and in the camps between the Tanzanian staff and refugees. Swahili is also well-known by Burundians living in border areas and by educated inhabitants in the capital, Bujumbura. The language issue raised by parents also relates to the poor knowledge of proverbs and traditional story-telling among Burundians of all ages. Many parents considered that the decreasing

proficiency in the national language of Burundi among young people was therefore linked to their parents' poor performance.

What is more, *the recall of actual historical relations between the Hutu and the Tutsi, has completely disappeared from oral traditions among refugees*. Historical evidence shows that "Hutu" and "Tutsi" were flexible socioeconomic labels (Lemarchand 1996, Chrétien 1993) reflecting positions in the hierarchical order. Social relations between farmers and pastoralists were characterized by strong socioeconomic interests leading to stability, although violence and political tensions were not absent in this society, based on a monarchic political system (Mworoha 1987, Ndarishikanye 1998b, Thibon 1995). But today, among the refugee population as well as in Burundi, there is a widespread idea that Hutu and Tutsi are rigid ethnic categories; and that past relations between people were characterized by extreme forms of exploitation, domination and violence. As an example, the *ubugabire* relation between pastoralists and farmers has come to epitomize the exploitation of the Hutu by the Tutsi. In pre-colonial times, *ubugabire* (or *ubuhake* in Rwanda) consisted of a gift, in the form of a cow, by which the giver would show his respect to the recipient (Vidal 1985). But after years of erroneous colonial interpretation, which turned *ubugabire* into a relation of domination between an exploitative cattle owner (supposedly always Tutsi) and a powerless farmer (Hutu) by which the farmer would get the right of usufruct on some of the cows of the pastoralist (who would offer his protection to

the farmer in return) in exchange of food and other small services (Adamantidis 1965), *ubugabire* came to epitomize Tutsi's exploitation of Hutu masses.

Such a deep-rooted view of an ethnic division based on exploitation, shared by all refugees, explains why the ethnic question can not be openly discussed. Some parents indicated that many teenagers categorically refuse to listen to story-telling and recitals of Burundian history, saying that war, violence and ethnic divisions were the cause of their sufferings. Such an obvious general reluctance to discuss the ethnic question has been incorporated by children and teenagers (Ndarishikanye 1998b) all the more so as strong affects are linked to it.

Knowledge and Practices concerning the Nature

Most parents mentioned that knowledge regarding agricultural practices had been lost following interdictions of owning fields inside or outside the camps. Although the legislation about agriculture has been relaxed, working in the fields still does not constitute a daily activity in the life of children and teenagers as it can be for Burundian farmers. Young generations have rarely heard about collective agriculture, a common practice among neighbours in Burundi but not in the camps. What is more, due to a general lack of cattle, it seems that many children and teenagers do not know anymore how to take care of stock, e.g. how to milk a cow. Traditional respect for and

praise of Burundian cows with their large heavy horns (called *inyambo*), whose possession was a sign a wealth and status (Niyonzima & Fendall, 2001, Adamantidis 1956), have vanished. *Traditional knowledge regarding farming and stockbreeding in the camp environment is disappearing.* Male teenagers, who prefer to engage in petty trade, are the first category to be concerned with this lack of agricultural knowledge.



Inyambo cows in a colline (Burundi)

Socio-cultural Norms: The Challenge of Male Position of Authority

Significant evolutions have affected male traditional authority in the familial sphere as well as in the social space. This aspect of ruptures in Burundian culture is not easy to detect as men tend to hide this phenomenon. One therefore needs to use cautiously interviewees' discourses and interpretations of reality. As we will see in the following paragraphs, the focus on trivial changes hides major shifts in power relations.

Dressing was raised as the first and foremost failure of cultural transmission not

only because it is a “typical” traditional practice but also because it is related to the crucial value of respect. Young teenagers and women constituted the target of parents regarding the introduction of shameful new fashions. They were accused of discarding the attitudes of shame and reserve imparting to women. A second socio-cultural dimension which drew considerable attention was concerned with the sexual division of labour. It was stressed that teenager girls would refuse to comply with their traditional roles requiring them to involve in cleaning, cooking, getting firewood, taking care of children or cultivating the fields. They were said to spend most of their time hanging around with their friends talking of fashion and boys. As for teenager boys, elders said that they would also disaffect former traditional behaviours and status in relation to power and authority, preferring to go out smoking marijuana and looking for girls. *The Youth Centre was depicted as a place where traditional roles and traditional division of labour were overthrown*, girls and boys being involved in similar activities and bearing similar responsibilities.

However, in everyday settings, changes in dressing and sexual division of labour or gender behaviours are not as radical as depicted by interviewees. As stressed previously, the reproduction of traditional sexual behaviours is the rule. Shameful fashions as described by interviewees are not to be seen. Nor was it possible to detect any striking evolution in the sexual division

of labour. Girls and female teenagers are involved in usual activities devoted to women, carrying babies on their back, washing the laundry and helping for cooking or collecting and transporting fire wood with their mother. In other words, elders’ and parents’ complaints, which might possibly account for slight changes in female submission to domestic rules and male teenagers disinterest in traditional male roles, largely exaggerate the breadth of this phenomenon. In the context of refugee camps, the focus on trivial evolutions hides extremely more crucial issues. Indeed, *what parents complain about, more than actual transformations, is the loss of their traditional authority over the youth. Condemnation of the youth hints at parents’ inability to fully control the transmission of traditional knowledge in exile, and its impact on the youth: a decrease in submission and respect to elders.*

Men are more severely affected by the loss of traditional authority than women, because it has challenged their dominant position in the social sphere from which women are traditionally kept away in the Burundian society. This appears evident if we turn our attention to changes in male behaviours towards women and girls. Several observers noted an increase in *domestic violence and rapes of young girls or female teenagers*. Accusing female teenagers of breaking the rules of traditional reserve by wearing sexy clothes constitutes an unconscious trick to make them responsible of the high level of rapes in the

camps, thus minimizing the responsibility of men (Sattopima 2004). Although domestic violence is part of traditional masculine norms of behaviours regarding gender relations, women attest that violence has increased since their installation in refugee camps. Experts in domestic violence interpret this phenomenon as a typical reaction to the loss of moral authority and the challenge of social position.



Girls drinking at a fountain, Kanembwa camp

3. Roots of Change in Traditional Cultural Knowledge

The experience of genocide and exile led those who fled Burundi 10 to 12 years ago to shape a new consciousness of their cultural identity (Malkki 1995, Turner 2002). New conditions of life imposed on refugees in the camps have worked towards changes in socio-cultural practices (Krulfeld & Camino 1994). Behaviours adopted by the youth express a tension between various cultures: the homeland, the host country, and a globalized identity.

The Genocide and the Experience of Exile

The sheer condition of exile as a forced displacement and deterritorialization from the native country carries along transformations in the perception of cultural identity. It has often been noticed that nostalgic memories of national / collective / ethnic culture emerge from a forced material and symbolical distance to places of origins (Malkki 1995; Corbet 2006). The creation of cultural groups, specialized in drumming, singing and dances, is proof of the existence of this phenomenon in Burundian refugee camps. Folklorist performances create the passing but powerful illusion, in terms of reproduction of collective identity, that life has remained the same. It is generally admitted that, in condition of exile, nostalgic feelings are nourished by altered memories of past life. Socio-economic and political divisions are discarded while peaceful everyday life is praised. Given that refugees are cut from the material and symbolical representations of the past, they tend to reconstruct a mythical perception of the past (Zetter 1999). *In Burundian refugee camps, studies have shown that such a mythical history resulted in the reproduction of the polarisation between the Hutu and the Tutsi (Malkki 1995), and the depiction of the latter as invaders, exploiters and murderers.*

Yet, in the case of Burundi, national history makes it difficult to romanticize past life. Political divisions which emerged at the independence of the country created the conditions for the ethnicization of the

political landscape. Past traumatic experiences that resulted from 1993-94 genocide have led some refugees to reject their culture. Described as a country of violence and ethnic divisions, Burundi has become tantamount to shame and generalized insecurity. Many refugees do not want to repatriate to a country they do not consider as being theirs anymore. *The trauma of a nation-wide genocide has led some refugees to reject their past and tradition, considered as a culture of divisions and violence.* As shown previously, this explains why refugees do not address the genocide of 1993 and avoid considering the existence of an ethnic divide in general, thus contributing to the disappearance of an oral tradition which illuminates the historical unity of the country and the solidarity within the whole population.



House planning in Kibondo refugee camps

Organization and Structure of Refugee Camps

The organization and structure of the camps where refugees settled contributed to the weakening of transmission of traditional

knowledge. Planned spatiality, democratic leadership, control over daily activities and more specifically over work, limitation of movement, dependence on food, provision of non food items and daily supervision of officers of the government of Tanzania resulted in the quasi total submission of parents to the camp structures. The evident socioeconomic distinctiveness of refugee camps in comparison to both Burundian urban and rural life, characterized by rather unplanned housing, freedom of circulation and work, self-reliance of households for the provision of food and non food items coupled with spontaneous solidarity between families, absence of daily direct relations to officials for administrative matters, etc. contributed to deprive parents of their former responsibilities.

At the same time, refugees' recurrent complaints over camp constraints go along with expressions of satisfaction at the material support they receive from UN agencies and implementing partners. Free food, free health and free education are generally applauded in spite of occasional regrets for the lack of drugs and school material, the poor qualification of teachers and the absence of variety in food. *Accustomed to benefit from international aid and assured of its long-term distribution, refugees incorporate a taken-for-granted attitude that is completely opposed to life experience based on self-reliance in Burundi.* In other words, asylum policy brought about dependence. However, it has to be noted that this dependence does not

equate with passivity. Indeed, in order to obtain specific items or favours in a context of extreme scarcity, individuals have proved particularly gifted at developing efficient strategies using the flaws of the international humanitarian system and of the Tanzanian administration¹².

As for children and teenagers, they were raised in a world where provision of food is equated to fortnight distributions of cooking oil, sugar, beans and rice, not a result of hard work. *Traditional representations that children and teenagers have of their parents as providers of material security and moral authority have been affected by the situation of dependence towards international organizations.* This partly accounts for the growing lack of respect towards parents among younger generations, who do not regard their parents as industrious individuals but as passive recipients, or active solicitors, of international aid.



Distribution of food, Nyabitare transit centre (Burundi)

¹² For example, refugees may try to register under several names to get more food and non food items; they can lie about their actual situation (as ethnic identity, protection status, *colline* of origin) to benefit from greater aid in the camps or upon return. Many of them also travel illegally from Burundi to Tanzania for trade.

Humanitarian and Development Programs

A second fundamental aspect which explains shifts in traditional practices and representations relates to the multiple development programs implemented in the camps. These programs have a heavy impact on refugees' ways of thinking, especially regarding male / female social division and norms of behaviours (Declich 2000, Hitchcok 1993). *Gender-oriented programs, whose main objectives concern the protection of girls and women from violence and the promotion of women in work and social life, have resulted in the reorientation of traditional relations of power between men and women.* Women were elected as community members to represent the voice of the refugees; women associations were created in the field of work as part of programs of 'Income Generating Activities' (IGA) – especially in petty trade, bakery and traditional basket craft – and cases of domestic violence or sexual abuses reported to community services generally turn in favour of girls and women. Women's concerns about changes in matrimonial institution or male behaviours towards their wife are taken into serious consideration¹³. The question here is not to advocate for the ban of these programs but

¹³ Indeed, a great number of women complain that men who had left their wife in Burundi when they fled to Tanzania took a new wife in the camps, marrying under the Tanzanian legislation. Moreover, male infidelity was described as a systematic practice born in the camps. However, if polygamy is illegal in regards to the law in Burundi, the practice itself has long been a traditional practice among inhabitants of the countryside. The number of wives a man used to possess accounted for his prosperity and position of power in society.

to highlight their incidence on socio-economic change. Slight changes of sexual and social status have ensued from the introduction of new responsibilities for women refugees.

Displacement to refugee camps has affected social organisation, as seen before, and it has to be underlined that a great majority of men have suffered from it when it comes to their traditional social roles and positions. Organized and controlled by UN agencies and officials of the government of Tanzania, decision-making regarding the community – an activity that was traditionally devoted to men – has been dramatically reduced. *In the sphere of work, men can no longer claim their dominant role as providers of food or money to justify their position as heads of family. Their status is threatened by a lack of political and economic power.* This accounts for the high level of domestic violence and rapes occurring in the camps as noted above (Sattopima 2004).

Globalisation in Refugee Camps

In spite of their specificity in terms of modes of creation and socioeconomic organization, *refugee camps are not places totally separated from the rest of the world. Social change is therefore not only the consequence of the internal organisation of refugee camps, but also a result of their integration to a worldwide globalization process.* Radios transmit information on ongoing events in far-away countries and broadcast “modern” music (hip-hop, rap,

dance, etc.). Some small shops own televisions and organize projection of movies. In Kanembwa, the television of the Youth Centre was connected to international channels via a satellite dish. UNHCR and operational field partners inadvertently introduce foreign fashion when they distribute American or European. Unofficial trade between refugees and Tanzanian villages also contribute to introducing changes into traditional knowledge. Teenagers are particularly attracted by this new international culture. Some of them therefore adopt new behaviours and way of thinking, rejecting the culture of village farmers seen as ‘old-fashioned’.

Conclusion

The following lines sum up main changes affecting traditional cultural knowledge in refugee camps:

- A decrease in knowledge of Burundians proverbs and traditional story-telling among the youth,
- A change in male – female traditional status: the submission of women and the full authority of men in the family and in the community are no longer taken for granted,
- The weakening of traditional norms surrounding male sexual behaviours, which have become more violent,
- A decrease in knowledge about agriculture and stockbreeding among the youth,
- The fostering of representations of Burundi as a country of violence and ethnic divisions.

II. CHALLENGES TO THE SOCIO-CULTURAL REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES IN BURUNDI

1. *The First Steps of Return for Burundian Refugees*

Facilitated Repatriation

UNHCR Kibondo is in charge of the first steps of refugee facilitated repatriation which include, as stated previously, dissemination of information on the political and economic context in Burundi, registration of voluntary returnees, transportation of refugees as well as their personal effects and the livestock. When they reach the Burundian-Tanzanian border at Mabamba exit point, refugees are put under the responsibility of UNHCR Ruyigi. This UNHCR Field Office is in charge of the refugees from Kibondo camps repatriating to the northern and eastern regions of Burundi. Repatriation buses and lorries stop at Nyabitare transit centre in Burundi. The identity of refugees is checked by UNHCR repatriation staff. The Burundian Ministry of Home Affairs delivers identity cards to refugees whose identity papers are in order. Refugees then obtain their return package. Lorries are unloaded and reloaded according to refugees' destination. Refugees living in Nyabitare commune and in surrounding areas set out for their home the same day while refugees living in distant *collines* spend the night at Ruyigi town to be repatriated to the nearest commune the next day (UNHCR 2005c).



Distribution of return packages a Nyabitare transit centre (Burundi)

Arrival at the colline (hill area)

At the commune, returnees are received by Welcoming Committees. Created in 2004 by a government body called the *Commission Nationale de la Réintégration des Sinistrés* (CNRS), Welcoming Committees are in charge of registering repatriates when they arrive at the commune. The objective of registration is to facilitate further assistance to refugees by local NGOs and associations and help follow up their reintegration to the community. *Reports show that repatriates are highly disappointed by the absence of warm welcome and practical help at the level of the commune* (LWF-CNEB 2006). After completion of administrative procedures, repatriates make up their way to their *colline* on their own, where they hope they will be appropriately greeted by their former neighbours and friends.

Upon arrival, repatriates agree that they were generally warmly received by their former neighbours and friends. Interviews carried out with repatriates show that residents offered their assistance: some of them accommodated repatriates until they were able to restore their destroyed house or built a new house; others provided food and, when possible, kitchenware and tools. Residents also helped repatriates build new houses. In other words, interpersonal solidarity seems to be the general pattern of the first stages of return to Burundi. Interviewees attest that residents expressed their happiness to see their old neighbours or friends coming back home. Yet, interviews with returnees who have spent between six months and three years in Burundi show that *genuine practices of mutual aid are intermingled with hidden feelings of suspicion*.

2. A Two-Faceted Reintegration of Returnees

Repatriates, UNHCR officers and NGO workers tend to depict relations between residents and returnees as peaceful interactions made up of solidarity, forgiveness of past events and harmonious cohabitation. However, although both residents and returnees do their best to live in peace, suspicion and mistrust are still the rule.

A Smooth Re-Adaptation to the Community

An overwhelming majority of returnees insist that they feel “at ease”, cohabiting peacefully with their neighbours since their repatriation to their home *colline*. Here are examples of acts and behaviours towards returnees which were cited as a proof of a good socio-cultural reintegration into:

- Residents spontaneously provide assistance in the form of food, firewood, seeds, etc.
- Residents spontaneously share their food with returnees’ children
- Returnees can ask for services in exchange of other services
- Both residents and returnees share a drink at home and in bars
- Peaceful and friendly talks take place without apparent ethnic discrimination
- Witchcraft is not used against returnees
- Returnees are invited to collective ceremonies like weddings, funerals or communions.

Interviews clearly show that ongoing assistance provided by residents contributed to fostering the social reintegration of returnees. A full participation of returnees in activities related to community life also facilitated their integration. Obviously, the value of community solidarity is still present in the cultural landscape. Even in cases where assistance was not provided, repatriates highlight the fact that their neighbours could not be blamed considering

that they have suffered hard conditions of life, like anybody in the community¹⁴.

Although children and teenagers have been identified as a sensitive group in refugee camps – some of them had left the country when they were very young, while those born in refugee camps have never known their home country, they probably constitute the group which more easily adjust to new conditions of life in Burundi. Different factors combine to explain this phenomenon. First of all, children and young teenagers have not been actors¹⁴ in the genocide¹⁵. As a consequence, they can not be the target of resident's resentment in regards of specific deaths which occurred in 1993-94. Secondly, school plays an essential role in their integration into the community. Everyday interactions between children, common activities and collective plays contribute to bind children together. Some young teenagers take an active part in drumming or dance groups while other are involved in sport activities. A good knowledge of Kirundi among returnee children and young teenagers makes it easy for them to integrate. Thirdly, life in refugee camps necessitated the participation of children in the same daily tasks which exist in Burundi. Although not as much involved in refugee camps as they would have been in

Burundi, the youth learned the basic tasks necessary in daily life, such as getting water, collecting firewood, taking care of their siblings or helping their parents in the fields.

It is evident that *the preservation of the national language in refugee camps, the reproduction of traditional and religious beliefs as well as the maintenance of social norms and values regarding solidarity and mutual aid contribute to facilitating the reintegration of returnees* in Burundi.



Drum festivities in Ruyigi (Burundi)

What is more, as far as children and young teenagers are concerned, *changes that have affected some elements of traditional knowledge seem to be easily overcome, such as the poor knowledge regarding the variety of Burundian local traditions or agricultural and stock-breeding practices*. Daily interactions between returnees and residents, integration at school and the adoption of way of life based on self-reliant agriculture contribute to a quick (re-)learning of the knowledge and savoir-faire required to adapt to new conditions of life.

¹⁴ In 2005-2006, the northern and eastern regions of Burundi underwent a long period of drought, followed by pouring rains which destroyed the few remaining crops. The conjunction of these meteorological phenomena resulted in a bad harvest and provoked famine in several areas.

¹⁵ Contrary to other African countries torn apart by civil war or ethnic cleansing, Burundi has not been the place of a massive participation of children soldiers in the genocide.

An Obvious Reluctance to Evoke the Genocide

During interviews, a majority of returnees stressed that they had never been threatened, insulted or even retaliated in one way or another in relation to the 1993 genocide after their return to Burundi. Several arguments were recurrent to assert this point: the conception that the population of a same *colline* was ethnically homogeneous, with the result that no ethnic-oriented misbehaviours could take place; the fact that having fled the country in 1993, present-day returnees could neither have participated in massacres which occurred at that time nor in the civil war of the following years, and therefore would not be subjected to personal threats or acts of retaliation today; and last, the assertion that people were anxious that “life gets back to normal” and, as a consequence, had “forgiven and forgotten” past events.

Although a couple of interviewees said that people could talk about the civil war in order to bring forgiveness, an overwhelming majority indicated that silence was the rule as people feared that talks may give rise to renewed ethnic divisions. What has to be stressed here is that *questions dealing with ethnic divisions and killings that were at the root of Burundians' exile in 1993 generate embarrassment and discomfort*. Some translators were unwilling to address the subject of the 1993 killings and the issue of ethnic divisions. As for interviewees, they would not answer the questions in full

length, settling for a mere yes or no, after which it was difficult to get more explanations. The existence of a generalized reluctance to address the ethnic question is evident (Ndarishikanye 1998b, Barancira 2002). This explains why neither refugees nor residents refer to the 1993 events as “genocide” but rather speak of the “civil war”, the “war”, or sometimes the “massacres”.

This ambiguity of ethnic reconciliation in post-conflict Burundi generates strong feelings of suspicion. Mistrust, concealed by individuals in their daily interactions, lies behind an apparently smooth social reintegration.

Factors of Suspicion in the Colline: Former Rebels, Land Issue and International Aid

A couple of hot issues contribute to maintaining a climate of suspicion among inhabitants. The first of these issues relates to residents' mistrust for young male repatriates. In the second half of 1990's, rebel forces infiltrated refugee camps to mobilize and train young male refugees. After illegally crossing borders to return to Burundi, these young refugees get involved in numerous outbursts of ethnic violence which took place up to 2003¹⁶. In the present context of refugee repatriation, such events inevitably cast suspicion on young male repatriates. Residents fear that these repatriates might take up arms in case

¹⁶ For example, in 2000, in Gisuru commune, situated by the Tanzanian border, interviewees explained that fierce fights between the Burundian army and rebel groups originated from Tanzania led to the massive exile of inhabitants to Tanzanian refugee camps.

rebellion forces organize new massacres. Several young male repatriates attested that residents' suspicion only disappeared after their acts, words and behaviours showed they were committed to a peaceful life in the *colline*.

A second issue raised by interviewees is concerned with land and property. Upon return, many repatriates have realized that their land has been illegally occupied or sometimes even sold to residents. Innumerable land disputes have followed the return of refugees, as land is obviously a primary concern in the life of people completely dependent on it to get food and income. According to ACCORD, it takes months or years to solve them. Regarding the issue of returnee socio-cultural integration, *the immediate effect of illegal land appropriation is to foster feelings of mistrust between residents and returnees*. Moreover, land is clearly part of the economic tensions which had been turned into ethnic divisions in Burundi (Ndarishikanye 1998a, Rwabahungu 2004). As long as land disputes are not settled, they can easily be interpreted in ethnic terms and give rise to renewed ethnic conflicts.

The situation is even more complex when returnees' relatives are directly involved in land occupation and expropriation. Numerous cases indeed concern members of a same family and divide those who stayed in Burundi and those who fled to neighbouring countries to seek refuge. In traditional societies,

solidarity in case of hardship is largely based on family ties. As a consequence, the weakening of bonds of trust and the growth of resentment between relatives contributes to disaffiliating some individuals and dismantling the social fabric.



ACCORD workers talking to farmers in a dispute over land ownership (Burundi)

The significance of the land issue explains why the place of return in which refugees settle is a factor of good or bad integration. Indeed, when refugees repatriate to their home *colline*, former neighbours and friends are still present and constitute an efficient social network for a smooth reintegration. But for returnees who settle in another area after their home land had been illegally occupied, integration to a new community is a long process. The problem is more acute for women who have no choice but settle at their parents' place after the death of their husband or after

repudiation¹⁷. In a society where male inheritance and patrilocality¹⁸ prevail, the return of former daughters and sisters to their parents' property exacerbates land and property disputes (LWF-CNEB 2006). Widows or separated women find it hard to start their life anew when they lack the advantage of social network and family solidarity.

Thirdly, international assistance to returnees is a hot issue in present-day Burundi. Some residents resent the fact that repatriates benefit from international aid, such as return packages, food support and particularly corrugated iron sheets to cover newly built or renovated houses. Free access to health centres for a period of three months also creates jealousy among a resident population whose conditions of life are similar to repatriates'. When asked about this issue, both residents and repatriates tend to stress that such discrepancy has not fostered bad feelings or opened conflicts, and said hidden tensions settle down by themselves. But the widespread complaint over unequal benefit of international aid¹⁹ in general show that returnees' full reintegration is still fragile.



Transportation of corrugated iron sheet distributed to returnees (Burundi)

3. The Impact of the Political Situation

The capacity of the Burundian government to sustain peace within its borders constitutes a major incitement to refugee repatriation. But despite the signing of various agreements since 2000, and the fact that the return of refugees remains a priority for the government of Burundi, the current political situation in the country contributes not only to deter refugees from joining a voluntary repatriation process (FMR 2004), but also to maintain ethnic divisions in Burundi.

Ongoing Processes of Ethnic Polarization

The role of the state in the polarisation of ethnic consciousness and in the fostering of feelings of hate has been demonstrated in full length (Chrétien 1997, Lemarchand 1996). Although impossible to quantify, the participation of farmers and pastoralists in

¹⁷ A great number of men who left their wife in Burundi when they fled the country married in the camps. Problems arise at the time of repatriation to Burundi with their new wives and, most of the time, their children. As the government of Burundi does not accept polygamy nor recognize marriages contracted in foreign countries, 'illegal' wives have no choice but go back to their parents' *colline*.

¹⁸ In a patrilocal society, when a woman marries a man, she leaves her own family to join her new husband in his home or compound, near his relatives.

¹⁹ International programs supporting the material and technical reintegration of refugees also target residents in order to minimize discontent and jealousy towards refugees (UNHCR 2005a, 2005b, 2005c).

massacres at the level of the *colline* is undeniable (Vidal 1995). Today, *ethnic identities are still being manipulated by the political elite in search of legitimacy, power and wealth*. At the beginning of August 2006, what was described as a coup by the Burundian government led to the arrest of political opponents. Witnesses informed the press that politicians who had been arrested were being tortured. Hutu and Tutsi activists use such events to accuse each other of conspiracy, therefore fostering divisions among the whole population²⁰. Contrary to the neighbouring country of Rwanda, where former murderers were imprisoned and traditional tribunals named *gacaca* operated to resolve conflicts (Rusagara 2005, Vidal 2004), *Burundi has not yet started a national-wide campaign to acknowledge genocide and seek for justice*. Reconciliation between the different parties involved in the genocide is an empty word as long as justice is not done. What is more, despite the ongoing disarmament program and governmental declarations that illegal possession of arms will be severely punished, demobilized soldiers and rebels are still in possession of arms. Numerous attacks regularly occur and threaten the life of the population²¹.

²⁰ To Tutsi activists, this recent repression orchestrated by the current Hutu government on Tutsi former politicians and their Hutu supporters, without formal proofs of coup, show that *“what happened there [in Bujumbura] cannot be but the beginning of a wide operation organized by the Hutu power to take revenge on Tutsi”* (Surviv-Banguka 2006).

²¹ On 31 July 2006, grenades exploded in the night, killing nine persons and injuring tens of them in Bujumbura and Gitega, two major urban centres in Burundi. All over Burundi, traders and businessmen are frequently attacked by young gunmen who do not

Ongoing ethnic and political divisions are still present at a national and at a local level. The last genocide contributed to widen dramatically the divide that was opened up in colonial and postcolonial times between the Hutu and the Tutsi (Chrétien 1993, 1997; Chrétien et Prunier, 1989). Today, these categories are used to interpret every political and economic event. This explains why, in regards to the reintegration of returnees, land disputes and supposedly unfair international assistance may generate tensions which would be explained following ethnic lines.

Fears of Ethnic Divisions in Burundi

Representations of Burundi as an ethnically and politically divided country persist up to now. The issue of Internally Displaced People (IDPs)²² and ex-combatants clearly show that, in the eyes of refugees, peace and unity which used to prevail in Burundi are a long way off. Refugees, residents and IDPs accuse one another to strive to take revenge.

In Burundi, IDPs and ex-combatants of rebel groups are targeted by residents as well as refugees as potentially highly dangerous groups of people. Despite the 2000 Arusha Peace Accord and the improvement of the political and security situation, IDPs have not yet gone back to

hesitate to kill people for money. House plundering by armed robbers is a common practice.

²² IDPs consist of people who sought refuge with the Burundian national army at the time of 1993 massacres. Today, they number a total of 116,000 people, most of them being of Tutsi origins.

their *colline* of origin for fear of retaliation (OCHA 2005). Some of them might be able to recognize neighbours who participated actively in the 1993 massacres, or might have themselves participated in these massacres. UNHCR and *Ligue Iteka* interlocutors said that although many IDPs have not yet gone back to their home *colline* to settle, they frequently travel from IDPs camps to their home *colline* in order to cultivate their fields and harvest crops. After harvest, IDPs usually store their crops at some of their former neighbours' houses and go back to their camps. When needed, IDPs set out for the *colline* and get a small amount of their crops to bring back to the camps. Fears of retaliation depicted in OCHA report (2005) are therefore not confirmed by the reality of a generally peaceful cohabitation between ex-IDPs and residents. Yet, from the point of view of refugees and repatriates, the refusal of IDPs to leave the camps are proof that the political and security situation has not yet been settled. Many refugees in the camps express concern about a possible organisation and training of Tutsi armed groups in IDPs camps²³. *As we can see, although concerns expressed about IDPs are discarded by UN staff and local NGOs, they nevertheless account for a complete break of trust along ethnic lines and fear of renewed fights.*

²³ During the meeting between UNHCR staff, implementing partners and Burundian refugees representatives that followed four days of 'Go-and-See' visit organized by UNHCR, the issue was raised again by some refugee representatives who inquired into the reasons why IDPs were not currently going back home.

A similar issue has emerged regarding ex-combatants of the rebel forces. An ongoing research program on former female forced combatants implemented by a local association in Ruyigi called *Maison Shalom* has shown that some of these women are not welcomed by the local population. Together with male ex-combatants, they are surrounded by suspicion. The fact that some of them are still in possession of firearms, alongside with their participation in specific programs designed to provide them with assistance or to collect their memories of the genocide, brings about feelings of fear, jealousy and animosity.



Ruyigi hospital, renovated with the help of the association *Maison Shalom* (Burundi)

Conclusion

The fostering of a Hutu consciousness in refugee camps and, as a consequence, of an incommensurable Hutu-Tutsi divide obviously sustains fears and suspicion between these two “ethnic” groups. The IDPs issue and the difficult reintegration of ex-combatants might give rise to renewed ethnic clashes if they are not adequately addressed. Moreover, *the reintegration of returnees in Burundi is conditioned by the production of a renewed consciousness of national unity that years of exile have participated to weaken*. If such a production of identity rests largely in the hands of Burundian refugees, the implementation of appropriate cultural activities can contribute to promoting unity and raise questions about the current ethno-political situation in Burundi among refugees.



Beating the drums in Kanembwa camp

III. UNESCO STORY-TELLING ACTIVITY IN BURUNDIAN REFUGEE CAMPS

“Bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them” (UNESCO 2003) constitutes UNESCO’s fundamental mission. It echoes UNHCR guidelines for peace education and related activities stating that *“education for peace, cooperation, conflict resolution and reconciliation”* are all *“prerequisites for the durable solution of voluntary repatriation and reconstruction”* whose promotion can contribute to *“avoid repetition of conflict by a new generation”* (UNHCR 1995). To achieve this goal in the context of refugee camps, the preservation and transmission of intangible traditional knowledge is crucial. The following pages describe why and how story-telling activities were selected as an adequate tool to reach this objective. An evaluation of the one-year pilot project undertaken in Burundian refugee camps in Tanzania presents the positive impact of story-telling and briefly underlines the reason why some difficulties can be encountered in the implementation of these activities in the context of humanitarian action.

1. Objectives and Methods for the Transmission of Traditional Cultural Knowledge

Objectives of the Program

The major objective of the UNESCO pilot project on the transmission of intangible cultural heritage in refugee camps for the facilitation of a sustainable repatriation of refugees was *to pass Burundian fundamental values and norms on to the refugee youth, as well as to transmit traditional ways of life, required savoir-faire and social behaviours, in order to prepare them adequately to a sustainable repatriation to their home country and facilitate a smooth social reintegration.*

In order to achieve this general objective, five main sub-objectives were identified:

1. To increase knowledge of Burundian traditional culture and history among younger generations;
2. To develop awareness of the importance to safeguard and revitalize Burundian traditional culture and history;
3. To revive generational links between elders – as custodians of traditional knowledge – and the youth;
4. To foster social and symbolical links with the home country for the facilitation of voluntary repatriation;
5. To cement a sense of common identity and national unity among all Burundians as a means to challenge the disruptive effect of

so-called “ethnic”/“racial” identities in Burundian society.

The causes of the weakening of transmission of Burundian traditional knowledge in refugee camps have been identified in previous pages. They include the organization and structure of refugee camps, humanitarian and development programs, the experience of exile and genocide, and worldwide phenomena of globalisation. *It is evident that programs designed to facilitate the transmission of traditional knowledge cannot pretend to modify the patterns of these causes, which are linked to the actual conditions of life in refugee camps.* The protection of victims of genocides in refugee camps and the implementation of humanitarian and development programs are part of the elementary rights of refugees as defined by the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and the *1967 Protocol*. Traumatic events related to genocide and exile shaped a specific refugee experience which cannot be simply erased from the individual and collective memory. What is more, it is obviously impossible to stop the globalisation wave.

As a consequence, *programs aiming at facilitating the transmission of traditional knowledge shall not have the objective to work on the causes of social and cultural changes but shall strive to face them by raising awareness, at a community level, on the importance to preserve traditional cultural knowledge.*

Methods Used in the Program: Story-Telling

In the frame of UNESCO pilot activities presented here, the regular confrontation of the younger generation to Burundian traditional knowledge, by repeated co-operative and respectful interactions with parents and elders, was made possible in the context of story-telling sessions. The following paragraphs present the main reasons why story-telling was selected as the most appropriate activity to pass on oral tradition, and consequently Burundian fundamental values, socio-cultural norms and practical knowledge to the younger generation.

First of all, oral tradition is part and parcel of Burundian cultural knowledge since pre-colonial times (Guillet & Ndayishinguye 1987, Guillet & Ndoricimpa 1984, Vansina 1972). Specialists in history and ethno-linguistics have identified four main traditional oral genres:

- *imigani*, i.e. tales and proverbs
- *amazina* or *ivyivugo*, poetry
- *imvyino*, songs
- *ibisokwe* or *ubupindo*, i.e. riddles

A last genre, called *ibitito* ou *ibitiko*, mixes stories and songs (Vansina 1972).

Each genre is composed of sub-genres. For example, *amazina* can be divided into two sub-genres: war poetry (*amazina y'ubuhii*) and pastoral poetry (*amazina y'urugamba*). Songs include cattle praises (*ukuvumereeza*), rural life praises (*ibicuba*),

lullabies (*ivyugumbiro*), solos (*indirimbo*), or popular rounds (*imvyino*). This diversity clearly shows the importance of oral tradition in Burundi. The fact that it incorporates elements of Burundian everyday life, from the sphere of work to ceremonies and family life, as well as aspects of pre-colonial history, justifies that it constitutes an appropriate tool to pass on traditional values, socio-cultural norms and practical knowledge to the younger generations in order to prepare them adequately to a sustainable repatriation to their home country and facilitate their social reintegration.

A second point to stress is that story-telling is an activity that helps bring together different generations. An authoritative voice is given to elders, as custodians of traditional knowledge. The participation of young people in story-telling activities requires that they listen to tales and stories carefully and with respect. As a consequence, the process of transmission of oral tradition can contribute to overcoming issues of decrease in moral authority which concern elders and men in the first place.

Lastly, culture is something that one lives. It is not learnt by sitting on school benches and repeating lessons learnt by heart. This explains why the project activities proposed to refugees do not include trainings or formations. Indeed, trainings and formations concentrate on individuals instead of groups. They adopt an individualistic approach to the transmission of traditional knowledge, personal attitudes

and personal responsibility being highly emphasized (Sommers 2001a). On the contrary, *the present project promotes a group level approach. The objective is therefore not so much about "Instructing" the youth but about creating symbolical links with their culture of origin through a process of impregnation.*



Applauses after a story-telling session in Kanembwa camp

Story-Telling and the Issue of the Genocide

Designed to facilitate the transmission of socio-cultural norms and values which help the younger generation to keep connections with their home country and facilitate refugee reintegration upon return, recounting traditional tales and stories can also contribute to a change of perception of the ethnic divide between Hutu and Tutsi in Burundi. Indeed, oral tradition shows that Burundi has not always been divided along ethnic lines, as so many Burundians believe. For example, pre-colonial wars are not remembered as a result of "ethnic" strife, but as the effect of asymmetrical relations of power between regions and monarchic

dynasties. Based on this example, it can therefore be said that recounting oral tradition can help replace the ethnic issue in the historical context of its construction.

A crucial issue to underline here is that oral tradition does not consist of a set of unchanging stories, tales or songs transmitted over time without being transformed. Oral tradition adapts to new economic and political contexts. Such a characteristic of oral tradition appeared clearly during preparatory meetings with elders. Especially when it came to the ethnic issue in Burundi, stories which were recalled by elders implied conceptions of social relations between Hutu and Tutsi which were impregnated with obvious colonial and postcolonial divisive ideologies as well as with the actual experience of genocide. An example of it is that the pre-colonial *ubugabire* institution was read following colonial interpretations according to which it created asymmetric relations of power between Tutsi cattle owner and Hutu farmers. In the same vein, Twa populations were described as backward people having few social relations with other social groups composing Burundi²⁴.

Knowing this, one may think that it would be a paradox to use oral tradition as a means to contribute to peace-building in post-conflict Burundi. Yet, given the expecting benefits of oral tradition for young refugees regarding other aspects of life

²⁴ In pre-colonial times, Batwa had indeed a specific status in Burundi but were incorporated into socio-economic networks linking populations all over the country (Mworoha 1987).

(norms of behaviours, etiquette, savoir-faire, knowledge of rural life, gender relations, etc.), and also given the fact that some stories and stales still retrace aspects of history which are not ethnically divisive, story-telling nevertheless constitutes an appropriate activity on the condition that, in the frame of UNESCO pilot projects, it is put under adequate control. Keeping the selection of stories under strict supervision will avoid the intrusion and subsequent diffusion of ethnic ideologies in oral tradition.

Secondary Benefit of UNESCO Program for Humanitarian Workers and Refugees

UNESCO story-telling activities are also aimed at raising awareness among humanitarian workers and refugees that *Burundian culture should be promoted as such, and not as a mere tool to be used to reach other objectives*. Indeed, UNHCR Community Development Approach (UNHCR 2001), which consists of a set of guidelines designed to strengthen community self-reliance and participation to decision-making, has been used to advance right-based development (Muggah 2005). Within this frame, humanitarian workers in Kibondo refugee camps have included traditional Burundian drumming, singing and dances into Western programs and campaigns on children rights, gender equality or democratization on the grounds that it would attract refugees. Although refugees easily express their satisfaction of being given an opportunity to attend

traditional performances, the risk is high to reduce Burundian culture to a couple of selected folkloric items²⁵ and disconnect it from its historical, socio-political and religious background. *The question here is not to refute the desirability of the promotion of fundamental human rights but to highlight the fact that Burundian living cultural heritage should not be transformed into a set of folkloric tools that would no longer bear any connection to social norms, values and knowledge embedded in the specific history of Burundi and present concerns of its people.*



Story-tellers gathered together at the Youth Centre in Kanembwa camp

2. The Organization of Story-Telling Sessions

Story-Tellers and Selection of Stories

A group of fifteen story-tellers was created prior to the beginning of UNESCO activity. All of them had previously been

²⁵ In Kibondo refugee camps, cultural activities which are promoted in the frame of the Community Development Approach consist of artistic performances and craftsmanship. On the other hand, cultural values and norms which are in contradiction to fundamental human rights, such as polygamy, arranged marriages or male domination, are condemned and fought.

involved in similar activities, which used to take place some years ago, and had developed a great knowledge of traditional stories and tales. It was decided that they would gather together once a month to share the stories and tales they knew, and select the ones considered the most appropriate by the whole group, as well as by the supervisor of UNESCO activity in the camp following UNESCO guidelines.

Story-Telling Sessions

Story-telling sessions were held once a week at the Youth Centre. This location was purportedly chosen for the reason that the implementation of UNESCO activities there might contribute to disconnecting the Youth Centre from the idea asserted by parents and elders that it was a place of major changes in social norms regarding gender roles and status. During these sessions, traditional stories and tales were recalled by two or three elders belonging to the above-mentioned group of story-tellers. Stories and tales, which had been selected before the performance, were told to an audience composed of children and teenagers who could join without pre-inscription or prior notice.

Traditional drumming was beaten at the beginning of every story-telling performance to inform refugees, and especially the youth, that a session was about to start. It was expected that traditional drumming and music instruments would also be used during sessions but it seemed that the

opportunity was not seized. Some tales and stories included traditional singing, especially when story-tellers were women. It has to be noted that sessions of story-telling constituted a good opportunity to transmit specific usages of the Kirundi language through the use of poetic or metaphoric expressions as well as traditional proverbs.



An elder telling a story in Kanembwa camp

Cultural themes

Stories and tales focused on aspects of traditional knowledge which had undergone a number a change due to the weakening of transmission from elders to the youth. As previously stated, they included agriculture and stockbreeding, social relations (notably gender relations, relations between elders and the youth, and relations within the family or within the community as a whole), as well as cultural and ritual performance. Each of these aspects was labelled a “cultural

theme”, and was addressed at least over 10 sessions. Considering what has been previously said about the ethnic issue, it was considered preferable that ethnic identities and ethnicity in general do not constitute a cultural theme as such. However, the ethnic question was addressed as a sub-topic of many tales, through references to traditional cooperation and solidarity between communities, and on the condition that it would not contribute to reinforcing common sense divisive representations but help put into question contemporary ethnic identities.

What is more, at the end of each story, story-tellers explained its meaning to the audience, retracing not only its links to Burundian history and oral tradition in general, but also deciphering for the youth the message enclosed and its relation to the context of refugee camps and after repatriation. The younger generations were also encouraged to ask questions or give their interpretation of the story recalled in order to promote an interactive and participative discussion with elders.



SAEU board in Kanembwa refugee camp

3. The Implementation of UNESCO Story-Telling Activities in Refugee Camps

The Operational Field Partner: SAEU

In Kibondo refugee camps, Southern Africa Extension Unit was in charge of the implementation and supervision of UNESCO project. As an operational field organisation, this non-profit education and training NGO has implemented community service and education programs in Nduta, Mtendeli and Kanembwa camps since their opening. SAEU receives its funds from three main institutions: UNICEF, UNHCR and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its main activities focus on education, training of refugee teachers, care for vulnerable people, and campaigns on HIV/AIDS and gender issues as well as support to peace and conflict resolution programs.

In the field, one refugee community worker from SAEU supervised and monitored monthly meetings between story-tellers for the preparation of traditional stories and tales, controlled the selection of stories following UNESCO recommendations, and organised weekly story-telling performances for the benefit of children and teenagers.

Another community worker was specifically in charge of the transcription of stories and translation from Kirundi into French, with the objective to collect and store them.

Diffusion of Cultural Activities: UNESCO Radio Program

Residents in Burundi and refugees in Tanzania have always expressed the need to increase cross-border connections²⁶. UNHCR “Go-and-See” visits²⁷, facilitation of exchange of mails between Burundi and Tanzania, informal crossings of borders by both residents and refugees have contributed to maintaining links and to transmitting information on conditions of life in Burundi. But the main means of connecting people has long been radio programs. Several radios, such as Radio Burundi, Radio ONUB, Radio Sanganiro or Radio Kwizera have designed special programs for the benefit of refugee information on the political and economic situation in Burundi and, recently, to help refugees make an informed decision before repatriation. Residents in Burundi also use these radios to send their greetings and to transmit important information to their friends and family members living in the camps in Tanzania. Among these radios, Radio Kwizera is much listened to in refugee camps as well as in Burundi. This is why it

²⁶ “[Refugees and resident] requested that more formal cross-border visits and interactions between refugees and their communities on the collines be organized. In the camps, they suggested that these cross-border visits bring people from the colline to live in the camps for a short period of time so that they can discuss and ask questions in a free and relaxed setting and so that the people from the collines can also understand the people in the camp” (LWF-CNEB 2006).

²⁷ “Go-and-See visits” consist in a two or three-day visit of selected refugees to Burundi. Going back to their colline, meeting their families, friends and neighbours, refugees gather information on the conditions of life in Burundi in order to dispatch it to other refugees when they come back to the camps.

was selected to record and broadcast story-telling activities organized by UNESCO

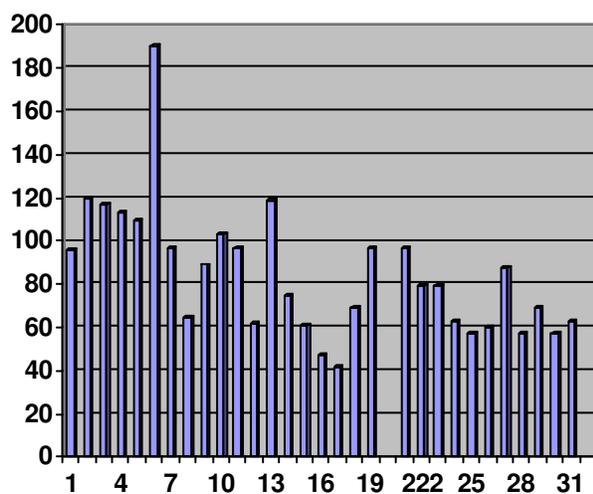
The effectiveness of programs and activities regarding the transmission of traditional knowledge can obviously be increased if they commit both residents and returnees in the construction of a social and cultural context fitted for peaceful reintegration. For residents in Burundi, story-telling can be taken as a proof that refugees are willing to keep connections to central values, norms and knowledge that define Burundian culture. This justifies the necessity to provide a larger audience for cultural activities organized in camps.

4. The Evaluation of UNESCO Story-Telling Activities

The evaluation of UNESCO activities was operated over two missions in October 2007 and November 2007. Story-telling activities proved a great success among refugees, having a positive impact on the preservation of traditional knowledge and on daily social relations between generations. Missions were aimed at collecting information on the outcomes and success of the activities among refugees. Questionnaires were filled by refugee story-tellers (performers) and teenagers (the audience). Discussions followed this first step of evaluation, all refugees being given the opportunity to express their sentiments and concerns in relation to UNESCO activities.

A Good Attendance

In Kanembwa refugee camps, figures show that the attendance to story-telling meetings was adequate, although not stable. After an average number of 111.2 people present at the first stages of the activities (first five sessions), a peak of 190 people was reached at the 6th session. It then decreased irregularly to reach an average 74.6 people per session since then, but only 66.7 people over the last 10 sessions of June 2007. This irregularity in participation had two main causes. First, other activities organized in the camps for children and teenagers (school, church) had sporadically contributed to a lesser attendance to some story-telling sessions. More important, it is obvious that the process of voluntary repatriation to Burundi which was taking place at the time of UNESCO activities contributed to a decrease in the total number of refugees.



Kanembwa attendance at story-telling sessions, November 2006 – June 2007 (based on figures available in SAEU first and second quarterly reports)

A High Level of Commitment among Elders

Discussions with story-tellers and community workers supervising the project showed that UNESCO activities were implemented with a high degree of involvement and enthusiasm. As both bearers and teachers of oral tradition in refugee camps, elders expressed their satisfaction to see that story-telling activities helped them acquire an improved social position, being treated with greater respect. The evaluation also suggested that elders had a good appreciation of their role and responsibility in the transmission of oral tradition (*"It is important for the youth to inherit our culture"*), and were aware of the positive impact it could have on children and teenagers. Indeed, some elders said that the behaviours of the youth improved towards more respectful manners in their relations to adults and between each others, a change which was positively rated (*"We see good outcomes as some young people start to follow our teachings"*, *"They start to behave respectfully"*). Elders also appreciated that young people kept talking about the stories and tales they had listened to (*"We are happy to see that the youth talk about our stories"*). They were all convinced that their tasks could effectively help the youth keep connections to Burundi, in the form of symbolical and emotional ties based on knowledge of ways of life and ways of thinking. They also mentioned the fact that children and teenagers would be more easily and rapidly integrated when they are

back to their home country, as they would be well aware of their compatriots' way of life and ways of thinking. The success of UNESCO activities among story-tellers is proved by the fact that, although it was agreed that only 10 to 15 story-tellers selected at the beginning of the activities would be the "official" story-tellers, a total of 32 elders came to sessions to tell stories and tales – an attitude which demonstrates a significant will to be actively committed.

An Enthusiastic but Unaware Youth

It is obvious that the youth enjoyed coming and listening to story-telling at the time of public sessions or on the radio. It seems that apart from being entertained by stories and tales, for most of them included funny sequences which made people laugh, the youth were not completely aware of the different kinds of knowledge they got through stories. The evaluation of the activity was generally limited to vague comments (*"We learn things", "We have learned a lot about many things", "We are given good advices and ways of behaving"*). Only a few mentioned that it may have an impact in their life when they are back to Burundi (*"We will know how to behave in Burundi", "Advices and teachings will help us in the future"*). Some asked for a teaching about history and culture in Burundi in the form of trainings or seminars carried out by specialists who would be able to explain these notions, their role in social life and the importance of their transmission.

The Unexpected Success of Radio Programs

It was mentioned that many inhabitants in Burundi, living in regions covered by Radio Kwizera, followed UNESCO story-telling activities on the radio. Apart from appreciating stories and tales as a form of entertainment, it seems that Burundians highly appreciated the fact that refugee populations had striven to preserve their culture and tradition in the camps. Because the broadcasting of activities show that refugees have not turned into mere foreigners, but have continued transmitting their traditional cultural knowledge despite of their harsh conditions of life, it can be more easily considered that, in post-conflict Burundi, peaceful social relations between refugees, returnees and inhabitants, based on a common culture, can be built after the repatriation of all refugees to Burundi.



Elders filling up their questionnaires in Kanembwa

A Difficult Assessment of the Impact of Story-Telling in Respect to Repatriation Trends

It has not been possible to evaluate the impact of story-activities on the decision to return, or on the quality of reintegration of returnees. It is evident that political and economic conditions of return constitute the first incentive for refugee repatriation. What is more, refugees may not consciously realize the role of symbolical ties which link them to their home country, which UNESCO activities aim at maintaining, in their decision-making to repatriate to Burundi.

SAEU Supervision

All recommendations made by UNESCO prior to the implementation of the project were carefully followed by refugee community workers and all SAEU staff in the supervision of story-telling activities. Both male and female elders were actively implicated in the preparation of story-telling sessions as well as in the narration of stories and tales during weekly sessions. Aspects of traditional knowledge which underwent a great number of changes due to the weakening of transmission from elders to the youth were properly addressed in stories and tales, especially the issue of social relations within the family and in the community. Finally, traditional Burundian drumming and dances were held at the beginning of every session to announce its beginning, and traditional songs had been

incorporated into story-telling, especially by female story-tellers. As a whole, the implementation therefore proved highly satisfactory. However, two points need to be underlined here in regards to possible flaws in the monitoring of projects. The first point is that the incessant changes and evolutions in the situations of refugee camps in general (transfer of refugees from one camp to the other, closure of camps, repatriation processes) require swift adjustments in the modalities of implementation of programs. Secondly, many local associations and NGOs have not yet developed a deep understanding of the importance of culture in humanitarian situations. Words and attitudes often showed that the staff considers culture-related projects as trivial, or at least not as a priority in regards to all other material, health, educational, etc. issues faced by refugees in their daily life. To hinder such an erroneous perception and its possible negative impact on the good implementation and the monitoring of programs, it is recommended that trainings be organized on culture and traditional knowledge to raise awareness among operational field partners of the significant dimension of culture, especially when it comes to people in exile. In all humanitarian situations, protecting refugees requires protecting not only their lives and their rights, but also their culture and traditional knowledge in general, for they are the basis of collective and individual identity.

Conclusion

Given the success of UNESCO's activities among refugees and residents, together with their utility in helping the refugee youth inherit Burundian traditional cultural tradition threatened by the conditions of life in refugee camps, and their expected positive impact in subsequent building of social relations based on mutual confidence and common cultural knowledge between refugees, returnees and Burundian people who had not fled conflicts in 1993-34, it is recommended that similar activities be continued in Burundi. It is therefore highly positive to see that UNESCO Office in Bujumbura will follow-up this program on the preservation of Oral Tradition for the benefit of repatriates. It is also recommended that similar radio programs as those created in Kibondo area continue to be broadcast in Burundi, as they help raise awareness among thousands of radio listeners on the need to preserve traditional culture.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1. General Findings

The present report draws on UNESCO guidelines on Intangible Cultural Heritage to raise awareness on the need to incorporate traditional cultural knowledge as a vital dimension of humanitarian programs in refugee camps in order to facilitate the socio-cultural reintegration of refugees upon return to their home country. Indeed, up to now, the task of humanitarian organizations has been to provide basic security and human right protection as well as safe return and reintegration of refugees. To achieve this major goal, these organisations deal with technical and administrative problems in refugee camps as well as in areas of return. But in this techno-administrative oriented approach of protection, the importance of cultural and symbolical aspects of life for social communities has often been ignored.

The research upon which this report is based, carried out in Tanzania and Burundi, showed that for Burundian refugees, the trauma of the genocide, the experience of exile and the new conditions of life imposed on refugees settled in refugee camps in eastern Tanzania have contributed to shifts and ruptures of traditional cultural knowledge. This shifts and ruptures in their turn contribute to influence refugee decisions to repatriate and hamper their smooth socio-cultural reintegration in their home community.

Although several aspects of traditional cultural knowledge have been reproduced in a formal or informal way, such as *refugee proficiency in Kirundi, cooking practices, religious practices, beliefs in witchcraft and spirits or gender division of labour*, others have not been handed down to the younger generations due the traumatic sufferings of genocide, the generalization of feelings of suspicion and mistrust among the population and changes in the socioeconomic organization of life. These ruptures in cultural transmission brought about the following changes in traditional cultural knowledge:

- *Decrease in knowledge concerning Burundian oral tradition among the youth,*
- *Shifts in male-female traditional social status: women put the full authority of men into question and, as a consequence, contest traditional female submission; men have lost their traditional moral authority in the family and in the community,*
- *Teenagers' lack of respect towards their parents and elders in general, as well as a tendency to violate social norms and traditional etiquette,*
- *Increase in male violence, notably in the form of rapes, towards women at the level of the domestic unit or in the community,*
- *Decrease in knowledge about agriculture and stockbreeding among the youth,*
- *Increase in the polarisation between the Hutu and the Tutsi and reinforcement of representations of Burundi as a country of ethnico-political violence.*

After repatriation to Burundi, aspects of Burundian traditional cultural knowledge which were preserved obviously contribute to facilitating the socio-cultural reintegration of returnees. The use of Kirundi, the respect of gender division of labour, of social norms and essential values is proof to residents that fifteen years of exile have not turned returnees into sheer "foreigners". Moreover, changes that have affected some elements of traditional knowledge seem to be easily overcome, such as the poor knowledge regarding the variety of Burundian local traditions or agriculture and stock-breeding. Children and teenagers quickly adapt to their new conditions of life.

Yet, refugees are also confronted to several major challenges which show that divisions persist behind an apparently easy reintegration. Apart from hard conditions of life (shortage of food, absence of employment opportunities) or bad infrastructure (difficult access to drinking water, lack of vocational training centres, overcrowded schools, expensive health centres), which affect the whole population, returnees are resented against for several other specific issues : their return gives rise to conflicts over land properties; the international assistance they benefit from produce envy and jealousy; the possible participation of refugees in massacres create mistrust and suspicion. Former animosities between neighbours as well as recurrent representations of Burundi as a country of ethnic divide between the Hutu and the Tutsi seriously hinder the

reintegration of returnees. The ethnic question is all the more crucial as ambiguities remain at the national level: the issue of internally displaced people has not yet been solved; no process of justice and reconciliation is under way; and hostilities between Hutu and Tutsi politicians sporadically resurface. UN staff and NGO workers fear that land disputes, supposedly unfair international assistance and a general atmosphere of mistrust may revive ethnic clashes if they are not adequately addressed.

The implementation of cultural activities that draw on oral tradition can contribute to promote social unity by raising awareness on the values, norms and skills that epitomize Burundian culture and bring people together whatever their ethnic background. Story-telling was selected as the most appropriate cultural activity to transmit oral tradition on the grounds that:

- *It develops awareness on the value of Burundian traditional culture to younger generations as well as on the importance to safeguard and revitalize it,*
- *It revives generational links between elders – as bearers of traditional knowledge – and the youth in camps by facilitating social interactions based on co-operation, cohesion and mutual respect,*
- *It cements a sense of common identity and national unity among all Burundians through the emphasis it puts on shared values, norms and practices.*

2. Major Outcomes

UNESCO story-telling activities have proved a highly successful project, generally adequately implemented by UNESCO operational partner. They did not worked on the causes of social and cultural changes but strove to face them by raising awareness, at a community level, on their value and on the importance of their preservation. Story-tellers explained the meaning of selected stories to the audience, retracing their links to Burundian history and tradition and its possible message in the current context of refugee camps. In doing so, it helped prevent a living culture from being transformed into a set of folkloric tools that would no longer bear any connexion to a specific historical and political context. Drumming and songs were used either to publicly announce the opening of story-telling sessions or as a means to catch the attention of the audience during a session, as it used to be in Burundi.

This pilot project has shown its utility in helping the refugee youth inherit Burundian traditional cultural tradition threatened by the conditions of life in refugee camps. Although its impact in building peaceful social relations based on mutual confidence and common cultural knowledge between refugees, returnees and residents in Burundi is difficult to clearly assess, it is highly recommended that similar activities be continued when refugees repatriate to their home country. This explains why the culture sector in UNESCO office in Dar es Salaam

is enthusiastic to see that UNESCO office in Bujumbura has designed a similar project for Burundi, in order to follow-up with returnees. It has to be stressed that the success of the program among refugees was all the more resounding as traditional stories and tales were broadcast on the radio.

3. Key Recommendations

In the international context of refugee camps, the intangible cultural heritage of populations who fled conflicts in their home country is put at risk. The individual and collective trauma of violence, feelings of insecurity, the experience of exile, the changes in the socioeconomic and political organisation of communities and the fostering of a refugee /ethnic /national consciousness contribute to shifts and ruptures of knowledge and savoir-faire. These changes are concerned mainly with the domestication of nature, relations between generations and between genders as well as identity consciousness. It is all the more urgent to preserve and revive this traditional cultural knowledge as it greatly helps refugees maintain appropriate behaviours and social relations based on socially accepted cultural norms, values and savoir-faire. What is more, as it contributes to preserving social, cultural and symbolical links to the home country, it obviously facilitates the decision-making to repatriate. Eventually, its safeguard contributes to facilitating peace-building processes in post-

conflict countries, as it promotes national unity with respect to cultural diversity.

In order to facilitate the transmission of key traditional knowledge and, as a consequence, to sustain the repatriation of refugees and ensure a proper socio-cultural reintegration in their home country, it is highly recommended that:

- The promotion of fundamental human rights be linked to a sensitive approach of traditional gender roles and generational relations, by trying to create links between these two poles rather than hinting at their supposedly radical opposition,
- The political and identity issues that were at the root of refugee exile be addressed by resorting to a historical and cultural approach of social reality,
- Cultural activities (music performance, story-telling, dances, etc.) be implemented to transmit traditional social representations and create a sense of common unity,
- Communication between refugees and residents be facilitated, especially through the means of the radio,
- Operational field partners working in refugee camps be trained to understand the significance of culture in the preservation of a people's identity and the maintaining of appropriate social relations. Specifically, it should be explained that culture should not be reduced to a set of folkloric tools that would no longer bear any connection to social norms, values and knowledge embedded in the specific history of a country and present concerns of its people.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADAMANTIDIS, D. 1956. *Monographie pastorale du Ruanda-Urundi*, Publication de la Direction de l'Agriculture des Forêts et de l'Élevage, Bruxelles.

AMSELLE J.L. & M'BOKOLO, E. (eds.), *Au cœur de l'ethnie*, Paris, La Découverte.

BAILY, J. 1999. "Music and Refugee Life: Afghans in Eastern Iran and California", *Forced Migration Review: Culture in Exile*, n° 6, December.

BARANCIRA, S. 2002. « La crise politico-ethnique et la santé mentale des populations », in CHRETIEN, J.P. et MUKURI, M. (dir), *Burundi, la fracture identitaire. Logiques de violence et certitudes*, Paris, Karthala

CHRETIEN, J.P. 1985. "Hutus et Tutsis au Rwanda et au Burundi", in AMSELLE J.L. & M'BOKOLO, E. (eds.), *Au cœur de l'ethnie*, Paris, La Découverte.

- 1993. *Burundi. L'histoire retrouvée*, Paris, Karthala.

- 1995. *Rwanda. Les médias du génocide*, Paris, Karthala.

- 1997. *Le défi de l'ethnisme. Rwanda et Burundi, 1990-1996*, Paris, Karthala.

CHRETIEN, J.P. & DUPAQUIER, J.-F. 2007. *Burundi 1972. Au bord des génocides*, Paris, Karthala.

CHRETIEN, J.P. & MUKURI, M. (dir.). 2002. *Burundi, la fracture identitaire. Logiques de violence et certitudes*, Karthala.

CHRETIEN, J.P. & DUPAQUIER, J.-F., KABANDA, M. & NGARAMBE, J. 1995. *Rwanda, Les médias du génocide*, Paris, Karthala.

CHRETIEN, J.P. & PRUNIER, G. 1989. (eds.). *Les ethnies ont une histoire*, Paris, Karthala.

CORBET, A. 2006. "Génération nées dans les camps de réfugiés Sahraouis : une vie entre les camps et l'Occident", Paris, Terra Ed.

DECLICH, 2000. "Fostering Ethnic Reinvention. Gender Impact of Forced Migration on Bantu Somali in Kenya", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 157.

DUDLEY, S. 1999. "Traditional Culture and Refugee Welfare in North-West Thailand", *Forced Migration Review: Culture in Exile*, n° 6, December.

DUPAQUIER, J.-F. & NDARISHIKANYE, B. 1995. *Burundi, le venin de la haine : étude sur les médias extrémistes*, Paris, Reporters sans frontières.

GUICHAOUA, A. 1995. *Les crises politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-1994)*, Paris, Université des sciences et technologies de Lille.

GUILLET, C. & NDORICIMPA, L. 2000. *L'Arbre-mémoire: Traditions orales du Burundi*, Paris, Karthala.

GUILLET, C. & NDAYISHINGUJE, P. 1987. *Légendes historiques du Burundi*, Paris, Karthala.

HARRIS, C. 1999. "Imagining Home: The Reconstruction of Tibet in Exile", *Forced Migration Review: Culture in Exile*, n° 6, December.

HITCHCOK, L. 1993. "Vietnamese Refugees in Hong Kong: Behaviour and Control", in BUIJS, G. (ed.), *Migrant Women: Crossing Boundaries and Changes Identities*, Oxford, Berg.

JEWSIEWICKI, B. NSANZE, A. & MUKURI, E. 2004. "Dossier Burundi. Lever le deuil du passé, parvenir à la réconciliation", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n°173-174.

KOPYTOFF, I. (eds.). 1987. *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Society*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

KRUFELD, R. M. & L. A. CAMINO (eds). 1994. *Reconstructing Lives, Recapturing Meaning: Refugee Identity, Gender, and Cultural Change*, Washington DC, Gordon and Breach Publishers.

LEMARCHAND, R. 1996. *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

- 2002. "Le génocide de 1972 au Burundi. Les silences de l'histoire", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 167, pp.551-567.

LEMARCHAND, R. & MARTIN, D. 1974. *Selective Genocide in Burundi*, London, Minority Rights Group.

LEMARCHAND, R. & NSANZE, A. 2003. *Le Burundi contemporain : L'Etat nation en question (1956-2002)*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

LWF-CNEB. 2006. *Programme pour la paix au Burundi. Field Assessment*, 10 May – 9 June 2006, Cankuzo & Ruyigi Provinces and Refugee camps in Kibondo, Tanzania, Lutheran World Federation, Department of World Service, in collaboration with CNEB.

MALKKI H. Liisa, 1995. *Purity and Exile. Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Refugees in Tanzania*, Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press.

MERKX, J. 2005. "Refugee identities and Relief in an African Borderland: a Study of Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan", *New Issues in Refugee Research*, Working Paper No. 19.

MUGGAH, R. 2005. "Distinguishing Means and Ends: The Counterintuitive Effects on UNHCR's Community Development Approach in Nepal", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 18(2).

MWOROHA, E. 1987. *Histoire du Burundi des origines à la fin du XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Hatier.

NDARISHIKANYE, B. 1998a. "Les rapports Etat – paysannerie au centre du conflit ethnique au Burundi", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 150-152, pp.347-383.

- 1988b. "La conscience historique des jeunes Burundais", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 149, pp.135-171.

NTAHOMBAYE, P., et al. 1999. *L'institution des Bashingantahe au Burundi. Etude pluridisciplinaire*, Université du Burundi, IDA/ASDI, Life and Peace Institute.

NUGENT, P. and ASIWAJU, A. I. 1996. (eds.). *African Boundaries: Barriers, Conduits and Opportunities*, London/New York, Pinter

NIYONZIMA, D. & FENDALL, L. 2001. *Unlocking Horns: Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Burundi*, Barclay Press, Newberg, Oregon.

OCHA, *Enquête sur les populations déplacées au Burundi*, 2005 (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Juin.

RODEGEM, F.M. 1966. "Structures judiciaires traditionnelles au Burundi", *Revue juridique de droit écrit et coutumier du Rwanda et du Burundi*, 6(1).

RUSAGARA, F.K. 2005. "Gacaca as a Reconciliation and Nation-Building Strategy in Post-Genocide Rwanda", *Conflict Trends*, February.

RWABAHUNGU, M. 2004. *Au cœur des crises nationales au Rwanda et au Burundi : La lutte pour les ressources*, Paris, L'Harmattan.

SAEU. 2000. *Care 2000 Final Report. Community Service and Education in Burundian Refugee Camps, Mtendeli & Nduta, Kigoma Region, Tanzania*, January 1 – March 31.

2005a. *Community Service and Education Report, Sub-project Monitoring Report*, July-December.

- 2005b. *Community Service and Education Report November 2005 (Mtendeli, Kanembwa, Nduta)*.

SATTOPIMA, J. *Domestic Violence against Refugee Women: Study of Kibondo camp in Tanzania*, Masters Degree in Women Law, University of Zimbabwe

SOMMERS, Marc. 2001a. "Peace education and refugee youth", Paper prepared for presentation at a UNHCR workshop on 'Refugee Education in Developing Countries: Policy and Practice', Washington D.C., March.

- 2001b. *Fear in Bongoland: Burundi Refugees in Tanzania*, New York, Berghahn Books.

THIBON, C. 1995. "Les origines historiques de la violence au Burundi", in Guichaoua, A. (eds.), *Les crises politiques au Rwanda et au Burundi*, Paris, Karthala.

TURNER, S. 2002. *The Barrier of Innocence: Humanitarian Intervention and Political Imagination in a Refugee Camp for Burundians in Tanzania*, PhD Dissertation, International Development Studies, Roskilde University.

UNESCO, 2003. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, Paris.

- 2005. *Convention for the Protection and Promotion of Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, Paris.

UNHCR, 1995. *Revised Guidelines for Educational Assistance to Refugees*, Geneva.

- 2001. *Reinforcing a Community Development Approach*, Geneva.

- 2003. *Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern*, Geneva.

- 2004. *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities*, Geneva.

- 2005a. *Return and Reintegration of Burundian Refugees, Supplementary Appeal, July 2004 – December 2005*, Dar es Salaam.

- 2005b. *Update on the Return and Reintegration of Burundian Refugees*, Dar es Salaam, February.

- 2005c. *Monitoring des rapatriés, Rapport Annuel 2005, section protection*, Bujumbura, February.

- 2005d. *UNHR Briefing Notes*, "Funding: Burundi repatriation/ reintegration operation at risk", October.

- 2006. *Briefing Note, Sub-Offices Kibondo*, Kibondo, May & June.

VANSINA, J. 1972. *La légende du passé, Traditions orales du Burundi*, Tervuren, Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, n°16.

VIDAL, C. 1985. "Situations ethniques au Rwanda", in AMSELLE J.L. & M'BOKOLO, E. (eds.), *Au cœur de l'ethnie*, Paris, La Découverte.

- 1995. "Les politiques de la haine", *Les Temps Modernes*, numéro spécial 'Les politiques de la haine. Rwanda, Burundi, 1994-1995', 583, juillet – août, pp.6-33.

- 1998. "Questions sur le rôle des paysans durant le génocide des Rwandais tutsi", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 150-152, pp.331-345.

- 2004. "La commémoration du génocide au Rwanda. Violence symbolique, mémorisation forcée et histoire officielle", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, n° 175.

ZETTER, R. 1999. "Re-conceptualizing the Myth of Return: Continuity and Transition Among the Greek-Cypriots of 1974", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 12(1).

ANNEX

Fieldwork & Methodology

The assessment exercise and the design of pilot activities covered a total of three months. The fieldwork was conducted in Kibondo refugee camps in Tanzania (especially Kanembwa camp) and in Ruyigi province in Burundi.

1. My first stay in Kibondo lasted two weeks. I visited refugee camps in order to: gather information on their structure and organization; meet Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS) and SAEU implementing partners and collect information on their projects, objectives and activities; meet refugee community workers and collect information on their everyday activities; interview refugee community workers about refugee life in the camps and repatriation issues; interview refugees who had previously repatriated to Burundi but had come back to the camps; interview refugees whose family were split between the camps and Burundi after repatriation; discuss with Youth Centre leaders of their activities; review and analyse UNHCR's and operational field partners' monthly reports on their activities and/or project results; review and analyse academic and leading articles, reports and books on refugee camps, cultural adaptation of refugees and production of refugee identity.

2. I then stayed three weeks in Burundi. In the town of Ruyigi in Burundi, I met two major operational partners: *Ligue ITEKA* (in Kirundi, *iteka* means "respect") and

ACCORD (*African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes*). Together with UNHCR, these two NGOs provided me with transportation to *collines* (hills) while NGOs monitors provided fieldwork and translation help in order to be able to: attend ACCORD monitoring activities, especially in regards to land issues and domestic violence; interview returnees on difficulties of socio-cultural reintegration; interview residents on their perception of returnees. I also attended monitoring trainings of *Ligue ITEKA*'s monitors; reviewed and analyzed monitoring questionnaires used by *Ligue ITEKA* and UNHCR to assess refugee reintegration; participated in refugees' feedback after a "Go-and-See visit" organized by UNHCR Kibondo (27-30 July 2006).

3. The second stay in Kibondo, which lasted 20 days, was concerned with the design of adapted activities that would be implemented in order to facilitate the transmission of traditional cultural knowledge. It consisted in: collection of information on the history of Youth Centres; discussions with parents representatives (Peer Parents Advisors) about their perception of rupture in transmission of traditional cultural knowledge; interviews with refugees holding no specific position in the camp organization on transmission of traditional cultural knowledge; discussions with former participants in story-telling activities to gather information on the content of traditional stories and their willingness to start again these activities;

visits to Radio Kwizera to collect information on broadcasting; reviewing and analysing monthly reports on cultural activities carried out in Kanembwa camp.

4. The third stay in Kibondo lasted two weeks. The objective consisted in finalizing the project and launching the first story-telling session. Discussions took place with UNESCO operational field partner, SAEU, for the implementation of story-telling activities; with elders and refugees regarding the actual organization of story-telling activities in the camps, and with Radio Kwizera concerning the modalities of story-telling broadcasting. The first story-telling session was organized at that time in Kanembwa.

5. Two evaluation missions were undertaken in October and November 2007, shortly before the project came to an end, with the purpose of evaluating SAEU competency in implementing and monitoring UNESCO story-telling activities, and evaluating the outcomes and success of the activities among refugees. Questionnaires were filled by refugee story-tellers (performers) and teenagers (the audience), followed by open discussions.

Interviews carried out at the time of the assessment exercise in Tanzania and in Burundi were subjected to the following methodological considerations:

- In Kibondo, refugee community workers provided translation from Kirundi to French or Swahili. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with refugees, community

workers and the international staff. Information was also gathered through informal discussions.

- In Burundi, I was dependent on NGOs monitors to carry out interviews with returnees. As a consequence, it was not possible to select in details a definite panel of interviewees. Various *collines* were visited with different monitors who had selected the people I would meet. Interviewees could alternatively be men, women or teenagers. Most of them were returnees but I also discussed with residents, that is to say people who had not fled Burundi at the time of the genocide in 1993-1994. Respondents represented farmers, artisans, members of associations and members of *bushingantahe*²⁸. Questions focused on issues regarding socio-cultural integration of returnees through the assessment of the state of social relation between returnees and residents, on the memory of the genocide and its different translations in people's behaviours today, and on present-day feelings of insecurity in Burundi. *Ligue ITEKA* and ACCORD monitors provided translation from Kirundi to French.

²⁸ A *bushingantahe* is a council of elected wise men (called *bashingantahe*) who act as mediators in local conflicts. This institution has existed since pre-colonial times in Burundi (Rodegem 1966, Ntahombaye 1999)