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## Introduction

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You talk to them and you think they listen, but the people do nothing with the good advice you give them. They say “yes” because they are tired of you and your speeches, but they are never convinced... They are resistant; they are really difficult (district official in Rwanda’s southern province quoted by Ansoms, 2009: 10).

Since overt resistance to government policy in post-genocide Rwanda is risky, discontent is more commonly expressed through everyday resistance... (Newbury, 2011: 236)

### Introduction

This thesis analyses farmers’ experiences, reactions and resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms in post-genocide Rwanda. It attempts to understand the phenomenon of resistance to reforms in a context of reconstruction after genocide and violent conflicts. The most fascinating aspect which motivated this study was that the recipients of reform seemed reluctant to implement the reforms, despite the fact that the large-scale agricultural and settlement reforms introduced by the post-genocide government were designed to curb poverty through empowering Rwandans in general and to improve the living conditions of the very poor in particular as well as to prevent recurrent violent conflicts. Some studies link this reluctance and resistance to the ruling party, the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), labelling it an authoritarian regime which imposes reforms on the people (see Ansoms, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010; 2013; Huggins, 2009; Thomson, 2009, 2011; Newbury, 2011). Other scholars, however, have focused on the achievements of the post-genocide government. These include, for instance, Phil Clark (2014), Nicola Palmer (2014) and Bert Ingelaere (2014) to mention but a few.

Rwanda has gone through difficult times characterised by recurrent interethnic conflicts. These conflicts degenerated to the point of culminating into genocide in 1994. During and after this period, the Rwandan population was in a desperate situation. As

the newly formed government was fragile, it needed support in the form of intervention from international organisations in order to heal the psychosocially affected population, to strengthen national security and to restore peace. The international community has played an important role in providing shelter and other basic needs for survival to the homeless. Some institutions which have aimed to restore peace include, among others, the Commission of Unity and Reconciliation and the Gacaca courts which were established in 1999 and 2000 respectively.

However, the post-genocide government believed that without solving the root causes of violence, the aim of achieving lasting peace would be vain. It identified poverty as the main root cause of interethnic violence in Rwanda and some other factors that fuelled ethnic group divisions. Thus, the post-genocide government committed to embark on extensive reforms, aiming to find a sustainable solution to the recurrent interethnic violence in Rwanda (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000). Rwanda Vision 2020, a government framework for long-term strategies aimed at transforming Rwanda's economy into a middle income country, was developed and made public in July 2000 (Ibid.).

The targeted reforms embedded in the six pillars<sup>1</sup> of Vision 2020's long-term strategies are, among others, good governance, resettlement, land use management, agricultural transformation, environmental protection, health care and education. Among the listed reforms, I opted to study the reforms of settlement and agriculture. These two reforms are inseparable given that both are fundamental in developing the rural areas for rational land use management. Indeed, as it is argued in the Vision 2020 document, the agricultural transformation from traditional subsistence to modern farming depends on a well-organised rural habitat (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 19).

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<sup>1</sup> The six pillars are: (1) Good governance and a capable state; (2) Human resources development and a knowledge-based economy; (3) Private sector-led development; (4) Infrastructure development; (5) Productive high value and market-oriented agriculture; and (6) Regional and international integration.

## The context of imidugudu<sup>2</sup> or the grouped settlement reform

The solution to overcoming the complex issue of land scarcity was outlined by the 1993 Arusha Accords<sup>3</sup>. It entailed settling refugees who had left Rwanda in the 1960s and 1970s – referred to as ‘old caseload refugees’ – on available public lands and resettling the internally displaced people in grouped settlements, so-called *imidugudu*, on their land or on land belonging to other peasants (Musahara and Huggins, 2004, 2005; Huggins, 2004; Bigagaza, Abong and Mukamana, 2002; Pottier, 2006; RoR\_MININFRA, 2004). However, this plan was not implemented due to the war which resumed in 1994, following the crash of the presidential plane and the subsequent genocide. As the RPF was advancing, the ‘old caseload refugees’<sup>4</sup> followed and settled in an uncontrolled manner in the areas under RPF control (Newbury, 2011). After overthrowing the government (known as *gouvernement y’abatabazi*<sup>5</sup>), which fuelled and incited the genocide, one of the major challenges that required urgent international humanitarian intervention was the accommodation of the influx of returnees (estimated at 800,000 individuals and thousands of internally displaced persons) (UNDP\_CCA, 2000: 1). As the post-genocide transitional government was not able to accommodate thousands of households of old caseload returnees alone, international humanitarians intervened and accommodation went smoothly in the east and north of the country where the influx was high. During and just after the 1994 genocide, many Rwandans fled to the neighbouring countries – the majority walking over into Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) and Tanzania, totalling around 1.3 million refugees (Hilhorst & Leeuwen, 2000: 266).

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<sup>2</sup> The policy of settling peasants in villages/*imidugudu* was launched by the Transitional Government of National Unity in 1996 and legalised by a 1997 Ministerial Order (see RoR\_MININFRA, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> The Arusha Accords are a protocol signed by both parties – the Rwandan government and the RPF – during the peace negotiations of 1993 in Arusha, Tanzania.

<sup>4</sup> The old case refugees refer to Rwandans who had left the country from late 1950s to the early 1970s due to ethnic violence and persecution. Some researchers go further and even include those who had left later in the 1990s.

<sup>5</sup> *Gouvernement y’abatabazi* literally means the government of reinforcement, which lasted only three months after the death of the President Habyarimana in April 1994.

Between 1996 and 1997 there was another influx of ‘new caseload refugees’<sup>6</sup> made of those who had fled during and just after the 1994 genocide. Back home, some found their homes either destroyed<sup>7</sup> or occupied mainly by the homeless old caseload returnees (Ibid., 267). Those who occupied the houses belonging to the new caseload returnees were forced to return them back to the owners. The situation of homeless households among both the old and the new returnees made the issue of accommodation more complex. After an assessment that showed that the complexity of the problem (where between 250,000 and 300,000 households needed a shelter), the Rwandan government decided that every Rwandan must reside in grouped settlements (RoR\_MININTER, 1997). As a result, the emergency programme was transformed into a national programme for rural transformation from scattered to grouped settlement.

Even though in many cases there were those who were delighted to receive shelter, there were many other cases where people found it very difficult to leave their homes and/or properties. For instance, this cause for discontent can be seen as a result of the decision to force the displaced population from the north of the country to settle in grouped settlements in 1997–1998 due to the insurgency in that area against the government (RoR\_MININFRA, 2004; HRW, 2001; UNHCR, 2000). Generally, farmers who didn’t leave the country during the violence prior to the 1990s and who resided on their properties were not happy with the resettlement and grouped settlement policy (Jackson, 1999; Isaksson, 2011).

Besides that, Huggins describes farmers’ complaints against the policy of *imidugudu*, specifying that they are opposed to the policy as it forces them to abandon their properties (Huggins, 2009; 296–303). Moreover, many other scholars added to this, by pointing to the issue of expropriation, indicating that land reform has always been among the main source of conflicts and violence in Rwanda (Huggins, 2004; Musahara and Huggins, 2004, 2005; Gasarasi and Musahara 2004; Des Forges, 2006).

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<sup>6</sup> The new case refugees are those who fled in 1994 to neighbouring countries out of fear of being killed by the RPF Army (or Rwanda Patriotic Army).

<sup>7</sup> Most of destroyed homes in the southern and western regions, roofs were removed by the owners who fled with the sheet iron, but other, especially in towns, were destroyed during the war.

According to Des Forges, the policy of *imidugudu* aimed not only at settling the landless: it was also a way of finding an alternative solution to land scarcity, encouraging urbanisation, with the hope to create more jobs which would reduce rural dependency on the land and thus minimise land-based conflicts (Des Forges, 2006: 361 referring to RoR\_MININFRA, 2004; see also Isaksson, 2011; Jackson, 1999). Moreover, as indicated in the Vision 2020 document, once organised and consolidated through the *imidugudu* policy, the land consolidation scheme would allow a modern and viable agriculture (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 19). An important question, however, concerns how these government strategies are implemented and how the recipients experience and react to them.

### **The context of agricultural reform**

National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) figures show that in 2010 about 91.5% of Rwandans depended on subsistence agricultural activities (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 100). Such a percentage of small farmers in a small country indicate that the land is highly fragmented with low productivity due to traditional farming practices. Thus, the post-genocide government identified a need to modernise the country's agriculture in order to decrease the rate of poverty while increasing economic growth. However, to modernise it, land needed to be consolidated.

Indeed, as mentioned above, land use management is fundamental for a modern and viable agriculture (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 19). Since the prerequisites for a modern agriculture are land consolidation, rainwater retention and terracing (to fight erosion on sloping land), the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) is committed to investing in those programmes. However, to make the agricultural production more efficient, transforming it from subsistence farming to a more productive one that can assure food security and market oriented agriculture, the MINAGRI has committed to embark on a research-based reform for an integrated agricultural reform. This includes taking into consideration variations on soil and weather conditions, use of fertilisers, improved seeds and adopting the practice of monocropping (Ibid., 21; RoR\_Office of the Ombudsman, 2010: 18).

The agricultural reform started with designing Poverty Reduction Strategies Programme paper I (PRSP I) in 2002, but it first began to be implemented in 2004 after the development of

NAP (National Agricultural Policy) and it was made operational through SPAT (Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation) (Ansoms, 2007: 16). However, with this first programme, the agricultural sector continued to face many challenges such as soil erosion, the constraints of persistent declining soil fertility (Alinda and Abbott, 2012: 8), bad weather and insufficient investment that prevented this sector from achieving its targets (Ansoms, 2007: 12–3). Moreover, a USAID report argues that the failure to achieve the targets can also be attributed to the economic impact of armed conflicts. Genocide had destroyed both human and physical capital, which in effect decreased the productivity and has led to a chronic poverty (USAID, 2008: 1).

The failure to achieve its targets with PRSP I was a lesson for the next planning process which targeted both economic development and poverty reduction strategies. That is, PRSP II, a medium-term goal, generally known as EDPRS (Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies), designed for five years, from 2008 to 2012. The figures from the Third Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey or *la Troisième Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des ménages* or the (EICV3) report shows that the agricultural sector has achieved good results given that the poverty rate has fallen 11.8%. That is, from 56.7% of 6,900 households in 2005 to 44.9% of 14,308 households in 2011. At the same time, the extreme poverty rate has fallen 11.7%, i.e. from 35.8% in 2005 to 24.1% in 2011 (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 165–6). Other figures which show the success in farming are, for example: the increasing number of livestock ownership – from 34% of 1,349,000 households in 2005 to 47% of 1,536,000 households in 2011 (Ibid., 99–100); and the significant increase in the use of fertilisers and insecticides (see Ibid., 204–6).

Apart from some areas where market-oriented farming was not new<sup>8</sup>, in many other places, it was difficult to initiate the new practices of the use of chemical fertilisers, the monocropping system and the new improved or hybrids seeds. Similarly, the targeted consolidated fields have not been reached because of delays to the resettlement of scattered households. The

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<sup>8</sup> Irish potatoes, pyrethrum and tea are grown in the north of Rwanda and farmers are familiar with the use of chemical fertilisers as well as the practice of the monocropping system. With the development of Irish potatoes and tea plantations in the north, small farmers have learned, through their cooperatives, how to use fertilisers.

implementation was initially so quick that it led to resistance in many areas. Some scholars argue that the quick implementation of reforms by local leaders is one of the causes of resistance to their implementation (Huggins, 2009; Ansoms, 2012).

### **Some of the factors that led to resistance to reforms**

There are many factors that intensify farmers' discontents. Regarding the settlement reform for example – apart from the homeless and a small number of those who had the ambition to invest in small business in *imidugudu* hoping to make profit – many farmers have opposed the pressure to abandon their properties (Hahirwa and Naramabuye, 2009). Aside from this, farmers whose lands are selected for *imidugudu* are dissatisfied with the expropriation of their land and the amount they receive as compensation for damaged properties (Ibid.). Newbury indicates for instance, that if those who would like to restructure the rural regions do not make a formal consultation with its dwellers, they might face resistance. However, she emphasises that farmers used disguised forms of resistance to manifest their discontents cleverly, in order to avoid harmful consequences as overt resistance to government policy in post-genocide Rwanda is risky (Newbury, 2011: 233).

With regards to agricultural reform, small landholders generally dislike monocropping for reasons of food security. That is, the result of investing in agricultural reform is that their diet is less balanced than it would be when doing multiple cropping on their small plots (see also Ansoms, 2012). It is also argued that commercial farming is indispensable if it is profitable, otherwise it is not viable. Generally, small-scale farmers fear risks (Ibid.); they only invest where nothing can hinder a good harvest. They prefer to invest in marshlands, because there the harvest is more certain due to the permanent availability of water. But on hillsides they are reluctant given that the irrigation systems are still rare and difficult to afford. Thus they only invest their labour and use local seeds without chemical fertilisers – only the large-scale farmers can afford such kind of investment. In many areas, the agricultural reform on hillsides is delayed due to small-scale farmers' reluctance to invest in inputs (improved seeds and chemical fertilisers) for fear that they will not be able to get back what they

invest and make profit (see also Silberfein, 1998; Ansoms, 2012; Huggins, 2009).

## Statement of the problem

As introduced above, government reports show that with the implementation of Vision 2020, the Rwandan government has achieved an encouraging step in several aspects of the socioeconomic sector (RoR\_NISR, 2012). Similarly, USAID has reported that compared to other Sub-Saharan African countries of a similar income level, Rwanda has, since 2001 and between 2006 and 2007 in particular, achieved impressive progress in GDP growth, education and health (USAID, 2008: 1–5). However, in the report it is also recognised that there are still some challenges in different sectors of development which need to be assessed and improved. Yet, as mentioned above, besides this success, a number of scholars indicate discontent with settlement and agricultural reforms among the target group – the rural farmers (See Gasarasi and Musahara, 2004; Ansoms, 2009, 2010; Ansoms and Rostagno, 2012; Huggins 2009; Newbury, 2011). Moreover, some of these scholars note that farmers’ discontents are manifested through resistance to those reforms and assume that, sooner or later, there is a risk that poverty-based conflicts could escalate and lead Rwandans into violent conflicts again (Huggins 2009; Leegwater, 2011; Newbury, 2011; Ansoms and Rostagno, 2012).

According to these scholars, the reasons behind farmers’ discontents are, among others, the way in which the reforms have been implemented and their effects on farmers’ everyday lives. They point to the effects of hastening the implementation of reforms in order to achieve the goals embedded in the Vision 2020 framework. One of the strategies of policy/reform implementation adopted by the Rwandan government is *Imihigo*<sup>9</sup>. In fact, this is a performance contract signed between the mayors of districts and the president of the republic and which aims to speed up

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<sup>9</sup>The concept of *Imihigo* is the cultural practice in the ancient tradition of Rwanda whereby an individual would themselves set a target to be achieved within a specific period of time and do so by following select principles and having the determination to overcome any possible challenges (Versailles, 2012). Its objective is to improve the speed and quality of execution of the government programme, thus making public agencies more effective (see also McConnell, 2010).



modernisation in order to achieve a certain level of development relevant to the overall goals of Rwanda Vision 2020 strategies (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000, 2007).

In fact through Imihigo, people are more committed when they believe that the project presented to them will generate a positive outcome (McConnell, 2010), but when they don't believe so, it is obvious that their commitment decreases to a point of abandoning the project. One of the examples in which farmers' commitment has decreased can be found in the agricultural reform on the hillsides, where farmers oppose replacing some crops with suggested ones in their areas (Huggins, 2009: 299). A similar situation of opposing reforms in which recipients do not see any advantage happened in the settlement reform (Newbury, 2011: 233) as well. Although, it is stated in official discourses and reports (such as Imihigo and ubudehe<sup>10</sup>) that policymaking and policy implementation are essentially performed through bottom-up approach<sup>11</sup> (see OSSREA, 2006; RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007: 36), the blueprint and the implementation of reforms are generally done through a top-down approach (see also Ansoms, 2009: 20).

The effects of reforms are numerous. The agricultural reform, for example, has allowed a number of farmers to improve their livelihood at the national level and the percentage of those who have joined *imidugudu* has risen (RoR\_NISR, 2012). However, it has been proven that even though some small farmers have increased their livelihood through modern agriculture, there are many others who have failed to produce precisely that which can assure household food security between both seasons of harvest because of pricing regulation of maize, rice, cassava, etc. (see Huggins, 2009: 301; Ansoms and Murison, 2012: 362). It is also argued that reducing the number of small-scale farmers through the alternative of off-farm activities seems to be unrealistic – due to limited wage labour in rural areas (see also Ansoms, 2012).

Moreover, additional decisions pertaining to settlement reform which have worsened everyday living conditions of various

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<sup>10</sup>*Ubudehe* (community-based participatory approach) is an institution or a process through which the population is given space to themselves decide on priorities and solutions in the process of poverty reduction.

<sup>11</sup> Bottom-up is an approach based on the principle of involving the grassroots' participation in finding solutions to their problems and or making decision on the behalf of local citizens.

farmers include the issues of property values being underestimated for expropriation and compensation as well as poor farmers being forced to leave their nyakatsi (thatched huts) (see Rutareka, 2011). Forced relocation has generally contributed to an increasing number of discontented farmers (HRW, 2001; see also Hahirwa and Naramabuye, 2009).

A number of researchers argue that farmers' discontents result from the use of a top-down approach for reform implementation and the lack of much room for a participatory approach at the grassroots level (Ansoms, 2009: 20; see also Huggins, 2009; Thomson, 2009, 2011; Newbury, 2011). Some of these researchers argue that farmers manifest their discontents through disguised behaviour in order to avoid any repercussions that overt resistance would engender (Thomson, 2009, 2011; Newbury, 2011; Ansoms, 2013). This situation indicates that there are some problems related to reform implementation in Rwanda.

Now, the concern is that there has been neither in-depth analysis of what is described above nor that of farmers' resistance to both settlement and agricultural reforms in particular. Apart from Thomson (2011), who analyses everyday resistance to the policy of reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda and Van Damme, Ansoms and Baret (2013) who analyse how farmers challenge authorities through disguised resistance in order to protect their livelihood, other scholars, including Huggins, Musahara, Newbury, Ansoms, HRW and UNHCR, to mention but a few, have concluded that Rwandan peasants resist government policies but have not made an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of resistance in Rwanda. This thesis goes beyond simple observations of resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms, as it seeks to more systematically understand how farmers experience, react to and resist reforms and how power is resisted in a situation where, as some scholars revealed, open resistance is risky (Newbury, 2011: 233; see also Thomson, 2011).

Furthermore, I assume that although resistance in the form of open protest is risky, Rwandans have the ability to express their discontents without necessarily leading to any danger, delay or failure of reform implementation. However, the use of a top-down approach and limited opportunities to express their opinions are not sufficient to justify the presence of resistance to policies and much less to the delay or failure of policy implementation. Resistance can also derive from other factors including lack of

sufficient resources to invest in reforms, the motivation and the level of expertise of implementers.

I also believe that the farmers' expression of discontent through resistance can lead to the improvement of the strategies of policy implementation and successful outcome (see also Huggins, 2009: 302). In fact, any kind of resistance can fuel coercion as it can lessen it depending on the attitude of the implementer. It is likely that the use of a coercive approach as a solution to resistance would lead to goal achievement, but at the same time it may worsen the conditions of the recipients where, rather than curbing poverty and preventing violent conflict, it would fuel it. However, it can also happen that due to resistance the implementers shift from a rigid to a participatory approach. This attitude would depend on whether reform agents are skilled in areas of reform implementation, or if they can adequately use their skills and have enough resources and use them properly (see also Lipsky, 2000). Power holders, especially those who are inflexible, consider resistance an evil to be obstructed or fought, but yet, it may be a necessary evil for the rights of the resisters.

## **Aim and research questions**

We have seen that Rwanda is a country where the rural areas are intensely populated and habitation is traditionally scattered, thus agricultural transformation is dependent on settlement reform. We have also seen that although both agricultural and resettlement reforms are supposed to contribute to the improvement of farmers' living conditions, recipients seem to be discontented with their implementation. Therefore, an analysis of how farmers experience the implementation of these reforms, how they react to and resist them, is what this study focuses on. Hence, the aim of this thesis is *to understand how farmers experience the implementation of settlement and agricultural reforms and how they react to and resist them.*

To achieve this aim, three broad research questions have been formulated as follows:

(1) How do farmers experience the implementation of settlement/agricultural reforms? With this question, the researcher explores farmers' opinions about their experience of reforms implementation; it also allows the researcher to understand the approaches which the agents of reforms use in the process of reforms implementation.

(2) How do farmers react to settlement/agricultural reforms? Within the framework of this research question, interviewees describe how they behave when settlement and/or agricultural reforms do not match their own personal priorities. They also describe how they react to the mandatory implementation of seemingly ineffective reforms. However, this does not exclude the researcher from considering the reactions of farmers who support what the reforms had hitherto achieved nor the benefits which some farmers gain from them.

(3) Which of the farmers' reactions can be considered acts of resistance? Considering the topic of this dissertation, this remains the core research question. The two preceding research questions were initially designed as a path to comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of resistance within the context of reform implementation. In responding to specific questions, farmers have described how they resist. Some of them have recognised that their resistance was intentional. However, in most of cases acts of resistance were defined either by the person resisted, the researcher or other observers.

I would also remind that the motive behind my choice of focusing on resistance was that resistance studies is a growing academic field embodying a useful approach for looking at what is happening in Rwanda. While analysing and interpreting the findings from the fieldwork, I will refer to a guiding definition of resistance which partly relates to Scott's definition of resistance (1985: 290), namely: *any acts of subordinates to express their discontent or refuse to comply with conditions imposed by the dominant person or institution.*

The research was carried out in four locations (Rusheshe, Gako, Gahogo and Shyogwe) of three sectors (Masaka, Nyamabuye and Shyogwe), located in Kicukiro and Muhanga districts, between the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2012. The selection of these locations was motivated by the fact that reforms were in progress and some acts of resistance were reported at district level by the agronomists whose role is to assess the progress of reform implementation in all sectors (*imirenge* in the local language). The analysis was, however, not strictly limited to these four locations: I occasionally refer to many other sites I visited during my pilot study carried out in 2010. Actually, I visited two sectors from each of the five provinces, plus two sectors which served only to test the relevance of the interview

guide, while ten other sites served mainly to select convenient sites for in-depth interviews, for providing a general idea about the phenomenon of resistance in the Rwandan context and for selecting potential candidates of poor farmers for the in-depth interviews.

A qualitative research approach was used to analyse and interpret the participants' accounts of their experiences during the implementation of settlement and agricultural reforms. To collect data, semi-structured and unstructured interviews were used with the support of audio recordings and occasionally – during the meetings and community works – observational method was also used (De Vos, 2002: 297–302; Creswell, 1998: 17; 2009: 61).

To understand farmers' acts of resistance to reforms, I interpret their statements and the meaning they attribute to their reactions, and relate these to Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) approach to analysing resistance. In addition to the farmers' views, I took into account the interpretations of other persons, including those who were resisted or targeted as well as external observers such as local opinion leaders and neighbours of the farmers selected for in-depth interviews.

To collect data, I interviewed 102 individuals, encompassing 20 in-depth interviews with poor farmers affected by reforms; 22 local agents of reforms including some local civil servants at sector, cell and *umudugudu* (village) levels; technical staff directly involved in reforms such as the relevant agronomist and the person in charge of community development at sector level; and some local opinion leaders involved or not in community development programmes. 60 of the interviews were conducted with farmers among the neighbouring those selected, other poor farmers who themselves were not necessarily affected by the implementation of reforms as the latter group were. The purpose of involving other farmers was to triangulate various sources of information about resistance to reforms under study in general and that of the 20 selected poor farmers in particular. I also added one top leader from RAB (Rwanda Agricultural Board) with whom I made a formal interview after having had a brief informal discussion with him during his visit to one of the fields my research focuses on.

## Theoretical context in brief

Through the theory of resistance, one may understand the farmers' behaviour vis-à-vis that of the authorities in their hierarchies, and particularly those who are directly in everyday contact with them. These include some local authorities directly involved in community development and the agronomists, but this doesn't preclude that other leaders who might have influence in the process of reform implementation can also be involved. Farmers' resistance is a phenomenon that exists in the history of humanity. But as Kelley (1992: 292) points out, research about resistance was developed a few decades ago with Thompson (1971), Hall and Jefferson (1993) and others, including Scott (1985) and Bourdieu (1998) to mention but a few.

However, as far as I know, there is no research on resistance to agrarian reform that simultaneously encompasses aspects of rural settlement and agriculture reforms in Rwanda. Most scholars who focus on peasant studies in general, without necessarily including an in-depth analysis of peasants' resistance to reforms, are, among others, Agarwal (2003), Bernstein (2004), Scott (1976), and in the case of Rwanda Ansoms (2007, 2009, 2012), Huggins (2009) and Ansoms and Murison (2012). Even though some scholars studied peasants' resistance a bit before or contemporarily to Scott, such as Paige (1975), Moore (1978), Mullin (1972) and others, the most well-known scholar who spared no efforts to develop peasants' resistance studies is Scott (1976, 1985, 1990).

Scott has produced an important empirical work entitled *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasants Resistance* in which he describes with rich and varied evidence, how the subordinate peasants behave when attempting to undermine the superordinates' power through either mitigating their oppression or claiming certain rights (Scott, 1985: 290). Some of the forms of everyday resistance he described and interpreted while exploring the Malaysian village of Sedaka, as well as peasants' behaviour when attempting to dissuade their oppressors, are classified under what he calls "cautious resistance and calculated conformity" (Ibid. 241, 289). Some of the examples peasants used to dissuade their oppressors (who ruled them unjustly through intimidation and exploitation) include trying to stop combined harvesting (or harvesting and gathering crops with agricultural machines), wage negotiations (workers' demands for basic salary increase), and

expressing their discontent through theft of paddies from the field in night or the murder of livestock, etc. (Ibid. 273). In his other work, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, Scott also analyses the ways subordinates resist domination or challenge ideological hegemony through what he calls hidden transcripts<sup>12</sup>, or the subordinates' secret discourses aiming to undermine the power, also known as public transcripts<sup>13</sup>, or political discourses used to oppress the subordinates (Scott, 1990: 4, 45).

As for resistance to settlement reform, scholars such as Thompson (1971), Polanyi (2001), Stiglitz (2007), Hyden (1980), Silberfein (Ed.) (1998), etc., have to some extent analysed it. However, there is no specific study about it, and therefore Scott remains the prominent scholar who has contributed to knowledge about resistance to settlement policy and resistance theories in general. In the area of settlement reform, his contribution is found in his book entitled *Seeing Like a State* (1998). Naturally, there are other scholars who, after Scott's publications, have developed critical theories contesting or reconsidering some concepts or supplementing with some new ones. These include Gutmann (1993), Chin and Mittelman (1997), Bayat (2000), Weitz (2001), Hollander and Einwohner (2004), Seymour (2006) and Vinthagen (2012), to mention but a few.

Although the concept of resistance is paramount in this thesis, it cannot be analysed alone. Therefore, it is essential to relate it to other notions without which the phenomenon of resistance to reforms would not be comprehensively understood. These are mainly the notions of power and policy implementation which will be discussed in detailed in the next chapter – that of theories.

However, for the moment, I would like to design a useful definition of the concept of power for this thesis. But before that, let's see its background in brief. In fact, the phenomenon known as of power evolved over the millennia and has taken diverse forms. Scholars have attempted to define it, but there is no consensus on a precise definition. For instance, Dahl (1957) argues that power is

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<sup>12</sup> Hidden transcript is the subordinates' discourse that takes place offstage beyond direct observation of those in power. It is about a matter of offstage speeches, gestures and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public transcripts (see Scott, 1990:4).

<sup>13</sup>Public transcript is or the "dominant discourse" based on the dominant's manifestation of power stressing their ideology (Ibid.).

the most disputed and contested of all concepts<sup>14</sup> and that there is no consensus among sociologists and political scientists its definition (Dahl, 1957 see also Scott, 1994: 288). Similarly, Pachrach and Baratz state that political scientists and sociologists disagree when defining the concept of power, which means it remains elusive (Pachrach and Baratz, 1962: 947). More details about various definitions of the concept of power will be developed in the next chapter. In the meantime, the working definition of power that I opted for is as follows: *power is the ability of a leader or a group of leaders to influence or facilitate the subordinates to act in a certain way in order to achieve specific goals.*

## **The empirical context of resistance in Rwanda**

There are no specific studies on resistance to the implementation of settlement and agricultural reforms on Rwanda. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, only a few scholars note certain cases of resistance in their reports, but they do so without making an in-depth analysis of it. The only scholar who has specifically studied resistance through policy implementation in Rwanda so far is Thompson (2009). Using political ethnography, she specifically studied everyday resistance to the reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. In her study, she ends up showing how the post-genocide government uses disciplinary mechanisms to generate compliance to its programme of national unity and reconciliation. From her findings she learns how ordinary people are forced to accept a state-led reconciliation, which, according to her, is a form of oppressive state power. However, her study doesn't focus on settlement and/or agricultural reforms.

As for settlement and agricultural reforms, a number of researchers show that there was, up until 2010, significant progress. For example, since 2007 the agricultural reform has achieved a great production of maize, rice, Irish potatoes and wheat as a result of the increasing use of chemical fertilisers, improved varieties of seeds and many hectares of consolidated areas. The tables below show figures illustrating the improvement

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<sup>14</sup> Dahl (1957) shows the different ways civilizations identify the word power in different languages, justifying its historical existence: power, influence, control, pouvoir, puissance, match, herrschaft, gewalt, imperium, potestas, auctoritas, potential, etc.



of agricultural reform in five districts selected among others in the northern (Burera and Rubavu), eastern (Kirehe and Nyagatare) and southern (Muhanga) provinces:

**Table: 1.1. Crop intensification programme in key figures**

	2008 A	2008 B	2009 A	2009 B	2010 A
Land use consolidation (ha)	28,000	–	66,000	–	254,448
Improved seeds(mt)	600	0	1,200	–	3,000
Fertiliser imported (mt)	6,000	0	14,427	–	33,500
Districts covered	8	8	17	17	24
Fertilisers auctioned (mt)	0	0	5,603	8,823	19,663
CIP outreach (No. of households)	85,000		200,000		750,000

**Source:** Adapted from MINAGRI/CIP, various reports, 2008a, 2009a, 2009b and 2010a.

**Table: 1. 2. CIP land use consolidated area (ha)**

Crops	2008 A	2009 A	2010 A
Maize	17,808	35,000	83,427
Irish potato	160	5,000	36,420
Wheat	600	10,000	7,340 <sup>15</sup>
Rice	0	6,000	6,703
Cassava	9,448	10,000	5,748 <sup>16</sup>

**Source:** Adapted from CIP Coordination Unit, January 2010.

<sup>15</sup>Only cassava production has significantly dropped.

<sup>16</sup>Wheat has also dropped but only slightly compared to cassava.

These figures from the CIP evaluation, carried out by IFDC, an independent consultant institution to MINAGRI, confirm the NISR's EICV3 report showing tremendous achievement in poverty reduction through different reforms in different socioeconomic sectors (RoR\_NISR, 2012).

Although many reports reveal significant progress in the agricultural sector since the implementation of EDPRS in 2008, Ansoms observes that the agricultural reform seems to push aside the small-scale farmers through the exploitation of marshlands in favour of large-scale commercially-oriented farming (Ansons, 2012: 24). However, this could not be generalised given that there are other scholars who contradict her argument. For instance, even though he notes the aggressiveness of the process of the implementation of the agricultural policy, Huggins shows that the Rwandan government encourages small landholders to join cooperatives – an organisational form which is considered a path to promoting the government policy of consolidating land and promoting monocropping in order to efficiently use marshlands (Huggins, 2009: 297). Indeed, as the IFDC report shows, small-scale farmers are supported through a number of projects and programmes within MINAGRI, including RSSP for marshland development, RADA to reinforce farmers' capacity through technical support and CIP to supply inputs and identify suitable land for consolidation (IFDC, 2010).

With reference to the above table 2, maize production increased significantly from 2008 to 2010. I would say that the data are sometimes inaccurate or biased as often is the case in policy evaluations, but most of small farmers have abandoned the former practice of growing maize. However, this doesn't prevent large-scale farmers from producing large amounts that compensate the cancellation observed in the fields of small farmers.

Concerning settlement reform, the NISR's EICV3 (*la Troisième Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des ménages* or *The Third Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey*) report shows that in five years the number of those who joined *imidugudu* doubled from 18% to 39% of households between 2005/2006 and 2010/2011. It also reports that during this period the percentage of those who were living in *nyakatsi* (or thatched huts) had fallen to 2% of households and metal roofs had increased by 10% in the rural areas. The use of cement and other durable materials in rural housing, as well as access to electricity

and sanitation, have also improved significantly (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 6–8).

However, researchers note some contradictions in this reform. For instance, Ansoms, Newbury and others point out some constraints young people from poor households experience due to the effects of *imidugudu* policy, including lack of means to afford a new house in the selected sites. In addition to the needs of materials for construction, they also need to purchase the plot on which they have to erect the house. According to these scholars, this situation generally leads the youth of marrying age to continue to reside in their parents' home and thus they are unable to form their own families. This situation has in turn contributed to the increase of the number of unmarried single mothers in rural areas and the influx of migrants from the rural regions to towns, especially to Kigali city, which has also increased the number of unskilled jobless, vagabonds, street children and burglaries in towns (Ansons, 2012: 437; Newbury, 2011: 234).

Isaksson also conducted research on *imidugudu* or the villagisation<sup>17</sup> programme in Rwanda; she reveals that certain human rights, including property rights, were violated during the implementation of the villagisation programme. She indicates that instead of improving agricultural production and alternatively creating non-agricultural employment to curb poverty, villagisation has increased dependency among the new village dwellers due to lack of an alternative substitute to social capital (Isaksson, 2011: 17). However, she reveals many advantages of the *imidugudu* policy, including the easy access to services, the improvement of non-farm activities, the increase in large-scale farming, the solution to the housing shortage and the prevention of conflict over land (Ibid., 17). Yet, Newbury observes that the results of the villagisation policy were disappointing, given that it has deepened land conflicts and aggravated household poverty (Newbury, 2011: 232).

## Scope and delimitations of the study

Considering that reforms implementation is a nationwide project, and that it was impossible to carry out a qualitative research throughout the whole country, I limited my in-depth inquiry to four

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<sup>17</sup>Isaksson, Newbury and other researchers use the term 'villagisation' to mean 'grouped settlement' or '*umudugudu*' policy.

sites in three selected sectors based on criteria that I will describe in detail in chapter three.

In fact, the spatial limitation was based on areas where reforms were ongoing, with indications that there could be some acts of resistance to both settlement and agricultural reforms. Another motivating factor was based on the location of the site. With this factor, I targeted sites where, in addition to arable land on hillsides, farmers had a chance of acquiring a plot in marshland. Such areas have some advantages in the agricultural sector. Their main advantage is that once farmers have, for example, a piece of land in the marshland or along its proximity, they may survive with the little they produce on it even if they fail to produce on hillsides, because of e.g. weather conditions. Another motivating factor which seems very important in resistance studies is that in marshlands there are regular interest-based conflicts between farmers residing around the marsh as well as between these farmers and the owner of marshlands, which is the state.

After a long period of group discussions with farmers and interviews with some local leaders during the pilot study and preliminary fieldwork in 12 selected sites, I realised that only four sites fulfilled the above conditions: Masaka (Gako and Rusheshe cells), a rural sector of Kicukiro district, and Nyamabuye (Gahogo cell) and Shyogwe (cells along Rugeramigozi marshland including Mbare and others) sectors of Muhanga in the southern province, were appropriate according to the criteria.

Masaka sector was known as a dense forest surrounding the city of Kigali; it was cleared in the 1970s–80s, mainly by the displaced community from the northern and north-western part of the country as a result of unusual overpopulation compared to other parts of the country. Even though resistance to reforms could be seen everywhere in the countryside, this study was limited to Masaka sector due to its particular characteristic of being an asylum of the recently dislodged population from Kigali city seeking plots for residence and farming. Cells of Rusheshe and Gako, part of current Masaka sector, were particularly targeted. Gahogo of Nyamabuye and Shyogwe cells along Rugeramigozi marshland are also taken into consideration because they fulfilled the required criteria described above. However, the data analysis is not only limited to the four selected sites for in-depth interviews. Ten of the twelve sites where preliminary fieldwork was conducted were occasionally considered, given that the information I

collected from there was relevant to understanding the phenomenon of farmers' resistance to reforms in Rwanda.

In addition to physical limitation, as just described, this thesis also has conceptual limitations. In fact, as discussed earlier, the concept of resistance is considered paramount to this thesis. However, there are other supplementary notions without which the phenomenon of resistance to reforms would not be thoroughly understood; namely, the notions of power and policy implementation, which are closely linked during the process of policy enforcement.

In fact, as mentioned earlier, this thesis recognises that in order to understand resistance, power also needs to be understood. However, the focus of the thesis is limited to the study of reactions and resistance to reforms. It does not make an in-depth analysis of power as it is exercised by the Rwandan state in general and during policy implementation. Theoretically, its main focus is on resistance in relation to policy implementation, rather than on power and repression.

Moreover, the thesis mainly focuses on understanding how farmers experience and react to reforms, and how their acts can be understood as resistance. It does not have an ambition to draw conclusions about patterns of resistance, or about what types of resistance are to be expected in relation to any given types of reform implementation strategies. Due to the limitations in time and space, the thesis also does not provide a full mapping of the options available to farmers who are discontent with the resettlement and agricultural reforms.

## **Thesis contribution**

A number of studies on agrarian reform conclude that compared to other Sub-Saharan countries, Rwanda has, in less than two decades, made an incredible step in diverse aspects, including: health with the *mutuelle de santé* (or the medical care insurance); a well-structured landscape through *imidugudu* development; and land use consolidation through monocropping, especially maize, rice, Irish potatoes and wheat, etc. (Ansoms, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012; Ansoms and Murison (2012); Huggins, 2009; IFDC, 2010). However, it is also argued, for example, that even if reforms are successful in general, the majority of small-scale farmers do not benefit from the agriculture reform (Ansoms and

Murison, 2012; Huggins, 2009), and that *imidugudu* implementation hurts poor farmers (Rutareka, 2011; Newbury, 2011; Hilhorst & Leeuwen, 2000; Jackson, 1999). Moreover, some of these scholars argue that farmers usually express their discontents through disguised and everyday forms of resistance (Ansoms, 2009; Ansoms and Murison, 2012; Newbury, 2011; Huggins, 2009).

Referring to the conclusions of other scholars who have studied the phenomenon of resistance in other developing countries, some argue that resistance is a catalyst of empowerment (see Kieffer, 1984); hence, it leads to self-reliance of the powerless especially when protest against injustice achieves its aim. On the contrary, other scholars indicate that coercion allows the dominants to achieve their goals. Lukes argues, for example, that power makes development possible (Lukes 1974, see also in Cleggs, 1989 and Sadan, 1997: 70).

Building on Mendras recommendations, this thesis goes beyond others' conclusions (Mendras, 1976: 9) through an in-depth analysis of farmers' everyday experience of reform implementation and their reactions and ultimately the way they express their discontent or satisfaction. Although some scholars have studied policy implementation and noticed some forms of resistance in Rwanda, they stayed in the field for a shorter time and based their findings on these limited studies, thus it seemed that the subject needed further investigation.

In fact, researchers on policies of settlement and agriculture including Newbury, Ansoms and co-authors, Huggins, etc. have generally focused their studies on specific small areas in one or two provinces and have tended to generalise their findings from that. While in my research, although I made an in-depth study in few sites, I supplemented it with the information I collected from a broadened investigation on resistance in two sites of each province of Rwanda, which gives a wider picture of the phenomenon of resistance to reform implementation in Rwanda.

Moreover, most scholars attribute farmers' resistance to state domination, especially restrictions on participation in decision making. However, they ignore the impact of environmental degradation and its consequences on farmers' acceptance to willingly participate in agricultural reform implementation. In fact, based on most of my interviewees' statements, farmers – out of fear of losing out due to uncertain weather conditions – are

generally reluctant to invest in agriculture on hillsides. At the same time, scholars ignore the effects of the Rwandan genocide which resulted from the impact of Rwandan history and its systems of domination; these last two factors also have, in certain circumstances, led farmers to resist the requirements placed upon them.

The focus on farmers' experiences has enabled me to study both different strategies of resistance and different motivations behind it. The interpretation of farmers' reaction has also revealed to me several forms of resistance in a particular context of Rwanda, which other researchers had not noticed. Generally, scholars in the field of resistance studies study the dominant and the subordinate, but they do not recognise the groups that may be in-between these two. In this study, I discovered that local chiefs and several agronomists were both the agents of reform implementation. Thus they represent the dominant power and siding with the farmers, protecting the resisters or resisting themselves in a way which goes unseen by superiors.

The fact that those who are supposed to enforce a policy based on directives from the top leadership play a double role in policy implementation is really new in the literature of reform implementation in Rwanda. It is also a new theoretical contribution to the field of resistance studies.

This study contributes to inform the reader how rural Rwandans act when experiencing the implementation of settlement and agricultural reforms. From the conclusion of this study, the reader should also understand why certain reforms fail to meet the needs of small-scale farmers while the government spares no effort to support their implementation for the benefit of Rwandans in general and the poor in particular.

Although the aim of this study was not to find out the impact of resistance, I have identified some impacts of resistance on power. This was noticed through a sudden shift from stiffness to flexibility of some agents of reform implementation. This thesis also contributes to knowledge in relation to resistance studies given that it reveals forms of resistance specific to the Rwandan context. Moreover, it seems that although the academic study of peace, security and development programme is a young discipline, it accommodates many other old disciplines such as economics, sociology, political science, etc. As these disciplines contribute to holistically explaining the phenomenon of resistance to reforms

through the experience of recipients, this study is epistemologically multidisciplinary and certainly contributes to uncover the nexus between resistance studies and peace and development studies. This can be seen through concluding remarks on the possibilities of transforming the rural without hurting the recipients and involving them in policymaking as a way of preventing the escalation of violent conflicts.

My expectation is that this thesis will be a source of knowledge about the phenomenon of resistance to reform implementation in Rwanda. Thus, it will not only contribute to improving the strategies of reform implementation for curbing poverty, but I also presume that recurrent violence could be prevented once the decision makers acknowledge farmers' discontent, which would in turn contribute to sustainable peace and development.

To conclude this chapter, I would say that through this study, one can learn how to improve the way of implementing reforms while preventing conflict escalation and building a long-lasting peace through the study of resistance in relation to power.

## **Thesis structure**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter has introduced the thesis, describing the motivation and the interest for this area of research, the research problem, the aim and research questions, theoretical and empirical contexts in brief, the scope and limitations of the study, the thesis contribution and the thesis structure. The next chapter consists of the conceptual framework and theoretical perspectives, putting emphasis on the literature on resistance.

Chapter three includes the methodological perspectives, using qualitative approach with semi-structured and unstructured interviews, while chapter four provides details about the context of Rwanda, focusing not only on current policies in relation to the topic, but also a brief description of the socio-historical background of Rwanda.

Chapter five relates to the analysis of empirical data concerning the farmers' experience and resistance to settlement reform, and chapter six deals with resistance to agricultural reform. Based on field observations and experiences so far acquired from the two previous chapters, a concluding discussion is developed in chapter seven.



# 2

## Theoretical perspectives

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### Introduction

This chapter aims to clarify the concept of resistance and discuss the thesis' theoretical framework. It relates to the debates of a number of scholars, mainly including Scott, Hollander and Einwohner, and Weitz to mention but a few. However, in order to understand the phenomenon of resistance, one needs to focus attention not only on the concept of resistance, but to also link it to other concepts, without which the phenomenon cannot be comprehensively explored. These are mainly the concepts of power and policy implementation. These concepts are vital in order to understand the context of enforcing settlement and agricultural reforms through which the phenomenon of resistance is manifested. As each of these concepts has a range of forms, the focus will be limited to those that I need for the interpretation of findings in the empirical chapters.

### The conceptual framework

In relation to the concept of power, there are many authors – other than those mentioned above – who are quite relevant and who will be discussed here. Among others they include Weber (1947), Dahl (1961) and Lukes (2005). In fact, the concept of power is essential to gaining a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of resistance, especially the kind of power relations that prevail in a specific context (see Faubion and Rabinow, 1994). A number of scholars believe that resistance studies, in order to be conducted properly, must be connected to notions of power (Barbalet, 1985: 531–46; Ortner, 1995; Gaventa, 1980; Rogers, 1975). For instance, Abu-Lughod argues that studies of resistance generally remain incomplete since most scholars primarily concern themselves with scrutinising the actors of resistance and drawing conclusions without examining either the aspect of power or the implications

generated by the power-resistance relationship (Abu-Lughod, 1990: 41–42). Likewise, in order to understand the phenomenon of power and power relations, one needs to link it with the notions of resistance (see Barbalet [1985: 42]; see also Bachrach and Baratz [1962]; Mann [1986]; James Scott [1985, 1986]; John Scott [1994]; Werth [2000]; Rogers [1975]; Ortner [1995]; Weitz [2001]). Foucault's assertion that "whenever there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978: 93) emphasises the inseparability of both phenomena. This connection is also emphasised by contemporary scholars working in the areas of both resistance and power. For instance, Fleming argues that resistance and power should be considered a singular dynamic (Fleming, 2008: 304–5) and Tuner and Caouette emphasise this assertion, arguing that it is unwise to pass over the concept of power when conceptualizing resistance (Tuner and Caouette, 2009: 951–3). Thus, one may conclude that the phenomena of resistance and power are always intertwined. That is to say that, the study of one always implies that of the other (see also Fleming, 2008: 301).

Although both concepts are connected and interdependent, most scholars consider them to be two separate phenomena. For instance, in his theory of circuits of power, Clegg (1989) argues that "although interdependent, power and resistance, are two separate aspects of social life" (see also Clegg [1989] in Sadan, 1997: 52). However, this dichotomy is contested by poststructuralists as well as theorists from several other orientations, including James Scott, Michel Foucault, and those mentioned above who believe that resistance and power are inseparable and form a complexity of power relations (see also Bayat, 2000: 541). In this thesis I recognize the interrelatedness of power and resistance, while studying them as two separate but closely related phenomena.

The notions of policy/reform implementation are discussed in this chapter as well, drawing on McLoghlin (1987), Goggin, et al. (1990), Winter (2003) and Paudel (2009) among many others. One key issue in policy implementation concerns participation. As I will later show, a top-down approach to policy implementation limits recipient participation in the process of decision-making, while a bottom-up approach involves them in both processes of implementation and decision- and policymaking (see Mayo and Craig, 1995).

With regards to the concept of resistance, discussions will be based on the most well-known pioneers in resistance studies, including, Scott (1976, 1985, 1990, 2008), Hollander and Einwohner (2004), Thompson (1971), Turner and Caouette (2009), Li and O'Brien (1996), Weitz (2001), to mention but a few.

## **Debate on power**

Dahl traces the genesis of the concept of power and finds that people have always believed that “some people have more power than others” (Dahl, 1957: 201) and that this fact has an important impact on the functioning of society or any other organisation (Secord and Backman, 1964: 273). Referring to the history of social theory – from the works of Plato and Aristotle, among the antique Greek philosophers, through a number of other thinkers from Machiavelli and Hobbes to Weber – Dahl concludes that the concept of power is as “ancient and ubiquitous as human existence” (Ibid.). According to Sadan, Machiavelli sees power as “a means, not a resource, and seeks strategic advantages such as military ones between his prince and others” (Sadan, 1997: 34). Hobbes focuses on state sovereignty which prevents anarchy of individual desire for power. He then assumes that a “common power is always necessary to prevent anarchy” in society (Lamborn and Lepgold, 2003: 35).

Most contemporary scholars, including Dahl himself, contend that power is the most contested concept *in social sciences* and that so far there is no single definition of power agreed upon among sociologists and political scientists (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962: 947; see also Dahl 1957; Scott, 1994; Mann, 1986; Sadan, 1997).

Weber is the pioneer of those who attempted to define power after World War II. Referring to Hobbes thought, Weber defines power as “the probability that an actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance to it” (Sadan, 1997: 35). While investigating illegitimate power within bureaucratic and legitimate power, Weber classified power in three different types: the charismatic<sup>18</sup> power, the traditional<sup>19</sup> power and the rational-legal<sup>20</sup> power.

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<sup>18</sup> The charismatic power or personal power, also known as leadership according to Weber, is legitimised as well, but not by the laws as for the rational legal power. The legitimacy in this context is rather based on special qualities

For instance, by referring to Weber, Dahl defines power as “the ability to make somebody do something that otherwise s/he would not have done” (Dahl, 1961). Mann simplifies Dahl’s definition of power and defines it as “the ability to influence the behaviour of others” (Mann, 1986: 25). Unlike Weber, who focuses on power in organisations, Dahl focuses on power in the community. For Dahl, those who possess power in the community exercise it so that those who are subjects to it conform to their preference (Sadan, 1997: 36).

Since Dahl, through Bachrach and Baratz, to Lukes and other contemporary scholars, the concept of power has evolved. Dahl’s contribution was to explain decision outcomes as being political; in fact, he was actually interested in understanding the ruling elite after World War II (Hardy and Leiba-O’Sullivan, 1998: 461; see also Sadan, 1997: 36) and from his understanding, Lukes formulates his first dimension of power, which is actually a kind of power of those who hold it over those who do not possess it (see Sadan, 1997: 36; Dahl, 1957). Lukes however, argues that there are two other dimensions of power that were not recognised by Dahl. Lukes’ second dimension of power is based on the next generation of Bachrach and Baratz (1962), which actually contributes to explain how, in addition to winning over others, the power holder also excludes or prevents others from gaining power or participating in decision-making (Lukes, 2005: 490; see also Sadan, 1997: 40). With Lukes’ third dimension of power, the strategy of wielding power (by means of defining the interests of the lower classes in order to prevent the expression of their

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embodied in the elite/person. It can be political, religious, or military... (See Gordon, 2007: 67–73). For Johnson and Johnson (1) charismatic leader has extraordinary power or vision and is able to communicate it to others or (2) s/he has practical leadership that enables her or him to achieve goals that will alleviate followers’ distress (See Zastrow, 2003: 148).

<sup>19</sup> The traditional power is also known as bloodlines. It refers to a context where people spontaneously obey the ruler, mainly the king, just because they believe in his traditional authority to bring order into their community/society (see Dowding, 2006: 137).

<sup>20</sup> Rational-legal power or authority is, according to Weber, the most appropriate form of power for organisational environments because it is legitimised by explicit rules and procedures...where power is exercised with well-defined limits... the authority refers to the legitimate power, a power that is acknowledged by the subjects/governed (see Gordon, 2007: 74).

discontent) is a way of creating an environment of acceptance of the dominant preferences (Lukes, 2005: 490). Lukes explains that in such conditions, people from the lower classes remain unaware of their interests. However, he adds that these conditions may lead to latent conflicts (Ibid.; see also Lorenzi, 2006: 92).

In addition to the three dimensions of power that Lukes developed, Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan (1998) introduce a fourth dimension of power with multifaceted ways through which power works (Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998: 458). According to these authors, the fourth dimension of power relates to the power which subordinates can hold in relation to the dominant. This dimension of power helps to explain the limits of power and resistance to it and it also highlights how disadvantaged people can improve their own capacity (see detailed of such a form of power below under the subheading "Democratic forms of power").

Gaventa (1980) argues that power "create[s] obedience and powerlessness"<sup>21</sup> in terms of dependence, i.e. power can, for instance, create a situation whereby someone is prevented from taking a decision on their own behalf (Ibid., 66, 116). Similarly, a number of other scholars see powerlessness as "the absence of power resources" (Hardina, et al., 2007: 4), while Salomon sees powerlessness as "a product of the interaction between individuals and the social structures that limit life opportunities for them" (see Salomon, 1976 in Ibid., 4–5).

However, Lukes (1974) argues that power is productive and makes development possible (Lukes in Sadan, 1997: 70; see also Kumar, 2008: 2; Clegg, 1989: 232). Likewise, Clegg asserts that power occurs in the process of production and innovation (Clegg, 1989). Similarly, in terms of power/knowledge with reference to Foucault (1980), Sadan argues that power can be productive in varied domains including economic, industrial and scientific (see Sadan, 1997: 58).

In this thesis, it is important to have a definition of power that creates space for a broad variation of meanings. Thus, my definition is based on the recognition that power may involve not only repression and domination but also freedom of choice and cooperation; it is based on Dahl's understanding of power and can be formulated: *Power is the ability of a leader or a group of*

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<sup>21</sup> According to Gaventa (1980), powerlessness can be seen in terms of lack of resources or economic dependence.

*leaders to influence or facilitate the subordinates to act in a certain way in order to achieve specific goals.*

The word ‘influence’ in this definition can on the one hand be coercive or repressive, and on the other be a stimulus which produces favourable results for the subordinates or powerless but which still is held by the dominant; while ‘facilitation’ enables the subordinates to design their own way of solving problems and strategies for achievement of goals. For instance, by helping someone in order to effectively achieve something. Therefore, based on this definition, I decide to focus my attention on two types of power exercised while implementing settlement and agricultural reforms. These are: ‘power-over’ and ‘democratic power’.

#### *Power-over*

Concerning the concept ‘power-over’, I refer to power as a ‘win-lose game’ of relationships, characterised by repression and coercion (Gomez, et al., 2010: 192–93; see also Rowlands, 1998: 14). This kind of power is a form of domination embedded in individuals or institutions which prevent others from acquiring it. Some scholars refer to it when they realise that power holders – an individual or an institution – attempt to prevent others from the opportunity of controlling resources and participating in decision-making (see Lukes, 1974; Gaventa, 1980; Hardina, et al., 2007).

In brief, with power-over or coercive power, we understand the exercise of influence on the subordinates as being against their will. Thereby, influence is carried out by means of threatening, or in other ways coercing, subordinates to comply or do something they would otherwise not do (see Luneburg, 2012: 3).

#### *Democratic forms of power*

Apart from power that limits or represses the subordinates or people of the lower class, there are also forms of democratic power, which encompass equal rights or relatively balanced social power (Atlee, 1992). Under such conditions, the influence of power can be seen positively, since instead of referring to a threat it refers to cooperation between the power holder and the subordinates or inferior class of people (see Lunenburg, 2012).

Furthermore, based on how scholars define power in the previous discussions on the subject, we can see that power is unavoidable in an organisation or a community. Thus, having a

fully equal social power in a community or an organisation would not be possible. However, the kind of relatively equal or balanced social power Atlee introduces here is, to a certain extent, embedded in, for example, freedom in the sense of having the ability to satisfy one's desire (Ibid.), or in unions of workers, in cooperatives founded on values and principles such as the participation of all members of a cooperative in decision-making, and other democratic values (see also Henry, 2005: 4; Hind, 1997).

Another form of democratic power that Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan introduce is the 'four-dimensional model' of power, which they draw from Cooper and Burrell (1988), Foucault (1977, 1982 and 1984) and some others. According to Hardy and Leiba-O'Sullivan, the 'fourth dimension' of power contributes to explain in which way the subjects acquire freedom in decision-making or freedom from effects of the dominant power. These researchers argue that, the fourth dimension of power intends to give authority to the powerless or people from the lower class; to give them the capacity or to energise them in the sense of strengthening the capacity they possess for their self-reliance (Ibid., 471).

Moreover, according to Gomez, et al. (2010: 192–93), there exist similar forms of power in autonomous institutions where members hold the capacity to achieve together what would never be possible if undertaken individually. This kind of power is, according to Townsend et al. (1999), embodied in mutual support, solidarity and the collaboration of a group of individuals. He labels it as 'power with', something that is usually found in autonomous institutions such as cooperatives (see Townsend, et al., 1999).

There is also 'power within' or the ability to act and change the world or agency, which has to do with one's ability to acknowledge individual differences while respecting others in an autonomous institution (see Ibid.). For instance, according to the author people are weakened and their participation in seeking economic autonomy declines, when they lose hope, dignity and a sense of independence. Thus, 'power within' is one of the forms that, members of a cooperative (among others) may utilise to actualise their dignity and fulfilment which in turn increase their participation in the process of decision-making and autonomy (see also Townsend, et al., 1999).

Power-over and democratic forms of power can be seen as two extremes on a sliding scale of how leaders exercise power: at the one end we find repression and coercion, at the other we find

democratic decision-making and collaboration, with a number of variations in-between these two.

## **Debate on policy implementation**

This section will spell out the existing literature on policy implementation and discuss its perspectives on how power is exercised and resistance occurs.

The concept of implementation has a range of definitions. Literally, the term means “carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing or completing” a given task (Paudel, 2009: 36; Lan, 1983: 17). However, these synonymous words from dictionaries do not provide a comprehensive definition of specific implementation such as that of policy implementation. Therefore, I first of all refer to Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) who are considered the founding fathers of the concept. According to them, policy implementation is “a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieve them” (Ibid., 37), while its meaning in Todtling-Schönhofer et al., (2003) seems more pragmatic and detailed. They define policy implementation as “the operational process needed to produce expected outputs”, and illustrate it in five steps as follows: (i) identification of the problem; (ii) formulation of a solution; (iii) decision on finance; (iv) implementation and (v) evaluation of results (Todtling-Schönhofer, et al., 2003: 11).

The above definition shows how policy implementation is a process within a cyclic complexity of steps, and situates the actual implementation between the allocation of resources and the results to be obtained. The challenge that may obstruct the step of implementation could be that the decision-makers are generally different from the agents of implementation which may lead to the distortion of the actual goals. An obstruction may also result from the barriers that may impede the flow of directives and resources from the top to the bottom where the implementation takes place. Nevertheless, it is also argued that the involvement of several stakeholders (usually having divergent interests) may affect the outcome (Ibid., 12). In order to be more explicit about the concept of and approaches to policy implementation, three generations of research are discussed below.



### *The first generation implementation*

The first generation includes the work of Pressman and Wildavsky (1984). This generation focuses on the analysis of the implementation of a single authoritative decision (Goggin, et al., 1990: 13; see also Paudel 2009: 38). Goggin and co-authors have concluded that the first generation of implementation research has contributed to reveal certain problems of policy implementation such as “uncertain relationship between policies, decisions and implemented programmes” (Goggin, et al., 1990), but it was reproached to be based on “atheoretical, case-specific and non-cumulative studies” (Paudel, 2009: 46).

### *The second generation implementation*

The second generation concerns the framework development and has contributed to explaining the variables of success or failure of implementation processes. Importantly, this was the first generation to explain these variables (Lester, et al., 1995). This second generation shows the relationships between policy design and implementation practices, and involves two approaches: namely, the top-down and bottom-up approaches (Paudel, 2009: 39; Winter, 2003: 213-5; McLaughlin, 1987; Goggin, et al., 1990). This particular aspect of the second generation makes it convenient for this study of reforms implementation.

*Top-down approach:* Although there would be some variations of power forms underlying the top-down approach of policy/reform implementation resulting from leaders’ individual talents of managing a situation, generally the top-down perspective of policymaking and implementation overlaps with and makes use of power which is closer to the power-over (or coercive power) than to the democratic forms of power. With regards to this approach, the process of policy implementation begins with developing policies by the policymakers, and then follows a linear implementation through the administrative apparatus, from the top towards the bottom. A set of characteristics of the top-down perspective is summarised from the works of Elmore (1978) in Paudel, (2009: 40–41), Winter (1990) 2003 and Berman (1978):

- policymakers specify policy goals and believe that implementation can perform successfully through certain mechanisms; policies are based on policymakers’ views;

- a vital point is the policymakers' capability of exercising control over the environment and implementers; implementation coincides with the goals embodied in an authoritative decision;
- it emphasises formal steering of problems and factors, which are easy to manipulate and lead to centralisation and control;
- it begins at the top of the process, with a clear statement of the policymakers interest, and proceeds through a sequence of increasingly more specific steps to define what is expected of implementers at each level;
- at the bottom of the process, one states what a satisfactory outcome would be, measured in terms of the original statement of intent; and
- it largely restricts its attention to actors who are formally involved in the implementation of a specific programme.

The top-down approach is the object of much criticism – among which is the fact that it does not involve the recipients in the process and therefore leads to biased solutions or to solutions which do not necessarily correspond to the actual local problems. This observation is emphasised by the normative perspective which argues that “local service deliverers are the only experts and have the knowledge of actual problems and thus they are in a better position to propose purposeful policy” (Paudel, 2009: 41). The top-down perspective is also, according to Berman (1978) and March and Saetren (1986), accused of being a “purely administrative process either ignoring political aspects or trying to eliminate them” (Paudel, 2009: 40). It is also argued that the weakness of the top-down perspective in the policy implementation process is extremely wide such that it can lead to “failure” and “resistance” (Elmore, 1979 in Ibid., 41).

*Bottom-up approach:* Generally this approach favours an upward process of policymaking, freedom and participation of recipients in policy implementation; and these characteristics makes it closer to democratic forms of power, as described above. According to Howllet and Ramesh (2003), the bottom-up perspective refers to formal and informal relationships in making and implementing policies (Howllet and Ramesh, 2003 in Paudel, 2009: 41). At the local levels, the Street Level-Bureaucrats (SLBs)

also known as lower-level public workers (I often call them agents of reforms or local authorities in this study) are those who deliver services to the citizens (Lipsky, 1980: 3). These public workers are known as the actors who are most familiar with local problems, citizens' needs and priorities (Lipsky, 1980: 3; see also in Paudel, 2009: 6). According to Winter (2003) these lower-level public workers should be considered the real policymakers (Ibid.).

The bottom-up approach was popular in Europe, particularly with Scandinavian scholars including Hjern (1982) and Hjern and Porter (1981). These scholars characterise the bottom-up perspective in three ways: firstly, their focus is on the actions of local implementers rather than the central government policymakers; secondly, they focus on the nature of the problem rather than the goals of a policy; and thirdly, the approach seeks to describe networks of implementation involving different stakeholders in the process including the private sector (Schofield, 2001: 250–1). Some characteristics of the bottom-up perspective from Lipsky (1980, 2010) and from other scholars who commented on this perspective namely Winter (2003), Berman (1978) and Paudel (2009), are summarised below: The starting point in the problem is the society not a planned policy (Lipsky, 1980: 3); SLBs or public civil servants at the grassroots level are made central in the political process (Ibid, 13–14):

- SLBs are the essential actors in implementing public policies (Ibid.);
- at the grassroots level, the SLBs play the same role as that played by the policymakers at the top, therefore they are the real policymakers (Lipsky, 1980: 83–84), but their discretion and routines are restrained by rules, regulations and directives from the top management (Ibid., 14); and
- rather than targeting the formal only, the policy subsystems involved in making and implementing policies include both the formal and informal relationships (Lipsky, 1980; see also in Paudel, 2009: 41);
- SBLs are characterised by flexibility and responsiveness (Lipsky, 1980: 99).

As mentioned in the above list, the advantages of this perspective are mainly based on the discretionary role of SBLs as the focal point in political process, and particularly their role in

delivering service to the citizens (see Lipsky, 1980: 4; see also Paudel, 2009: 41). According to Lipsky, SBLs' behaviour depends on a number of factors and circumstances. Namely, the extent of discretion, autonomy, consistency of policies, the kind of service to be delivered or assigned task and the nature of the clients they serve (Ibid. 14–5). Moreover, he argues that SBLs' discretion and personal autonomy contribute to either (a) conformity to the directives from above when they share the same perspectives or (b) noncompliance when they disregard directives from above due to interests-based conflicts (Ibid.).

However, Lipsky is convinced that by using their discretion and certain mechanisms in order to make their tasks of service delivery more manageable, SBLs are more effective (Lipsky, 1980: 81–82). It seems that when they disregard the regulations and directives from the top, the assigned goals can or cannot be achieved depending on the SBLs relationships with the top management (see Ibid., 16–7). Hence, the SBLs are sometimes deprived of autonomy and discretion.

This policy implementation perspective highlights several other constraints. For instance, Matland brings up some conflicts between the elected representatives of the people at the central level and the practitioners or SBLs, where the latter are accused of appropriating the authority of policymakers while they are not democratically elected as citizens' representatives (see Matland, 1995: 150). However, this allegation does not seem very relevant given that, according to Lipsky, SBLs' discretion is locally limited and generally based on regulations and the directives shaped by the top leadership, including those legitimate representatives of the citizens (see Lipsky, 1980: 14). The scholarship on bottom-up policy implementation has, as is clear from this discussion, focused on the role of local agents of reform, but given less attention to the recipients of reform. A resistance perspective, as taken in this thesis, will bring their points of view and agency more in focus.

### *Synthesis of top-down and bottom-up policy implementation*

Although some researchers argue that the top-down and bottom-up perspectives diverge, there exists certain reciprocity among them (Paudel, 2009). Therefore, one may conclude that in order to achieve the assigned goals, the contribution of top-down approach is essential, which means that the top-down and bottom-up approaches should be interdependent in the process of

implementing policy reforms (see Schofield, 2001: 250; Goggin, 1986). Indeed, even if practitioners have local autonomy and their networking in service delivery is considered convenient, the role of the top is always vital when it comes to design policies and budget allocation. In brief, with these constraints, local practitioners are not fully autonomous policymakers (see Paudel, 2009: 42–3). Reflecting on the above discussions, a synthesis of both perspectives is discussed below.

Elmore has proposed a model that combines top-down and bottom-up perspectives arguing that “policy designers should choose policy instruments based on the incentive structure and target group” (Elmore, 1985 in Paudel, 2009: 43). He proposed a twofold model including “forward mapping and backward mapping.” According to him:

Forward mapping consists of stating precise policy objectives, elaborating detailed means-ends schemes, and specifying explicit outcome criteria by which to judge policy at each stage (Ibid.).

He also defines backward mapping as follows:

Backward mapping consists of stating precisely the behaviour to be changed at lowest level, describing a set of operations that can ensure the change, and repeating the procedure upwards by steps until the central level is reached (Ibid.).

With backward mapping, Elmore believes that one would gain more “appropriate tools than those initially chosen,” given that the model involves the implementers at the grassroots level and the policy recipients in the process of finding problems and possible solutions (Ibid.).

Many other scholars including Matland (1985), Goggin, et al. (1990), Thomas and Grindle (1990) have proposed different models of implementing policy reform involving elements of both top-down and bottom-up perspectives, but with small differences. For Thomas and Grindle for example, the process of implementing policy reform should be interactive rather than linear. The most important element of their model is that the “policy reform initiative should be altered or reversed at any stage in its lifecycle

by the pressure and reaction to it” (see Thomas and Grindle, 1990 in Paudel, 2009: 44). Although these models have evolved over time, researchers have not stopped searching for the best model of implementing policy reforms. Thus, a third generation was born.

### *The third generation implementation*

The third generation proposed in Paudel’s analysis focuses on both macro- and micro-levels of policy implementation, that is, it focuses on policymakers operating at the system level on the one hand, and the individuals at the grassroots level on the other (Paudel, 2009). However, the macro-level analysis is criticised for providing “insufficient guidance to policymakers or practitioners”, while the micro-level analysis ignores the situation prevailing in the whole system, such as the achievements and unexpected consequences. Thus, it limits the policymakers’ performance to making a coherent policy that satisfies the whole system (see Paudel, 2009: 45). Moreover, this researcher argues that this generation is not developed enough in order to be used in practice (Ibid.). Therefore, since I’m not analysing the meaning of policy outcomes, and based on the aim of this study, to discuss it in details here seems unnecessary.

### *Specificity of developing countries*

Although the policy implementation process in developing countries generally does not differ from that of developed countries, scholars such as Saertren (2005) and Laizen (1999) specify that the policy implementation process in developing countries should consider particular factors which are not found to the same extent in developed countries (Paudel, 2009: 48). That is for instance, “poverty<sup>22</sup>, political uncertainty<sup>23</sup>, people’s

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<sup>22</sup> “Poverty is a state of economic, social and psychological deprivation occurring among people or countries lacking sufficient ownership, control or access to resources to maintain minimum acceptable standard of living” (see Paudel, 2009: 49). This definition seems to be very complex, while Björn has simplified the concept through different meanings: He for instance refers the absolute poverty to the 1995 UN definition as severe deprivation of basic human needs and adds other forms such as relative, administrative, consensual and contextual poverty (Björn, 2002: 54).

<sup>23</sup> Political uncertainties refer to any threats that destabilise political system; this may include military threats; domestic violence; political regime change, etc. (see Paudel, 2009: 49).

participation and other unique character to each country” (Ibid.). Poverty is a threat to policy implementation process as goals can be difficult to achieve if the society is poor (see UNDP, 2002). Lane (1999) links the failure to policy implementation in developing countries with the political stability and economic development; he argues that both are always interrelated such that economic development failures leads to political instability, which in turn worsen poverty and therefore limit the achievements of policy implementation. However, even without threatening political factors, circumstances such as corruption, inequality and economic systems which favour the rich (by making them richer at the detriment of the poor) also contribute to increasing poverty among the majority and, therefore, limit the achievement of policy implementation.

A number of other scholars believe that there is a very tight connection between economic and political uncertainty and policy implementation in developing countries because of, on the one hand, limited resources and extensive demands for public services and investment, and, on the other hand, weak political institutions and limited capacity of policymaking and programme implementation (Saertren, 2005; see also Lazin, 1999; Lane, 1999; Jamil, 2002; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005). By applying this argument on my Rwandan case, one may conclude that policy implementation in Rwanda is difficult because not only are its citizens are poor but the country is also among the poorer on the list of global rankings (see IMF report, 2013). This poverty factor is one among several challenges which agents of reform encounter when implementing settlement and agricultural reforms.

Moreover, as we will see in chapter 4, some policies – including those which this studies takes concern to – are strictly immutable at the local level, especially when the local public servants do not have the authority to adapt them locally (see Office of Ombudsman report, 2010). The agents of settlement and agricultural reforms have neither the discretion nor the opportunities to adapt certain policies to the local context (see also Garrison, 2010; Ansoms, 2009: 20).

The approach to policy implementation – top-down, bottom-up or a combination of the two – will determine the reactions of the recipients of the reforms. The debate on the concept of resistance is useful in order to put focus on their perspectives and agency.

## Debate on resistance

Although the concept of resistance seems to be loosely defined, there are some forms of human acts of resistance which are easily visible and therefore relatively easy to interpret. These include collective actions, political contentions, protests, marches, strikes, revolutions, to mention a few (Weitz, 2001: 669; see also Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 535; Scott, 1985). McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly argue that, to understand the phenomenon of resistance, researchers need to focus on two main components: the authority or the structure and the power holder on the one hand, and the resistance symbolised by the “actions of the ruled aimed at opposing the authority” on the other (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, 2003: 100; see also Fleming and Spicer, 2008: 105). For Abowitz (2000), resistance is defined as “opposition with a social and political purpose”. However, resistance is not limited to the social and political issues only; rather it goes beyond embracing many other aspects including material resources, culture, etc. Based on an analysis of class relations and class struggle against repression and unfairness, Scott (1985) defines resistance as follows:

class resistance includes *any* act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are *intended* either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those superordinate classes (Scott, 1985: 290).

This definition broadens the understanding of resistance to include not only actions aimed at opposing power holders, but also acts which are intended to mitigate the effects of claims made by the dominant.

In addition to the above definition, what Scott calls “indigenous forms of struggle or “primitive resistance” as the forms of resistance are the nearly permanent, continuous, daily strategies of subordinate rural classes under difficult conditions” (Scott, 1985: 273). However, one would think that the term primitive resistance designates the sense of caveman logic with its irrational, superstitious and childish behaviour (Davis, 2009), when rather, it could be a method subordinates use to subtly manage



difficult conditions. Scott argues that once these conditions disappear, such forms of resistance can also disappear or transform into other forms of resistance (Scott, 1985: 273).

My point of departure, when defining resistance, is to some extent based on Scott's understanding of resistance. Thus, the definition of resistance that I opted for is formulated as follows: resistance refers to *any acts of subordinates to express their discontent or refuse to comply with conditions imposed by the dominant person or institution.*

Although the word intent does not appear in this definition, I would like to mention that refusal to comply can either be manifested with the intention to undermine power or any other reasons, including avoidance of harmful consequences of the imposed conditions. In such circumstances, the subordinates can manifest their discontent overtly where anyone can see it or behind the dominant's back in order to avoid the risk of adverse consequences in case of overt insubordination (see also Scott, 1990). "Refuse to comply" indicates a certain consciousness – the subordinate is aware that s/he is not complying with the demands by the dominant. Given that one form of resistance or another can manifest during reform implementation, it is obvious that one may need to have a clear understanding of the most recurrent forms of resistance. That is, the overt resistance on the one hand, and the covert on the other.

### *Types of resistance*

The types of resistance with similar characteristics are often labelled differently depending on the author's choice. For 'overt resistance' for example, some scholars simply use open or overt resistance (Scott, 1985, 1990). Raby talks about active resistance and places it in opposition with passive resistance (Raby, 2005).

The second category is 'covert resistance' which is characterised by a number of forms with many similarities. Scott, the pioneer of this type, labels it everyday acts of resistance which includes a set of unnoticed or observable but ambiguous, peaceful or violent forms (Scott, 1985, 1990, 2008). Some unnoticed forms of resistance are referred as the politics of disguise or infrapolitics which are manifested as hidden transcripts or hidden tales and actions of subordinates which undermine dominant power, public transcripts or dominant discourses of power (see Scott, 1990, 2008; see also Chin and Mittelman, 1997; Soriano, 2012). Raby develops

a modernist conception of resistance and includes, among other, forms such as passive, strategic, alternative discourse, linguistic and bodily resistance (Raby, 2005: 153–4).

The two main categories of resistance, i.e. overt and covert, are not immutable. Resistance is a process – it is everywhere and embedded in human beings' behaviour; it can occasionally evolve to become a collective and organised action (Scott, 1990; see also Li and O'Brien, 1996). Resistance can be effective<sup>24</sup> or episodic<sup>25</sup>. For example, in South-East Asia and in China, there is, as Li and O'Brien reveal, a kind of resistance to policy implementation – whereby peasants safeguard their rights and interests – shifting from covert, to more organised and violent forms. For instance, in the communities or organisations of Chinese villagers, resistance initially takes the form of individual petitions and complaints, but sooner or later the phenomenon increases gradually changing into collective and open complaints and mass demonstrations with risks of violence against the dominant (Li and O'Brien, 1996: 29–30).

*Overt resistance:* Sociologists, political scientists and other multidisciplinary scholars, including mostly Marxists (see Gramsci 1971) and structuralists, believe that political actions such as rebellion, revolution, revolt, mutiny and other forms of civil disobedience are the real acts of resistance (see Bayat, 2000; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Scott, 1985; Brown and Strega, 2005). Most scholars in resistance studies see such forms of resistance as overt because the agenda behind the action is normally presented to the targeted person or institution. Indeed, in case there is a manifestation with a hidden agenda, then the act ceases to be classified as overt acts of resistance, but becomes a disguised or hidden act of resistance (see Scott, 2008). This means that when the agenda is hidden, even if the manifestation is observable, the action is no longer classifiable among overt resistance (see Scott, 2008).

Though, overt forms of resistance are generally rare in the process of reform implementation in Rwanda, I will not overlook

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<sup>24</sup> Resistance is effective in case of victory over the dominant, where it becomes institutionalised as a new power (Sadan, 1997: 52).

<sup>25</sup> Resistance is labelled episodic when it strengthens the stability of power through obedience; for example a hunger strike by prisoners can be episodic if prison guards neglect such kind of a strike assuming that after all they will give up (Ibid).

some of its most known forms that exist to some extent in the context of this study. However, as the literature shows, covert resistance is the only form highlighted by most critical scholarships on policies in Rwanda (see Newbury, 2011; Ansoms, 2009; Huggins, 2009).

*Covert forms of resistance:* Some scholars have gone beyond conceiving the observable insurrections as the only political action against domination and instead put the focus on other varieties of forms of micro politics against cultural hegemony and other forms of repression (see Foucault, 1980; Scott, 1985; Bayat, 2000: 541). Scholars label such forms as covert resistance and see it as the most difficult field of study given that it involves deep study of human behaviour (Ortner, 1995; Weitz, 2001; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Raby, 2005; Scott, 1985, 1990, 2008). Scott criticises scholars who believe that only organised, systematic resistance having revolutionary consequences constitutes ‘real resistance’, and that those they label unorganised, unsystematic, without revolutionary consequences, etc. are trivial. According to him, the actions considered trivial have, usually, revolutionary consequences on the dominant’ strategies and goals even worse than intended (see Scott, 1985: 293–5). The self-demobilisation of soldiers during the 1917 Russian Revolution is one of the examples of unorganised and unsystematic resistance that have had important consequences.<sup>26</sup>

Scholars have discussed several types of covert resistance. The multiplicity of the concepts in this type of resistance does not have to be a problem, as long as we recognise that some are etymologically similar even if they are labelled differently. For example, covert resistance would be called disguised, hidden, underground, masked, etc. (Scott, 1985, 1990, 2008; Seymour, 2006; Vinthagen, 2012). Similarly, the overall concept of “everyday forms of resistance” has also been referred to by other names. Walter, for example, labels it to “inertial resistance” (Walter, 1969: 304), Kelly considers it a “simple resistance”

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<sup>26</sup> Scott shows that what is thought to be trivial is really not, because it also has consequences for the dominant. He cites the example of the consequences of the massive desertion of soldiers during the 1917 Russian Revolution, which was incited by various causes, including poor treatment within the army which in turn pushed the soldiers along with the other peasants to seize the land belonging to the class of tsarists (see Scott, 1985: 293–5).

(Kelley, 1992), while Ortner labels it “soft resistance” (Ortner, 1995), and Raby sees it as “passive resistance” (Raby, 2005: 153; Scott, 1985: 33). Scott, however, does not describe everyday resistance in the same simple terms as the above scholars do but as a multifaceted concept characterised by “constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them” (Scott, 1985: xvi).

Although a number of scholars do not differ in making a distinction between everyday resistance and covert resistance, the former is one of the latter. If this was not the case, then the irregular/non-constant struggles would also be everyday resistance. Yet, there are some covert acts or struggles which happen once or only a limited number of times and cease to occur once the targeted need is satisfied. Thus, not all covert resistance is everyday resistance, since some of its characteristics are not identified in other covert acts of resistance which only occurs once or sometimes.

Moreover, Scott considers some acts of everyday resistance, such as “petty thefts” of grain as “coping mechanisms”, which are, according to him, trivial acts not necessarily considered real acts of resistance as described earlier in this section (see Scott, 1985: 296). According to him, for instance:

[...] petty thefts of grains or pilfering on threshing floor may seem like trivial coping mechanisms from one vantage point, but, from a broader view of class relations, how the harvest is actually divided belongs at the centre (Ibid).

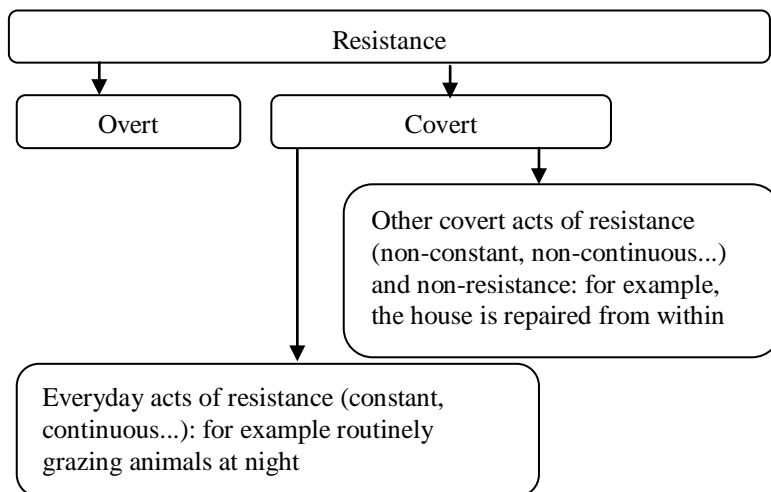
Categorising such acts depends on who defines the importance of the performed act; the owner of grains may for instance consider such act resistance, while the actor or any other observer may consider it trivial. We may also recognise that such acts can evolve and cause important consequences for the dominant, which then makes it an obvious act of resistance (see Li and O’Brien, 1996; Scott, 1985).

Moreover, Scott makes a distinction between acts of resistance based on the message and the messengers (Scott, 2008), where he argues that although some of the acts are observable, the message behind them can be ambiguous, which makes them disguised acts of resistance (Scott, 2008). Indeed, when it comes to peasants’ cultural rituals, covert forms of resistance are generally

difficult to notice, so the message becomes ambiguous and can only be recognised as an act of resistance by those who are aware of the metaphorical meaning of those rituals (Scott, 2008: 54–5; see also Weitz, 2001).

Scott classifies disguised resistance into two main categories. The first is where the act of resistance is a clear message but delivered by a disguised messenger; for example, this can be a frightening message spread through tracts of land or sent to the employer or any other dominant person as a warning threat. The second is where the act of resistance is in the form of an ambiguous message but delivered by an identified messenger; this can be, as Scott argues, a subtle form of aggression or warning message such as “implicit strategic advice” to the dominant (Scott, 2008: 55). He also argues that this form of ambiguous messages is generally used through euphemism, metaphor, etc. aiming to confuse the interpreter or the recipient of the message. According to Scott, this tricky way of resisting is often used in dangerous circumstances when there is a risk of penalty or revenge (see Rowlands, 1998: 14; *Ibid.*, 54–5). The subsequent figure illustrates the relationships between different forms of resistance as discussed above:

**Figure: 2.1. Relations between different forms of resistance**



**Source:** Designed by the author.

As individuals behave differently from one to the other, there are also several types of corresponding acts of resistance to power and therefore a meticulous analysis and interpretation is recommended. In order to identify them, Hollander and Einwohner use different approaches, including relying on actors/resisters' statements about their own acts or observers' description about actors' acts. Two major aspects are emphasised when it comes to identifying what resistance is: the intent and the recognition (Hollander and Einwohner (2004).

#### *The elements of intent and recognition in acts of resistance*

This section focuses on scholars' discussions about different views on the intent behind covert resistance. Unlike social movements and revolutions (and other human acts whose claims and underlying intents are clearly expressed), the intent behind covert resistance is notably difficult to detect. The reason for this is that covert resistance remains concealed unless the acting party reveals it to the researcher or another person (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 542).

Although it is difficult to notice the resisters' intent behind their acts of resistance, a number of scholars believe that it is the most defining element of resistance (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 39–44; see also Weitz, 2001: 669; Scott, 1985: 290; Seymour, 2006: 304; Raby, 2005; Ortner, 1995). In seeking to understand the acts of covert resistance, Hollander and Einwohner are among those who acknowledge the role of the actors' intent; however, they also recognise its limitation, which leads them to also recognise acts of resistance carried out by others, including the resisted or targeted person(s) and other observer(s) (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). In my definition of resistance, I focus on expressions of discontent and the refusal to comply, which can be studied both from the point of view of the resisting actor, or from the point of view of others. However, given that intent is an important part of the discussion of covert resistance, I will here discuss intentionality of consciousness as a basis to understand intent and how difficult it is to study.

#### *Intentionality of consciousness*

For a number of scholars, human beings' consciousness refers to the state of being aware of actions and everything surrounding

them. That is to say that, they are aware or conscious of things that they experience, the environment that affect their life, such as the physical objects, the events, the actions of other human beings, etc. (Smith, 1977: 483; Reidel, 1982: 1; Winance, 1965: 70).

The acts of resistance are recognised when they are consciously intentional or are, as Husserl, Brentano and other scholars argue, acts of consciousness. These acts can be identified when the actors declare the intention behind their actions (see McIntyre and Smith, 1989; see also Smith, 1977; Brentano, 1995: 78–79).

As Hollander and Einwohner argue, this issue of consciousness has been a matter of discussion among scholars. Most of them have come to believe that the resister's consciousness only needs to be explored with respect to the category of covert resistance and that it is not always relevant with respect to overt resistance, given that in the latter case, the action can be observed and the actors do not hide the purpose of their action. For example, if workers revolt against an employer's decision, or if there is a collision between the police and strikers in the streets, nobody would doubt that workers are resisting their employer or the police order (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 542). Indeed, overt resistance is well-visible through organised demonstrations, political contentions, or other similar forms of actions against the will of the dominant (Ibid.). However, as discussed above, even if it is not essential, it is sometimes important to consider the intention of the actor when studying covert resistance.

Although some scholars consider actors' intent to be crucial in the process of determining acts of resistance, others are sceptical about its validity since intent is difficult to explore (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 542; Leblanc, 1999: 18; Scott, 1985: 290; Weitz, 2001: 669). Some researchers contests its role by declaring that studying intent is unnecessary in resistance studies. They argue that outsiders' (e.g. the researcher) recognition of an actor's act as resistance is the most important factor, given that intent is difficult to explore (St. Martin and Gavey, 1996). From these different arguments, Weitz proposes an assessment of the nature of the act itself, which frees us from only relying on actors' awareness. Weitz recommends that we not solely rely on the recognition of outsiders, but that we also recognise their capacity to understand the ambiguous message of the resister's culture. Thus, she argues

that knowledge about local culture is also important in resistance studies (Weitz, 2001: 670).

According to Weitz, the researcher should be sufficiently familiar with the culture of the community under study. The understanding of the culture could, for example, allow the outsider, the researcher in particular, to acknowledge actions of covert resistance not only because the actor would testify his/her intention, but also when s/he deliberately provides an ambiguous message requiring the allusion to the culture of the actor/resister and his/her milieu (Weitz, 2001; see also Scott, 2008: 54–5).

### *The recognition of resistance by others*

By referring to various sources of information while studying the phenomenon of covert resistance, a researcher can reach various interpretations without necessarily relying on the intent of the actor alone. Hence, the researcher can also consider varied interpretations from other persons who experience similar phenomenon, especially the targeted person or the neighbours of the similar status.

Besides intentional resistance, Hollander and Einwohner's approach categorises some types of unintentional resistance, including, for instance, "unwitting resistance", such as dragging one's feet due to fatigue. As we will discuss below, the targeted person can interpret an act as resistance even if the actor declares that they do not have the intent to undermine power (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 545). Based on this approach, in resistance studies, especially those that seek to understand covert resistance, the recognition of the acts of resistance by the targeted person and the observers – who experience similar phenomenon – can also provide information about the phenomenon of resistance and contribute to its understanding.

Hollander and Einwohner have argued that some acts can be hidden deliberately by the actor and therefore, they would not be identified if the researcher doesn't refer to other sources (Ibid., 540). Thus, many debates about recognition of covert resistance have raised many controversies. For instance, Scott is sceptical about the role of the observers in deciding whether an act is really among everyday forms of resistance or not. For him, the most determinant element (in ruling whether an act is one of the forms of resistance) should be the actor's intent (Scott, 1985: 290). Yet, there are some scholars who support the idea that to be identified



as an act of resistance, the actor's act has to be recognised by the resisted person (or the dominant), as other observers' recognition would be ineffective (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 541).

However, Foucault asserts that "power makes men mad, and those who govern are blind, and that only those who keep their distance from power can discover the truth" (Foucault, 1972–77: 51), which indicates that the outsiders or observers may play an important role since the targeted person may sometimes neglect the consequences of actor's actions in the long-run. Foucault's assertion highlights the role of observers, which can be related to the exercise of trying to understand the acts of covert resistance relying on the interpretation of the actor and the targeted person alone is not absolute; as Hollander and Einwohener argue, other observers can also provide their interpretation of actors' reactions or meanings which they attribute to their acts (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 545).

As will be further discussed in chapter 3, in this study, I identify resistance based on the subordinate's expression of their discontent or refusal to comply with conditions imposed by the dominant. This is done based on the subordinate's narratives and/or observations and interpretation made by the targeted persons, neighbours or myself.

### **Connecting power, policy implementation and resistance**

The connection between the three phenomena shaping the conceptual framework and discussion in this chapter is based on the assumption that studying resistance to policy/reform implementation, without exploring the kind of power behind the perspectives or approaches of policy/reform implementation, would not allow the researcher to identify hidden acts of resistance. Such resistance is important to identify since it is often used to oppose actions of the implementers or reforms that are incompatible with the recipients' priorities.

First of all, I argue that behind a top-down perspective of policy/reform implementation – whereby the recipients of the policy/reform are not involved in making decision and where the implementation is imposed (see Schofield, 2001: 250–1; Paudel 2009: 39–41) – there is a tendency towards the use of coercive power or power-over. I also argue that imposing conditions usually leads to the reaction of the recipients and that such reactions are

manifested in form of either compliance or resistance (see also Hoffman, 1999: 671–5).

On the other hand, behind a bottom-up perspective of policy/reform implementation, there is often a tendency towards the use of democratic forms of power, which rather than forcefully influencing the recipients to serve the process of policy/reform making and implementation, it facilitates them to do so in a way that is based on their context and their priority needs. In other words, through this perspective, power would be shared between the recipients or their representatives<sup>27</sup> and the central leadership; that is to say that, this perspective promotes policy/reform making and implementation on the basis of cooperation between different levels of leadership and the recipients or their representatives at local level (see Schofield, 2001: 251–2; see also Paudel 2009: 41–3; Lipsky, 1980: 13; Hardina, 2007: 18). This kind of democratic power is generally exercised at the local level through social service providers who generally claim to have autonomy and discretion in decision-making for the sake of recipients (see Lipsky, 1980: 24).

However, the recipients' right to participate as well as the autonomy and discretion of local representatives are not always fully accorded or facilitated. Under such conditions, the recipients or their local representatives react against the policy implementation, either in the form of compliance or resistance (see *Ibid.*, 23–5).

While a top-down policy implementation is more likely to generate resistance – particularly covert resistance if overt resistance is likely to give rise to further repression – both overt and covert resistance can also arise in the context of bottom-up approaches to policy implementation.

The next section is a continuation of the debates on the phenomenon of resistance but in connection with other phenomena. It explores different perspectives of resistance in a more or less wide context based on varied studies on resistance and particularly those that analyse settlement and agricultural policy/reform implementation.

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<sup>27</sup> These representatives are, according to Lipsky (1980, 2010), called Street-Level Bureaucrats and are general local public [social welfare] workers.

## Earlier research on resistance to policy/reform implementation

The phenomenon of resistance is not new in the history of humankind<sup>28</sup>, Young describes a history of fierce contradictions between Hellenistic<sup>29</sup> rules and the Yahwism<sup>30</sup> of the ancient Israelite Religion concerning the emergence of the new theology which became the theology of resistance (Portier-Young, 2011: 4). Likewise, there was resistance to absolute monarchies and oppressive bourgeoisies in Europe as well as on many other continents. For instance, as Polanyi and other scholars reveal that in today's developed countries there were different forms of peasants/farmers' resistance during the early periods of agrarian reform, industrial revolution and other socio-economic transformations (Polanyi, 2001: 36–7; see also Thompson, 1971: 77; Scott, 1976: 4).

As a number of scholars argue, the agrarian reform<sup>31</sup>, with emphasis on the Green Revolution<sup>32</sup> and rural habitat reform, was exported through globalisation to many newly independent countries of South-East Asia, Latin America and Africa since the 1960s and the 1970s. This change has had positive repercussions by producing a huge amount of food, but also negative implications on rural poor households (Scott, 1985: 56; see also Turner and Caouette, 2009; Ansoms, 2010; Silberfein, 1998;

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<sup>28</sup> See the Old Testament with contradictions between Hellenistic cultural and ruling practices and the Yahwism toward BCE 160.

<sup>29</sup> Hellenistic refers to the culture of historic Greece.

<sup>30</sup> Yahwism (Christian religions writings) refers to the term Yahweh/Jehovah which is the Jewish god in the Old Testament.

<sup>31</sup> Agrarian reform can be defined as the rectification of the whole system of agriculture. It is normally done by the government whereby they redistribute the agricultural land to various economic classes of farmers in the countryside. The agrarian reform is concerned with the relation between production and distribution of land. It also concerns the processing of raw materials that are produced by farming the land from the respective industries (<http://economywatch.com/agrarian>).

<sup>32</sup> Green Revolution has had positive repercussion in the sense that it contributed to increase production and eliminated chronic hunger in many countries. Shiva argues that in developing countries, it contributed to dependence on imports of fertilisers, pollution and the starvation of low income households due to increasing commodity markets (see Ansoms, 2010: 7; Shiva, 2008: 127).

Stiglitz, 2007; Shiva, 2008). Although Ansoms argues that the Green Revolution has had positive repercussions by increasing production and eliminating chronic hunger in many developing countries, including Rwanda (Ansons, 2010: 7), Shiva argues on the contrary that in developing countries, the Green Revolution has contributed to dependence on imports of fertilisers, pollution, and starvation in low income households due to globalised agriculture which regulates commodities' markets at the expense of the rural farmers with low income (Shiva, 2008: 127).

Turner and Caouette agree with other scholars, when they point out that resistance has sprung up as a result of the transformation from traditional land use practices to high-tech agriculture. The new order of innovation-based agriculture has been introduced by means of an overly optimistic movement of globalisation which originally was expected to improve society, but which has often perpetuated poverty and increased inequality" (Turner and Caouette, 2009: 951–2; Scott, 1998: 286; Stiglitz, 2007: 11). In various countries, there was not only overt resistance in the form of collective actions, strikes and violent or non-violent demonstrations but also covert resistance (Turner and Caouette, 2009: 955).

Scott is among the scholars who associate peasant behaviour with the expectation of social justice and fairness in terms of economics or wealth distribution. That is, according to him, this means assuring everyone's subsistence, which is in other words means assuring the "right to a minimum level of subsistence" (Scott, 1976: 11, 13). In relation to this brief description of peasant behaviour, some scholars have concluded that peasant behaviour is characterised by reciprocity, community and charity, collective action, etc. (Thompson, 1971; Polanyi, 2001). In fact, this means that by sharing all values from and within local economy, the wealth of the rich guarantees the subsistence of the poor. As Scott puts it, this means that the local elite should make sure that social justice is assured through securing the peasants' right to a minimum living standard (Scott, 1998: 3). As a number of scholars argue, lack of these basic needs of survival generally leads peasants to find their own solution to their problems and often they claim their rights through various forms of resistance. What's more, Thompson and other scholars reveal that peasants use disguised manifestation but that once opportunities arise and they feel strong enough, they also attempt to handle their problems

through open resistance, through collective action and through revolution (Thompson, 1971; Polanyi, 2001; Scott, 1976: 245).

Moreover, Scott argues that those whose main means of subsistence are cultivation, but who are worried by the uncertainties of the weather, prefer to continue using traditional techniques of farming rather than the new ones that would risk a big loss (Scott, 1976: 4–5). Indeed, Scott, Popkin, Thompson and many other scholars believe that peasants are generally rational because they make calculations before deciding to take any action in relation to their economy. Thus, to understand peasants' acts, researchers need to take into consideration the specific meanings peasants' attribute to their struggle for daily survival and their own acts (Scott, 1976: 4, 1985, 1990; Powelson, 1998: 8–9; Thompson, 1971; Polanyi, 2001).

As Wade (1997) argues, human beings possess the inherent ability to respond effectively to the difficulties they face. They have (in insecure situations) the ability to act and seek solutions to their problems and one of the strategies they usually choose is to resist for fear of risks. However, a researcher in the field of resistance should be aware of some biases which may arise. That is, the acts can be about coping with uncertainties in the sense of struggling for survival through mutual support and reciprocity in the community rather than resisting *per se*, i.e. with intention to undermine or challenge the targeted person (Shevchenko, 2008: 53; Sakalo and Delasey, 2011: 25–7). The following subsection focuses the discussion on notions of the transformation of modernisation through policy/reforms' implementation as being a crucial key to understanding the core issue of this study.

## **Resistance and modernisation**

The difference between traditional and modern societies is based on different aspects. According to Huntington, sociologists and political scientists suggest major differences through intellectual, social, geographic, economic and agricultural aspects (Huntington, 1971). For example, according to Sutton traditional society is generally characterised by agriculture while modern society is an industrial society. Most theorists in the social sciences who research modernisation believe that a 'modern man' [sic] is one who has greater control over his natural and social environment; that is, according to Huntington, it is a matter of control based on

the expansion of scientific and technological knowledge (Huntington, 1971: 286).

However, when it comes to implementing these constituents of modernisation, there are a number of issues which emerge. The most known issue is that of resistance to new values introduced in order to replace the traditional ones. Turner and Caouette (2009) give an example in which peasants put the 'local' (coveted by investors) and the 'global' (ambitious to expand the investment and capitalist markets in South-East Asia) in continuous opposition to each other. On the one hand they argue that the rural peasantry is characterised by solidarity, identity and a social network; and on the other, that global capitalism is characterised by a "free market system and flows of information". They ultimately argue that the interaction of both systems results in a "permanent peasants' everyday resistance to a permanent global hegemony" (Turner and Caouette, 2009: 952, 67).

A number of scholars who are interested in peasants studies, including Kerkvliet (1990, 2005), Wolf (1971), Turner and Caouette (2009: 956) and Scott (1990), have introduced a component of political resistance to hegemonic ideology and capitalism. Most of them highlight the relevance of covert resistance such as avoidance, ridicule, acts of petty revenge, hidden transcripts, etc. in undermining the hegemonic ideology. For instance, Scott uses hidden transcripts to describe one of the subtle tactics of dissimulating discourse which contradicts public discourse. Scott reveals that similar subtle tactics were very frequent in slaves' everyday life in the US and very common in contemporary opposition to hegemonic ideology in South-East Asia (Scott, 1990: 3–4). It is a form of resistance peasants often use to protect their values against ideological, cultural and material hegemony (Ibid., 4 and 5). Many examples illustrate how peasants behave subtly in order to resist domination. For example, Scott reveals the ways peasants use to defeat the dominant and make him/her lose control of the subordinates. This includes tactics like masking anger and revenge with ironic smiles and greetings; showing enthusiasm; subordination and being willing to conform but changing attitude once they are alone; calculating what they have to say in face of the dominant which is different from what they say behind his/her back, etc. In sum, that is what Scott has called hidden transcripts or discourse that takes place offstage. It is the opposite of what he has called public transcripts or the

dominant discourse based on the dominant's wish stressing his/her ideology (Ibid., 4).

Moreover, Scott (1985) highlights permanent struggle between peasants and the dominant class of rich landlord peasants who uses its power for self-interest in Sedaka, a Malaysian village, where agricultural modernisation benefits the rich peasants and other investors, while the livelihood of the poor is disregarded. For instance, Scott reveals that peasants are not as indifferent to the situation; they actually use subtle tactics to deal with the oppression of the rich dominant class (Scott, 1985: 241). Some of those tactics of resistance are foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, theft of grain or pilfering on the threshing floor, etc. (Ibid., 96). Scott reveals that such kinds of acts of resistance are used by the weak peasants in order to avoid the reprisal they would receive if they attempted to use open protest (Ibid.).

### **Policy implementation process and resistance**

From a political economic perspective, it is argued that rural transformation through enforcement of "highly modernist plans" is generally implemented through coercive and authoritarian measures. In other words, without the exercise of power-over, the transformation would not happen in the form that the dominant would wish (Powell, 2008: 137–186; see also Polanyi, 2001; Stiglitz, 2007; Scott, 1998). However, based on Foucault's assertion, Jackson claims that where there is power, we may also expect resistance (see also Jackson, 1999: 7). Many researchers working with the analysis of political economy in Rwanda conclude that the main forms of resistance to policy implementation are the hidden transcripts and other similar acts (Silberfein, 1998; Jackson, 1999; Ansoms, 2008, 2009; Huggins, 2009; Ansoms, Verdoodt and Van Ranst, 2010; Thomson, 2011; Newbury, 2011; Ansoms and Rostagno, 2012).

An illustrative example of the role of power-over in the success or failure of reform implementation can be found in Silberfein and Powell where, on the one hand, they indicate that in the process of change/reform based on land (such as settlement and agricultural transformation), coercive power and a greedy elite contribute to the shuffle or failure to reach the assigned objectives; and on the other they stimulate peasants' resistance to that

transformation (Silberfein, 1998: 286; Powell, 2008: 146–186). However, as we have seen with Lane, this statement contradicts the assertion that coercive power is more likely to achieve its objectives even if it would affect the powerless/poor farmers, and perhaps fuels resistance (see Lane, 1999).

A similar example is that of a study carried-out in Bangladesh highlighting factors that influence policy implementation, namely a huge power distance between authority and common citizens, or the use of power-over; low tolerance for ambiguities, i.e. absence of flexibility of the authority; dependence on traditional sources of information or lack of modern information and communication technology; low tolerance of bureaucrats among the population; more positive attitudes towards NGOs; pride of dependency, etc. (Ishtiaq, 2002: 121–2; see also Paudel, 2009: 50).

However, based on the conceptual framework (see above figure 2.1.), the recipients of the policy can also resist reforms even where the implementers use a bottom-up approach. This is not only relevant to the Lipsky's example where SLBs resist the directives of the top managers (see Lipsky, 1980: 23–25), but the consequences of their resistance can also affect the recipients, which leads them to react in a certain way, including resisting welfare policy or reform implementation in the context of this study (see also Jackson, 1999; Huggins, 2009).

Lipsky points out acts of resistance between SLBs and top managers and not between clients and top managers. Indeed, in case of interest-based conflicts between SLBs and top managers, bottom-up approaches to policy implementation may also lead to resistance, where SLBs resist the violation of their discretionary rights to adjust policy directives from above (Lipsky, 1980: 23–25).

Although, the context within services delivery organisations that Lipsky (1980, 2010) has analysed seems a bit similar to the participatory approach that local leaders use in Rwandan welfare system and poverty reduction programmes (see OSSREA, 2006), the context of settlement and agricultural reforms implementation is far different. In fact, the agent of reforms doesn't have the authority to alter the directives from the top even if the official discourses and documents specify that policies will privilege bottom-up approach (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007). For instance, it is



indicated in EDPRS<sup>33</sup> (a medium-term programme for economic development and poverty reduction) that the implementation of policies will be based on a bottom-up perspective (Ibid.). Yet, as will be further discussed in chapter 4, some studies show that in the field, a top-down approach is often used in reforms implementation in Rwanda (see Ansoms, 2009, 2011, 2012; Newbury, 2011; Huggins, 2009).

## **Conclusion of the chapter**

This chapter doesn't focus only on the phenomenon of resistance but also on the phenomena of power and policy implementation. This was motivated by the fact that the phenomenon of resistance cannot be studied and be comprehensively understood in isolation. In fact, as we have seen from Weber (1947) to the contemporary scholars, through Dahl (1957), and poststructuralists including Foucault (1978; 1980, 1982) and many others, the phenomenon of resistance is always linked to that of power. Moreover, as the phenomenon of resistance is explored through that of the process of policy/reform implementation, which, in turn needs a certain power in order to be enforced (see figure 2.1), the notion of policy implementation has had to be debated as well.

We have seen how power can fuel, encourage or prevent resistance depending on the way it is exercised. We have also discussed the approach through which power is exercised. Although power-over may seem effective for policy implementation, it is considered the form of power that fuels resistance to policy implementation much more than those using other forms such as participatory and democratic forms of power (see Schofield, 2001). Some scholars have for instance concluded that despite its effectiveness in policy implementation, the outcomes of power-over are not always sustainable.

Two main categories of resistance were discussed. That is overt and covert resistance. The former being noticeable and researchable, and is often collective, systematic, organised, etc., while the latter is disguised and very difficult to study. However, knowing that it exists makes it easier to detect, especially when one is purposefully trying to understand it. We have also learned that covert resistance can eventually turn into open and organised resistance. Indeed, resistance is not something static. For example,

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<sup>33</sup> EDPRS stands for Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies.

Li and O'Brien argue that a soft, unorganised and disguised form of resistance can gradually shift to open, collective and organised and sometimes openly violent resistance. This assertion is based on an example of villagers in China in which peasants were initially compliant but gradually transformed their compliance into violent resistance. In fact, during their fieldwork carried out between 1992 and 1994, Li and O'Brien found that among farmers there was a group of those who, as all villagers, were initially compliant to cadres' demands such as birth control, taxations and the implementation of funeral reform, but that they gradually changed from compliance to recalcitrance by openly refusing taxation, illegal feed demands and by opposing corruption, etc. However, these recalcitrant villagers are different from resisters in the sense of Scott's everyday forms of resistance. Li and O'Brien were dealing with the resisters to policy implementation whose claims were based on laws, policy documents and official communications. Their exception is based on the fact that they were claiming their rights with supporting documents in order to show their awareness of their rights (Li and O'Brien, 1996: 32, 35).

Obviously, all human actions are not supposed to be classified as acts of resistance. Hollander and Einwohner (2004) argue that to be considered an act of resistance, an act must have a combination of three features which are: (1) the actor him/herself, (2) the targeted person and (3) the observer who experiences similar phenomenon. However, some contradictory observations have been brought up, especially with regard to the honesty in actor's statements and the reliability of observers' interpretations of actor's actions. Thus, to avoid misinterpretations of actor's statements and other biases linked to them, we might also – besides the multiple sources of information suggested by Hollander and Einwohner (2004) – take into account what Weitz (2001) recommends: that the researcher should have sufficient knowledge of the local culture so as to better understand actor's intent. Otherwise it would sometimes be difficult to identify the intent behind actor's acts.

There are also general observations about the way in which ordinary and relatively poor peasants think and act. To understand peasant's acts, scholars suggest that researchers should be aware of factors that lead peasants' to resist new values. For example, Scott, Popkin, Thompson and other scholars believe that peasants are

generally rational; they make calculations before acting or before deciding to any action related to their economy. Therefore, to avoid a failure that would bring them to ruin, especially when their past was pleasant and they enjoy a non-alarming present, they will generally opt for the status quo (see Scott, 1998; Popkin, 1979; Thompson, 1971).

However, with the emergence of high-technology and the globalisation which contributed to its dissemination all throughout the world, means that everything in this world is evolving. Moreover, new values have arisen which are the product of various aspects of this transformation. These values relate to the shifts in agriculture, economics, education, trade etc. which distinguish a traditional way of living from a modern lifestyle. For instance, Sutton argues that among the products of new values, there is the capacity of modern society to be able to control the natural and social environment through scientific and technological knowledge (see Huntington, 1971).

It is in this context policy/reform implementation becomes an important part of the process of transformation. The scholarship on policy implementation was brought in to supplement the theories of resistance and power in order to build a conceptual framework for this study. Two perspectives of implementation have been discussed here, that is: top-down and bottom up perspectives and their synthesis and then their application in developing countries, highlighting in particular constraints to policy implementation. The main identified constraints are poverty, political uncertainties and obstacles to participation in the policy implementation process. Although both are criticised of lacking a unifying approach to implementation analysis, the bottom-up approach is the one most supported by scholars, including those from Scandinavian countries (see Hjern, 1982; see also Hjern and Porter, 1981).

The Street-Level Bureaucracy is acknowledged to be effective due to its particularity of providing to SLBs the autonomy in decision-making and the management of social activities at grassroots level (see Lipsky, 1980, 2010: 81–82).

However, the Street-Level Bureaucracy model alone cannot perform effectively. It encounters challenges not only while delivering services to its clients but also it faces the issues linked to resources (see Schofield, 2001; see also Lipsky, 1980, 2010). For instance, some scholars argue that a balance should be established,

wherein some aspects from the top-down perspective support the policy implementers' efforts at the local level. For example, the provision of resources and policy design and reformation, etc. (see Goggin, 1986; Goggin, et al., 1990; Schofield, 2001; Lipsky, 1980, 2010).

With the synthesis of both generations of policy implementation, a number of scholars have proposed varied models with small nuances, what we can retain are the elements of Thomas and Grindle (1990) in which they propose the amendment of policies during their implementation or adapting them to the prevailing situation, especially when they are locally challenged (see Paudel, 2009: 44).

This chapter was built on a framework that combines the theories of power, implementation and of resistance. This combination is motivated by the fact that an understanding of how farmers experience reforms implementation and the form of power that the agents of implementation is fundamental for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of resistance. In fact, it would be possible to simply use theories of resistance and policy implementation without bringing in theories of power. However, this alternative alone could not enable the perception of disguised resistance which is generally recognised once the researcher explores different forms of power as exercised during the process of policy implementation.

# 3

## Methodological perspectives and methods

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### Introduction

This chapter is about the methodological perspectives and methods designed to carry out the study and to analyse and interpret the results. However, the area of methodology and method is so large that each research study requires a meticulous selection of suitable methods. The method is selected in accordance with the philosophical worldview, which is briefly discussed below. I will first describe the motive behind my choice and then describe the chosen strategies and methods used for data collection, analysis and interpretation.

### Epistemological and methodological perspectives

As mentioned above, the first concern to be discussed in this chapter is the motive that led to my methodological choice. As Bryman puts it, there is always a cardinal assumption underlying one's position with respect to how the social world should be studied, and accordingly, he raises two major philosophical perspectives: positivist and interpretive perspectives (Bryman 2008: 13; see also Brown and Strega, 2005). As he points out, the positivist position advances methods and procedures used in natural sciences which appropriate to social sciences as well. Positivists believe that only observable phenomena – in the sense phenomena which can be tested through experimentation – can genuinely be identified as verified facts and that scientific knowledge is reached through the accumulation of such verified facts (Bryman 2008: 14). This assertion is emphasised by Krauss, who stresses that positivists consider human beings to be the objects of the social sciences and therefore “applying natural science methods to social sciences is absolutely relevant” (Krauss

2005: 759).<sup>34</sup> However, in contrast to this standpoint, it is argued that the appropriate method for understanding human behaviour and social phenomena in general would be interpretivism, or hermeneutics, which is often linked to or labelled as constructivism (Creswell, 2009:6; see also Krauss 2005: 759; Bryman 2008: 15). Indeed, according to Ulin, “[the] interpretivist perspective sees the world as constructed, interpreted, and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with wider social systems.” Similarly, Creswell adds that with the social constructivist perspective, “individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work by developing subjective meanings of their experience” (Ulin, et al. 2005: 18). Bryman clarifies this perspective in the following quote:

The fundamental difference resides in the fact that social reality has a meaning for human beings and therefore human action is meaningful—that is, it has a meaning for them and they act on the basis of the meanings that they attribute to their acts and to the acts of others. This leads to the second point – namely, that it is the job of the social scientist to gain access to people’s ‘common-sense thinking’ and hence to interpret their actions and their social world from their point of view (Bryman 2008: 16).

The choice of an appropriate research method for addressing the issue of research is contingent on one’s epistemological position with respect to understanding social reality as well as for methodological considerations. The method can be either quantitative, qualitative or a mix of these (Creswell, 2009: 16). The subsequent section provides a synopsis of the characteristics of each research method and the motive behind selecting one of them rather than the others.

## **The method**

Creswell illustrates the distinction between the three research methods in the table below:

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<sup>34</sup> According to Krauss, the object of the study is independent of researchers; knowledge is discovered and verified through direct observation or measurement of phenomena; facts are established by taking apart a phenomenon to examine its component parts.

**Table: 3.1. Quantitative, mixed and qualitative methods**

Quantitative methods	Mixed methods	Qualitative methods
The method is pre-determined	Both are used	It is about emerging methods
Uses closed-ended questioning	Both types are used	Uses open-ended questions
Use of instruments to collect data	Both are used	Use of interview, observation, documents and audiovisual data
Statistical analysis	Both	Text and image analysis
Statistical interpretation	Across databases interpretation	Themes, interpretation of patterns

**Source:** Adapted synopsis (see Creswell, 2009: 15)

The most important aspect in the process of choosing a research method is the nature of the problem, the questions to be answered and the practical approach of collecting data liable to answering to those questions. Since the present researcher seeks to understand the way recipients experience reforms and the meaning recipients attribute to their own reactions and resistance, qualitative method is deemed appropriate for this thesis (Ibid., 16).

Strauss suggests a way of removing biases associated with methodological issues when psychological aspects are involved in the study, especially in cases where the node of the problem concerns the understanding of the significance of human action. He suggests that the researcher should consider human social action as a written text, which may be successfully analysed without always making allusions to the psychology of the actor – just as with written texts analysis (Strauss, 1992: 5). In order to smooth my understanding of the phenomenon of resistance, I refer to Hollander and Einwohner’s approach of analysis through which they attempt to understand the meaning of people’s behaviour and define them as resistance based on three different sources of information, namely (i) the actor’s intent, as the actor discloses the meaning of her/his action, (ii) the targeted/resisted person’s recognition that the actor’s acts are really acts of resistance, and (iii) the observers’ recognition that the act is a kind of resistance

(Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 539–44). In this context, the role of the researcher is to interpret the interpretations of those different sources of information.

In order to understand the ambiguities of intent analysis emphasised above, I refer not only to the actors' statements but also to those of other sources of information, the context of the actors' milieu and the nature of their acts (Ibid., 539–46; see also Leblanc, 1999; Weitz, 2001: 670). As interviews alone are not sufficient to collect exhaustive information, the use of multiple methods of data collection was prioritised. Besides the unstructured and semi-structured interviews, participant observation has also contributed to data collection (De Vos, 2002: 273; see also McCracken, 1988: 28; Creswell, 1998, 2009).

Some obstructions occurred during the process of data collection – most importantly when the actors opted not to speak. Indeed, it is difficult to interpret silence or any other human body language and the intention behind communicative gestures (Strauss, 1992: 7). But, as Blundell and other scholars argue, hermeneutic interpretation may solve such intricate situations, given that it aims to interpret all forms of communication, including verbal and non-verbal (Blundell, 2010: 32 see also Creswell, 2009: 6; Krauss 2005: 759; Bryman, 2008: 13).

Examples of such forms of non-verbal communication are whispers, winks, whistles, silence, humour and jokes, etc. These are not easy to handle, but by becoming familiar with the actors, I managed to understand the meaning behind some of those disguised communications such as silence. Thus, hermeneutic interpretation seems to be appropriate for elucidating intricate phenomena behind farmers' experiences, reactions and resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms, even in the case of disguised forms of defiance.

## **The strategies of inquiry**

The data for the main fieldwork was collected through a qualitative approach using interviews with open-ended questions and observations. In order to go deeper into the meaning which interviewees attribute to their experiences, I used the phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenologists argue that a study of lived experience necessitates deep analysis and interpretation of the meanings interviewees attribute to their experience (Creswell



2007: 58; see also Moustakas, 1994; Mickunas, 1990). However, besides describing how interviewees experience the implementation of the reforms, there was a need to understand the context of the study in its natural setting and this led me to use case study inquiry as well (Creswell, 2009: 131, 184; see also Yin, 2009). Thus, in order to holistically understand the phenomenon of resistance, I used an overlapping strategy of multiple inquiries.

Both semi-structured and unstructured interviews were used. The unstructured interviews were specifically used with a selected number of poor farmers (five in each of the four sites for the main field work), while the semi-structured interviews were used to collect information from the rest of interviewees, including other farmers, especially the neighbours of the 20 selected poor farmers for in-depth interviews, some opinion leaders and the agents of reforms with some local authorities (see Smith, 2008: 53; De Vos, 2002: 273).

As mentioned earlier, the information from the interviews was supplemented by participant observations, a technique which allowed seeing, hearing and drawing conclusions (Silverman, 2001: 227) on what was happening during the interviews and in the interactions between the recipients of reforms and the implementers/agents of reforms. Indeed, I have had many other opportunities to take part in the interactions between recipients and the agents of reform implementation in villages or in the field during the cultivation periods, at the cooperative or cell offices during the distribution of seeds and/or fertilisers. There were also other occasions when participant observation allowed me to collect important information, for example during local regular meetings or monthly community work and the meetings immediately following such activities.

I would therefore conclude that based on the arguments of Bryman (2008: 16), McCracken (1988: 28), Hollander and Einwohner (2004: 44) as well as other scholars, one may use multimethod approaches and perspectives in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon.

Before presenting and discussing the whole research process, the next section introduces both the pilot study and the main fieldwork. In fact, Mouton argues that in order to have a good study design, a pilot study is recommended. In addition, he argues, for instance, that one of the very common errors researchers make is to disregard conducting a pilot study before starting the main

inquiry (Mouton, 2001: 103). The pilot study is not only useful for testing the effectiveness and length of research instruments (an interview schedule and/or a questionnaire) for the main fieldwork, but also for reviewing the whole research project, including the research problem and methods as well as the selection of a suitable field and reflection on the type of behaviour that the inquirer should adopt while in the field (Sarantakos, 2000: 291; see also McBourney, 2001: 228; Babbie, 1990: 220, 2001: 250; Neuman, 2000: 241). Thus, the pilot study in this study was given a prominent place in order to prepare the main fieldwork. Moreover, the pilot study was carried out in many areas of the countryside, not only for the sake of testing and adjusting the research proposal (De Vos, 2002) but also for the collection of useful data, in order to complement the data from the main fieldwork, which helped me to thoroughly understand the phenomenon of resistance to reforms under study.

## **The fieldwork**

As just mentioned above, the pilot study was not only needed for pre-testing questions of the interview guide and review the research problem, but also for ascertaining the feasibility of such a complex phenomenon as covert resistance, for facilitation of the selection of sites for the main fieldwork and for learning about prevailing problems related to the reforms under study at different countryside sites and for occasionally attempting to find farmers' acts considered resistance.

As part of the pilot study, group discussions were held from September 2010 to December 2010. The participants in these focus groups were generally farmers, but the emphasis lay on poor farmers who were supposed to be the most affected by the reforms. Moreover, to make sure that the findings from the main fieldwork would be valid, data gathered from the pilot study was analysed and interpreted before the beginning of the main field work (Babbie, 1990: 220–5; Monette, et al., 1998: 90; Royse, 1995: 172).

Although the Rwandan government had established and strengthened institutions for social harmony (NURC, the Gacaca court system and the Abunzi system)<sup>35</sup>, the population was still

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<sup>35</sup> Established social harmony institutions are NURC (National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation), the Gacaca system (a neo-traditional community

affected by what happened in the 1994 Tutsi genocide. This attitude led them to not trust unknown researchers. The beginning of the group sessions and individual interviews during the pilot study were discouraging because participants spoke only about others' experience, especially when the questions related to their own reactions and resistance. They preferred not to reveal their own position; it seemed like they hid the reality of what was happening in the field for fear of being pursued. In almost all areas I visited, the beginning was characterised by indifference or fear of disclosing what happened during the implementation of the reforms under study. For instance, participants in group discussions were very reluctant to speak out and they often spoke in a very calculating way. To build mutual trust in order to motivate them to participate was really difficult. In such conditions, I was obliged to be patient and perseverant, and indeed, mutual trust was gradually built and after some days of contact, suspicion between us was completely removed. This formed the basis of the strategy I adopted before beginning to conduct interviews for the main fieldwork.

Hence, reaching out to the local population during the main fieldwork was no longer a problem since we already had a strong relationship built after some informal courtesy visits. Mutual trust was already built, and generally, the purpose of my visit was known. They knew that I was a PhD student in Sweden, and a researcher and teacher at NUR (National University of Rwanda).

## **Selection of areas for pilot study and the main fieldwork**

### **Areas selected for the pilot study**

The figure 3.1 below indicates selected districts and sectors for focus group within each province. The following symbols indicate the selected sites:  Nyamasheke;  Muhanga;  Kigali;  Gicumbi;  Kirehe districts.

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courts designed to prosecute perpetrators of genocide and to promoting mediation) and the Abunzi system (a traditional conflict resolution and mediation system).

**Figure: 3.1. Rwanda Map highlighting sites for the pilot fieldwork**



**Source:** Map designed by ADB, ADF: 2008–2011 Country Strategy Paper

As the table below indicates, the fieldwork for the pilot study was conducted from September to November 2010 in the eleven sectors throughout the country.

**Table: 3.2. Areas visited in the countryside during the pilot study**

Province	Kigali City	Southern	Eastern	Northern	Western
Districts	Nyarugenge & Kicukiro	Muhanga	Kirehe	Gicumbi	Nyamasheke
Sectors	Rugenge Gahanga Masaka	Nyamabuye Shyogwe	Gatore Nyarubuye	Kageyo Bukure	Bushekeri Bushenge

**Source:** Designed by the author.

In Kigali city, I targeted sectors where residents were being forced to relocate. These are Nyarugenge (Rugenge sector), and the three peripheral rural sectors where they were supposed to go to reside, namely Masaka and Gahanga sectors, all in the rural part of Kicukiro district. In the Southern Province, group discussions took

place in Gahogo and Shyogwe sectors (Muhanga district). In the Eastern Province, it was in Nyarubuye and Gatore sectors (Kirehe district). In the Northern Province, it was in Kageyo and Bukure sectors (Gicumbi district), and in the Western Province discussions took place in Bushekeri and Bushenge sectors (Nyamasheke district).

The selection of participants for focus groups was done through the contact persons recruited in the field and some local elites of local cooperatives. However, where this did not work, I recruited contact persons among farmers. Contact persons have played a significant role in persuading farmers about the objective of research in general and introducing me so that I could talk about my research and its purpose. Contact persons were generally chosen among farmers called *Inyangamugayo* or honest persons. I was lucky since in the areas I visited I could always find at least one former NUR (National University of Rwanda) student working as a civil servant in the local administration, in a local NGO, a Cooperative or an Association. Some of these individuals are the ones who played the role of contact person. However, in case it was not possible for them to assist me, they had to connect me to someone else they trusted and knew as an honest person.

Recruitment took place when there was an event, either when fertilisers and seeds were distributed, or after a local meeting organised by local authorities or by a cooperative representative. When there was no meeting, I had to organise field visits to places where many farmers usually gathered, such as the closest marshland during the cultivation periods or in their villages. Depending on their preference, I would often meet them immediately after work or the next day. The limitation of the focus groups always depended on the willingness of the farmers to attend. That is to say that their numbers varied depending on their willingness, but since the acceptable size of a focus group varies between four and nine (see Bryman 2008 and De Vos 2002), the numbers of participants stayed within the recommended margins as they were between six and nine (Bryman, 2008: 478–9; see also De Vos, 2002: 311–2).

The themes for the focus group were predetermined before I began the fieldwork for the pilot study. Questions were arranged and varied from simple questions relating to daily living conditions and types of ongoing reforms in or near their villages, to more complex questions such as how they felt and thought about and

carried out settlement and agricultural reforms as well as how they reacted to these and how they occasionally resisted them (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995: 76; see also Smith, Harre and Van Langenhoven, 1995: 14).

As mentioned above, I visited many areas, but only the two first locations served to review the questions and the structure of the interview guide. These are Rugenge and Gahanga sectors. The remaining locations served other purposes, such as for the selection of a suitable area for the main fieldwork, for locating interviewees for the main fieldwork, for creating an environment of trust with the local population in general. The information collected from these areas was so useful that it was not only used for the above purposes but it also ultimately complemented the findings from the main fieldwork when analysing and interpreting them (De Vos, 2002: 306). During this exercise, recordings were used to make sure that all information was captured, and at the end of each interview, observed phenomena were documented in the form of field notes which were later used in the steps of analysis and interpretation.

Since the topic of the study requires cooperation from the participants in order to help uncover hidden phenomena, it is necessary to attract the participants' attention and motivate them to unveil their experiences, reactions and eventually their resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms (Weitz, 2001: 670; see also Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 542). It was also necessary to take measures to prevent misinterpretation. Thus, an anticipated data analysis of findings from the pilot study was crucial in ascertaining whether the aim of the study would be achieved.

### **Selected sites for the main fieldwork**

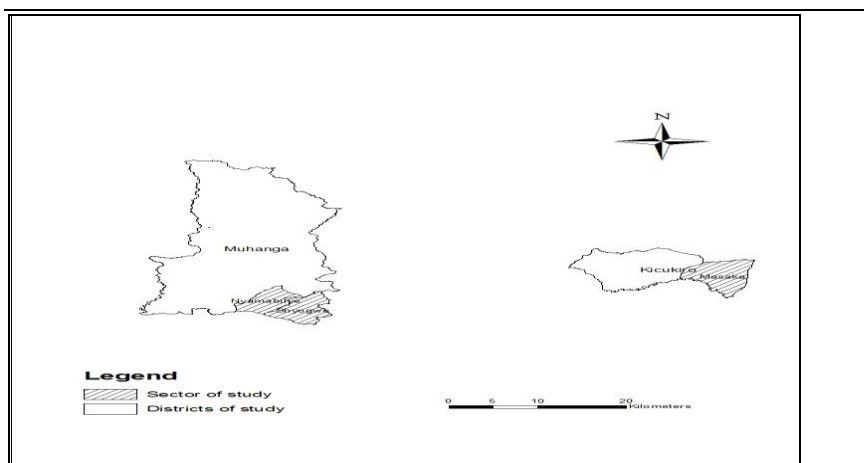
**Table: 3.3. Areas selected for the main fieldwork**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Kigali city (rural)</b>	<b>Southern</b>
<b>Districts</b>	Kicukiro	Muhanga
<b>Sectors (&amp; sites)</b>	– Masaka (Gako and Rusheshe)	– Nyamabuye (Gahogo) – Shyogwe (cells surrounding Rugeramigozi I marsh including Mbare, Kinini, and Mubuga cells)

**Source:** Designed by the author



**Figure: 3.3. The selected sites of the main fieldwork within each district are hatched.**



**Source:** Designed by Niyonzima Theophile: Nyamabuye (Gahogo) & Shyogwe (left) sectors and Masaka (Gako /Rusheshe) sector (right)

The choice of Rusheshe, Gako, Gahogo and Shyogwe sites, respectively of Masaka, Nyamabuye and Shyogwe sectors, was first motivated by the fact that forced movement of the population from the city to the periphery and from the periphery to other remote areas in the countryside was ongoing and thus fascinating for research. Second, the sites had a fascinating and promising ongoing agricultural reform process in the close marshlands, including Nyabarongo, Rugende and Rugeramigozi wetlands on the one hand, and delayed agricultural transformation on their surrounding hillsides on the other.

Third, two of them (Rusheshe and Shyogwe) have a specific historical background of *paysannat*<sup>36</sup>. Shyogwe is the first pilot site for *paysannat* imported from the Congo by Belgian colonial

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<sup>36</sup> *Paysannat* is a French word meaning, roughly, “peasantry”; introduced during colonial rule in the 1930s. Silvestre (1974) describes it as a dispersed-linear habitat along streets with the objective of establishing an intensive agriculture regulated by modern techniques favouring coffee farming.



administration, followed by Icyanya<sup>37</sup> where Masaka (Rusheshe and Gako) is situated. This area has continually been a refuge of internal migration for the overpopulated regions in the north and south (former Ruhengeri in the north and Gikongoro in the south: see figure 4.2)<sup>38</sup> and has historically been characterised by chronic hunger. The main influx of internal migration was in the 1970s and 1980s, when the first and second post-independence governments transferred and settled them to occupy pastures and other properties belonging to the old case refugees who had fled out of fear of being killed during and subsequent the 1959 Hutu revolution (see details in chapter 4). This population from the highly mountainous northern and southern borders with Uganda and Burundi respectively are stereotyped to be naturally aggressive (Focus 2).<sup>39</sup>

The selection of Gako and Gahogo sites was motivated by the fact that they are respectively peripheral to Kigali and Nyamabuye cities and attract relocated population from those cities. Other common characteristics of the selected sites were that they are close to wetlands under development for modern farming and surrounded by hillsides totally dominated by subsistence farming, and that the dispersed/unplanned settlements were still in the process of being replaced by *imidugudu*/grouped settlement.

## Data collection

### The instruments of data collection

From the three research questions introduced in chapter one, an interview schedule in form of semi-structured interviews was developed with two sets of questions designed respectively for the farmers and the local elites (local authorities and opinion leaders). Then there was a group of themes used to collect in-depth information through unstructured interviews from the most affected farmers who were selected during the process of semi-structured interviews. Before presenting the sampling and data

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<sup>37</sup> Icyanya is a natural region around Kigali city which in the 1970s was covered by natural forests and cattle farms.

<sup>38</sup> Ruhengeri and Gikongoro are the densely populated former prefectures respectively situated in north and south of the country.

<sup>39</sup> The highland population is said to be very open-minded and to not hesitate to act when they don't agree with an idea (Focus 2).

collection methods, I will present the process of operationalisation of the research questions by giving details on how they have been constructed:

*Research question<sub>1</sub>*: The first research question relates to how farmers experience reform implementation, i.e. their understanding of reform implementation in relation to their properties and their everyday life in general. In this respect, farmers reveal their understanding of how reforms under study are undertaken and their repercussions on their lives. Although the involvement of agents of reforms and local opinion leaders was not fundamental to understanding farmers' experiences, their opinions have also contributed to understanding how reforms were implemented as well as the challenges that providers and recipients encountered during the process of reforms implementation. Interviewees were asked to describe their experience regarding settlement and agricultural reform in their everyday life, i.e. to describe their expectation from the reforms, disappointment or hopelessness resulting from the repercussions of reforms implementation; while observers were simply asked to describe the way the implementation was undertaken and the impact of the encountered challenges to the achievement of the assigned goals.

*Research question<sub>2</sub>*: The second research question pertains to farmers' reactions when experiencing settlement and agricultural reforms implementation. As for the previous research question, I interviewed not only farmers, but also local opinion leaders and agents of reform. The purpose of involving other categories of interviewees was motivated by Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) approach of studying a phenomenon of resistance in relation to that of power and through the reactions of the subordinates. It's on the basis of farmers' reactions as described by themselves and by other interviewees that the acts of resistance can be recognised. Some of the questions I asked were, for instance, how they reacted; when does it become mandatory to relocate from their land to another place or to replace the crops they usually grow with others, or to implement mono-cropping in their small fields and gardens when they are only used to multiple-cropping; etc. Specifically, interviewees were asked to describe how they behave when settlement and/or agricultural reforms seemed ineffective for their priorities or when, instead of improving their livelihood, it brings it into decline.

*Research question<sub>3</sub>*: The third research question is a logical continuation of the previous one. It pertains to separating the acts of resistance from any other survival mechanisms in farmers' everyday lives. Actually, after the description of their statements about the implementation of settlement (or agricultural) reform, interviewees were requested to describe their acts, separating those they perform to undermine power (held by the agents of reforms) from other acts which do not necessarily have that aim. Through specific questions, farmers described how they resisted and some of them recognised that they were intentionally resisting, but in most of cases, acts of resistance were determined by either the resisted person or the observers.

*Questions and themes preparation*: Specific questions were prepared based on the research questions. However, in order to have a general idea about individual everyday life, the interview process began with questions in relation to the identification of the selected interviewees. Questions that usually I asked related to interviewees' level of education, their occupation, their properties, their marital status, the number of children they have, etc. For instance, questions like 'how do farmers manage to survive after genocide and the effects of genocide on their properties' were asked but upsetting questions that would give rise to psychological troubles were avoided. Other questions related to grouped settlement and agricultural reform, with focus on interviewees' everyday experience of implementation. Thereafter followed a set of other questions in relation to their reactions and ultimately determine which of those reactions could be considered acts of resistance).

## **Sampling and data collection**

### *Sampling and data collection through the focus group*

Contrary to what I had planned, the size of participants in the focus group discussions within each selected site was less than ten. However, as mentioned earlier the margin of six to nine is acceptable for a focus group (De Vos, 2002; Ulin, et al. 2005; Bryman, 2008). The table below illustrates the number of participants in each selected site:

**Table: 3.4 The sample size for focus groups and some semi-structured interviews**

Selected sectors for focus group	R	G	M	N	S	N	G	K	B	B	B	T	P	
	u	a	a	y	h	y	a	a	u	u	u	t	e	
	g	h	s	a	y	a	t	g	u	u	s	a	r	
	e	a	a	m	o	r	o	e	r	h	h	l	i	
	n	n	k	a	g	u	r	e	e	e	e		d	
	g	g	a	b	w	b	e		k	k	n			
	e	a		u	e	e			e	e	e			
				e					r	i				
<b>Number of Participants</b>	7	7	9	6	9	9	6	7	9	8	6	6	89	Sept. – Dec. 2010
<b>Interview with farmers</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	24	
<b>Local authority/ reform agents</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	

**Source:** Designed by the author.

The number of focus group participants in all visited sites was in total 80 individuals. In addition to that, in each selected sector I interviewed one person from the local authorities or an agent of reforms (especially those in charge of community development or the agronomist at the sector level), before meeting the farmers, which in total makes 12 local staff interviewed. After each focus group, I interviewed two individuals selected from each group, preferably those most affected by the reforms implementation, which makes a total of 24 individuals.

The individual interviews, with the two selected farmers and one of the agents of reform implementation, were in the form of semi-structured interviews. For the latter, the interviewee was given the interview guide sheet so that s/he could go through it immediately and familiarise themselves with it – after this we either carried out the interview or arranged an appointment for interview. While for the former, the interviewing process started immediately after each group discussion.

As De Vos recommends, the questions were organised starting from the simple questions and moving to the complex ones (De Vos, 2002: 302–3). They generally related to reform

implementation; the kind of approach agents of reform used to attract people to accept grouped settlement; the agricultural practices based on scientific method; farmers' experience with reforms implementation; and the recipients' reactions. And eventually, we the interviewees and I, attempted to examine if any of their reactions could be recognised as acts of resistance.

Before discussing the two forms of interviews used in collecting information during the main fieldwork, I would first like to introduce the sampling and sample size of the interviewees and the period in which the fieldwork was carried out.

### *Sampling for the main fieldwork*

The number of selected interviewees varied depending on their availability and willingness to respond during the interview. The category of farmers not only includes those known simply as poor but also resourceful poor farmers (see RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2002, 2007). It also includes local elites from different local institutions such as cooperatives or associations as well as some private entrepreneurs who, in addition to their main occupation as business persons, are also farmers. There is also a category of rich farmers who not only produce huge amount of crops for processing but who also are sponsored by the government in order to train neighbouring small farmers by means of demonstration gardens. Besides these categories, there is a category of local opinion leaders who, in addition to other occupations (such as teachers, local NGO staff, etc.), are involved in the activities of local community development.

Another source of information consisted of agents of reforms and local civil servants. These included the executive secretary of the *umurenge* (sector), the agronomist at the sector level, and the person in charge of Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP)<sup>40</sup> or the person in charge of social services at the sector level; at *akagali* (cell level) I included the executive secretary or her/his assistant and finally the chief of the *umudugudu* (village) as an 'administrative unit'<sup>41</sup> not as 'grouped settlement'. The inclusion

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<sup>40</sup> VUP or Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme is a pro-poor programme targeting to reduce poverty in rural areas.

<sup>41</sup> *Umudugudu* means two different things. First, it is known as grouped settlement or a small village of geographically structured houses. Second, through the administrative reform which gradually began to be implemented as

of all these other categories was influenced by Hollander and Einwohner's (2004: 544) approach, which asserts that analysing resistance involves not only the persons who supposedly resist, but also those who are targeted or resisted and the observers of the phenomenon of resistance (such as the researcher, a journalist, any other farmer or someone else who has an interest in reform implementation). Also, only one official from the Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB) was involved in my interviews and this person has provided very important information. Finally, the total number of all interviewees is 102 individuals. The table below provides details about all categories of interviewees involved in the exercise of collecting data during the main fieldwork:

**Table 3.5: Presentation of interviewees based on their resources, gender and location**

Category Site	The three first categories of poor farmers		Resource -ful poor farmers		Rich farmers		Others (local authorities <sup>42</sup> , agents of reform and opinion leaders)		Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Rusheshe	5	4	4	12	–	1	1	5	32
Gako	6	3	2	4	–	1	1	5	22
Gahogo	6	5	5	8	–	–	2	3	29
Shyogwe	5	4	2	3	–	–	1	3	18
Kigali City	-	-	-	-	–	–	–	1	1
Total	22	16	13	27	–	2	5	17	102

**Source:** Designed by the author.

of 2002, *umudugudu* has also denoted the basic administrative unit of Rwandan decentralisation

(see RoR\_MINALOC, 2005).

<sup>42</sup> Local authorities were either the executive secretary of the sector, the agronomist or the person in charge of community development at sector level, the executive secretary and/or his/her assistant at cell level and the chief of the village; while the opinion leaders could be a teacher, a religious, a local businessman, a large-scale landholder practicing modern agriculture and/or one of the members of the cooperative executive committee.

Initially, it was not planned to interview ‘80’<sup>43</sup> farmers as shown in the table above, but given that some farmers could not respond to all questions and some, after providing useful information, withdrew before the end of our conversation, the number of interviewees continuously increased until I reached sufficient information (De Vos, 2002). In particular, the resisted/targeted persons and observers contributed a lot to the third research question through which they were asked to determine if the observed reactions of their neighbours or fellow workers were acts of resistance (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 544).

Careful analysis is required before confirming a human action is an act of resistance, especially when dealing with covert resistance. As mentioned earlier, the resister/actor plays an important role in deciding whether her/his act is an act of resistance. Therefore, there was a need to focus on certain criteria while selecting the most affected farmers for in-depth interviews.

#### *The selection of interviewees for the main field work*

Selecting and reaching interviewees was done through purposive sampling with the expectation of getting interviewees with various perspectives concerning the reforms under study. This technique was chosen because I acknowledged its popularity and effectiveness in accessing suitable interviewees for a qualitative study (Creswell, 1998: 62; see also De Vos, 2002: 206, 334; Seidman, 1991: 42; Bryman 2008). As Creswell highlights, in qualitative studies it is crucial that the researcher keep in mind a clear set of criteria for purposeful selection of interviewees (Creswell, 1998: 118).

The criterion of poverty was a priority, and involves the three first categories of poor households as they are defined in the National Poverty Reduction Programme report (RoR., 2002: 15). Their selection was possible through the village chiefs and the informants. The focus on poor farmers was motivated by the fact that I wanted to know how the reforms affected its recipients. I also focused my selection on the interviewees who seemed to have contentious arguments in relation to settlement or agricultural reforms. Such arguments were detected during semi-structured

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<sup>43</sup> 80 is the number of farmers alone, without involving opinion leaders and local authorities (see the first six columns of the table 3.5. above).

interviews which I carried out before I had decided on who would be involved in further in-depth interviews. Once selected, the most affected farmers had to describe their experience and reactions and then determine if their acts really were acts of resistance. In each site I selected five interviewees for in-depth interviews, which makes a total of twenty in the four selected sites. The table below shows how the selected farmers were affected by the reforms.

**Table: 3.6. Interviewees who are supposed to sell/buy plot**

Site	Rusheshe	Gako	Gahogo	Shyogwe	Kigali City	T o t a l
Interviewees						
Are supposed to sell their plot for public interest ( <i>umudugudu</i> )	5	5	–	–	–	20
Are supposed to buy a plot in the selected site for <i>umudugudu</i>	–	–	5	5	–	
Total	5	5	5	5	–	

**Source:** Sample size designed by the author.

The role of key informant or contact person was important in the overall process of selecting relevant interviewees (De Vos 2002: 379, 399; see also Seidman, 1991: 43; Lincoln and Guba 1985). Moreover, my own observations have also contributed to picking those I assumed to be capable of providing information in relation to farmers’ experiences, to their reaction and eventually to their resistance to reforms. It took me a while to identify resisters among poor farmers, despite the fact that even the first interviewees were designed to screen them out.

*Data collection through semi-structured interviews*

Regarding semi-structured interview, questions were predetermined in the form of an interview schedule. Interviewing was flexible in a way that the interviewees were free to answer to



questions of their choice. As De Vos (2002: 302) recommends, interviewees were considered the experts of their own experience of settlement and agricultural reforms and their effects on their everyday life. The interview guide was arranged in a way that simple and broad questions were posed in the beginning and complex and specific ones in the end. However, the interviewees were allowed to feel free to respond to questions that seemed easy to respond to, and in case some of them felt uncomfortable responding to any question they were free to abstain (Ibid., 303).

Local authorities/agents of reforms provided general information in relation to reform implementation and resistance without specifying who had done what and how. The village chief and often the local agronomist and/or the executive secretary at cell level were better positioned to describe what was happening and the way people reacted to the government initiatives of restructuring the rural areas, not for aesthetic reasons (Jackson, 1999; Newbury, 2011), but for developing professional farming and non-farm activities (RoR-MINECOFIN, 2000; Isaksson, 2011; Silberfein, 1998). The table below highlights the periods of interviews in each site:

**Table: 3.7. Presentation of the periods of the main fieldwork**

Site \ Period	Rusheshe	Gako	Gahogo	Shyogwe	Kigali city
	Dec. 2010–Feb. 2011				
	Sept. 2011–Jan. 2012				
					Dec. 2011
			January–February 2012		

**Source:** Designed by the author.

The first interviews for the main fieldwork were conducted from December 2010 to February 2011 (50 working days) and the next step of the processes of interviews started in September 2011 and continued until February 2012 (63 working days) which in total makes 113 working days. The duration of the interviews depended on many factors, including the willingness of the interviewees to continue with the interview. The duration of each individual interview was generally between 35 and 60 minutes.

However, the meetings were sometimes interrupted due to heavy rains, especially in November and December. Other obstructions were associated with farming activities. In fact, agricultural activities are generally intensive during September and October and farmers are generally very busy at that time. They are a bit less pressed for time in January and February and during the summer period.

Generally, I would spend some time interviewing selected farmers, opinion leaders and agents of reform through semi-structured interviews, but as I needed to learn much more about the topic through in-depth/unstructured interviews, I had to stay longer with the selected, most affected poor farmers.

#### *Data collection through in-depth/Unstructured interview*

Similar to semi-structured interviews, the themes for unstructured interviews were of an open-ended style with the possibility of probing after introducing each theme (De Vos, 2002: 299). The only difference between both is linked to the procedure of interviewing and the time that the researcher has to spend with the interviewee. Open-ended style in this context is as De Vos labels it, a kind of “conversation with purpose” (Ibid., 298–9). Seidman illuminates the importance of in-depth or unstructured interview while collecting data as follows:

In-depth interviewing’s strength is that through it we can come to understand the details of people’s experience from their point of view. We can see how their individual experience interacts with powerful social and organizational forces that pervade the context in which they live and work, and we can discover the interconnections among people who live and work in a shared context (Seidman 1991: 103).

In-depth interview was used in this study because of its specificity, which allows the researcher to use conversations and which frees him/her from being strictly reliant on a predetermined order of questions but it also gives the interviewee a chance to provide detailed information through sub-questions (Bryman, 2008: 196; Smith & Osborn, 2008: 53). This type of interview was used in the form of a long-lasting conversation with selected poor farmers. What motivated the use of this interview method was its ability to get into specifics, which enables the researcher to step into others’

mind through deep conversation. (De Vos, 2002: 298) along with participant observation (Ibid., 280). Furthermore, as Moustakas argues, it allows the researcher to understand interviewees' experience as they describe it (Moustakas, 1994: 14).

In-depth interview was used particularly for questions that were abandoned or pending during my interaction with the interviewee, either because these questions were difficult to answer (and therefore needed more emphasis and perseverance) or because they were related to risky topics, such as those involving the performance of local leadership or the political system in general and the way they enforce policies in particular. Another topic that needed more emphasis was how farmers reacted to or expressed their discontent when they were, for example, forced to abandon their huts or to uproot banned crops such as banana, etc. During our interaction, I had to adapt the formulation of the theme of conversation, making the interaction more friendly and informal through my own experiences of what happened to me or what happened to someone else I know in the cell where I reside.

## **Recording**

As a supplement and important tool for data collection and management, audio and occasionally audiovisual recordings were used during semi-structured and in-depth interviews. These recordings helped capture details of conversations and other interactions during the whole process of data collection. This method sometimes required an ad hoc assistant, especially during the meetings and after community work where I used to concentrate my attention on observing participants and attentively listening to their discussions (De Vos, 2002: 341).

In cases where interviewees consented, audio and video recordings were used simultaneously during face to face interactions (Creswell, 1998: 61). Before I used the audio and/or audiovisual recorders, I would explain the purpose of using them. The use of video tape was often declined, especially by the authorities, opinion leaders and some farmers, but most of selected poor farmers for in-depth interview accepted it without objection.

All recorded, videotaped data and notes were transcribed daily, carefully managed on a computer and analysed (De Vos, 2002: 341; see also Creswell, 2009: 181–3). Before the analysis of the collected information, I spent a lot of time translating from

Kinyarwanda, the local language, to English, the academic language. Actually, this is one of the challenges I faced in this study because it took me several months to finish translations of the manuscripts.

The sources of information were not limited to the fieldwork interviews through recordings only. Some other sources were also useful in providing information about what was happening in the field during the process of reform implementation. For instance, participant observation of the milieu allowed me to witness certain realities that inspired me to understand the roots of the problem and recognise some of the farmers' actions as acts of resistance (De Vos, 2002: 96; Hollander & Einwohner, 2004).

## **Observation**

The technique of observation is not only relevant in the process of seeking a researchable topic (Mouton, 2001: 27; see also De Vos, 2002: 96), it is also a useful and inspiring approach for a researcher who needs to enter the culture of the interviewees and gather data from non-verbal communication and behaviour (De Vos, 2002: 288). However, this is not like any observation of interviewees and settings (Ibid., 278), rather it is about *participant observation*, which, as De Vos argues, allows the researcher to “gain an in-depth insight into the manifestation of the reality” (Ibid., 280). It is relevant for a long-lasting fieldwork such as the phenomenological and ethnographic studies. With it, the researcher becomes familiar with the local context and thus understands it easily while interviewing and interpreting findings (Ulin, et al. 2005: 75; Creswell, 1998: 58).

During participant observation, I used to spend days at a time with farmers in and stay with farmers in marshlands as well as in hillsides and more than six hours each day in *umudugudu*. I also used to grow crops in the marshland close to my residence in order to experience what really happens with agricultural reform and observe my close neighbour farmers when I was in my own field. Other occasions of participant observations were possible when I was attending and interacting with participants during the monthly *umuganda* (community work) and the subsequent meeting and other organised *inama* (meetings) at different local administrative levels within the selected sector, cell or site.

For instance, I attended two community works and five meetings in Rusheshe and Gako, while in Shyogwe I attended one community work and two meetings and only two meetings in Gahogo. My role was not only to observe, but during the meetings I was often asked to provide my experience about *umuganda* (community work) activity and/or the way agricultural and settlement reforms are implemented in my area – which is in the Southern Province, Huye district, Ngoma sector, Ngoma cell, and *umudugudu* Ngoma III – and the strategies that the agents use to implement reforms successfully.

At the end of each session, I also used to chat with some participants in order to have their views on what was discussed. Scheduled and occasional or ad hoc meetings were made known through the village chiefs, the executive secretary at the cell or sector level.

Short notes describing particular individual wording and gestures were taken during the meetings and community works, and in a few instances audio recordings and video recordings were taken. At the end of each session I also had to organise, transcribe, analyse and interpret collected arguments captured through short notes and recorded information. This was motivated by the fact that I needed to analyse and interpret the participants' mood and wording, and I used to connect the results of my observation to my own experience immediately and interview recordings. This strategy has prevented biases of forgetting what happened during the meetings and community works (see Creswell, 2009: 183).

The literature is another source of information from which secondary data on the topic and on the reality in relation to the reforms under study were collected (Ibid., 131).

## **The use of literature**

The literature has served this study in many ways. At the very beginning, it served to shape the topic of the thesis, to illuminate some key concepts needed to elucidate and frame the research problem, and to formulate an interview schedule (Creswell, 2009: 27; Grant McCracken, 1988: 31). While avoiding generating preconceptions, the literature review has also been a basis for understanding the phenomenon of resistance and its relationship with other phenomena such as power, empowerment and the process of policy implementation. It also provided standards on

which the analysis and interpretation of findings was based (Creswell, 2009: 25; see also De Vos, 2002: 134–5).

In order to understand the context of this study, other sources including government policy reports, ministerial decrees and national laws, etc. were useful. Most of these sources and reports from ministries were, for instance, particularly useful in helping to create an understanding of policies and government strategies regarding the preparation and the implementation of the policies in general and the agricultural and settlement reforms in particular. Many critical articles published on Rwanda were very useful given that they not only wrote about the success that the government had so far achieved but also the gaps and failures (see for example, Ansoms, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012; Huggins, 2004, 2005, 2009; Newbury, 2011; Thomson, 2009, 2011; Isaksson, 2011; Des Forges, 2006; Reintjens, 2007, etc.). Moreover, newspapers, public or private, were of particular use to assist in understanding the reality of reform implementation in Rwanda, allowing me to verify what was spread by farmers as rumour but believed as truth by local leaders and vice versa.

## **Measuring the validity of findings**

As Seidman argues, the consistency of what interviewees say can be revealed through intensive interviews over a number of weeks, through interviewing a number of interviewees, through connecting their experiences and through checking the comments of one interviewee against those of the others (Seidman, 1991: 17). The validity of the results of this study is seen through the consistency of what interviewees say: how they understand and make meaning of their experiences to the reforms, their reactions and resistance. As studies of resistance are tricky, especially when they deal with cases of covert resistance, I opted to use multiple sources of information and multiple techniques and methods (De Vos, 2002: 341–2; see also Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). This was the only option I opted for in order to avoid the risks of misinterpreting interviewees' acts and the meanings they attribute to their acts. That is, why instead of relying on only the actors' meanings, I also referred to the implementers of the reforms and other observers, including the local opinion leaders and neighbours of the selected interviewees, for in-depth exploration.

Triangulation is generally useful, in studies like this where observations and interpretations are not perfectly repeatable. As a number of scholars reveal, triangulation serves to clarify the meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen (Silverman, 2001; Creswell, 1998). Creswell, for instance, emphasises the importance of triangulation by saying that the “use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators and theories provides corroborating evidence” (Creswell, 1998: 61, 202).

## **Data analysis and interpretation**

After a thorough data collection in accordance with the principles of the qualitative approach – such as listening more but talking less, asking real open-ended questions, asking concrete details, exploring participants’ gestures, etc. (De Vos, 2002: 343; Seidman 1991: 56–71; Creswell 1998: 143), this section explains the procedure of the analysis and interpretation of the information that I gathered from the fieldwork.

Although I didn’t use a unique method of analysis and interpretation of findings, I was in one way or another inspired by Creswell’s approaches of structuring, analysing and interpreting collected data (Creswell, 2009: 185; see also Smith and Osborn, 2008: 67). The option of using Creswell’s steps was also motivated by the fact that it corresponds with Hollander and Einwohner’s (2004) recommendation of considering everyone’s opinion regarding actors’ acts. Moreover, the exercise was so complex that, in addition to the interpretation of the meanings actors attribute to their acts, the researcher had to interpret the interpretation of the targeted persons and that of other observers (Ibid.).

## **Organising and preparing data for analysis**

In order to prevent any loss or omission of information, I used to keep it in a safe place. Even though verbatim transcription was done while doing fieldwork and after data collection, I proceeded with a preliminary analysis, and then saved the verbatim of the recordings, transcribed data and the results of the preliminary analysis in separate files on my computer. As Marshall and Rossman (1985) argue, this step of managing data is important. These scholars “suggest that the process of preserving the data and

meaning on tape and the combined transcription and preliminary analysis greatly increase the efficiency of data analysis” (De Vos, 2002: 343).

### **Reading through all data**

As Creswell (2009) recommends, before beginning with the step of coding, I went through the transcripts, reading and rereading them, so that I became familiar with their content. Consideration was taken to all notes, summaries of observations and memos of key ideas written in book notes or in the margin of the interview schedules and observations (Creswell, 2009: 184).

### **Coding interviewees’ responses**

All statements were coded just after transcription. The coding system was based on the type of interviews (SS [Semi-structured], ID [In-depth interview]), the number representing the interviewee and then the site (R for [Rusheshe], G for [Gako], Go for [Gahogo], S for [Shyogwe] and K for [Kigali city]) and the substantial theme. Recurrent themes were then grouped into categories of separate, substantial themes of the topic, which were *settlement reform* on the one hand and *agricultural reform* on the other. Related major themes of findings were then written down and grouped under substantial themes. Thereafter, the statements under each theme were reread and the most relevant statements were selected and rewritten into the second line themes and listed under related substantial themes, etc. (Ibid., 187).

From the second line themes, which include: “actors’ economic status or living conditions, actors’ experiences, actors’ reactions, reactions of the targeted person and the effects of the reform”, I developed categories under which all similar statements were listed and clustered in meaning units ready for preliminary interpretation (Smith and Osborn, 2008: 67).

The next exercise was selecting similarities, differences and contradictions, and then clustering them (Ibid.). Similar raw materials under the second line titles/themes were clustered and from within them categories were generated (Creswell, 2009: 186). These categories and specific units of statements constituted the real place of interpretation of interviewees’ meanings. The same exercise continued and simultaneously there was another exercise of sorting through all transcripts, indicating what seemed relevant



for the study, but without throwing away what appeared superfluous, until all transcripts had been scrutinised. Categories were mainly the experience of reforms, reactions and the forms of resistance emerged from interviewees' statements in relation to the approach that the agents of reforms have been using while implementing the reforms.

### **Interpretation of data**

The interpretation was mainly based on actors' statements and particularly on the interpretation of their own reactions.

However, as I mentioned earlier, others' interpretations were also considered, i.e. the interpretation of the person who was resisted and that of the neighbours or any other individuals who had information related to the actors acts or reactions. My own experience acquired from everyday life, participant observation in the field and from the literature played a key role in influencing my position regarding the interviewees' interpretation of actors' reactions and resistance.

The intents behind interviewees' acts could not be known if they did not speak thereof. Thus, in order to figure these out, I attempted to understand their intents through the meanings they attributed to their statements and stories, and related this to my understanding based on the context and, in particular, the prevailing socioeconomic and political environment.

Despite some obstructions in this exercise, the interpretation of interviewees' statements and meanings of reactions and acts of resistance, were generally based on specific terms symbolising, for example, 'confrontation or disagreement' (*guhanga*), 'opposition' (*gupinga*), 'refusal to implement' (*kwanga gushyira mu bikorwa*), 'unwilling to implement' (*ntabushake*), disrespect (*gusuzugura*), 'exaggeration of reform agents or some local authorities' (*gukabya*), 'lack of alternative for survival' (*amaburakindi*), 'lack of interest' (*ntakamaro*), 'lack of financial capacity' (*ntabushobozi*), etc. This exercise allowed us to understand the phenomenon of resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms even when actors attempted to hide their intent behind their reactions.

For instance, the interviewees used to say that they did not resist or that they did not intend to infringe on the rule, but that they were, for example, trying to find protection from harmful

effects of imposed reforms or trying to find a way to meet their basic needs when agricultural reform interfered with their usual way of cultivating food. However, whatever their justifications, since they knew that they were deliberately performing forbidden acts, one may conclude that their acts should be considered resistance.

## **Ethical consideration**

Permission to carry out the fieldwork is a prerequisite in Rwanda. Foreigners without a letter of permission from the Ministry of Education and citizens without approval from the district mayor will be prevented by local authorities from conducting fieldwork. Therefore, the first task was to negotiate the permission. The letter for seeking permission to be addressed to the top leaders of institutions at national, ministerial and/or district levels was provided by NUR's authority.

This letter was presented to targeted ministries and a few other public and private institutions from where I had collected secondary data. It was also presented to the mayor of each selected district, who in turn provided me a letter to bring in the field at the lower level (sector and cell levels). The next task, after being granted official permission was to seek informants and build mutual trust with the local population. To avoid suspicion of being a government agent, a disguised policeman or someone who would lead them to risk legal prosecution, I used to make informal visits in the selected sites in order to be familiar with the population in general. As a next step, I had to present the aim of my visit, talk about reforms in general, share experiences with farmers about the advantage and disadvantage of agricultural and settlement reforms, etc. The day of starting my interviews everybody knew at least that I was a teacher at NUR, a PhD student in Sweden and interested in reforms and the way people understand them and how they react to them. Indeed, before I negotiated their involvement in my research, I briefly introduced myself, told them which institution I worked for, what my occupation was, what the purpose of my visit was and why I had selected their location instead of others. Then I broadly explained the objectives of the study to those who were selected as well as what I expected from them. The time frame of the conversation in groups or face-to-face interviews was discussed with them.

The anonymity of participants/interviewees was ensured in an informed consent statement letter for sake of their personal privacy; confidentiality was announced and in order to found a good working environment, the use of recording devices was negotiated before everything else. I ensured them that all information they would supply during the research would be held in confidence and that unless they specifically indicated their consent, their name would not appear in the thesis. It was also indicated that the interviews would be digitally recorded and transcribed and that each interviewee would be given a specific code, and that their data would be kept and safely stored for some years after the end of the thesis publication and that it would then be deleted.

As a way of protecting them from any harm, I informed them about the potential risk of conducting research on ongoing government policy implementation, in case where, for example, the implementers would like to conceal some form of repression of the recipients; those who felt uninterested were unconditionally allowed to withdraw (Babbie, 1990, 2001; De Vos, 2002: 62-68; Bryman, 2008: 118-124; Creswell, 1998: 132-3, 2009: 89-93; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Ulin, et al. 2005: 105-6). Of course, some withdrew without explaining the reason, other said that they were busy with something else or had an appointment with someone else. Some even disappeared even though they had promised to participate in group discussions or individual interview. There was no problem because I had ensured them that to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, would not affect our relationship. I had also ensured them that once someone withdraws; all data collected would no longer be considered in the analysis and interpretation.

## **Problems encountered and coping strategies**

The first challenge I had at the outset related to the decision concerning the farmer who was to be part of participants in focus group and how to acquire an honest contact person. However, this issue was sorted out with my patience and perseverance. Aside from that, building and strengthening the relationship with the local population was a serious challenge, but this was usually solved by the contact person.

One of the most challenging situations was that even if interviewees had been showing discontent related to reforms

implementation, some were not ready to clearly explain the basis of their discontent. To sort this out, I used multiple sources of information as explained earlier. This approach allowed us to understand the meaning of the interviewees' actions based not only on the meanings which they attribute to their own acts but also the meaning that others attributes to actors' acts (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Bryman, 2008: 16).

Among other challenges were the interruptions of discussions and meeting postponements as a result of heavy rains. Indeed, I have often failed to assemble participants because of the rain. This happened twice in the Northern Province; once in the South; and three times in the West. Under such conditions we would meet in one of the closest village's classrooms or at the cooperative office or occasionally at the *akagali* (cell) office, especially after a meeting or distribution of agricultural inputs.

# The contextual framework

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## Introduction

This chapter aims at clarifying the context of rural Rwanda and that of the areas selected for this particular study. It briefly describes the general context of settlement and subsistence agriculture in Rwanda and in the selected areas in particular. In order to understand the issues of settlement and agricultural reforms, I discuss landownership in the Rwandan context and other issues connected to it. I then discuss the context of farming and resettlement in the pre-genocide period as well as different factors that contributed to violence and genocide in Rwanda. Then, I discuss the issue of settlement and agricultural reforms during the post-genocide period, highlighting the context, the rationale and the approach of their implementation. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a brief summary.

## Brief description of Rwanda's geography

Rwanda is a small country located in mid-central and eastern Africa with an area of 26,388 km<sup>2</sup>. It is bordered to the north by Uganda, to the east by Tanzania, to the south by Burundi and to the west by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is hilly in the central and southern parts, has high mountains including volcanoes in the north and the north-west and is covered by savannah in the east and the south-east of the country. Its climate is temperate with two rainy seasons (from October to December and from March to May) and two dry seasons (from January to March and June to September). Even though the annual rainfall is estimated at an average of 1,250 mm, it is unpredictable in certain regions of the country, especially in flat regions of the east and part of the south-east, and the dry season can unexpectedly last long. The average temperature in the region is 18.5°C, but because of its varied elevation, Rwanda presents multiple climates. For instance, the yearly temperature is around 24°C, and the minimum night

temperature is 10°C, while the maximum daytime temperature is around 34°C (Prunier, 1994: 1–4 see also Niyonzima, 2009: 34–35; RoR\_MINAGRI, 2006b).

Before and during colonialism Rwanda was a monarchy, with an absolute king surrounded by three main chiefs and under the latter were regional chiefs, hills' chiefs and their assistants who were generally the elder chiefs of lineages. The figure (4.1) below illustrates the regional context where Rwanda is located on the African continent.

Germany first colonised Rwanda from 1897 to 1916, and after having been defeated by Belgium during the World War I, the Belgians took over its colonies including Rwanda and Burundi and adjoined them to the Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of Congo). Independence was granted in 1962 just after the 1959 Hutu revolution that put an end to the Tutsi Monarchy which had founded Rwanda as a sovereign kingdom several centuries before. Following the Hutu revolution in 1959<sup>44</sup>, there was recurrent violence between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, which had partially fled the violence resulting from this conflict. The inter-ethnic violence continued until it culminated in the 1994 Tutsi genocide.

**Figure: 4.1. Administrative map of Rwanda in regional context**



**Source:** <https://www.google.rw/>

<sup>44</sup> The 1959 Hutu revolution was triggered by a rumour spread among Hutu elites that one of the political Hutu elites – Mr Mbonyumutwa Dominique – was beaten to death by Tutsi political activists and monarchists.

Despite the loss of human lives in the 1994 Tutsi genocide, Rwanda remained a densely populated country. This is a result of the increased birth rate. According to Nduwayezu (1990), in 1934 the population was 1,595,000 with 85 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> of arable land; in the 1970s it was 3,756,000 with 200 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> of arable land; and in 1989 it reached 7,128,000 with a density of 380 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> of the total area of the country (Prunier, 1994: 4). The 2006 figures show that Rwanda's population had reached approximately 9.5 million with 357 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, while those of 2011 show the population had reached 10.8 million with 408 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 29). Thus, in a small country with very high population growth, where more than 91.5% of the population depends on subsistence agriculture, there are several subsequent repercussions including, among others, land fragmentation and household poverty.

Indeed, although the population of farmers is increasing significantly, arable land isn't increasing, which explains land fragmentation and scarcity (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 100; see also ICARRD, 2006: 7). Therefore, as a result of the acute land fragmentations, the farmers have become small-scale landholders and the number of landless persons continues to escalate alongside the increased birth rate. Land fragmentation is therefore a result of the demographic pressure proportionate to the available arable land (World Bank, 2008: 21). The major problem in rural Rwanda is that there are insufficient alternative activities to farming. In fact, the industrial sector and other off-farm activities are quasi non-existent in rural Rwanda (RoR\_MINICOM, 2006: 9) and the majority of adult Rwandans are illiterate or unskilled (RoR\_NISR, 2012). Indeed, apart from a small number of masons, local transportation services and merchants selling everyday household items, rural Rwanda in general, and the sites selected for this study, lack other off-farm alternatives.

### **The issue of landownership in Rwanda**

As I mentioned above, Rwanda was historically a monarchy ruled by a king and a group of leaders around him, the prominent chiefs, under which there were other chiefs, including regional and local chiefs. There were three prominent chiefs, each with different responsibilities: *Umutware w'umukenke* (or the livestock and

grassland chief), *Umutware w'ubutaka* (or the land chief) and *Umutware w'ingabo* (or the military chief). These chiefs were from all ethnic groups (Hutu, Tutsi and Twa). The relationship between these ethnic groups was symbiotic in the sense that it was characterised by mutual support through the exchange of labour. It was a kind of clientele system called *ubuhake* (Maquet, 1954; see also De Heusch, 1966; Jan Vansina, 2001; Schoenbrun, 1998) whereby the majority of the *Tutsi* were cattle breeders and predominant in administrative leadership, the majority of the *Hutu* were cultivators and the *Twa* were predominantly pottery makers (Melvern, 2006: 5; Vansina, 2001).

Scholars presented different versions when explaining the institution of *ubuhake*. For instance, Maquet believes that clientele/*ubuhake* was a *key institution holding Rwandan society together* (Maquet 1954). With the same perspective, others assume that it was an institution of social cohesion among Rwandans. For example, Mamdan argues that the pre-1959 assumption about clientele/*ubuhake* was that “everyone except the King was simultaneously a patron and a client in unending and unvarying chain of patron-client relationship” (Mamdan, 2001: 64). Newbury has however rejected this version, showing that in the western region of Rwanda, the client family, generally owning cattle, had to periodically provide a cow as a gift to the patron in exchange for regular protection. Newbury argues that such a relationship “exposed the clients to arbitrary forms of exploitation” (Newbury 1988: 74–75). According to her, this kind of exploitation was worsened by colonialism in which money collection from clients was added to the traditional form of clientele system (Ibid.; see also RoR, 1999: 32).

As highlighted above, Mamdan and Newbury’s arguments are not based on ethnic groups. All of them were potential objects of *ubuhake* or *umuheto* institutions. This means that a Tutsi could be a client of another Tutsi or a Hutu and vice versa. A number of historians believe that Rwandans were separated and exploiting each other through their differences, e.g. Tutsi cattle owners over Hutu, but generally the clientele was not founded on relationships based on ethnic groupings, because even the Tutsi were clients of other Tutsi or of Hutu (Mamdan 2001; Newbury 1988).

Another type of clientship, known as *uburetwa*, was based on land. According to Vansina, *uburetwa* was predominantly imposed only on Hutu farmers and not on herders and herdsmen who were



mainly Tutsi (Vansina, 2001: 134; see also Mamdan, 2001: 66). Originally, the word *uburetwa* was used to refer to the “obligations of land tenants to their masters on *ubukonde*<sup>45</sup> land” (or right over land), and later it was transformed in “manual labour for the local hill chiefs as payment for the occupation of the land” (Vansina, 2001). Many authors believe that *uburetwa* may be one of the main causes of the 1959 Hutu revolution<sup>46</sup> but this has been contested by others who see the main cause in colonial strategy of divide and rule (Reyntjens, 1985: 260; see also Vansina, 2001: 134; Mamdan 2001; Newbury 1988; RoR, 1999).

In the western region of Rwanda, the immigrants who received land from settled lineage were called *abagererwa*. These people, as Newbury (1988: 79) puts it, had to provide part of their harvest each agricultural season to their patron landowners. There was also *Igikingi* (*ibikingi* in plural) which is a large piece of land on which Tutsi breeders generally grazed their cattle. This was a political grant of pasture to cattle owners provided by the king or his chiefs (Ibid.).

De Heusch (1966) states that except the north-eastern region intended for grazing land (only accessible to all cattle breeders and far isolated from the areas assigned for agriculture), *ibikingi* were generally occupied by lineages where each household owned its own piece of arable land (De Heusch, 1966: 144–148). While the monarchy was still in place, before the arrival of Germans (the first colonisers of Rwanda) in the 1897, all Rwandans had their own land to grow food on. Only herders could make seasonal migrations in search of other pastures. This was common everywhere in the country, including areas where the research for this thesis was carried out (Kigali city and surrounding rural areas of Muhanga former Gitarama).

Although Rwandans owned land, pastures and cattle, everything was the King’s property. Thus, in case of noncompliance to the King or his representatives, the right of landownership was rescinded and the owner was often evicted (De

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<sup>45</sup> *Ubukonde* was the right of a lineage over the land it had cleared (see Mamdan [2001]; Vansina [2001]).

<sup>46</sup> The 1959 Hutu revolution, or the social revolution of Hutu peasants led by Hutu elites, abolished the Tutsi monarchy in 1959 (see also Reyntjens, 1985: 260). Since then the Tutsi, even those of the lower class without any relationship with the monarchists, became scapegoats whenever the monarchists attempted to retake power.

Heusch, 1966). The relationships of the clientele system show that for centuries, right over land and cattle was problematic in Rwanda, since no one, except the King, had inalienable ownership.

### *Land tenure during the pre-genocide period*

Land tenure systems have been changing since the pre-colonial era through the colonial period, the post-independence period up to recently during post-genocide period. Niyonzima (2009) argues that use and acquisition of land were regulated by various laws – customary and statutory with significant changes to land tenure systems. However, he reveals that the most common system during the pre-colonial era was that of collective ownership (Niyonzima 2009: 38–39). In addition to the mentioned land tenure systems described above (*ubukonde*, *igikingi* and *isambu*), there were also *inkungu*<sup>47</sup> (the land reserve) and *gukeba*<sup>48</sup>, or settling certain families within grazing land or fallow land.

Rurangwa argues that contrary to German colonialists who had acknowledged the Rwandan King's authority and had accepted collaboration with him, the Belgians, after defeating the Germans in WWI, had established new laws giving to colonial ruler the power over land taken from the indigenous population (Rurangwa, 2002; see also Hajabakiga, 2004). However, the new land tenure law was only applicable to institutions among which the churches and white settlers belonged. This law didn't affect or invalidate the customary law, which remained and continued to function among indigenous land property owners. Following independence, the same practices continued and 90% of land was still managed under the customary law. Only 10% relied on written law (Niyonzima 2009: 39–40).

### *Access to land in Rwanda*

Since the pre-colonial era, land in Rwanda has mainly been through inheritance, governmental land distribution, purchase or donation (Bigagaza, *et al.* 2002; see also Niyonzima 2009: 41). However, some of these mechanisms have subsequently lost their importance due to the demographic explosion. Inheritance in

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<sup>47</sup> *Inkungu* was a kind of land reserve for a political authority – a chief – which he normally used to provide pieces of to those who required them, especially the needy (see Niyonzima 2009: 39).

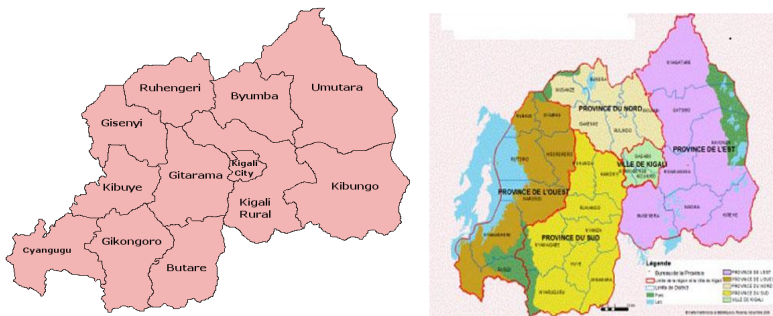
<sup>48</sup> *Gukeba* was the process of settling certain families within grazing land or fallow land (see Rurangwa 2002; Niyonzima 2009: 39).

particular has become problematic. Parents are no longer able to bequeath portions of land to their adult sons (Niyonzima 2009: 41). Traditionally, inheritance was a right of male children only, but with the current gender policy<sup>49</sup>, male as well as female children are equal, which makes the institution of inheritance more problematic. The issue of legacy has worsened and contributes to poverty as well as family conflicts in rural areas.

*Constraints on acquiring land*

In addition to inheritance constraints, land acquisition has always been a thorny problem due to the demographic explosion in certain regions of the country. According to Rurangwa (2002), this situation has resulted in an internal migration from the densely populated prefectures to the less populated ones since the 1970s and 1980s. The migrations were mainly from the former Ruhengeri, Gisenyi, Kibuye and Gikongoro prefectures to the former Kibungo, Umutara, and Kigali rural prefectures. The first figure below highlights the prefectures of Rwanda before the 2005 administrative reform and the second shows the five provinces in different colours and their respective districts after the 2005 reform.

**Figure: 4.2. The map of Rwanda before and after the 2005 administrative reform**



**Source:** <https://www.google.rw/>

<sup>49</sup> Land law promulgated in July 2005 specifying that female children have the same rights of inheritance as male children (see Niyonzima 2009: 42).

Due to the migration phenomenon, less-populated regions have also been affected by the problem of land scarcity, which has made it a nationwide problem (Niyonzima 2009: 40). After the genocide, almost all remaining land belonging to the state was also distributed to the landless, mainly for *imidugudu* to accommodate repatriated refugees who fled since the Hutu revolution of 1959.

### *The 2005 land law and policy*

Although the republic of Rwanda published a revised land law in 2013, I will not discuss it; rather I will talk about the law from 2005, because my field work was conducted before the new revised land law. However, given that the focus of this study is limited to landownership, expropriation and compensation, I will only discuss a select few some articles, including mainly Articles 3 and 14. Article 3 of the 2005 organic land law stipulates that:

Land is part of the public domain of all Rwandans [...] With exceptions of the rights given to people, the state has supreme powers to manage all the national land, and this is done in public interest aimed at sustainable, economic development and social welfare, in accordance with procedures provided for by law. In that regard, it is the state that guarantees the right to own and use the land. The state also has rights to expropriation due to public interest, settlement and general land management through procedures provided by law and prior to appropriate compensation (RoR, 2005).

Paragraph four of Article 14, of the 2005 organic land law stipulates that “swamps that may be productive in terms of agriculture are among private state owned land” (Ibid.). Swamps are very useful in rural areas of Rwanda, especially in regions where the rainfall is unpredictable and where arable land on hillsides is overused or very acidic.

In the next section we will discuss farming in the traditional context and the agricultural reform introduced during Belgian reign between 1916 and 1962. It is also an opportunity to learn about resistance to reforms before the 1994 genocide.

## Farming in pre-genocide Rwanda

Even though there were many other crops in the region, the most common in the Great Lakes region since the Iron Age, as Jan Vansina (2001: 27) reveals, were finger millet and sorghum.<sup>50</sup> Other historians and archaeologists believe that banana, squash, beans, yams, sweet potato and some other crops are also among the most ancient (Schoenbrun 1998: 79; see also Maquet 1954; Kanyamacumbi, 2001).

According to Kanyamacumbi, some of those traditional crops were appreciated because of their utility not only for food but also for manufacturing local wine and beer. Local traditional wine from banana and beer as well as from finger millet and sorghum are still coveted in rural Rwanda and poor areas of Rwandan cities (Kanyamacumbi, 2001: 171). The popularity of these beverage results from the traditional belief that drinking water is an indication of *ubutindi* (misery) and no one likes to be called *umutindi* (miserable).

### The farming in traditional Rwanda

According to Kanyamacumbi (2001), the alcoholic drink made from bananas and sorghum, the pruning knife, the traditional tools such as the hoe or *isuka*, the *inkondo* or *inkonzo* (also a kind of hoe used to prepare the field before the proper work of digging) found in Rwanda, were common in other Sub-Saharan African countries as well. However, the author shows that Rwandans had a particular way of cultivating and nurturing crops and plants compared to other neighbouring populations: before cleaning the soil and sowing seeds, Rwandans made successive clearings, using not only green manure by burying weeds in the soil, through the formation of platforms and small dams as well as erosion protection on hills, but also by using dung as manure (Ibid., 171). The following methods of agricultural practices are still common in Rwanda and in neighbouring areas of the Great Lakes region in general: *gutema ishyamba* (clearing), *kubanjura* (digging), *gutabira* (mounding), *gutera* (sowing), *kubagara/kufira* (weeding), *gushingirira* (support climbers), *gusarura* (harvest collection), *guhunika mu bigega/mu*

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<sup>50</sup> Sorghum is an annual grass that is extremely drought-tolerant and which is an excellent choice for arid and dry areas. It is specially adapted to weather extremes and is a very stable source of nutrition.

*mitiba* (harvest stocking/in silo). Rwandans were very proud both of their ability to carefully prepare the earth and of their ability to take care of certain crops; they believed they did better than their neighbours in the region (Kanyamacumbi, 2001: 179).

Climbing beans and other types of beans and bananas are very important to the diet. While finger millet and sorghum are frequent throughout Africa, the care Rwandans give them is unique. The advantage Rwandans have had, was that they associated farming and livestock and when the weather was favourable, the harvest was good enough, which made them proud of their style of farming (Ibid.). Although Kanyamacumbi and other scholars argue that those skills of preparing fields and growing crops were rooted in Rwandan tradition, Silberfein argues that Rwandans learned those practices from colonial agronomists and then incorporated them into their everyday activities. He says for example that soil-erosion control was introduced by colonial administration and not a culturally Rwandan practice (Silberfein, 1998: 177).

Similarly, as Scott puts it, an agricultural agronomist in the Shire (*Tchiri* in Malawi) had confirmed that “Africans didn’t have the training, skill and equipments to diagnose soil erosion troubles”; they lacked the “scientific knowledge” to plan and remedy those issues (Scott, 1998: 226). Indeed, as I will show below, the techniques that improved agricultural production in Rwanda were a work of colonial administration introduced in order to curb the recurrent famines that occurred in different periods since the beginning of the 1900s. The most known famines are of 1904, 1906, 1910, 1917–1918, 1924–1925 and 1943–1944 (RoR\_MINEDUC, 2006: 81; see also Singiza, 2011: 95).

## **Resistance to agricultural reform in pre-genocide Rwanda**

During the period of Belgian power, great reforms happened in Rwanda. The most well-known was initiated in 1920 by a Belgian agronomist called George Mortehan, whose name was finally given to all reforms that arose during the Belgian colonial power (MINEDUC, 2006: 45).

### *The Mortehan reforms*

The Mortehan reforms included the introduction of the first national identity, and the political, administrative and economic

reforms. Through it, *ibikingi* (large land for both cattle grazing and farming which was managed by a chief of a lineage) were abolished and replaced by *sous-chefferies* (a French word comparable to *umurenge* or the sector) and *chefferies* (or districts). The chiefs who were nominated by the King were removed and replaced by the most influential Tutsi, including the trained princes and other nobles (RoR\_MINEDUC, 2006: 47). This administrative reform has had consequences on the king's political power; it weakened his power to appoint or sack chiefs. The economic reform encompassed mining, business, agriculture, etc. However, as this section focuses on farming, I will only discuss the Morteahan strategies introduced to curb famine and promote cash crops.

The new farming practices which were introduced include drainage, irrigation, erosion control, animal husbandry and the introduction of new crops for food to curb famine (including sweet potato, cassava) and cash crops for export (such as coffee, tea and pyrethrum) (Ibid.).

Through the farming reform, a practice that Rwandans named *shiku* (digging new land or hard fallow) was introduced. As Adiaenssens (1962) argues, *shiku* was a place indicated by the colonial administration where people were forced to cultivate and grow sweet potato and cassava crops (also chosen by that administration) as a strategy of fighting the 1924–25 Gakwege famine. Fallow land could however be cultivated on *ku mpama* (or very dry land) on the condition that it was situated near the road so that the white supervisor could see it. In general it was very useful, but it did not prevent the Ruzagayura famine to ravage the poor population in 1943–4. One of the reasons was that cultivating fallow land was in fact greatly despised by the people because it required hard work. Moreover, it required too much effort for such a poor harvest, or a harvest intended to be exported while the grower continued to starve.

Also people were forced to work beyond their capacity. A chief could, for example, ask a peasant to cultivate a very large field within only two days. With this oppression, Rwandan peasants learned how to cleverly resist the chief. For instance, instead of cultivating the entire piece of land, the peasants used to bring the soil from the cultivated land and cover the uncultivated part with it so that when seeing it from far away, the chief would think that the whole field was cultivated (RoR, 1999: 23–27). In fact, this is a form of resistance similar to Scott's everyday acts of

resistance (Scott, 1985). Actually, even if Rwandan peasants were starving, they disliked clearing new lands and cultivating fallows not only because the soil was hard to plough but also because the crops that were introduced seemed strange in their culture (RoR, 1999). For instance, in the 1930s one of the chiefs of the western region who disliked the cassava crop proliferated a rumour to prevent the collection of cassava stems from Kigali. In fact, when the population was called to collect cassava stems the chief told them that it was a way to trap them in order to bring them to the Belgian Congo working in mines. Actually, during that period there was a kind of forced migration of Rwandans to Katanga (Belgian Congo) to work in the mineral industry. Therefore, as that chief knew that Rwandans disliked to be sent to the Congo, he spread the rumour in order to prevent them to go to Kigali to collect cassava stems (MINEDUC, 2006: 81).

The Paysannat system was introduced early in the 1950s. This system entailed a rationalised distribution of habitation, including gardens of standardised size, each split into two parts (one for food and another for cash crops), along which parallel streets were created primarily to facilitate the motorised collection of the coffee harvest (Silvestre, 1974: 107–9; Silberfein, 1998: 261). The *paysannats* were first developed in the southern and central territories in Shyogwe. In the 1960s and 1970s, the scheme was then expanded to other territories, including the eastern and south-eastern territories, among which was the former Kigali rural district, especially the Masaka sector (Silvestre, 1974: 104–5). Havugimana reveals that the *paysannat* scheme was intended only for less-populated plains and plateaus, while the mountainous and overpopulated areas, representing 85% of arable land, remained scattered; the main reason for avoiding the extension of the scheme to the whole countryside was that it was politically difficult to implement redistribution of land in settled areas (Ibid., 30).

Moreover, the Paysannat system was introduced as a way of promoting the cultivation of cash crops, especially coffee, while also encouraging structured settlement. In fact, it was a system structured on two-hectare parcels on which there were both an owner's residence and an *igipimo cy'ikawa* (a garden of coffee plants) along parallel streets. It was introduced in Rwanda in the 1950s by the Belgians but it was limited to select regions, including the areas where this study was carried out; that is,



Masaka (in the former Kigali rural district) and Shyogwe (in the former Gitarama district or current Muhanga district).

However, the objective of Paysannat changed over time. According to Sylvestre, it initially aimed to improve cash crop agriculture on organised sites with structured dwellings. Eventually its aim was to produce high yields to supply food to towns and regions which were starving during the colonial era. Ultimately it was expanded during the distribution of arable land to the landless from densely populated regions, so as to solve the problem of chronic food shortages in those specific regions, and, through intensive agricultural methods, to incite a transformation from subsistence living to intensive agriculture (Silvestre, 1974: 104; see also Umugwaneza, 2003; HRW, 2001). This would mean that the Paysannat was only possible where land was vacant because owners had fled escaping killings during the Hutu revolution or it that it comprised the state's land reserve.

Other reforms which the colonial power imposed through forced labour were, among others: construction of roads, building terraces to control erosion in hilly areas, taxation, etc. Concerning the latter, a fiscal tax collected from every active male was added to the annual taxes for the King's warriors, funding things such as spears and arrows; while for land leases, tenants had to provide agricultural products (a cow, pots, etc.) (see RoR, 1999: 27–8). The implementation of these systems was generally so coercive that some of male population chose to flee to neighbouring countries. The most attractive country was, as Prunier shows, Uganda, where the British colonial system was quite different and less coercive compared to the Belgian system. He notes:

Between 1920 and 1940, the burden of taxation and forced labour by the native population increased considerably. Men were almost constantly under mobilization to build permanent structures, to dig anti-erosion terraces, to grow compulsory crops (coffee for export, manioc and sweet potatoes for food security), to plant trees or to build and maintain roads. These various activities could swallow up to 50–60% of a man's time. Those who did not comply were abused and brutally beaten. The result was a manpower exodus towards the British colonies, especially Uganda where there was plenty of work (Prunier, 1995: 35).

The act of fleeing is also an example of resistance to authority (see Vinthagen, 2012). Similar to Prunier (1995), Uvin (1998) asserts that like other human beings, Rwandans obey orders and laws (Uvin, 2001: 84) but can also resist them. Some of the forms of resistance that Uvin unveils are, among others: “evading taxes, smuggling, avoiding mandatory meetings, escaping from forced labour (work), engaging in petty crime or illegally migrating” (Uvin, 1998: 63). These types of resistance in pre-genocide Rwanda look like what Scott sums up as everyday acts of resistance (Scott, 1985).

During colonial era, there was also resistance to socio-cultural reform, especially during the reign of the King Yuhi V Musinga (1896–1931). Indeed, there was fierce resistance to Christianity introduced by the first priests – *Père blancs* (or White fathers) – whose role was to convert primitive people to a more civilised religion and ban their traditional primitive cultural practices. The King opposed conversion to Christianity and the population adopted his position and fiercely resisted as well (MINEDUC, 2006). The King’s resistance resulted in his deportation from his country to the Congo in 1931. He was then replaced by his son Mutara III Rudahigwa, who had already been trained in and converted to Catholicism (Ibid.).

As the Rwandan population was naturally loyal to the King (Prunier, 1995: 35), the impact of the new king’s conversion resulted in a massive conversion of the population to Christianity. The King was divine (MINEDUC, 2006), therefore, everybody owed him loyalty. Various oral traditions also contain expressions indicating similar obedience. For example, *yego mwidishyi!*, which literally means ‘yes always’, which can, for instance, be compared to soldiers’ obedience to their superiors when they are commanded to go on mission which they know is perilous. This is a kind of blind obedience whereby the subordinates indiscriminately obey the King’s orders, even in conditions which are to their own disadvantage. Obviously, the subordinates comply out of fear for any harmful consequences that would result from their resistance to the dominant order (see also Scott, 1985). Generally, this manifests when the dominant order is inflexible or tyrannical.

### *The situation after independence*

Although food production in Rwanda had improved in the 1960s and 1970s, by the late 1980s the production has decreased and the

poverty rate has increased significantly (Bigagaza, et al., 2002). The 1994 World Bank report confirms this decrease and its causes in the following quotation:

Rwandan farmers have historically defied predictions of disaster by keeping food production ahead of population through a variety of measures but that this success stalled in the early 1990s because of increasing land scarcity, low use of fertilizers to improve soil fertility, a high risk environment due to thin markets, lack of irrigation, and little intercropping, and excessive government intervention in favour of coffee and in opposition to other crops, including food crops (World Bank, 1994: vii).

By the late 1980s, the country was experiencing localised famine. Poverty was worst in the south-central region of the country, while the north-west (home to the President of the Republic, Mr Habyarimana) was more or less well-off (Ibid., iv; see also Storey 2007: 367). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, despite their efforts, Rwandan farmers failed to increase agricultural productivity in proportion to the pressure of a growing population. The population rate was increasing significantly and the situation had gradually worsened over time with the incessant rise of birth rates, which resulted in land fragmentation due mainly to the inheritance system (Diamond, 2005). Newbury adds that this situation had worsened in such a way that the vast majority of Rwandans were landless and many others had access only to a very small piece of land (Newbury, 1995: 14). According to Bigagaza, et al., the Habyarimana regime introduced a number of other activities and reforms aiming at improving living conditions of the rural population, including land redistribution, resettlement of internal migrants and agricultural reform in the form of terracing and investment in cash crops such as tea, coffee and pyrethrum (Bigagaza, et al. 2002: 70). However, some of these reforms faced a number of challenges, including incoherent methods of modern farming, land sterility, smallholdings due to land fragmentation, etc. But the most upsetting challenge was the scarcity of arable land, resulting from unequal distribution of public land and *ibikingi* being abandoned by Tutsi landlords (Ibid., 65–69). The same mistakes – of unequal land distribution benefiting only Hutu elites in power and excluding the majority of the poor landless

population – made by the first regime after independence were later repeated by the second post-independence regime. The following table shows the average of national landholding and land scarcity resulting from land fragmentation:

**Table: 4.1. The average of hectares in landholding per household**

<b>Year of survey</b>	1949	1960	1980	1990
<b>Average hectares per household</b>	3(ha)	2(ha)	1.2(ha)	0.7(ha)

**Source:** Adapted from Bigagaza, et al. (2002: 68)

Rwandans experienced similar inequalities in land distribution during the pre-colonial and colonial periods with the *ibikingi* owned by a small number of Tutsi herdsman. This was also seen among the Hutu elites in power after their 1959 revolution. In 1984, for example, figures from a survey show that 43% of the poor population owned only 15% of the total cultivated land while 16% of rich families owned 43% of the total arable land (Bigagaza, et al. 2002: 69). In 1988, another survey carried out in five prefectures shows that 60% of agricultural households owned only 31.4% of arable land, while 20% of the population owned 46.9% of the total cultivatable land. Just before 1994 genocide, another survey estimated that out of 92% of the total population, 45% of rural population were unemployed or landless peasants (Ibid., 69). And in 1994, 57% of rural households owned less than one hectare, while 25% owned less than half a hectare. The Agency for Cooperation and Development (ACORD) also conducted a survey in 1998 on 271 village households in Rwanda and found that about 26% were landless (Ibid.). Based on these figures, it is obvious that the rural population in Rwanda lived in critical conditions.

However, the Habyarimana regime had acknowledged the critical conditions that the rural population faced and sought solutions to land and agricultural issues. This included four strategies of solving the problem of land scarcity: (1) agricultural intensification, which was a continuation of what was initiated by the Belgians before independence, (2) family planning, which was

a matter of delaying marriage and spacing births as a way of preventing further land fragmentation, (3) fighting erosion, which meant using fertilisers and selected seeds to increase production and finally, (4) the adoption of zero-grazing systems, which limited cattle farming and aimed to protect the environment and encourage domestication of small animals such as goats, pigs, rabbits, etc. (Bigagaza, et al., 2002).

Another solution to rural poverty stemming from landlessness, was, as mentioned earlier, to encourage internal migration away from overpopulated areas, especially from the southern and the northern prefectures (Gisenyi, Kibuye and Gikongoro) to the less populated ones (Kibungo, Umutara and Kigali rural district) (see figure 4.2.). Rurangwa argues that this population movement affected the less populated regions as well and that the problem of land scarcity became a national issue (Rurangwa 2002). In some areas, internal migrants were free to choose their own way of settling, which was generally scattered, while in other areas, including Masaka and other neighbouring communes of the former Kigali rural prefecture, inhabitants were forced to continue with the paysannat system introduced by Belgians in the 1950s (Bigagaza, et al., 2002: 70–4).

## **The context of re-settlement in pre-genocide Rwanda**

Traditionally, Rwandan families lived in roundhouses, covered with a roof shaped like a dome. This was common in Sub-Saharan Africa before Europeans introduced burnt bricks, iron sheets or tile materials to build stronger housing and create modern agglomerations (Kanyamacumbi, 2001: 160–1). Compared with modern housing, the traditional housing in Rwanda is pejoratively nicknamed *Nyakatsi*<sup>51</sup> (a hut with thatched roof, see figure 4.3.).

The figure (4.3.) below shows an example of the type of habitation in Rwanda before the colonisation, where a cluster of houses is surrounded by *urugo* (or an enclosure) made of ficus. In *igikari* (or outer surface behind the main houses but inside the enclosure) there are other small huts used for granaries and religious rituals. The materials used to build a hut (*inzu*) were mainly wood, reed, straw for the roof and clay for the floor and

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<sup>51</sup> *Nyakatsi* means hut built only of grasses or mud bricks with a roof made of thatch.

termite soil for the walls. Plant fibre mats were used to separate the rooms inside the hut. As illustrated below, this kind of clustered housing was dispersed on hills and often each hill was a property of an extended lineage or a clan (Ibid.).

As illustrated in the figure (4.3) below, each lineage or kinship grouping was living in the midst of its farm on the same or closest hills (Silberfein, 1998: 13). Although families were living in the same compound, each of them kept their discretion and secrecy (Kanyamacumbi, 2001: 179). Everyone in a family could eat and have a drink at home except during a particular feast such as that of the newborn, marriage, a religious celebration or ancestor worship such as '*guterekera* and *kubandwa*'<sup>52</sup> (Ibid., 179–80).

As we have seen, Rwandans traditionally lived in settlements of groups of houses (*ingo*) and the number of houses depended on the number of married women in the enclosed space. The other houses were cottages or temporary housing identified as *indaro* (*ibiraro* in plural). Schoenbrun argues for instance that the *indaro* (or a small hut at the back side of the enclosure) was usually temporarily used as a cultural shrine but that those for the tombs of dead ancestors were permanent (Schoenbrun, 1998: 136).

**Figure: 4.3. *Urugo* (a single home) and *ingo* (traditional habitation with multiple units)**



**Source:** photo Rwanda Development Gateway- NUR

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<sup>52</sup> *Guterekera*, as Silberfein (Ed.) (1998: 136) explains, was the rite of appeasing the ancestor's spirits and *kubandwa* or performing the cult ritual to *Ryangombe* (the messiah) which brought the living and the dead (ancestors) together, in order to maintain good relations between them. Available online: see <http://www.grandslacs.net/>.

There was no single isolated house in the traditional Rwandan housing system. The parents' house and those of married sons were grouped together and surrounded by a fence<sup>53</sup> and together formed a community housing unit called *umuryango*. This small community was composed of the father, his wives, their children, including single and married children and grandchildren in a same enclosure (Kanyamacumbi 2001: 192–3).

Married children had the right to *umunani*<sup>54</sup> (literally eight) or the groom's inheritance. This encompassed a new home, a field for crops and/or a piece of banana plantation, some cattle, food, household utensils, etc., depending on his parents' economic capacity. In Kinyarwanda, this ceremony was called *Kubakir'umwana*, meaning to build and equip the household for the new couple (Ibid: 193). These practices were rare in poor families or in regions where land was scarce. However, lack of inheritance was a family problem because it is traditionally a right that a male<sup>55</sup> must obtain an inheritance (Takeuchi & Marara, 2011: 126).

The consequence of the lack of inheritance was that it strengthened the clientele system whereby males of marrying age had to seek a patron in order to get a piece of land. Inheritance was a problem in poor families, and the situation was worsened after the clientele system was abolished in the 1950s. Thus, as land was the main resource for inheritance, the land problem had always been among the factors at the heart of conflicts in rural areas and it would become one of the root causes of the 1994 genocide (Bigagaza, et al., 2002: 75).

### *The origin of imidugudu in pre-genocide Rwanda*

Traditionally, in the Rwandan context, the *umudugudu* was in the form of groups of huts close to each other and to the place where the chief representing the King resided or at the King's court. In other parts of the country, this habitation was a kind of small groupings of dispersed habitations based on kinship (Ibid., 54). The first agglomerations in the Western style started with

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<sup>53</sup> Hedge of ficus or reeds (see RoR\_MININFRA, 2004).

<sup>54</sup> *Umunani*, in Rwandan tradition, is the part of resources (cattle or land) that the father provides to his sons when they reach adulthood (see Takeuch and Marara, 2011: 126).

<sup>55</sup> The current inheritance law gives both males and females the same rights to inheritance.

colonisation. Catherine argues that the first was built in Kigali by Kandt, the first German administrator (*le résident*) of Rwanda from 1907 to 1913 (Catherine, 2004: 53–5). However, the most significant change in settlement structure was established by the Catholic White fathers missionaries in the 1890s and a bit later by other missionaries, including Seventh-Day Adventists and other Protestant churches which established rural missions with a number of services such as churches, schools, health centres, etc. (Silberfein (1998: 156). In addition to the rural mission stations, which grew to a point of becoming the main rural agglomerations (Silberfein, 1998: 157), a new scheme associating farming and settlement called *paysannat* was, as I mentioned above, also introduced (Silvestre, 1974).

The next part of this chapter focuses on the two reforms under study. However, before I start the discussions about settlement and agricultural reforms, I first introduce the motives behind these reforms, especially those linked to the 1994 Tutsi genocide.

## **The 1994 genocide: factors and consequences**

As we can see below, there was no single factor that led to genocide; so many factors are distant and others are immediate. For instance, in addition to ethnic divisions between the Hutu and the Tutsi since the 1950s, and the consequences that followed (such as forced exile of monarchists, assassinations of the Tutsi, civil wars, other factors that fuelled genocide), there are land-based inequalities, arable land scarcity in rural areas, poverty and rural exodus, unemployment among the majority of youth, etc.

For instance, according to the Senate report, since the 1959 Hutu revolution, whenever there was political problem, even among the Hutu, the political leaders used to seek a scapegoat and it was always the Tutsi minority who were targeted (Senate, 2006). This situation contributed to a very big number of Tutsi refugees in neighbouring countries. As peaceful return was always rejected, Tutsi refugees had, since 1963, constantly attempted to return by force to their homeland but in vain. It was with the 1990 invasion that the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) succeeded at imposing negotiations and overthrowing the regime in 1994 after vain peace negotiations which had culminated in genocide (Power, 2002).



There are different versions of the immediate cause of the genocide which claim that the Tutsi genocide began in 1959 and continued until 1994, but there are many others specifying that the main trigger was the death of the President Habyarimana (Melvern, 2006: 1–19; IRDP, 2008: 32–51; Boudreaux, 2009: 62–65; Bigagaza, et al. 2002: 53–58). Although there are many versions concerning when the Tutsi genocide started, it is obvious that even though killings of the Tutsi had begun in 1959, some scholars believe that the Tutsi genocide began just after the crash of presidential plane, which killed all passengers, including President Habyarimana (see also Melvern, 2006: 133–6). However, there is a version which states that the genocide was planned in advance, given that the militia *interahamwe*<sup>56</sup> (literally meaning those who fight together) were well-trained to kill the Tutsi before the crash of presidential plane.

Melvorn argues that young people who participated actively in the 1994 genocide were the youth wing of all political parties formed since 1991, when other political parties were allowed to start their activities (Melvern, 2006: 25–6). Youth involvement could also be justified by other internal conflicts. Ford, for instance, argues that internal problems were not exclusively socio-political and interethnic conflicts, there were also economic crises since late 1980s – the most threatening of which was the 1989–1990 drought and famine, which devastated many parts of the country and the south in particular (Ford, 1998: 189; Magnarella, 2005: 817). This phenomenon has contributed to an increasing rate of poverty and unemployment among the youth (Bigagaza, et al., 2002: 71).

Young Hutu were not only willing to exterminate the Tutsi, whom they believed were the enemies of the Hutu, but they also believed that once the Tutsi were exterminated, they would be able to take their land and other properties. Thus, the economic crisis was also among the main motives of the massive youth-participation in the implementation of the 1994 Tutsi genocide. Even though the Hutu youth were initially trained to support the respective political parties which emerged with the afflux of multiparty system in 1991, they were finally lured by extremists who didn't want to share power with other political parties and the

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<sup>56</sup> *Interahamwe* is a Hutu militia that used different sorts of weapons in 1994 (and shortly before) to exterminate the Tutsi ethnic group.

RPF<sup>57</sup> (a Tutsi rebel party) in particular. Even though negotiations were underway, the youth mission of supporting their respective parties in political struggle was transformed into that of protecting their country against those they called *Inyenzi* (cockroaches), who had attacked from Uganda (see also Bigagaza, et al., 2002; Melvern, 2006). As previously stated, it is obvious that economic factors were among the main catalysts that sped up the 1994 Tutsi genocide.

After the failure of Arusha Peace Agreement, resulting from the crash of the presidential plane on 6 April 1994 which killed President Habyarimana and all other passengers, killings of the Tutsi and some Hutu political opponents to the Habyarimana regime started. Immediately the war between the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* or Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and the Rwanda Patriotic Front resumed. The RPF rebel movement – through its armed branch the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) – managed to defeat FAR on 4 July 1994, and formed the Government of National Unity on 19 July 1994.

As the country was completely destroyed, the new government faced many challenges, including trauma and miserable conditions which needed humanitarian aid and international intervention as well as the need for solid national security due to the threats from neighbouring countries, especially DR Congo. However, the most challenging issues concerned internal security – the ability to protect the nation from invasion and to assure individual protection of survivors in particular. The socioeconomic challenges mainly included the urgent interventions needed in order to accommodate thousands of internally displaced persons and the influx of returnees, i.e. hundreds of thousands of old caseload refugees<sup>58</sup>, and shortly after, in 1996, the new case returnees<sup>59</sup> (UNDP\_CCA, 2000: 1). The table below shows the influx of the returnees from both the old and new case refugees and

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<sup>57</sup> RPF is a political movement mainly composed of Tutsi refugees, but which has, especially in the 1990s, recruited many Hutu, who also aimed to fight the injustice and inequalities that characterised the Habyarimana regime.

<sup>58</sup> Old case refugees refer to Rwandans who had left the country from late 1950s to early 1970s due to ethnic violence and persecution. Some researchers go further and even include those who, for various reasons (including the drought in the 1980s), had left up until the 1990s (see Bigagaza, et al., 2002).

<sup>59</sup> The new case returnees are Rwandans who fled when the war resumed in 1994 and then were forced to return en masse in 1996.

the internally displaced persons; it illustrates the figures of repatriated refugees and the internally displaced population from 1994 until 1999.

**Table: 4.2. The influx of old and new caseload refugees and internally displaced persons**

Year \ Indicator	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Old caseload returnees	900,000	146,476	28,646	19,615	7,723	890
New caseload returnees	200,000	79,302	1,271,936	199,183	3,167	19,337
Internally displaced persons	1,000,000	–	–	–	720,000	40,000

**Source:** Adapted from the Common Country Assessment 1999–2000 report (2000: 2).

The next sections of this chapter examine settlement and agricultural reforms which, with other strategies, aimed to solve the problems of settlement and to attempt a sustainable solution of land scarcity in a small, densely populated country where more than 90% of the population mainly subsist on rural farming. However, before I focus on each reform under study, I will, in order to understand their nature, present briefly what Rwanda Vision 2020 framework is about and its goals.

### **The Rwanda Vision 2020**

The Rwanda Vision 2020 is a framework of long-term strategies for development. Basically, the ambition behind the vision framework is to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country by the year 2020. The framework has three main goals namely: short-, medium- and long-terms goals<sup>60</sup> through which six pillars

<sup>60</sup> The short term is about the ‘promotion of macroeconomic stability and wealth creation to reduce aid dependency’; and the medium-term targets ‘transforming

and three crosscutting areas are undertaken. The first medium-term framework through which these reforms were undertaken is the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper I (PRSPI) that started in 2002. Then followed the paper II, also known as Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies (EDPRS) implemented in 2007 simultaneously with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) introduced by the United Nations (UN) in order to emphasise the pro-poor programmes (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000; 2002; 2007). Two among the six Vision 2020 pillars are examined in this study. That is, on the one hand, the 'Infrastructure development' from which rural settlement reform is a component among others, and on the other, the 'Productive and Market Oriented Agriculture'. The study of resistance through both reforms was motivated by the fact that focusing the research on one reform alone would not provide a comprehensive understanding of farmers' resistance.

## **The grouped settlement reform in post-genocide Rwanda**

As mentioned above, the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi has had considerable impact on settlement in general. Most of houses were destroyed and there was need to accommodate old returnees and internally displaced people. During the emergency, just after the 1994 genocide, international humanitarian organisations, in collaboration with the Government of National Unity, managed to accommodate vulnerable groups, particularly genocide survivors whose homes were destroyed, the homeless among the old case refugees and other internal landless persons. However, the problem of accommodating all landless with a garden for farming was very complex considering the number of the needy compared to the amount of available public land in reserve. Therefore, there was a need for government strategies to overcome the problem.

The *umudugudu* (grouped settlement) system, which was proposed in the 1993 Arusha Peace Agreement, was the only alternative available which could accommodate old case refugees and the internally displaced population from the war areas (the former Byumba prefecture), which were under RPF control.

After realising that the problem was extremely complex, the government of national unity opted for an inclusive strategy that

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from an agrarian to a knowledge-based economy'; while the long-term is about 'creating a productive middle class and fostering entrepreneurship'.

would avoid problems linked to land scarcity. Thus, a policy of land use management was adopted in 1997 aiming to restructure the unplanned rural areas. This policy was to provide possible solutions to arable land scarcity, low agricultural productivity, environmental problems and inaccessibility of basic infrastructure to the majority of rural households, which could then improve their living conditions and prevent land-based conflicts, etc. (RoR\_MININFRA, 1997). The updated 2009 version of the National Human Policy Settlement in Rwanda stipulates, for instance, that:

The resettlement policy involves finding adequate housing for a category of households which are homeless, often poor and vulnerable (widows, orphans, persons with disability...) and bringing all the houses in the *imidugudu* [plural of *umudugudu*] to an acceptable level in terms of housing and access to social and economic services. The programme of settlements in blocks *imidugudu* is under way and has made it possible to settle returnees (old and new cases) and displaced persons on planned sites, and to create an environment of social integration for different strata of the Rwandan society (RoR\_MININFRA, 2009: 5).

This was planned in the framework of Rwanda Vision 2020, on the pillar of Infrastructural Development, in its component of land use management, where grouped settlement reform was emphasised as one of the strategies for developing the countryside. The following quotation gives comprehensive details:

Rwanda will pursue a harmonious policy of grouped settlements based on economic activity. Rural settlements organized into active development centres will be equipped with basic infrastructure and services. This system of settlement will serve as an entry point into the development of non-agricultural income generating activities. Land will be organized and consolidated so as to create adequate space for modern and viable farming (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 19).

This quotation highlights the importance of grouped settlement for not only accommodating the needy the same way as it was during

the emergency periods, but also to develop the countryside while improving the standards of living of rural population in general.

As mentioned above, the overall rationale behind the 1997 settlement policy (see RoR\_MININFRA, 1997, 2004), the 2009 updated version of national Human Settlement Policy (see RoR\_MININFRA, 2009) and other policies connected to land and agriculture (RoR\_MINITERE, 2004a,b; RoR\_MINAGRI, 2004a,b), was to restructure the rural areas aiming to accommodate a maximum number of landless persons.

With the 2009 updated settlement policy, the government of Rwanda committed itself to achieving the overall objective of the rural Human Settlement Policy, to improve the existing system of rural settlement for a sustainable socio-economic development. The specific objectives in the rural human settlement sector are, among others: “the rationalization of land use, the establishment of new homes, the rational management of land, the creation of other income generating activities, the establishment of basic facilities closer to the population” (MINIFRA, 2009: 26).

Despite that the government knew the challenges which implementation of the settlement policy constituted, it was also believed that it offered the unique alternative solution to the problems related to land in rural Rwanda. Among the expected advantages of the settlement policy or *imidugudisation* policy are: the maximum arable land can be allocated to agriculture; houses and support amenities built on selected sites; easy access of services provided; distance and costs of support amenities and basic infrastructure reduced; security; opportunity for mechanised agriculture and easy use of agricultural inputs (Ibid., 27).

To realise this government strategy, all Rwandans, especially those living in the scattered countryside, have been invited to live in *umudugudu* (or grouped settlement). In 1997, the year where the first policy of grouped settlement was launched, in some regions of the countryside, especially in Eastern Province and Northern Province (former Kibungo, Umutara, Byumba, Gisenyi and later on Ruhengeri), farmers were forced to resettle in selected sites, but afterward, in other parts of the country, use of force was no longer permitted (HRW, 2001). However, other measures, such as prohibiting the construction of new houses in non-selected areas for *umudugudu* and the reparation of old scattered houses, have been taken into consideration in order to gradually discourage scattered settlement in the countryside (Hahirwa and Naramabuye,

2009). The figure below illustrates a less populated scattered settlement to be reorganised in order to ease land use consolidation for agricultural intensification and other socioeconomic activities.

**Figure: 4.4. Illustration of scattered settlement**



**Source:** Photo of a hill in Kigali rural region taken by the author in 2010.

The figure below illustrates a structured *umudugudu* in one of the Kigali rural areas.

**Figure: 4.5. Illustration of grouped settlement**



**Source:** Photo of a structured *umudugudu* taken by the author in 2011.

In order to eradicate *Nyakatsi* (see the example in figure 4.3.), the government accommodated vulnerable persons by granting them a completed house, or by giving them materials for construction, including sheet iron and nails, on the condition that they build their new homes in the indicated *umudugudu*. The special programme of eradicating *Nyakatsi* is the most accelerated programme launched since 2008 under a campaign entitled *Bye Bye Nyakatsi*. It was assumed that in 2011, *Nyakatsi* would be a part of the history of Rwandan settlement (Rutareka, 2011). Therefore, all districts' mayors were requested to treat it as a priority issue and implement it immediately.

Except in some very remote areas where cattle herders build temporary huts and some very poor peasants are still waiting for the government grant, traditional huts have almost been eradicated in Rwanda. The success was achieved through the local authorities' effort, particularly the districts' mayors who swore before the President of the Republic to achieve what they promised him and to serve the population according to a specific schedule (Rutareka, 2011). Obviously, there are two only ways of achieving the assigned goals: one is to use coercion or to accommodate them through the assistance of the government or NGOs.

### **The situation of imidugudu from 1997 to 2011**

From 1996 to 2011, MININFRA, in collaboration with MINALOC (especially its local staff), has achieved tremendous outcomes in some areas and poor results in others. Apart from resettling vulnerable groups and homeless people during the emergency periods, the implementation of grouped settlement has reached all parts of the country, even the most remote ones. The third Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey or *la troisième Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages* (EICV3) of 2010/2011, in comparison with the EICV2 of 2005/2006, shows that there are some achievements at national level but with important variations from one district or province to another. The table below illustrates some examples.



**Table: 4.3. The percentages of housing in *imidugudu***

	<b>EICV2 (2005–2006)</b>	<b>EICV3 (2010–2011)</b>
<b>Country level</b>	18%	39%
<b>Eastern Province</b>	55%	80%
<b>Northern Province</b>	14%	38%

**Source:** Data from EICV3 report from 2012.

As indicated in this table, in 2011 the housing at national level was 39%, while the MININFRA report of 2008 had projected that it would be 45% (RoR\_MININFRA, 2008). Moreover, the EICV3 report of 2012 indicates that apart from the province of Kigali city, which has its own unique context, in other provinces, i.e. Southern Province and Western Province, the percentage is lower compared to the figures given in the table above (see RoR\_NIRS, 2012: 56). The huge gap between figures between provinces is well-justified in the literature of *imidugudu* implementation from the period of emergencies just after the 1994 genocide. In fact, in contrast to the period following the emergency, where international humanitarian organizations provided important support to the Government of National Unity in order to help accommodate the huge number of landless/homeless, the government alone was not able to continue accommodating the homeless after that period. The former prefectures that received more support from international NGOs were Kibungo<sup>61</sup>, Byumba and Bugesera<sup>62</sup> – one of the former communes of Kigali Ngali<sup>63</sup> prefectures (see figure 4.2. of the map of Rwanda before the 2005 administrative reform).

Since 1994, the government has only been able to accommodate the vulnerable groups, including genocide survivors and very poor farmers. Other persons who were expected to be able to afford the costs for new housing were encouraged to use their own means in order to free up space for agricultural

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<sup>61</sup> With the 2005 administrative structure reform, the former prefecture of Kibungo is part of Eastern Province.

<sup>62</sup> Byumba is now part of Northern Province.

<sup>63</sup> Bugesera is now part of Eastern Province.

intensification (see HRW, 2001; RoR\_MININFRA, 2004; RoR\_MINAGRI, 2010).

Apart from Eastern Province, which has had the advantage of humanitarian assistance, there have been obvious delays to the *imidugudu* implementation in other provinces. Another element that contributed to the success in Eastern Province and part of Northern Province is that those who had resources to afford a new house at the selected sites were forced to relocate. They were coerced into compliance due to widespread fear during the emergency and because grouped settlement was considered to be a solution to the risk of security disturbance. However, after the emergency periods, it was no longer easy for the local authorities to force farmers to relocate to the selected site for *umudugudu*. The farmers of Kibuye prefecture are one of many examples of resistance to grouped settlement policy, because, according to Havugimana, the farmers pretended to have better housing than those proposed to be built in *umudugudu* (see Havugimana, 2009). This is, for instance, the reason why relocation in many other areas has been delayed.

A similar case of forced resettlement which succeeded is as Havugimana states, that of the 1997–1998 insurgences in parts of the former Gisenyi and former Ruhengeri prefectures, where farmers were forced to resettle in *imidugudu* in order to separate them from the insurgents who were hunted by RPF soldiers (see Havugimana, 2009: 44). Farmers have fiercely resisted abandoning their properties but in cases of such severe security issues the rule must be respected. Thus, everyone was finally requested to leave and resettle in *umudugudu*. In brief, there are two mechanisms of *imidugudu* implementation: (1) the first mechanism is performed under social welfare support and after the period of emergency, those who are eligible to receive support are determined through *ubudehe* scheme, i.e. where the most vulnerable are identified by the population itself at grassroots level (see OSSREA, 2006); and (2) with the second approach of *imidugudu* implementation, the less vulnerable population is compelled to use its own resources in order to buy a plot within the selected sites and build a house of the required standard.

These two mechanisms can be compared to the Lipsky's model of street-level bureaucracy (see Lipsky, 2000), but the contexts are totally different. With regard to Lipsky's model, SLBs have discretion of deciding on which needs the social agency

should provide (Ibid., 13), but in the Rwandan context its either the population itself that decide, in case of welfare to vulnerable groups, or the local leaders, considered STBs, enforce a policy without discretion to decide or to modify the directives and regulations as designed by the policymakers. The only decision that the local leaders make in relation to settlement policy is to select sites for *imidugudu* but they do not to determine the costs of expropriation and compensation or decide that in some areas the policy enforcement is not needed (see Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007).

### **The agents in charge of settlement policy implementation**

The district mayor signs a performance contract known as *Imihigo*, swearing to achieve their commitment by working hard for the development of the district and to provide excellent service to the population they serve (McConnell, 2010: 3). However, aside from providing essential services and developing communities, all activities in relation to *imihigo*, including settlement reform, are performed at the sector level under the supervision of the district's administrative and technical staff. Subsequently, the staff at the sector level works in the field, hand in hand, with the cell's executive secretary and their assistant. Moreover, the chiefs of the lower administrative unit – the *umudugudu* – are the most important informants as they are generally supposed to know everything about each household and all individuals in their appointed boundaries. At the lower level, for instance, the chief of the *umudugudu* plays a very crucial role of reporting and diffusing the information from both upwards (from the *umudugudu* council and committee) and downwards (from the district through the sector and cell). Moreover, they join the staff from the sector and cell levels to supervise the implementation of development activities including the *Bye Bye Nyakatsi* programme and grouped settlement implementation.

### **The selection of the sites for grouped settlement**

The selection and plan of the *umudugudu* site had to take into consideration the suitability with regard to availability of or potential for future provisions of important infrastructural issues such as water, energy, schools, health care facilities and land for

agricultural production (MINITERE, 1999). However, the new policy had several consequences. For instance, in 1996 with the return of new case refugees, some NGOs were reluctant to work in the housing sector. Many of them were specifically reluctant to support the grouped settlement to people whose houses were demolished during the war. They preferred repairing existing houses or constructing new ones on the sites where the destroyed ones stood. Actually, their reluctance to support the policy was based on failures that occurred in other African countries. In Tanzania, for instance, even Nyerere, the initiator of villagisation policy, or the *Ujamaa* Villages Policy, has later acknowledged the failure of his policy, which was attributed to the lack of the recipients' participation and failure to provide promised facilities (Silberfein, 1998: 291). Rwandan leaders were also aware of these failures, but they hoped to avoid them. Thus, NGOs were not allowed to repair damaged houses or build new ones in the scattered areas; rather, they were requested to build new houses in the selected sites for *imidugudu*.

### **The issue of expropriation and compensation**

In Paragraph 22 of Article 2 of the 2005 organic law N° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005, the term “[e]xpropriation is defined as an act of taking away individuals’ land by the state due to public interest but prior to respect of procedures provided for by law and prior to payment of adequate compensation.” The 2007 law adoption refers to the decree Law n° 21/79 of 23 July 1979 relating to expropriation as confirmed by Law n° 01/82 of 26 January 1982.

A farmer whose land is used for public interest<sup>64</sup> receives compensation. The 2007 law stipulates that compensation can be in

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<sup>64</sup> Acts of public interest, according expropriation Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007 in its Art. n° 5, are among others: roads and railway lines; water canals and reservoirs; water sewage and treatment plants; water dams; rainwater canals built alongside the roads; waste treatment sites; electric lines; communication lines; airports and airfields; motor car parks, biodiversity, cultural and historical reserved areas; acts for security and national sovereignty; hospitals, health centres, dispensaries and public health related buildings; schools and other related buildings; government administrative buildings and their parastatals, international organizations and embassies; basic infrastructure and any other activities aimed at public interest which are not indicated on this list that are

kind, that is, to swap land thus giving the owner another plot of the same dimensions elsewhere. It can also be monetary, and if the deal is for public interest, then the law determining the price of land is used, but if it pertains to an agreement between private individuals, the price is negotiable. However, expropriation is one of the most challenging issues in relation to grouped settlement policy. On the one hand, those whose land is selected for *umudugudu* are always discontented, on the other, the ones who are supposed to buy the plot in the selected sites in order to build and then relocate claim to be unable to afford the costs for a new home (Hahirwa and Naramabuye, 2009).

In concluding this section, it is important to keep in mind that except during the emergencies and especially for the landless and homeless in general, farmers who were resettled by force were especially discontented for many reasons, including being unprepared for the changes, then forced to live in *umudugudu*. Another issue concerns the exceptional delays in joining *imidugudu* in many parts of the countryside. The figures in table 4.3. indicate that only Eastern Province has achieved a successful implementation in such kind of group housing. However, I cannot ignore the recurrent problems of poverty, scarcity of arable land and land-based conflicts among others that seem to be the node of delays of grouped settlement.

As rural development involves both planned settlement and agricultural development, the two policies are quiet inseparable. The next section discusses the agricultural reform in post-genocide Rwanda, starting with a brief introduction of what farmers are required to do, then discuss a bit about the agricultural policy and how it is implemented and who implements it.

## **The agricultural reform**

Traditionally, farming is the main livelihood in Rwanda (Kanyamacumbi, 2001: 160–1). As mentioned early in this chapter, the recent NISR report indicates that 91.5% of Rwandans still subsist solely through agricultural activities (RoR\_NISR, 2012: 100; see also ICARRD, 2006: 7). As I mentioned earlier, in the historical context of agriculture, Rwanda has always been characterised by recurrent famines and structural poverty. Through

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approved by an order of the minister in charge of expropriation, at one initiative or upon request by other concerned persons.

the Morthan reform introduced in the 1920s, Belgian colonists introduced new food and cash crops aimed at curbing the recurrent famines and poverty among Rwandan peasants.

The post-independence regimes did the same with some improvements. However, although there were some improvements, the majority of rural farmers remained poor. Committed to finding a sustainable solution, the post-genocide Government of National Unity has developed a long-term framework entitled *Rwanda Vision 2020* in which there are six main pillars for development and three crosscutting issues. Among the six pillars, the agricultural reform is the fifth, that is *productive and market oriented agriculture*. Its main ambition is to transform the agriculture from subsistence farming to highly productive farming (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 11–17).

The Rwanda Vision 2020 document indicates that the agricultural sector has, since independence, been considered to be the engine of economic growth (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 17). However, the agricultural sector did not reach its expected goals of curbing persistent food insecurity and poverty (Ibid.). As the Government of National Unity acknowledged that the agricultural sector is in any case among the main priorities for poverty reduction and economic development, it was strengthened through Poverty Reduction Strategy Program1 (PRSP1) and then Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies (EDPRS) (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000; 2007). The table 4.4. below shows an overview of some of the targets of the agricultural sector based on the long-term framework of Rwanda Vision 2020.

**Table: 4.4. Selected national and agriculture-related goals in Vision 2020**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>
Population (million)	7.7	10.1	12.71
GDP/capita (constant 2000 US\$)	220.0	400.0	900.0
Poverty (percent)	64.0	40.0	30.0
Agriculture GDP growth (per cent)	9.0	8.0	6.0
Land under modernised agriculture (per cent)	3.0	20.0	50.0
Soil erosion protection (percent total land)	20.0	80.0	90.0

**Source:** Adapted from ROR\_MINECOFIN, 2008.

Considering the figures indicated in this table in comparison with what was achieved as indicated in the EICV3 report of 2012, one can say that from 2000 till 2010, some of these targets seem to be more or less achieved. For instance, the difference between the projected demographic growth (10.1 million) and the recent figures (10.8 million) seems to be minor; soil erosion protection is about 83.5% instead of 80.0% as projected, while poverty has fallen to 44.9% instead of 40% as projected (RoR-NISR, 2012). For the application of fertilisers, the percentages are not comparable since the indicators do not correspond to one another, but considering that the imported quantity has constantly increased with only 4,612 tonnes in 2004 to 30,500 tonnes in 2009, it's obvious that the use of fertilisers has increased considerably (see RoR\_Office of Ombudsman, 2010: 25).

To achieve its targets, the current government not only aims to achieve national economic growth but also to improve the population's living standards; i.e. targeting the most disadvantaged through a pro-poor policy and aiming to reduce poverty (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000). In order to understand the agricultural reform in Rwanda and the strategies that the government uses to deal with the encountered challenges, and of course without disregarding those encountered by the farmers, this section briefly discusses the specific subdivisions of agricultural reform, namely farming in marshlands and on hillsides, land use consolidation,

monocropping, the voucher system for fertilisers and improved seeds, empowering cooperatives and the livestock system.

Before describing each of these subdivisions of the agricultural reform, here is a brief reminder of the situation of subsistence farming in relation to other income generating activities in Rwanda. The table below illustrates the predominance of subsistence agriculture (85%) in comparison with other activities especially the non-farm occupations (RoR-NISR, 2012: 90–1).

**Table: 4.5. Economic activities undertaken in previous 12 months by persons aged 16 and above.**

<b>EICV 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
Any of the following work in previous 12 months <sup>65</sup>	
Cultivated own land	85%
Paid agricultural activity	35%
Worked for salary or wages in non-farm	28%
Run a non-farm small business	25%
VUP <sup>66</sup> Public Works Programme	2%

**Source:** Adapted from NISR (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda), 2011: 91.

Apart from subsistence farming performed individually, Rwandans are traditionally characterised by agricultural solidarity. In fact, similar to other pre-capitalist societies as Scott argues (Scott, 1976) rural farmers in Rwanda seek to assure a minimum income and maximise the security of households within their villages through collective action (see also Scott, 1976: 9). For instance, the innovated traditional practice of *ubudehe*<sup>67</sup> is a

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<sup>65</sup> As the survey was carried out in 2011 and that the report was finalised in the beginning of 2012, the 12 previous months the author noticed, were in the interval of 2010 and 2011.

<sup>66</sup> VUP or Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme offers labour to poor people as a way to improve their livelihood.

<sup>67</sup> *Ubudehe* is a collective work...a kind of social capital...involving trust and reciprocity...



collective action that farmers use to support each other. This practice of mutual support in ploughing was also used in the 1970s in cooperatives and informal associations in form of savings and credits or *ibimina* (*ikimina* in a singular form)<sup>68</sup>. This is a matter of rotating savings and credit associations, introduced as an additional income to the small one the households get from farming (see also Popkin, 1979: 10; Musahara, 2004: XXI; OSSREA report, 2006: 5). Such kind of income from rotating savings and credit contributes significantly to the increase of off-farm activities. Another alternative source of income that has contributed to decreased underemployment among the rural population and dependence on ploughing, is *Haute Intensité de la Main d'Oeuvre* or Labour-Intensive Work (HIMO), through which the local administration provides temporary manual labour to the poor and the poor landless in particular; thus assisting them in opening bank accounts and familiarizing them with saving and soliciting credits for small investments.

## **Agricultural reform in wetlands and on hillsides**

### *Wetlands*

The wetlands/marshlands have many advantages for human livelihood. In Rwanda as well as other tropical countries where the weather is unpredictable, wetlands absorb water during the rainy season and gradually release the stored water during the dry season. The released water is used not only for everyday household activities, but also and especially for the irrigation of farms in wetlands and on uplands. Therefore, wetlands are precious resources for human livelihood. In fact, farmers consider them as the foodstuffs' granary. However, their products feed not only the farmers who exploit them, but the human beings in general (see also Nabahungu and Visser, 2011: 4).

In its programme which aims to ensure food security, MINAGRI is committed to developing wetlands in order to guarantee foodstuff for consumption and for trade in case there are

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<sup>68</sup> *Ikimina* or *Tontine* is defined in Art. 2, paragraph 18 of the Law n° 40/2008 of 26/08/2008, as a principle by which a group of people whose members are committed to pay a predetermined sum at a given frequency to a common fund in order for one of them to take it; the arrangement determines how each member pays, the period to pay and how each member receives the funds at the right time.

surpluses. Through its different projects and research centres such as Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB), Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP), Rwanda Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) as well as its main international partners, such as the Germany Agro Action (or Agro Action Allemande), International Fertiliser Development Centre/Catalyze Accelerated Agricultural Intensification for Social and Environmental Stability (IFDC/CATALYST) and others, it has invested and significantly developed the marshlands (see also RoR\_Ombudsman, 2010).

With its status of being a state property, MINAGRI has the full rights to decide which crops are to be grown in wetlands, and indeed, all developed wetlands/marshlands are required to produce the crops that MINAGRI targets to improve the most, such as maize, rice, soya beans, etc. After having developed the wetland, farmers who are entitled to exploit it are required to organise themselves in cooperatives so that their representatives bridge the relationships between MINAGRI or the private sector and farmers in any situation. In fact, farmers' cooperatives are run by farmers themselves in order to spread and implement the government agricultural policy. The government, through MINICOM, has therefore opted to strengthen them throughout the countryside in order to implement agricultural reform and all other activities connected to it that contribute to food security and poverty reduction in rural areas in general. The tasks that MINAGRI assigns to agricultural cooperatives are on the one hand, the provision of fertilisers, seeds, pesticides, garden equipment, machinery, etc., and on the other, to assure the delivery of the harvest to the wholesalers or factories and cash or bank transactions.

### *Hillsides (uplands)*

Hillsides or uplands refer to various kinds of landscapes, including hills, slopes, plateaux and plains. Generally, the landscapes comprise farmers' private properties where they grow crops, plant trees, have their pastures, etc. and housing. Even though Rwandan farmers exploit their fields and home gardens individually, some are also organised in cooperatives as well. Those who are organised in cooperatives can also benefit from MINAGRI with the same advantages as those organised in marshlands. In uplands, farmers grow a variety of crops and some receive more encouragement from MINAGRI than others (see RoR\_Office of

the Ombudsman (2010). This will be detailed below under the heading 'Monocropping'.

### **Land use consolidation**

There are some scholars who argue that the increase of fragmented land decreases the productivity, while land use consolidation increases it (Lerman and Cimpoeis, 2006: 4). In order to minimise land fragmentation and therefore increase productivity, the parliament has adopted, sanctioned and promulgated an organic law that strengthens land use and management and defined as “a procedure of putting together small plots of land in order to manage the land and use it in an efficient uniform manner so that the land may give more productivity” (see Art. 2 of 2005 Organic Land Law 14 July 2005). Land consolidation is one of the strategies that the Rwandan government uses in aiming to optimise land utilisation. It is planned in the Rwandan Vision 2020 document that through grouped settlement, land will be reorganised and consolidated for modern and viable farming (MINECOFIN, 2000: 17).

According to the Crop Intensification Programme (CIP) evaluation report by International Centre for Soil Fertility and Agriculture Development (IFDC):

Land use consolidation helps integrate and coordinate agricultural production efforts of individual landholdings. It facilitates the achievement of a unified production situation characterized by collaboration in types of crops grown, sale or processing of agricultural products and/or distribution and marketing of agricultural products.<sup>69</sup> Land use consolidation also helps to address other issues such as erosion control under radical terracing scheme, rainwater harvesting and management, extension work, hillside irrigation, crop protection, etc. (IFCD, 2010: 6).

In Eastern Province for instance, the policy of land consolidation was more or less successful, but in other parts of the countryside, farmers are still reluctant to implement it on hillsides (Musahara, 2006: 11).

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<sup>69</sup> Draft Ministerial decree related to Powers and obligations on agricultural land use consolidation in Rwanda.

MINAGRI's intention is to grow one selected crop in accordance to the specifications of the applicable area. It had planned that plots should be used by owners and each owner is supposed to grow the same selected crop in the consolidated land. Furthermore, the selection of crops for each region was motivated by its specific climate conditions and economic potentiality. When explaining 'land use consolidation', the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) was clear:

Land use consolidation is a procedure of putting together small plots of land in order to manage the land and use it in an efficient uniform manner so that the land may give more productivity. It helps integrate and coordinate agricultural production efforts of individual landholdings. It facilitates the achievement of a unified production...it also helps to address other issues such as erosion control under radical terracing scheme, rainwater harvesting and management, extension work, hillside irrigation, crop protection [...] (IFDC/MINAGRI, 2010: 6).

In reference to FAO (2003: 21), Musahara and Huggins (2006: 312) argue that comprehensive land consolidation serves not only to re-allocate parcels together so as to improve agricultural production as MINAGRI highlights, but also to add many other components which would lead to an integrated rural development. Those other components include "village renewal, support to community agro-processing, construction of rural roads, construction and rehabilitation of irrigation and drainage systems, erosion control measures, environmental protection [...] creation of social infrastructures including sports grounds and other public facilities" (Musahara and Huggins, 2006: 312). But the above-mentioned scholars argue that the form of land consolidation varies from one country to another, and even though it violates individual property rights, it contributes to "improve the agricultural productivity" and rural development in general (Ibid., 19).

This policy has actually, at least where it succeeded, achieved incredible results in crop production (Rurangwa 2002: 8; see also IFDC/MINAGRI, 2010: 6; RoR-MINECOFIN, 2012: 14). However, Musahara is sceptical of the policy's practicality since the rate of land fragmentation is high. His concern is that its implementation could alienate a number of households due to their

dependency to their multiple scattered plots that serve them in producing food crops in different seasons, and with various crops aiming to safeguard soil fertility and water (Musahara, 2006: 11).

## **Monocropping**

Traditional farming, also known as subsistence farming, generally uses multiple crops on the same garden/field, with the aim to collect various foodstuffs in a short time in order to guarantee balanced, everyday sustenance. For instance, at a banana plantation it is common that farmers sow other crops to be harvested in the short-term; these include beans, peas, wild vegetables, etc. Moreover, in other fields farmers combine more than one crop to be harvested in the short-term in order to keep up a period for fallow. That is, for example, maize and beans or peas; maize and groundnuts; beans or peas and groundnuts, etc. From this traditional practice, I believe that this technique of mixing crops is advantageous to farmers with a small plot of land because they optimise its exploitation with diversified food for daily survival. This traditional practice of farming was not limited to uplands/hillsides only but included wetlands as well. In fact, farmers used to grow sweet potatoes, vegetables and many other crops in wetlands during the dry season.

Even though enforced monocropping can entail a risk of food shortage among small-scale farmers (see also Ansoms and Rostagno, 2012: 436), monocropping of some crops is not new in Rwanda. It was traditionally practiced in Rwanda and it was particularly common for farmers with large-scale land. It included, for instance, sorghum, sweet potatoes, groundnuts, maize, finger millet, cassava, etc. (Kanyamacumbi, 2001).

With agricultural reforms in post-genocide Rwanda, monocropping has been associated with regional crop specialisation (see RoR\_Office of the Ombudsman, 2010). It is enforced in marshlands and on hillsides as well. However, the implementation of this reform continues to face some challenges since it has been delayed on hillsides while wetlands have implemented it successfully. The following table shows the regionalisation of crops by province:

**Table: 4.6. Crop intensification programme: selected crops per province**

Province	Selected crops
Southern Province	Cassava, rice, coffee, tea, wheat, potatoes, maize
Northern Province	Tea, coffee, passion fruit, potatoes, wheat
Eastern Province	Maize, rice, banana, cassava, coffee, pineapple, beans, sorghum
Western Province	Tea, coffee, wheat, cassava, fruit ( <i>marakuja</i> ), potatoes, maize, vegetables, rice, pineapple, beans
Kigali city	Fruits, vegetables, coffee, mushrooms, pineapple, tomatoes

**Source:** Office of the Ombudsman, 2010 report on RADA

As shown in this table, crop distribution, also known as *regional crop specialisation*, was challenged not only because of the introduction of unpopular crops but also due to inadequate approaches of its implementation. According to Huggins, the idea of transforming the rural regions was not bad (Huggins, 2009), but as peasants fear risks, and the implementation was enforced rapidly, farmers didn't have enough time to think about and take strategies to prevent the risks of investing in uncertain situations, which led to their reluctance. Huggins and some other scholars add that in many parts of the country farmers have manifested their grievances in response to policy implementers' brutalities (Huggins 2009: 298; see also Ansoms, 2008, 2009; Pottier, 2006; Newbury, 2011). However, based on the ENGIN report – apart from rare cases where selected crops for wetlands were resisted due to poor production resulting from poor ecosystem study, namely that of Rugeramigozi marshland (see RoR\_MINITERE/ENGIN<sup>70</sup>, 2010) – generally farmers have successfully exploited wetlands; only hillsides still present some delays due to the slowness of the land consolidation system (IFDC, 2010).

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<sup>70</sup> ENGIN is the acronym of Entreprise du Génie d'Infrastructures or Company of Infrastructures Engineering.

## **Agricultural reform through voucher system**

In order to increase agricultural production, the government of Rwanda, through MINAGRI, has introduced a system whereby small scale farmers are given subsidies of inputs through a voucher system. The 2010 IFDC evaluation report explains the procedure of the voucher system. According to the report, the fertiliser voucher is a subsidised title of payment for agricultural inputs prepaid in local banks scattered throughout the countryside, which are given to the farmer in order to exchange with the dealers. Normally, farmers pay 50% cash of the value of the inputs and supplement the payment with the voucher that they have been granted by the CIP representative, an agronomist or a local leader. Then the dealer will use the voucher at the indicated local bank in order to receive the remaining amount equivalent of 50% of the total value of the delivered inputs (IFDC/MINAGRI, 2010: 12).

The government subsidies are 50% of the normal price of fertilisers per kilogram. This strategy of in-kind subsidy is mainly geared to increase the production of maize and wheat on hillsides and in marshlands without sufficient water to grow rice. The remaining 50% is paid by the farmer either immediately or after the harvest:

Vouchers are one of the most reliable means to make sure that the subsidies on the inputs granted by governments for the development of the agriculture sector and for the improvement of farm income reach their target – the farmers, while integrating distributors into the procurement chain in order to ensure the development and sustainability of the distribution chain (Ibid.13).

It often happens that, due to various reasons, some farmers, especially the poor, sell part of the subsidised fertilisers to other farmers or vendors. Although there is no law, presidential or ministerial decree or order that penalises such act, each district council decides on which punishment is given to anyone caught selling subsidised fertilisers. Punishments inflicted on the recipient of subsidised fertilisers include detention in prison for some days and/or a fine; while the buyer is forced to bring back what s/he has bought, is fined and is imprisoned for some days. These punishments have considerably discouraged cheaters to continue

luring poor farmers with a small additional amount on the cash they pay before the subsidy.

### **The system of livestock**

Animal husbandry is of great importance to farming in Rwanda. In the same way that Rwandans give importance to agricultural products, they give it to domestic animals as well, and the cow in particular. However, even if the cow is very important in Rwandan culture, other small domestic animals including sheep, goats, pigs, etc. and poultry are also well-nurtured (Boudreaux 2009: 91; Kanyamacumbi, 2001).

The cattle feed the owners with their milk, meat and butter and traditionally their skin was used for clothing. Besides all these advantages, cow dung was and still is used in farming as fertiliser. The practice of marrying agriculture and animal husbandry saved herding Rwandans from disasters stemming from land infertility and recurrent famines which devastated crop growers without domestic animals. Before and during the colonial era, there was still enough grazing land, but with the increase of crop farmers, they gradually became scarce. Therefore, the previous governments, especially the Habyarimana regime, have opted to develop subsistence and cash crop farming and to promote small ruminants other than cattle. In fact, except rare ranches belonging to some top government leaders, among the ordinary population cattle herders were rare, but there were small landholders who possessed a limited number of cows at home in a barn. With the repatriation of old case refugees after the 1994 genocide, the number of cattle herders has increased again. Thus, there arose a strategy of limiting wandering cattle in order to avoid conflicts between cattle herders and crop growers, and which also limited environmental destruction (RoR\_MINAGRI, 2006).

Grazing cattle outside pastureland or outside livestock barns is among the crimes violating the Organic Law N° 04/2005 of 08/04/2005 which determines the modalities of protection, conservation and promotion of environment in Rwanda. In its Article 82, this law prohibits the destruction of the local flora. Grazing cattle without restraint is the practice most destructive to local flora. However, the law does not state which kind of penalty applies to cattle herders who violate the law. Therefore, the kind of penalties placed on those who graze at night or who let their cattle



graze in fallows, in protected bushes or somewhere else outside of the grazing land fenced off from the farming land, are decided at the local level; that is, the provincial or district level. In areas where I carried out my research, if cows are caught grazing at night or any time, the cattle owner pays a fine of 10,000 Rwandan francs per cow (equivalent to \$15.30 US). If a cattle herder is caught cutting grass in a pasture or a farm belonging to someone else or on public property, s/he is fined roughly between 50,000 and 100,000 Rwandan francs (equivalent to \$76.90 US and \$153.80 US respectively). Such fines are quite heavy, but they are also efficient in preventing violation of the law.

### *The Girinka programme*

In order to curb malnutrition among Rwandan children, the government of Rwanda introduced a programme of decreasing the rates of malnutrition known as *Girinka* (or providing one cow per poor household). Poor households that have malnourished children and possess a field of at least 0.25 ha are eligible to receive a heifer or a milk cow. However, other poor households may also be eligible on the condition that they have children and a field, and are chosen to be among the needy at the *umudugudu* level. However, in addition to milk provisioning, the provided cow has other advantages, such as using its dung to fertilise the soil, which contributes to increased agricultural production and therefore increased income for poor households. As planned, the beneficiary will give the first calf to one of other selected needy households. Thus, the cow also becomes a source of social harmony, cohesion and friendship among neighbours in the community. Some poor households have increased their income through *girinka*, shifting from the class of the very poor households to that of poor households (see also RoR\_MINAGRI\_RARDA, 2006).

### **Agricultural reform implementers**

Although there are many stakeholders, the implementation of agricultural and animal husbandry policies is done through a channel built through MINAGRI centres, partners to local authorities and particularly the agro-technicians at all local levels, i.e. from the province, to district, and sector levels. At the top level, the Crop Intensification Programme (CIP) and Rwanda Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) share

responsibilities and involve international organisations as well as the private sector. The overall goal is to implement the national agricultural policy by developing and supplying agricultural technologies, providing advice and training, etc.

The specific strategies that CIP implements are, among others, promoting irrigation in marshlands as well as on hillsides, erosion control, marshland development, import and distribution of fertilisers and improved or hybrids seeds, training of agronomists, identification and consolidation of areas, subsidisation of transportation of seeds and fertilisers, storage of products, collaboration with the private sector, etc. (IFCD/MINAGRI, 2010: 4). Similar activities or some of them are also performed by IFCD/CATALYST, German Agro-Action (GAA), local NGOs and unions including CCOAIB, ARAMET, ARDI, Imbaraga and many others. There are also commercial partners from the private sector who sell seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. and others, including factories, that buy the harvest through farmers' cooperatives (RoR\_MINAGRI, 2001; IFCD/MINAGRI, 2010). In fact, farmers in cooperatives would like to evaluate their harvest based on their in-kind and cash investment, but they are often silenced by the buyers. The consequence of being forced to accept the price determined by the buyers is that farmers become discontented.

Similar to settlement reform, the agricultural policy implementation uses two mechanisms: (1) the social welfare mechanism is used to support vulnerable groups through the *girinka* programme of providing one milk cow per poor household. Here, the local population is given the ability to identify those who are eligible, i.e. the most vulnerable households with children at risk of malnutrition; (2) the agricultural policy reform has to be enforced following the directives from MINAGRI (the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources), i.e. consolidate lands, implement monocropping, apply fertilisers and use improved seeds. In comparison to street-level bureaucracy, there is no difference with the explanations provided for settlement policy reform implementation. The contexts are totally different, given that the agents of reform are not given the opportunity of discretion, autonomy and routinisation (see Lipsky, 1980: 81–6).

# Political decision-making and opportunities in post-genocide Rwanda

## Political decision-making

In Rwanda, the main policy guidelines and strategies of policy implementation are designed at the ministry level, mostly with the assistance of external experts. Policy guidelines are generally designed with or without extensively consulting the beneficiaries beforehand (see IRDP, 2008: 101). Some are simply top leaderships' political preferences without necessarily being based on citizens' opinions (see Ansoms, 2009), while others are based on opinions collected from the citizens concerning the actual needs (see RoR\_MINALOC, 2005). However, both political preferences from the top leadership and from the grassroots' preferences contribute, in a certain way, to the process of policymaking and implementation. For instance, district development planning based on policy guidelines are generally designed after consulting the beneficiaries following the *Imihigo* (or performance contracts) process.

This process begins with households where each one fills in a form of needs assessment. The chief of *umudugudu* collects the information and identifies common targets. The chief then passes them on to the cell level where common priorities are analysed and sent to the sector level where compiled priorities are integrated with key national issues and priorities which constitutes a draft of district *imihigo*. The draft is scrutinised at the district level and presented to the district council in order to make a final draft before its approval at the ministry level where it is signed by the district mayors with the president of the republic (RoR\_MINALOC, 2012: 17).

The *imihigo* scheme mainly includes social and economic policies, which also include settlement and agricultural reforms. The goals of settlement and agriculture policies are twofold, i.e. a component of economically empowering the very poor and that of enforcing policies for a speedy development. On the one hand, the aim was to enforce reforms in line with government policy guidelines involving all household categories. With this component, it often happens that the implementers attempt to resettle residents from an area to another or compel them to abandon cultivating certain crops and substitute them with others.

Such decisions are made especially when they have to achieve what they had promised to achieve before the president of the republic. On the other hand, there is a pro-poor policy aiming to empower the poorer groups through free-of-charge accommodation, giving them subsidies for agricultural inputs, granting them a subvention of one cow per poor household, and promoting farmers' autonomy through their cooperatives, etc.

### **Political opportunities**

The question of whether there are opportunities (O'Brien, 2006: 25) for collective action to protest against a policy, a decision, or any other requirement incompatible with farmers' preference in Rwanda, can be answered through what the constitution says and how it is concretely manifested at the grassroots level. Firstly, in its article 48, the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda specifies that "every citizen has the right to defy orders received from his or her superior authority if the orders constitute a serious and manifest violation of human right and public freedom" and that of 33 stipulating that in accordance with conditions determined by law, "freedom of thoughts, opinion, conscience, religion, worship and public manifestation thereof is guaranteed by the State in accordance with conditions determined by law. Propagation of ethnic, regional, racial or discrimination or any other form of division is punishable by law" (RoR, 2008: 22).

Looking at the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, one could believe that protesting any human rights violation is allowed. Indeed, to some extent, some demonstrations are allowed. Instances of this include: demonstrations against gender-based violence and child abuse, collective actions condemning genocide and supporting the "genocide never again" ideology and/or walking in support of the policy of unity and reconciliation, etc. However, the right to demonstrate is often refused collective protests which result from any form of mobilisation of protesters and especially when it is hostile to government interests (see Bendaña, 2006: 16–18; see also Uba, 2007), to state legitimacy or to that of a particular higher authority. Therefore, violating an announcement proscribing a collective action, or any other decree forbidding protest, may lead to prosecution of the actors. One of the examples of banned public and collective demonstrations is the reaction to the disappearance of a member of *Partie Social*

Imberakuri (or Social Party Imberakuri) on 23 June 2010, which resulted in the arrest of the president of said political party, Mr Bernard Ntaganda, because the protestors had confronted the police (Garrison, 2010).

Similarly, to demonstrate against a government decision, a policy or a law elected by the Chamber of Deputies or to publish an article criticising or contradicting an official discourse or a national policy, can also lead the protestors or the author of the article to trouble with public security agents, particularly the national police. For instance, in 2010, the High Media Council – a public media institution – suspended and then banned two newspapers, namely, *Umuseso* newspaper, which was accused of insulting the head of state and was subsequently banned in 2010; and in the same year, *Umuvugizi* newspaper was also accused of inciting insubordination among the police and army against the ruling political party – the RPF – and was then banned as well (RNA Reporter, 2010).

Based on these examples, one may say that the freedom of thought, opinion and expression, etc., are violated in ways that are in contradiction with the Constitution, other ratified international conventions and human rights' instruments (see Art. 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified and implemented by Rwanda, and Art. 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda).

Whether a demonstration is authorised or proscribed depends on the purpose of the demonstrators, but generally, authorisation is refused if it can affect national security or contradicts the state political orientation or rejects a policy/law. As O'Brien and Li argue, the latter may indicate that the political opportunities and window for critical action in Rwanda is only partly opened (O'Brien and Li, 2006: 25) or simply inhibited.

In case of unjust prohibition to protest collectively and publically, the protesters may appeal to justice. This means that security agents or local authorities who violate such human rights should be charged with that violation in a court of law (see the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2008), but it is rare that such trials take place. Mostly, citizens do not turn to judicial institutions, not only because they are afraid of retaliation, but also because they pretend that they would not have fair justice (see IRDP, 2008: 97; Thomson, 2009), which is not always true since those who trust the courts, the police hierarchy and/or the office of

the Ombudsman, are usually considered fairly (see IRDP, 2008: 97; RoR\_Ombudsman Office, 2011).

## **Conclusion of the chapter**

This chapter focused on land, the traditional context of settlement and agriculture and reforms during the colonial era and those that followed it through post-independence regimes and then during the post-genocide period. The discussion pertains to land issues in relation to population dynamics and rural transformation policies. Scholars and many reports have revealed that Rwanda is a small and densely populated country, which makes land issue a basis of conflict and, as one of the factors of poverty, land is among the main barriers to rural development. Land is very important in Rwanda, since it is the main source of subsistence; therefore any decision without the owners' consent is susceptible to grievances.

Settlement reform has been challenged, for instance, due to many factors including cultural values, poverty, lack of involvement of reform recipients and the issue of expropriation. Likewise, agriculture reforms are challenged, especially on hillsides due to fear of risk in investing in upland farming. Although other factors contribute to their reluctance, the unpredictability of rainy seasons and lacking irrigation capacity seem to be among the main ones. Traditional farming associated with livestock and the role of cattle in Rwandan tradition have also been highlighted and served to understand the importance of ruminants, particularly the cattle in Rwandan culture. All the aspects discussed in this chapter help to clarify, in one way or another, the context through which settlement and agricultural reforms are undertaken and which contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of resistance to reforms under study.

Moreover, this chapter allows the reader to understand the context in which the research was carried out. It specifically allows the reader to understand the official approaches which the agents of reforms are expected use while implementing the reforms under study.

Regarding political opportunities as discussed above, one may say that although collective protests are formally allowed in Rwanda, they are rare and in practice only allowed when not seen as threatening or criticising the government. Thus, the political space for open resistance is very limited.

# 5

## Farmers' experience of and resistance to settlement reform

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### Introduction

This chapter is one of the two empirical chapters. It answers the three research questions: (1) How do farmers experience the implementation of settlement reform, (2) How do farmers react to settlement reform? And (3) which reactions can be considered acts of resistance? I will analyse farmers' resistance to *umudugudu* (grouped settlement) policy and how agents of reforms (local authorities and community workers) handle the problems related to its implementation. For instance, I will analyse how interviewees are persuaded to accept grouped settlement reform and how they experience the process of reform implementation into everyday life. Then, the interviewees and I will attempt to identify which of their reactions should be considered acts of resistance.

The chapter is organised around themes that have emerged from farmers' statements in relation to each of the above-mentioned research questions. These themes, categories and subcategories serve as headlines under which I will describe and interpret the interviewees' statements.

### Everyday experience of settlement reform implementation

In my study, the interviewees share their experience about settlement reform and the way it is implemented. This research involves all the six categories of households described above and each category of interviewee seems to have an opinion different from that of those in the other categories. The majority of the *abakire* (wealthier) and a number of the *abakungu* (in fairly favourable economic conditions), who generally have properties in rural areas but reside in countryside agglomerations, support the

government policy of relocating everyone to *umudugudu* in order to consolidate arable land for agricultural intensification. Some of those who intend to become professional farmers exert a lot of effort in order to convince small landholders of the importance of grouped settlement policy and other policies connected to it, including land reform and agricultural transformation (SS/23/G; SS/45/Go).

Farmers' experience of settlement reform implementation varies from one to another. The *abatindi* (poorer) and *abakene* (relatively poor) without government relief seem to be the most affected. When they are forced to relocate, most of them reside in odd shelters – usually made of either banana leaves or a mixture of banana leaves and used sheet iron – while they wait for accommodation. Their everyday living conditions are also hampered by the consequences of staying far from their small gardens. One of the most widely known consequences for both the sheltered and those who are still waiting for assistance is that they experience food shortages due to the lack of wild vegetables and other various food products usually mixed into their small garden. The advantage of the garden around family units is that with the compost and/or manure from domestic animal dung, the yield of the mixed food products, even if insufficient, prevents starvation and child malnourishment in particular. The details about the effects of settlement reform are developed in the subsequent section where I use farmers' statements to answer to the research question of *how do farmers experience the implementation of settlement reform*.

### **Lived experience of settlement reform**

Everyone has an opinion about the reforms. Interviewees report a number of reforms initiated in their respective locations, but most of them underscore grouped settlement. During the interviews, interviewees were given space to describe what they know about settlement reform, especially about who initiated it, how it has been implemented and how it affects their everyday lives.

For example, according to a 46-year-old poor farmer of the third category of poor households, local leaders spare no effort to explain the advantages of residing in grouped settlement (ID/5/R). My interviewees had a general understanding of the rationale behind the reform, but most of them, especially those who were



not yet resettled in *umudugudu*, did not want to hear about it. The reasons for their reluctance to conform vary from one individual to another. However, the most frequent reasons are socio-cultural and economic. Namely the intimate link between the farmer and his land and other values (see also Eyles, 1986); while the economic reasons relate to the capacity to afford the costs of reform in comparison with their income (RoR\_MININFRA, 2004). The following quotation illustrates how farmers understand the slowness of grouped settlement implementation.

We are all aware of the advantage of settlement reform. It's really good to live in a house with electricity, close to tap water, and where all services such as health centres, schools, markets... are easily accessible. But our income doesn't allow us to afford the required type of house. Look for example: I'm in the third category of poor households, which means that I cannot receive assistance in the form of materials for construction. Yet, I cannot afford a house that costs about 7 million Rwandan francs [\$10,769 US<sup>71</sup>]. The only source of income I have, which is obviously insufficient, is from farming on a small piece of land that I use along Nyabarongo<sup>72</sup> marsh (ID/5/R).

In fact, this family consists of seven individuals, that is: the interviewee, his wife, and five children. He owns a piece of arable land, measuring 0.75 hectares, which was inherited from his parents. His parents had two hectares that they bequeathed to him and his young brother, and they only remained with 0.50 hectares, which will serve as a reserve or *ingaligali*<sup>73</sup> for any daughter who would get a divorce and need to come back to the parents' home.

The same farmer has also acquired a piece of land measuring 0.30 hectares in the Nyabarongo marshland from the local authority. On it he grows tomatoes that are supplied to a local tomato factory. When the weather is good he earns around 90,000

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<sup>71</sup> In 2011 the average exchange rate of one USD was estimated at 650 Rwandan francs.

<sup>72</sup> Nyabarongo is the name of the river that passes nearby Rusheshe and the swamp along it.

<sup>73</sup> *Ingaligali* in Rwandan tradition is the land that a chief of lineage (large family) could give to a woman without resources either because her husband has abandoned her or died.

to 120,000 Rwandan francs [150 to 175 USD] from growing tomatoes only (Ibid.).

The other arable land inherited from his parents serves for food. When the harvest is good he sells a few bunches of banana, a few kilogrammes of cassava and beans. The little money he gets from these food products is used to buy salt, food oil, kerosene for lamps, etc. With the money that the factory pays for the tomatoes he pays the children's tuition fees, buys clothes and pays other household expenses, and also puts some into savings. However, it does happen, that due to long dry season or heavy rains, crops are damaged in the marshland and/or in the hillside garden, which worsens the household living conditions. When local authorities have asked him to sell part of his land and transform his home according to the model of the requested standard, he has always maintained that his income has been insufficient to implement what he has been asked to do – see the quotation above (ID/5/R). Similarly, a 53-year-old landless interviewee, surviving only on leased land and ploughing for large landholders describes her concern about settlement reform, thus justifying her failure to implement settlement reform. Apart from farming for others, she also leases a small 30-metre plot of which she uses 20 metres to grow beans, vegetables and sweet potatoes for daily consumption. In turn she pays twenty working days per season ploughing for the landowner. She is a single mother with two children aged nine and seven. She temporarily resides in a small, abandoned hut belonging to the landowner. She is among the very poor of the second category of poor household (*umutindi*) and is on the waiting list of those who will receive the benefit of a shelter through government assistance. However, she feels uncomfortable when, through Bye-Bye Nyakatsi<sup>74</sup> campaign, the local authorities have obliged the poor to leave their *nyakatsi* (or huts made with thatch) before they get another shelter (ID/2/R). For instance, as Rutareka argues, during the Bye-Bye Nyakatsi Campaign, after leaving their huts, poor farmers end up staying in even worse huts made of used sheets iron (which are collected from anywhere) and banana leaves while they wait for assistance in the form of a decent accommodation (see Rutareka, 2011). One of the farmers who have experienced such situation says:

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<sup>74</sup> See The Independent news letter of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011. With Bye-Bye Nyakatsi campaign, farmers are compelled to abandon their huts, but before they obtain a decent shelter, they live in temporary poor huts.

It's really unfortunate that I was forced to leave my hut and then end up living in a worse hut made of banana leaves. I've stayed there waiting for better housing assistance, but, as I know, it takes a long time to receive shelter. In the meantime, we suffer from cold and insects. It's really unfortunate, not only for me as a poor person, but also others who seem to have resources. They also cry out when they are forced to leave their properties (see Focus, 4).

It is generally indicated that the government of Rwanda will, through different institutions, implement its policies following a bottom-up perspective (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007). However, based on the principles of the approach to policy implementation (see Paudel, 2009), it seems that in practice the top-down perspective is predominant in many sectors of rural development, including grouped settlement reform. Top-down is the most used approach in grouped settlement reform implementation (see Powell, 2008), but with a variety of forms from one area to another and varying from one agent of reform implementation to another. However, since this perspective implements policies conceived by policymakers without the consent of local citizens, scholars consider it undemocratic (see Paudel, 2009: 39; see also Scott, 1998: 239; Winter, 2003; Goggin, et al., 1990). Obviously, it is a great challenge to convince people to leave their properties. It requires preparation, persuasive arguments and patience. Yet, in order to achieve their goals, policy implementers choose a way that would allow them to speed up the implementation despite farmers' reluctance. For example, they force them to leave their land so that they use it for the common interest and those who disobey are prohibited from using it. One of the interviewees stated that even the agents who urge people to relocate are aware of the weight of such decision, but as they are afraid of being dismissed from their work, they pretend not to be aware of farmers' incapacity to afford the costs of a new house (SS/20/R).

An interviewee from the category of resourceful poor farmers said, for example, that it is sad to abandon one's land and other properties that are quite expensive (see Focus, 5). One of my interviewees in Rusheshe who has a quite similar understanding of grouped settlement policy says:

Local authorities inform us about the disadvantage of scattered settlement and particularly the danger of residing in huts that are at risk of catching fire. But still only a very small number among us welcome the idea of resettling. Most of us don't see the feasibility of such decision. In order to move from our huts, we should have another shelter, but there is nothing (ID/4/R).

The same interviewee has added that farmers are reluctant to abandon their inherited property not only because of cultural barriers, but also due to lack of necessary means to implement the policy:

It's really a challenge to everybody when there is no support from the government or any other charity. No one is able to afford the costs of a new house; even the so-called resourceful farmers cannot unless they have had enough time to plan and save (ID/4/R).

The exception for the Rusheshe cell and the Gako cell is that they belong to Kigali Province. However, they are not concerned with the Kigali city master plan. Except the commercial centres which are considered as cities, the rural part of Masaka is under local regulations, which is similar to other rural parts of the countryside. However, this doesn't prevent the residents of this area to face particular challenges. The most challenging issue that Rusheshe and Gako residents face is that their areas are coveted by people dislodged from other parts of the city of Kigali, especially from poor quarters surrounding Kigali city centre. In fact, the Kigali city management committee is committed to gradually transforming unplanned city areas to planned ones. This affects poor residents who are not able to adapt their dwelling to the master plan. They are thus compelled to sell their properties and go away, and the most coveted areas are the rural areas of the city and other areas in the adjacent provinces.

Although Gahogo sector is also peripheral to the city of Nyamabuye of Muhanga district (part of the former Gitarama prefecture), it is not as coveted as Rusheshe and Gako, and its population is not as affected as that of the rural areas of Kigali city. However, the city management has planned and informed its residents that Nyamabuye city will mainly expand towards the

sector of Gahogo. This puts its residents at risk of being compelled to relocate as well, but till then there has been no sign that residents have been affected.

In addition to the effects of cities' expansion, the common challenge to all sites has been that residents are requested to move to *imidugudu*. Local authorities have frequently attempted to expropriate the residents of Gako suggesting them to find cheap land in Rusheshe, but they finally surrendered after facing the property owners' resistance. Only a small number of landowners have accepted the amount offered for expropriation and compensation, but many others refused.

While in Rusheshe, residents whose land was selected for *umudugudu* were only requested to sell part of their land and keep only the small portion on which their house sits, on the condition that it will be renovated. In case any, where other assets such as woodland, crops, houses, and so on, are damaged by groundwork constructions or streets, the landowner has, in addition to land expropriation, to be compensated. Farmers, whose land was not selected for *umudugudu* but for cultivation of maize and other selected crops for that area, were also requested to move to the selected sites for *umudugudu*. Those who were supposed to move had to buy a parcel of land at the selected site, either with cash or in kind through an arrangement of land swap. The next subsection shows how farmers deal with expropriation arrangements in general.

### **The issue of expropriation<sup>75</sup> in the selected sites**

Contrary to other African countries where the state has huge reserves in public land and where resettlement doesn't require any expropriation, settlement reform in the Rwandan context is unique since the state doesn't have enough land on which to resettle its population. In many cases the selected areas belong to private individuals and therefore, if there is a need to use it for public interest, the landowners have to be expropriated.

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<sup>75</sup> In paragraph 22 of Article 2 of the 2005 Organic Land Law N° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005, the term "expropriation is defined as an act of taking away individuals' land by the state due to public interest but prior to respect of procedures provided for by law and prior to payment of adequate compensation."

The decree Law<sup>76</sup> relating to land expropriation adopted in 2007 stipulates in Article 19 that “the expropriated person has the right to appeal against any decision taken by the relevant Land Commission in thirty (30) days after the decision is taken”, and that “in case of failure, the case shall be referred to a competent court.” Yet a number of farmers argue that they do not have the rights to make a claim once they have been treated unfairly, especially in relation to expropriation and compensation for ‘public interest’<sup>77</sup> (ID/5/R; ID/8/G; SS/29/G). An interviewee illustrates this as follows:

Local authorities are the ones who determine and decide everything. The sector determines the amount for expropriation and we are compelled to accept. Their explanation is that the price per square metre of land and other properties is determined by the law. They also say that the value of land in the rural part of Kigali city is low compared to the city centre, but when it is a matter of registering land they say that we are living in the extension of Kigali city centre. Then we have to pay more than our neighbours from the adjacent districts even if we survive under similar living conditions. They always tell us that we do not have right to make a claim because land value is predetermined by land law (ID/5/R).

Generally, the value of the plots per square metre is based on the land law determining the value<sup>78</sup> of land in each area. One of the

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<sup>76</sup> The 2007 law adoption refers to the decree Law n° 21/79 of 23 July 1979, relating to expropriation as confirmed by Law n° 01/82 of 26 January 1982.

<sup>77</sup> Acts of public interest, according to the Expropriation Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007 in Art n° 5, are roads and railway lines; water canals and reservoirs; water sewage and treatment plants; water dams; rainwater canals built alongside the roads; electric lines; communication lines; airports and airfields; biodiversity, cultural and historical reserved areas; acts for security and national sovereignty; hospitals, health centres, dispensaries and public health related buildings; schools and other related buildings, etc.

<sup>78</sup> Ministerial order n° 001/16.01 of 26/04/2010, which determines the reference land prices outside the Kigali city in Official Gazette n° 19 of 10/05/2010, indicates that one square metre costs 582 Rwandan francs in Gahogo sector because of its closeness to the city of Nyamabuye –Muhanga district, while in Shyogwe (which is a bit far from the city), one square metre costs 230 Rwandan

interviewees stated that the value of land is not determined by local authorities and that their role is simply to implement the decisions from above (SS/63/R). Farmers wonder why the land registration fee is equal to that of a plot in Kigali city centre, while the amount for expropriation differs. For example, the value per square metre in the rural areas of Kigali Province is very low<sup>79</sup> while it is much higher in the city centre (ID/8/G). During group discussions, one of the interviewees among the cooperative leaders recounts land registration disparities between the rural and the urban areas of Kigali Province. He compares the adjacent areas to Gako and Rusheshe of Rwamagana and Bugesera<sup>80</sup> in Eastern Province:

[...] there is no difference between this area (Rusheshe) and that of the other side of Nyabarongo River [the interviewee pointed at it] but each piece of land here is registered at 5,000 Rwandan francs (7.60 USD), while our neighbours who have the same living conditions as us pay only 1,000 Rwandan francs (1.50 USD). It's unfair, given that when it's a matter of expropriating our properties for the public interest, they give us a small amount of money equivalent to what they give to those who register their land for only 1,000 Rwandan francs. In fact, the expropriation for each square metre is almost the same, while the registration fee on our side is five times higher than that of our neighbours of Rwamagana and Bugesera [their neighbouring districts in Eastern Province] (Focus1).

This is a unique situation which is particular to the rural parts of Kigali Province. Indeed, in other areas the registration fee of each piece of land – whatever its dimensions – is only 1,000 Rwandan francs; but when it comes to land expropriation it becomes a national problem since landowners do not have the right to negotiate in matters of expropriation for public interest (SS/64/R;

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francs. Specific land prices for Kigali city vary between 2,297 and 168 RWF, depending on land location. The prices are determined in the ministerial order n° 001/16.01 of 23/11/2009. In Rusheshe and Gako of Masaka sector, the price of one square metre is 306 Rwandan francs.

<sup>79</sup> The ministerial order no 001/16.01 of 23/11/2009 see the Official Gazette n° 19.

<sup>80</sup> The districts of Rwamagana and Bugesera are respectively situated in the east and south of Kigali city (see figure 4.2).

SS/79/S). In fact, landowners ask for more than what the law<sup>81</sup> provides for.

Land expropriation was problematic in all areas visited. As I will illustrate below, landowners are disappointed with the proposed value of their properties, which was observed through the rejection of the proposed amount and farmers' refusal to move (SS/3/R; ID/1, 2, 4, 5/R).

The alternatives of expropriating selected sites for the new villages can be found in Chapter IV, Section 2, Article n° 23 of the Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007. This law stipulates that “through agreement between the person to expropriate and the one to be expropriated, the just compensation may be monetary or an alternative land and building equivalent to the determination of just monetary compensation.” Indeed, this is an adoption that came out after realising that the best way to facilitate expropriation among farmers of various living standards, mainly among the poor without cash, would be either to offer land exchange to the cashless or cash to the employed landless. In this regard, an agronomist explained that the local land commission selects suitable sites for *imidugudu*, and that usually their selection falls onto farmers' land because public land reserves are rare (SS/G/68). However, when farmers are approached with proposals to sell part of their land to those in search of parcels for *umudugudu* at the selected sites, it's rare that the owners agree promptly. Actually, landowners are allowed to negotiate with the buyer, but when the site is selected for public interest (such as constructing houses for vulnerable groups and demobilised soldiers), land value refers to the official tariff per square metre as determined by the law. Compared to the negotiated land value, the official one is extremely low, which raises discontent among landowners (SS/G/68).

Actually, the value of land in the rural part of Masaka sector, where Rusheshe and Gako are located, is 306 Rwandan francs (0.47 USD) per square metre (also see Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007) and properties like banana, sweet potato and cassava plantations, among others, are not valued and many other properties are undervalued (Ibid.).

Just as in Gako and Rusheshe, expropriation and compensation are problematic in all other areas visited (SS/21/R; SS/37/G; SS/56/S; SS/31/G). Farmers are not willing to recognise

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<sup>81</sup> 2005 Organic Land Law N° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005, op. cit., Article 2.



that the state has an absolute right to land when it undertakes an activity for the sake of common interest. For instance, the 2005 Organic Land Law stipulates in Article 3 that “the state has supreme powers to manage all the national land and the right to expropriation due to public interest, settlement...” (RoR\_Organic Land Law N° 08/2005). Therefore, farmers seem to be unaware of the law when they think that no one has the right to their land on hillsides. Yet the government can remove the so-called owner and use their land for other purposes and expropriate them according to the law. Obviously, whether opposed or not, landowners are given an amount based on a value determined by the law (see Law n° 18/2007 of 19/04/2007).

Where the deal between farmers is allowed, the cashless farmers are allowed to use land swapping (see Focus, 7, 8, 9, and 10). This land swap arrangement is a good one for the cashless farmers, but it is also subject to considerable criticisms. For example, one of my interviewees criticises the policy of grouped settlement and the option of land swap in particular. He argues that “while striving to bring people into *imidugudu*, settlement policy is creating individual, fragmented and scattered fields” (SS/79/S); Havugimana (2009) had also observed similar case. This means that through the option of swapping a piece of land for another, the owner of the selected site – if large enough – could get a lot of scattered small pieces of land from other farmers attracted by the selected site. Although this alternative favours the cashless farmers, it complicates land management with the increased risk of failure to obtain a land title, since, Article 20 of the 2005 Organic Land Law indicates that no one is allowed to claim the property title for fragmented and scattered small pieces of land (RoR\_Organic Land Law N° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005, Art. 20).

Indeed, where the government doesn't have public land reserves, the policy of imidugudisation is delayed due to the constraints on land swapping. Generally, landowners of the selected sites refuse to accept scattered pieces of land on the same or adjacent hills because managing them is very tiring. Some of these pieces of land are not good enough for cultivation, and there is a risk of failing to get the land title as stipulated above (see Focus, 1–10).

The issue of land expropriation and other property compensation is unique in Rusheshe. For example, in order to avoid unplanned *imidugudu* in areas adjacent to Rusheshe, the

local legislative committee at the sector level has selected a cell that serves as a model of grouped settlement for other cells. The landowners are not dislodged, but they are requested to renovate their houses and sell the remaining surrounding land to other farmers who wish, or are compelled, to live in the planned *umudugudu*. The value of each plot at the selected sites is estimated by the committee, but the residents generally disagree with the proposed value. With the suggested value, farmers believe they would not be able to afford the costs of the required new house or renovate the one they live in. For example, all costs to build a new house are estimated at seven million Rwandan francs (10,769 USD<sup>82</sup>) while the amount of expropriation is estimated at 150,000 Rwandan francs (231 USD) per each twenty by fifteen metre plot. The little amount of money they get doesn't allow them to implement the required renovation, which is to modify one's home according to a given model. One of the residents expresses her experience as follows:

My land measures sixty by fifteen metres. This means that if I decide to sell seventy-five percent of it and stay in the remaining twenty-five percent, I could get a total amount of 300,000 Rwandan francs [461.50 USD]. Yet, to transform my house would cost me not less than 4 million Rwandan francs [6,154 USD]. To sell part of my garden is really disadvantageous since it doesn't allow me to do what is required for the renovation of my old house (ID/1/R).

ID/1 is one of those who decided to stay and refused the proposed amount for his land. His resistance increases his distress, because as a result of his resistance, he is not allowed to exploit his land. It is clear that no one can ultimately resist the decision of the local legislative committee, which means that he will eventually have to accept the proposed amount and renovate his house; and if he fails to renovate it he will sooner or later be obliged to sell it and leave. He no longer has the right to exploit his garden situated around his home and this situation affects the livelihood of the household and its living conditions in general (SS/65/R). Similar to the above interviewee, another one reveals that she leases small pieces of arable land from neighbours in order to survive because she is also

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<sup>82</sup> In 2011 the average exchange rate of one USD was estimated at 650 Rwandan francs.

among those who are not allowed to exploit their land since it is situated within the selected site as well. She says:

In order to feed my family, I have to lease a piece of land along the edge of Nyabarongo swamp. But as the hired piece is too small, I have to go far from here in the surrounding areas to seek other arable land where I can grow cassava and beans. It is really regrettable since those who are supposed to assist us disappoint us (ID/4/R).

This quotation corresponds with what Scott (1998) describes as forced villagisation in Tanzania during the Nyerere regime in the 1960s and 1970s, where the Tanzanian leaders used local chiefs to force peasants to move and resettle at the planned sites for the common interest (Scott, 1998: 234). The Rwandan case is a bit different. On the one hand, local authorities in one of the areas that I visited have been using order to compel people to sell their own land if the land was selected for *umudugudu*. On the other hand, farmers from other areas are compelled to obtain a plot at the selected site through land swap of the same dimensions or in cash, to build a house and thereafter resettle.

However, the case of Rwanda is also more complicated since it engages land expropriation and compensation, which was not the case in Tanzania and other African countries like Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Kenya, etc., as these countries have large-scale, free public lands where they can resettle their populations (Silberfein, 1998).

Although some farmers opposed the local leaders' decision, during my next field visit I found that most of them had finally given up and accepted the proposed amount, but chose to stay until they would obtain funds to renovate their homes. These farmers stated that they ultimately accepted the proposed amount because, they had no other alternative and were not allowed to use their gardens since they were selected for common interest usage (ID/5/R).

In order to understand the reasons behind the discontents of small-scale farmers whose land was selected for *imidugudu*, I incorporate a subsection below with examples of farmers who sold pieces of their land through negotiations disregarding the official tariff and compare these with examples of those whose land was selected.

## **The situation in plots adjacent to Rusheshe**

The local legislative committee had planned that apart from the site selected for vulnerable groups and demobilised soldiers, farmers having land in vicinity to the site would also be encouraged to sell parcels of land to other people who wish to reside there. As indicated earlier, most of those who needed land parcels were among those dislodged from poor quarters of Kigali city. Farmers having land close to the selected site were allowed to negotiate with the buyers, which is an advantage for landowners. In fact, these farmers were not obliged to base the value of their land on the official value of plots as pre-determined by the law, and excluded local authorities in the process of price negotiation.

For example, one of the interviewees decided to sell some plots from his land to dislodged people from Kigali city at a price he deemed convenient (SS/64/R). The following statement shows how such an agreement has contributed to the increase of one's living standard:

The programme of resettlement is sometimes advantageous, although it may not be for everyone. For example, this area was so rural, with impracticable roads and damaged clean water taps. But today this area is developing quickly. We have a good road linking Masaka town and Bugesera district via Rusheshe and it is said that this is the beginning. The district has promised that it will soon be paved with quarried stones and then asphalt. I'm exceptionally lucky because my land is close to the selected site, and not concerned with government price of expropriation. I sold my land through an agreement with the person who needed a parcel. The agreement was made individually without any broker. This favoured me over those who reside within the selected site for *umudugudu*, who have to accept the official tariff (SS/6/R).

Contrary to residents of the selected sites who depend on government tariffs, farmers who sell their plots individually earn enough and usually they build houses according to the required standard on their remaining plots.

The interviewee ID/10 supports the government strategies, including that of transforming the unplanned rural area into a more

organised countryside, but he suggests that the ownership rights be respected for a fair expropriation. He gives some evidence where a free transaction between the landowner (seller) and the buyer favours the seller more than when local authorities get involved as a third party. With the latter option, where local leaders are involved, farmers become quite discontented and sometimes fierce:

We don't refuse to sell our land to anybody if it is for common interest, what we need is fair treatment. Neighbouring farmers, whose land was targeted for common interest, earn six times more than what local authorities propose to give us. For the same parcel of 15 by 20 metres, where we just earn 98,000 Rwandan francs [151.7 USD] they can earn 600,000 Rwandan francs [923 USD]. By selling more than one parcel they easily make millions of Rwandan francs (ID/10/R).

Although some of those who sell at the official price end up accepting the offered amount, the person in charge of the bank transaction often delays the payment, which makes them more vulnerable. One of those who were waiting for payment for several months says:

It is true that we had refused their offer but because they were not flexible towards us, we finally changed our mind. We have suffered enough from the decision that prevented us from exploiting our land and finally we were ready to accept their offer. They always tell us that our money is saved in the local bank but they do not help us withdraw it or transfer it to our bank accounts (Ibid.).

The above statements show that the effects of lack of flexibility in certain circumstances make some farmers miserable. However, only three of my interviewees from Rusheshe have been waiting to be expropriated; two had received the amount and many others were not concerned by the issue of expropriation through local authorities, but did it privately and were happy.

## Separation of relatives in Rusheshe

The issue related to separation of relatives brings other grief with it. Some of my interviewees have brought up this issue of separation as one of the distressing consequences of grouped settlement. In fact, a kind of grief develops among relatives when, after being obliged to sell their land, some move far away from their inherited land. This phenomenon happens when some relatives are located at the selected site while others are not (SS/51/G; ID/2/R). Those who are not at the selected site can sell if they want to, but those whose land is within the selected area are generally forced to. One of the interviewees recounts her experience:

We are here today, but we are not sure that you will find us around here tomorrow. Some of our relatives have already moved out and are now settled in Umutara<sup>83</sup> where they found cheap land. They are lucky since they are among those who got the opportunity to sell their land at good price. The amount that they obtained allowed them to buy other lands and, often, they pay for a ticket to come back and visit us, which is good. Unfortunately, we do not expect to join them because we are not lucky like them. The result is that we are separated forever and we are not happy at all (ID/2/R).

Indeed, when some members of the large families residing on the same hill were forced to sell their properties and move to other remote areas while others stayed due to factors that I mentioned earlier in this chapter, both groups became discontented.

## Farmers' experience in other selected sites

ID/14 is among those who benefited from an accommodation from the government relief (intended for the destitute). She highlights that living conditions in *umudugudu* are not always good. According to her, one can starve albeit while dwelling in a quite good house. Actually, I had observed similar situations, particularly in *imidugudu* designed for vulnerable groups including

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<sup>83</sup> Umutara is a less-populated district located in Eastern Province.

the elderly, orphans, the poor landless, genocide survivors, etc. ID/14 argues as follows:

My position regarding settlement reform is that it is good! But staying in a given house like this [points at one of the new homes in the *umudugudu*], covered by sheet iron, when you have nothing to eat, makes its value a bit unimportant. I'm not strong enough to plough for rich farmers and I don't have enough land to grow crops for food. The only small land I had was acquired from my grandparents; I sold it expecting to buy another plot close to this site, but here land is very expensive compared to its value in the remote areas where I stayed before. I finally used the little money I have for other household needs, and now I live in miserable conditions (ID/14/Go).

Many others, especially among the first three categories of poor households, have made similar observations, that settlement reform doesn't necessarily improve living conditions. For example, SS/32 argues that grouped settlement has deepened their misery. He argues that even among those who have had government relief via a shelter, nothing has changed in their everyday lives so far (SS/32/G).

Another interviewee from Gako cell, who benefited from a free accommodation, is thankful for the charity, but adds that despite that there has been no significant improvement in her daily life:

Thanks to the authorities of this country I have this house! May God reward them! I really got this home after local authorities registered me among the deprived, otherwise I could not have got it; so my thanks to all! I was alone without anybody to take care of me, living in a very poor house about to fall down and I didn't have anybody to build a new one or repair the one I resided in (ID/10/G).

She adds:

Whereas regarding my daily life, honestly, as you can see, getting food or clothing is very difficult. I get something to eat or to cover my body with only when good people like you [points at me] use this path and leave something out of

pity or when an aid organisation offers me something (ID/10/G).

Indeed, when they do not receive regular assistance, resettled vulnerable groups live in appalling conditions. However, in villages where all household categories live in the same *umudugudu* and the chief of the village is empathetic, very weak older farmers and other vulnerable groups receive regular support in kind from their neighbours. When the majority of residents in a village are poor and physically weak and where they cannot support each other, all are doomed to a continual misery. A poor woman who headed a household emphasises this situation as follows:

I and my granddaughter have resided here for about two years. We were living behind that hill [shows the direction]; we came here one year after my daughter's death. She was the only one who supported me in everything. Today, to feed my granddaughter is difficult. Poverty is still a serious issue. Sometimes I regret having abandoned everything, especially the green banana and wild vegetables that I usually prepare for daily meals, but above all I'm really grateful to leaders for having raised me from lonely; I'm no longer isolated from other people (ID/16/S).

This is a single, 66-year-old woman who survived the genocide and lives with her 6-year-old granddaughter whose mother died just after she was born. They were then transferred to Mbare village in 2006. She has a 0.8 ha field situated at a distance of 3.5 km from Mbare village where she stays. She sometimes regrets residing far from her field because it's difficult to look after the growing crops and the small banana plantation. Even though she would prefer to stay in an *umudugudu* nearer to her field, she is thankful to the authorities who integrated her into a large family of other Rwandans. However, she is scared that her house will quickly deteriorate and cave in on her because it is made of very fragile materials.

Indeed, the state of her house shows that it will not last long. This is a general observation for most of *imidugudu* built after the 1994 genocide. Houses were generally built without a



strong foundation and with fragile materials such as mud bricks without cement for fortification. Most houses belonging to vulnerable groups were of poor quality (Focus, 4). However, in some areas of Eastern Province, Northern Province and part of Western Province, which I visited at the beginning of my fieldwork, there were some exceptions, where farmers testified that their income has significantly increased due to settlement reform which allowed land consolidation and therefore agricultural intensification (Focus, 5, 8, 10). Some have increased their economic situation by investing in modern agriculture – especially through cultivating improved plants of banana – while others were among the very poor and have, in addition to a decent shelter from the government assistance, received a milking cow which improved their living conditions (Focus, 5, 6).

### **Farmers' experience of the environmental effects of imidugudu policy**

The risk of environmental destruction that prevailed during the emergency due to *imidugudu* construction in woodlands was no longer alarming during my fieldwork. Since the crisis of 2003–2004, planners of settlement reform and local leaders punish whoever cuts down a tree, even if it belongs to them. Whoever wishes to cut down a tree in their own woodland has to request permission from the district authorities through local administration, namely from the *umudugudu*, to the cell and then the sector levels. Before giving permission, the agronomist at district level has to verify whether the given reasons are acceptable and if the tree has grown enough to be cut down.

However, these strict measures do not prevent people from cutting down trees in their own woodlands or in those belonging to other farmers, specifically for firewood or ceiling their house. Picking firewood illegally is very common everywhere, not only in the neighbourhood of *imidugudu* but also in scattered settlements due to lack of alternatives to substitute firewood (see Focus, 1–10). One of the interviewees revealed the way they do it:

As you can see, with *imidugudu* policy, houses have replaced woodlands. Today it is rare to find firewood because of the destruction of scattered small woodlands. Yet, the only possibility for poor farmers to cook their

meals is to use firewood and the majority do not have their own woodland. The other possibility is to use charcoal, but we do not have enough to buy it. We generally send our children to search wherever they can find firewood. It is commonly known that they collect it from woodlands belonging to other farmers. Generally they collect pieces of fallen tree trunks or cut off branches of trees (ID/15/Go).

Access to firewood is one of the challenges poor farmers living in *imidugudu* face. To find firewood when they were scattered was easy – not only could they find it in their own fields but also in the bush and on fallows. When the wood was scarce, they could even use dry cows' dung collected from cattle farmers. However, this traditional alternative no longer exists. Some cattle farmers use biogas as a source of energy for cooking and light, but many others have serious difficulties cooking their meals as they don't have money to purchase charcoal (SS/17/R; SS/29/G; SS/43/Go; SS/58/S).

The effects of *imidugudu* policy on the environment were also recognised by one of the officials I interviewed. He said that the mistake made during the emergency period, during which wooded areas were abusively cut off and used to build *imidugudu*, has had adverse effects on the environment and of course on the population. He said, for example, that the significant decrease in rainfall in 2003–2004 was a result of cutting off scattered woodlands to build *imidugudu* (SS/82/K). Indeed, as Silberfein (1998: 155) warns, if such reforms [like that of grouped settlement] are wrongly implemented, the consequences of environmental destruction follow with the risk of desertification.

### **Distance between the selected site and farmers' properties**

When the distance between the *umudugudu* where farmers live and their fields/gardens is too far, farmers become discouraged from doing regular upkeep. One of the interviewees recounts:

It is really distressing to reside far from one's property even though you are living in a good house. Everyone would agree and relocate without delay if only they suggested sites close to our fields and if they supported us in obtaining materials for construction (ID/17/S).

She also adds that except for a small number of young people and merchants, rural farmers in general prefer their traditional way of residing scattered, rather than be compelled to live in grouped settlements where issues such as the distance to one's own field poses new complications. According to her, except those who have been able to get electrical energy for their houses and use them for commercial activities, many others, the poor farmers in particular, prefer scattered settlement because they know how distressing it is to live far from one's property (Ibid.).

Although significant improvements can be seen in many areas of the countryside, the first *imidugudu* built during the emergency up until 2004 (when the first evaluation was carried out) were far from farmers' fields. Indeed, in some areas it was exceedingly arduous to travel the long distance from the new residence in the *umudugudu* every morning to the fields/gardens for ploughing or to take care of growing crops or harvesting (RoR-MININFRA, 2004: 25; Hahirwa and Naramabuye, 2009: 67). Silberfein argues that planners of rural transformation need to carry out a meticulous analysis of cultural contexts. According to him, the distance between planned sites for settlement and farmers' gardens/fields has to be reduced in order to encourage them to resettle (Silberfein, 1998: 246).

### **Living conditions in grouped settlement**

It is indicated in the Vision 2020 framework that grouped settlement would facilitate land consolidation for agricultural intensification,<sup>84</sup> and therefore increase agricultural production which would eventually lead to monetised and commercial farming (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2002). However, interviewees doubted this goal. Some wondered whether this goal would be achieved on the hillsides, because so far, ten years after the implementation started,

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<sup>84</sup> Modern agriculture on the hillsides will always depend on well-planned land management and this is only possible if settlement and land consolidation are connected and given priority. The role of the district is therefore to make sure that scattered settlement is hindered and if the process of *imidugudu* policy implementation is undertaken for land use consolidation (see also RoR (2007) EDPRS: Lesson learned 2008–2011; IFDC/CATALIST and MINAGRI (2010) CIP 2008–2009 Evaluation report).

there is no sign of improvement in consolidating land on hillsides (Focus, 7, 8, 9 and 10), which is one of objectives of grouped settlement policy (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2002).

During interviews there was a recurrent issue of farmers' priorities and their capacity to afford the costs of relocating in almost all selected sites other than those designed and built for vulnerable groups. Farmers raised the issue of food shortage and increasing poverty in *imidugudu*. Even though local authorities use media and meetings to explain the importance of grouped settlement, by referring to the success of the first *imidugudu* intended for genocide survivors and other vulnerable groups, interviewees in general doubted that grouped settlement would help them become better-off (Focus, 8, 9 and 10). According to them, those who, as usual, have means are the ones who benefit from grouped settlement (ID/4/R), while the situation for the majority of the poor gets worse in *imidugudu*, especially when they don't have alternatives to the farming or an additional support from the government or charities (Ibid.). One of the interviewees explains it as follows:

It seems that the government intend to develop the rural areas, but leaders forget that everyone is not able to put their own resources into any given reform. There is an unsolved problem of poverty and the *imidugudu*, instead of solving that problem, worsen it. Instead of improving our daily lives we lose a lot. For example, agricultural production in abandoned gardens has decreased and this is a result of the lack of regular care (ID/10/G).

It is not realistic that everyone living in scattered settlement would simply join the allotted *umudugudu* sites if they were close to their homes. There cannot be a site where every household feels close to the *umudugudu*. Moreover, since this issue concerns a poor country, the government does not have the resources to provide a free house to all categories of poor households, which are presently estimated at 44.9% of the population while very poor households comprise 24% of the entire population (RoR\_NISR, 2012). The results from this study show that the small landholders, especially those who intend to protect their small properties, are the ones who do not understand why they should abandon them and spend their money on another house when it would better serve meeting other

needs (SS/20/R; SS/29/G; SS/52/S). Yet, the very poor farmers welcome this reform, expecting to get not only a free and better house, but also a milk cow from the programme of *girinka* (or one cow per poor household) (ID/14/Go).

There is evidence that settlement reform associated with other programmes of poverty reduction improves the conditions of the very poor. Some farmers from different household categories, especially the first three (the miserable, beggars but able to work, and poor farmers holding a small plot) have been able to increase their living conditions. Most of them moved or jumped up a category thanks to the government support of one cow per poor family and paid works such as rehabilitating local roads, protecting public land woods, etc. through the programme of *Haute Intensité de la Main d'Oeuvre* (HIMO) or Labour-Intensive Work.

One of those who jumped up a category is a 36-year-old widow with HIV/AIDS who has two children, age seven and five respectively. Her third child died at the age of three. Before she moved into an *umudugudu*, she lived with her three children in their *nyakatsi* (a hut with a roof made of banana leaves). She didn't want to leave her small 0.05-acre plot inherited from her stepfather. She recounts the following:

Four years ago I was living in a very poor hut. One Saturday at the end of the month my neighbours, as usual, called me to join others in *umuganda* (a monthly community work). We went there and found a crowd of people putting up two new houses. We joined them and in few hours the houses were ready with new sheet iron on the roof. As usual, after work there was a meeting, surprisingly at the end of the meeting I and another widow were granted the two new houses, it was really a miracle for me. After a few months I was also given a small plot along the nearby marshland and was advised to grow grass for a cow as I was on the list of those who would get a milk cow. Now I have it and its calf. It provides me with 6 litres in the morning and 4 more in the evening. Now I have an income of at least 48,300 Rwandan francs [74 USD] per month (ID/18/S).

This hard-working woman was desperate, living in a very poor hut, ploughing for others and begging. But after having received

assistance from both the government (which provided materials for construction and a milk cow) and her neighbours (who built the house and provided a small plot along the marshland), she is now no longer hungry. She is able to send her children to school, save money and she aims to increase her income through future investment. This is one of the cases of poor farmers who have been forced to leave their huts, resettled in an *umudugudu* and managed to improve their living conditions after having received support.

Farmers residing in *imidugudu* have significantly improved their living conditions in well-organised villages, i.e. where the chiefs are keen to uphold their commitments and where people practice *ubudehe* (that is, where they support each other and work together for community self-sufficiency). They support each other not only through cultivation but also through tontines, whereby they gather an equal sum of money and give it to one of themselves, and rotate recipients until everyone has received it (SS/61/R; SS/78/S).

Included among the many *imidugudu* achievements that have contributed to the improved living conditions for farmers, I found that more of them have lost their distrust for the educational system and modern medicine. All farmers now send their children to school and their distrust of modern medicine has been lessened, which previously led to them to avoid compulsory health care insurance. The latter is rather characteristic of peasants in remote areas. Additionally, evening education has benefited illiterate adults in relation to many areas of everyday life. Moreover, some of those *imidugudu* have facilities such as a health centre, a school, a market, clean water and electricity.

### **Challenges for small landholders in the selected sites**

There are many challenges that lead to reluctance to accept and implement grouped settlement policy. For example, one interviewee said that the policy of grouped settlement is only good for the very poor, other vulnerable groups and the homeless in general. This means that other categories should make arrangements on their own in order to have a house in the *umudugudu*, or simply not leave their properties with the knowledge that scattered settlement will gradually be phased out by the government. He illustrates this argument as follows:

I and some of my neighbours have opted not to leave, even though we don't have electricity or clean tap water at our place. The new villages [pointing his finger] were nicknamed *imudugudu y'abatindi* [or villages of miserable people]. This image discourages those who would like to build their houses there. Instead of building in such villages, some of our sons prefer to stay at their parents' homes or go away to nearby cities seeking jobs. Many other young people, however, prefer other places close to here, such as the commercial centres of *umudugudu w'Inazareti* [the village of Nazareth] and others along the main road, where they expect to get electricity and clean water in the future (ID/18/S).

As the government has committed to assisting the very poor, one of the reform agents said that in order to obtain assistance, poor farmers of other categories claim to be poor as well. Yet, he added, the majority of those other categories have resources but do not make efforts to use them rationally and seem indifferent to the advice they receive (SS/68/G).

For example, a 64-year-old widow believes that she should also be on the list of the needy, but the chief refuted her appeal only because she has a large piece of land. According to her, the chief of their village is unfair because the land she possesses doesn't bring her any income. Obviously, the chief doesn't care about other factors, she added; he only considers the land dimensions as one of the indicators of household categorisation (ID/14/Go). Nevertheless, neglecting other factors of individual weaknesses is one of the problematic characteristics of household categorisation. The purported resourceful widow recounts:

For me, if the leaders grant me a house like they do for others I would also go and stay with others in an *umudugudu*. Even if I had sufficient land, I'm honestly not able to afford such a new house. They presume that I generate some income from my plot, but in reality, I don't benefit from it. First of all, it is overused which makes it unproductive, and second I'm not strong enough to dig and transport manure. These leaders are really biased (ID/14/Go).

Indeed, this woman has about 2 ha of land, but unused. She claimed that she would like to rent it out but no one was interested. Neighbours revealed, however, that she was very demanding. Those who used to lease it were exhausted by her conditions for rent. For example, she requires payment even when the lessee fails to produce a crop due to a long dry season or damaging rains (SS/41/Go; SS/40/Go; SS/37/Go). It seems that her neighbours marginalised her because of her intolerable behaviour.

Many other interviewees from Shyogwe and Gahogo do not understand the reason for relocation, but each for their own reasons. For some, there is no need to relocate if the aim behind resettlement is to consolidate land because their residences are so close to each other that to force them into grouped settlement doesn't make sense (SS/57/S). The same as for many interviewees from other areas, small landholders from Gahogo and Shyogwe believe that only the very poor and other vulnerable groups need to be resettled.

Indeed, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, the initial aim of resettlement was targeted at vulnerable groups, and generally they have received free accommodation. However, with the changes that happened after the 2008–9 assessment (see Hahirwa and Naramabuye, 2009) of the existing *imidugudu*, recommending the establishment of basic infrastructures before persuasion, things have improved. Since then, the *imidugudu* sites are prepared in advance with streets, access to electricity and tap water, which attract everyone. In addition, farmers join voluntarily *imidugudu*. However, the same goes for many other sites, those most attracted are generally young people, civil servants and local merchants (SS/58/S). Generally, when there is a project for distributing electricity and tap water along the main local roads or at specific sites, even in the very remote areas, some young people and resourceful farmers rush to put up houses at the newly prepared sites (SS/29/G).

Nonetheless, the development of *imidugudu* in Gahogo and Shyogwe doesn't have the effect of decreasing scattered settlement. The same farmers who rush to put up commercial and residential houses at the new sites have not abandoned their scattered homes. They are tied both to their duty to their inherited properties as well as other family values. They have decided to reside in both scattered and grouped settlements (SS/42/Go).



Despite that many reports show that economic growth is increasing in Rwanda and that governance has improved the assigned strategies<sup>85</sup> to empower landless and small-scale landholders, a number of interviewees argue that their income has decreased. According to some of them, the main reasons include unpredictable weather and the new agricultural system that bans mixing crops, the limitation of access to land in marshlands, difficult to ensure the safety of one's crops if the field is far from the residence (ID/2/R; ID/6/G; ID/9/G).

Most of interviewees have also pointed out that they have been incapable of implementing settlement reform even though they were not among the vulnerable. Except those who have more than one occupation or other activities from which they can generate additional income, small-scale farmers need sufficient time to supplement the little resources they have in order to implement *imidugudu* policy. They claim to be financially unable to afford the costs of the required types of houses in a short period (SS/5/R; SS/9/R; SS/22/G; SS/24/G; SS/43/Go; SS/53/S; SS/54/S).

Ineffective use of available resources is also one of the barriers to increasing individual or household income. For example, instead of claiming to be among the categories of the needy, if SS/41/Go (see above quote) and other farmers of the same category use their resources rationally, they could perhaps increase their income and be able to afford the required housing.

There is a particular example where a farmer with middle income, i.e. that of category of resourceful poor farmer with a small, 0.15-ha coffee garden and other small gardens for food crops, claims to be poor and would like to receive assistance as well. By comparing his income before and after dividing his land, he realises that his income has significantly decreased which makes him unable to afford the costs of constructing a house in an *umudugudu*. He recounts:

Our land is no longer sufficient to produce what we wish.  
You know, more than thirty years back I received this plot,  
it was large enough to feed a family of more than six

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<sup>85</sup> Assigned government strategies include, among others, improving nonfarm activities or off-farm employment opportunities, skills, management, energy, transport, supply-chain management and export credit packages... [ROR\_MINECOFIN (2007: 26) see Vision 2020 Umurenge Program; RoR\_MINECOFIN (2007), see EDPRS].

individuals. It could produce enough coffee, cassava and other crops for the market. In the 1980s we were fairly rich. However, after several years my parcel was reduced to three small patches because of sharing it with my two married sons. With its current dimensions it's really impossible to build another house since my income is very low (SS/5/R).

Indeed, none of those who received a *paysannat* in the 1980s has the same dimensions today because of continual land fragmentation. Obviously, after married sons get their portions, the agricultural production decreases in the father's household and in those of his sons. Indeed, demographically, when the rural population increases, the dimensions of individual land decrease. This leads to land scarcity due to demographic pressure, lack of rational land use and the lack of off-farm alternatives increase household poverty (see Boserup, 1995).

### **Restriction to build or repair one's house**

Although problems linked to reform implementation seem to be similar, Gahogo and Shyogwe sectors have the particular characteristic of being densely populated. Indeed, the results of the 2010–2011 survey shows that these sectors, compared to the national density (395 habitants/km<sup>2</sup>) are among the most densely populated rural areas, with more than 430 habitants/km<sup>2</sup> (RoR\_NISR, 2012). These two sectors are situated in a region where traditional huts are rare. Almost all houses, even in the remotest areas, have generally been covered by tiles or sheet iron since late 1960s–70s. This makes their residents proud of their socioeconomic status, which makes them feel more confident in themselves. This attitude has often led to the escalation of conflicts between local agents of reform and farmers. To avoid conflict, the authorities have decided to let them stay on their inherited land on the condition that they no longer have the right to build a new house at the selected site or the right to repair the old ones until they collapse. One of the interviewees describes how it is risky to rehabilitate one's own house or build a new one at the indicated site and the consequences of this decision:

As you may perhaps know, there are many people, including the youth and young couples who need to have their own home in order to get married, or just to become independent from their parents. But nobody is allowed to build on their own or of parents' land if it is not among the selected sites for *umudugudu*. Those who can afford the costs of acquiring a plot on that site do so, but the majority of rural young people today do not have enough to pay for it, especially when they are planning to get married. Where the landowners agree, most of farmers use the arrangement of land swapping. But without alternatives, farmers stay where they are without the right to build a new house or to repair the old one until it collapses (ID/14/Go).

There are many consequences of proscribing the repair of the old scattered houses or of constructing new ones on one's own land. Interviewees have, for example, shown several cases of unmarried males and females who do not have the means to buy a plot at the mandatory site and build a house of the required standard on it. As so many young generations and adults do not have professional skills other than ploughing and as this has no longer sufficient income to meet the prices of foodstuffs on the market, some of them seek other possibilities. The jobs they generally perform include transporting goods from and to the markets, and shuttling people around by bicycle and motorcycle. Other consequences of settlement reform are inter alia the migration of the rural youth and adult population to the closest cities, increased unemployment in those cities and the large numbers of vagrants and banditry in those cities (SS/64/R; SS/72/G; SS/78/S).

## **Farmers' reactions**

As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, this section answers the question of how farmers react during settlement reform implementation. In fact, farmers' reactions to grouped settlement reform fall into different types. Generally they are motivated by the effects of its implementation on farmers' everyday lives. Some farmers react openly or covertly to certain decisions made by the agents of reform, whose task is to enforce the government policy at the grassroots level.

To answer the question of how farmers react to settlement reform, one should inevitably refer to their traditional cultural ties to land and other related traditional values as described in the previous chapter. Moreover, many other factors may also influence farmers' behaviour. For example, the relationship between farmers and the agents of reform; the approach of reform implementation; farmers' living standards; their occupation; their level of education, and so forth.

Interviewees from Rusheshe have, for instance, shown a feeling of discontent vis-à-vis settlement reform. This was particularly seen and heard from farmers who were forced to sell their properties and/or buy another piece of land elsewhere for a new residence. They dislike being separated and would like to stay in their groups as *umuryango* (a community characterised by mutual support), or otherwise move all together. However, the latter alternative is virtually impossible, since moving all together would require sufficient land to accommodate all of them.

Farmers feel very depressed when they abandon their properties and other cultural values, which in turn disrupts the moral foundation of their community (SS/11/R). But other factors such as insufficient expropriation and compensation interfere as well. For instance, some opinion leaders argue that it was very challenging to convince people to abandon their inherited land and other properties without providing sufficient compensation and expropriation (SS/61/R; SS/68/G; SS/76/Go; SS/79/S). In Rusheshe and Gako for instance, farmers disagree with the proposed value of their properties. One of the interviewees recounts:

The amount that local officials propose us is very little comparing to the amount other land seekers propose. What the officials propose is six times less than what our neighbours get when they sell their plots to other land seekers. Those who have refused to sell at official price, including myself, were prohibited to continue cultivate their own land, and in case of rule violation, growing crops were uprooted by the agents of reforms themselves or by using local defence forces (ID/5/R).

As one can see it in this quotation, farmers have refused the proposed amount for expropriation and compensation. Despite

such reactions, agents of reform have insisted and, instead of giving up, they forced them to conform by prohibiting them to cultivate their own land. He or she who has dared to disobey has had his or her growing crops uprooted. However, as we can see in the next quotation, after a certain time, some of those farmers have renounced their claims and accepted the amount they had refused. The same interviewee continues to recount:

After realising that we were losing, we finally accepted the amount that we had refused. It was impossible to survive since I was not allowed to use my land. As I needed money to lease another piece of land I finally accepted the amount that I had refused (ID/5/R).

Based on this quotation, it is obvious that local authorities or the agents of reform implementation were inflexible even if farmers had refused to conform to the order. However, although farmers were initially against relocation in Rusheshe, they were forced to conform, and most of them finally submitted.

Similarly, in other selected areas the implementation of grouped settlement was problematic. For example, a number of farmers dared to say 'no' to the leaders' decision of forcing them to abandon their properties even when they were warned that their houses would be torn down (SS/20/R; SS/4/R; SS/27/G; SS/30/G; SS/36/Go; SS/60/S).

As we will see below, farmers have reacted in different ways depending on many factors, namely the nature of the policy in relation to the farmers' interests, the relationships between the agents of reforms and farmers, the approach that the agents of reforms use in the field, and so forth.

## **Obedience**

In a situation where the authority's views are absolute or unchangeable, the subordinates have two options of reaction. They can either disagree with the authority's imposition or submit spontaneously. However, there are many variations of behaving in between the two extremes when subordinate(s) interact with the dominant(s). On the scale from open confrontation to submission, individuals can honestly obey or smartly challenge the dominant authority (see also Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). For instance,

Hollander and Einwohner have categorised variations of reactions from open opposition to an extreme situation of the absence of opposition comparable to (absolute) obedience or submission (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 44).

In all visited areas there were many examples of spontaneous submission of farmers but also submission after confrontation between the agents of reforms and farmers. For instance, with respect to the quotation above, farmers had refused to sell their plots once they were selected for *umudugudu* but they later on surrendered them (see ID/5/R).

There are some cases where obedience was spontaneous and seemed sincere. For example, some interviewees said that when they are requested to do something, they generally do it spontaneously (SS/1/R; SS/22/G). Indeed, some farmers rush to implement and often take the initiative of persuading their fellow citizens to comply (SS/42/Go; SS/50/Go; SS/27/G; SS/52/Go). This category of farmers is generally known as *intore* (or something similar to local cadres). In fact, as it is defined in the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) document, *intore* is any Rwandan trained to become an exemplary citizen and who, through learning, has to become excellent. Any Rwandan who has a plan of *imihigo* (performance contract) to implement government policies is called *intore* (see RoR\_NURC, 2009).

However, obedience to implement a policy or a reform is not always something that the dominant can seize and monopolise (see Foucault, 1980), there must be a minimum of requisites. It can be seized through power-over or coercion (see Gaventa, 1980) as it can also be through a democratic power involving persuasion and flexibility of the dominant (see Lipsky, 2000) and facilitation of the process.

In this study, the phenomenon of power seeking compliance is seen through the approaches that the dominant uses while enforcing settlement reform. These approaches can be either top-down or bottom-up or both (Elmore, 1980: 602; see also Paudel, 2009). For instance, some of my interviewees argued that coercion can be used where it is necessary but added that if leaders need recipients' obedience in order to achieve assigned goals, they should also be flexible while enforcing reforms or delivering services, and particularly listen to them and take into account their priorities and individual economic capacity (SS/12/R; SS/69/G;

SS/77/Go; SS/55/S). Indeed, in order to achieve effective policy implementation, participation of recipients in decision-making is crucial. For example, one of my interviewees, from the group of opinion leaders, argues that the factors that motivate farmers to accept reforms and participate actively to their implementation include frequent meetings between leaders and the recipients, provision of basic materials for smooth implementation, etc. (see SS/61/R).

In fact, the acceptance of reform implementation, or any other form of change for rural development, needs a certain level of belief in both the agents of reform implementation and the recipients (see Andrews, et al., 2010: 6). The belief can be developed through ownership, expected advantage from reform outcome, leadership accountability, etc. (see Ibid.). These factors can create a kind of mutual trust between agents and recipients and often allow an environment of obedience. However, if there is a conflict of interests, there is no trust, and therefore no obedience, or, if there is obedience it could be a “false obedience” (see Scott, 1985).

Although a bottom-up approach is used to implement some policies in Rwanda, such as the *ubudehe* programme for poverty reduction, the implementation of *imidugudu* is generally carried out through a top-down approach. This approach is criticised for being authoritarian and, as Paudel argues, such an approach leads to resistance with the risk of failure (Paudel, 2009: 40).

One of the top leaders has clarified that policymakers initially know that the top-down approach can lead to failure as it happened in many countries (see also Silberfein, 1998). However, he also indicates that many countries have reached a certain level of development through the approach of forcing people to participate in public works that ultimately transformed their standard of living (SS/82/K).

Although there are some examples of a participatory approach in the process of poverty reduction such as *ubudehe* (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007), in practice, a top-down approach is the most-used in the process of reform implementation, and based on most interviewees statements, coercion is the most-used, especially when change is compulsory and the recipients are reluctant to comply (see ID/5/R; ID/13/Go; ID/20/S; SS/78/Go; SS/52/S).

## **Farmers' silence**

In the context of settlement reform, silence was observed during meetings. The citizens' silence has a meaning, but it's up to them to disclose the meaning behind their silence. When they are before a fait accompli where reform implementers seek compliance through intimidation, it is a way of expressing their discontent (SS/29/R). According to the interviewees, such intimidation was common, especially in meetings related to policy implementation where, for example, the local authority was explaining the purpose of grouped settlement. Silence can be manifested in different ways and the motives behind it may vary according to the circumstances. Silence is common in rural Rwanda, especially when the local leaders use coercion over farmers in order to make them to accept and perform government policies. In such context, silence is also seen as a way of challenging leaders.

Burnet considers silence as a way of protecting oneself, especially when the actor has experienced traumatising events (Burnet, 2012). However, silence can also arise from subordinates' experience where the dominant attempts to intimidate or compel them to implement all that s/he has planned for them (see Focus, 1).

When I asked one of the attendees to the meeting in Rusheshe why they didn't speak at the meeting and then complained when they were outside, he told me that some local leaders are arrogant and such behaviour discourages many people from expressing their opinion at the meeting. He gave an example of one of the former sector leaders who dared to insult them (ID/4/R).

Usually I personally choose to keep silent in order to avoid humiliation. Some of our leaders consider us unskilled peasants and then want us to follow their opinions like a herd of sheep follow the herdsman. There are also those who use offensive words and even insult us. In front of this kind of leader, I prefer silence (ID/4/R).

Indeed, such behaviour, which is generally rare among leaders, creates a sort of indifference among the population under his/her control. Another interviewee emphasised the above statement claiming that to speak or not to speak is the same since nothing



would change what has already been planned (ID/3/R). This attitude was observed in many areas of the countryside that I visited in the beginning of my fieldwork (see Focus, 1–10). Some of the participants said that they are happy when they have such an opportunity like that of the group discussions I organised because through it, they can say whatever they want and therefore feel reinvigorated (Focus, 7, 9 and 10). One of them said for example that:

When a leader from the central government, especially the President of the Republic, visits us, it is an opportunity of us to reveal some of the unfairness we experience. We talk about everything in order to relieve ourselves by revealing accumulated injustices. And very often our claims are solved (one of the participants in Focus, 7).

Generally, when farmers' interests are incompatible with the goals of reform or when farmers are sceptical about the outcome of reform, and, particularly, when farmers are in a weak position compared to the ruling group, they usually choose a delicate way of dealing with the situation of being forced to accept and implement reform. One of these ways is to keep silent (see Burnet, 2012).

Although, some farmers occasionally confront the agents of *imidugudu* policy implementation, many others prefer to keep silent. In the selected sites, the majority of small-scale, and poor farmers in general, do not dare say what they would like to say; they often prefer to keep silent when they are asked to give their opinions about what would work better for settlement reform; it seems like they play out what Houston and Kramrae call feigned ignorance (Houston and Kramrae, 1991: 394; see also Scott, 1985).

Examples of silence were seen especially during meetings where participants were asked whether they understand the advantages of the policy of grouped settlement or asked to suggest suitable sites for *imidugudu* and ways of implementing the reform (SS/52/S; SS/67/R). To justify their silence, some of them indicated that even if they suggest their point of view nothing would change what policymakers have already planned (ID/1/R; SS/42/Go; SS/50/S; SS/27/G; ID/10/G; SS/23/G; SS/25/G; SS/12/R; SS/53/S; SS/47/Go; SS/26/G).

An agronomist who was moderating the meeting indicated that when they receive an opinion from a farmer they consider it scrupulously. During his presentation he consistently stressed that farmers are the ones who are the key to making reforms successful. He said:

[...] you are the ones who better know your area, where each of you would feel safe. We need your suggestions so as to make a decision favourable to all of you. Do you think that if you remain silent we will stop the programme? Forget it. You need to move to grouped settlement in order to remove barriers that prevent agricultural productivity and livestock farms. Do you need to stay in poverty forever? If that's your choice, we will not accept (SS/62/R).

One of the delegation who works at the ministry level, told me in confidence that without strict settlement reform people would naturally be unwilling to leave their land (SS/82/K). The agronomist also added that it's really stupid to see people remain silent while they are given an opportunity to reveal their opinions and problems (SS/62/R). One of the sector's authorities also recounts:

When we ask them to suggest a suitable site for *umudugudu*, where everyone would easily access her/his gardens, all of them remain silent and we finally decide to consult the *Njyanama* (local legislative committee) which represents them. Very often our suggestions are rejected, and so we implement local legislators' decisions but this doesn't prevent farmers from remaining indifferent to the decision from their local representatives. They keep silent during meetings which we often use to call attention to the advantages of dwelling in *umudugudu* and other related reforms (SS/65/R).

Farmers' silence can be attributed to many factors. For example, as Burnet argues, fear is the foundation of silence, but fear is also the result of a number of events, including witnessing traumatic events, such as the murder of one's parents or other close relatives (Burnet, 2012: 112–4); it can also be, as Scott argues, a result of a situation where the dominant group bullies the subordinates (Scott,

1990), etc. For instance, farmers' fear in post-genocide Rwanda could be attributed to the consequences of the 1994 genocide, which is rooted in the psyche of a group of Rwandans (the alleged perpetrators of genocide) who have a feeling of guilt for what happened to other Rwandans (the genocide survivors) (see also Burnet, 2012). It may also be the result of farmers' fear resulting from the effects of the accumulated intimidation rooted in the Tutsi's psyche, stemming from the Hutu regimes' oppression since the 1959 revolution. Thus, just like fear, silence can originate from a number of other factors, including the hegemonic strategy of silencing the subordinates or political opponent (Burnet, 2012: 117). However, it can also be a way of resisting the hegemonic ideology (Scott, 1990; Lilja, 2007; Thomson, 2011). For instance, some of my interviewees from the opinion leaders group told me that farmers' silence can be attributed to insolence (SS/60/R); hatred against the ruling political party (RPF) or the whole political system (SS/71/G); fear of prosecution in case of mockery or use of hurtful words by mistake; and the preference to use a cautious strategy (SS/74/Go). Relating silence to the process of the implementation of settlement reform, in addition to concern for their personal safety, interviewees brought in economic and cultural aspects as discussed in the previous section of farmers' experience. These aspects are illustrated in the subsequent subsections.

### **Breaking the rule: building at night and making repairs from within**

#### *Building at night*

In some remote rural areas, it happens that individuals alone, or with some of their neighbours, build a new house in their scattered farmsteads although it is forbidden. Interviewees stated that they do it secretly in the early morning when it is still dark or in the evening in order to avoid being seen by the chief of the *umudugudu* (ID/16/S; ID/20/S; SS/61/R; ID/8/G; SS/79/S). This is a way of coping with a situation wherein desperate farmers break local rule in order to continue to reside within their homesteads or close to their properties. In fact, in many areas, the approach of forced relocation is no longer used; rather, local authorities forbid construction of new houses within the homesteads or in any other areas than the selected sites for *imidugudu*. However, farmers do

not stay passive when local authorities make such decisions; they also find a way of challenging them. One of my interviewees, a resident of Shyogwe, recounts:

Among us there are some brave and fearless people who take the risk; they sometimes organise themselves, wake up together early in the morning, gather trees or make mud bricks, raise a house and put the roof on within the lapse of few hours. In the evening they make coloured mud and cover the walls. They just build a house in one or two days. But it happens that the chief of the village catches and denounces them out of fear of being blamed by his superiors, the executive secretary of the cell in particular (ID/16/S).

Similarly to the above quotation, another interviewee – an agronomist – reveals that peasants are not as stupid as some officials believe. He recounts the following:

As you may know when authorities make a decision that hinders farmers' interests or a decision that they think can endanger their lives, farmers always find a way to cope with such a situation. They often laugh at their authorities when they declare that they have found a way to ban scattered settlement without confrontation with farmers. They really ignore peasants' behaviour. As you may know, in order to get married young man should have a home, but there are only allowed to build in *umudugudu*. When they don't have enough resources to do so, some choose to enlarge their parents' house with additional rooms or even if they can afford the costs of a new house in *umudugudu*, they choose not to abandon their properties (SS/68/G).

This kind of defiance occurs in many parts of the country; in rural as well as in urban areas where residents need permission to build or repair their houses. Except the two sites that I visited in Eastern Province, all other sites that I visited (including one of the poor quarters in Kigali city) revealed that many residents use similarly subtle ways of coping with such worrisome situations (Focus, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 10). Although some farmers attempted to convince us that the intentions behind their acts were not to oppose

the rule that forbids construction, it seems that the act of violating the rule, while deliberately knowing that it is forbidden, would constitute an act of resistance. Moreover, farmers also use other subtle ways of defiance when, for example, a house is about to fall down, they occasionally take the risk of repairing it from within.

#### *To repair one's home from within*

As just mentioned, farmers have various subtle way of dealing with decisions made against their interests or which require unaffordable specifications (SS/50/S); SS/76/G; SS/68/G). One of the interviewees recounts:

You know! When we don't have any other alternative, we take a risk and decide to repair damaged homes, but from the inside. In many cases the chief of the *umudugudu* turns a blind eye because he understands our grief. He recognises that it is a punishable act but he's also convinced that it's a necessary evil, especially when children or the elderly risk catching pneumonia (SS/50/S).

Local chiefs find themselves in a dilemma in such cases of necessary evil, especially when the matter concerns protecting the people's health. For instance, one of the chiefs told me that instead of reporting a miserable farmer caught in the act of repairing her/his home (even though he recognises that it is a risk for a chief to not do so), he often let them continue and finish the job they had started. According to him, that was a lesser evil compared to the risk of violating the rule (SS/78/S). In fact, as I mentioned earlier, to repair houses in scattered habitat is not allowed in the countryside, which is a strategy that the local government has taken on in order to discourage scattered settlement without using physical violence as in the case of tearing down repaired houses.

#### **Building temporary resting huts in the field**

In many places where land consolidation has succeeded, farmers built temporary huts in which they stay while cultivating, taking care of growing crops and harvesting. Sometimes couples stay longer than expected, but local chiefs often surprise them and force them to tear their huts down, otherwise local defence forces are

ordered to do it. However, despite the threats, farmers do not stop performing such forbidden acts:

You know, as my field is too far and I have to wake up early morning in order to be able to start cultivating before sunrise, I prefer to stay there with my labourers in a temporary hut so that we don't have to travel long distances every morning, which makes us tired very quickly. Generally, we wrap and transport raw food and cook it in the field. But as it is forbidden to reside in huts, when the chief passes by, he forces us to destroy it. We normally destroy it but put up another immediately after his departure (see Focus, 5).

Another farmer from Eastern Province, among those who participated in group discussions, recounts a similar experience:

The huts we build are temporary. During cultivation and harvest temporary huts protect us against the sweltering sun and against rain during weeding and hoeing. Of course, since it's a bit far from our residences, we sometimes stay longer than expected. It even happens that young couples stay together in the field. We often destroy them [the huts] when they are no longer needed, but when we neglect to do so, we are in trouble. Local defence forces burn them down (see Focus, 6).

Similarly, where cattle still wander along the Akagera National Park or in pastures located far from cattle owners' residence, herdsmen frequently construct temporary resting huts and the owners are always requested to tear them down. However, farmers have never ceased to rebuild those prohibited *nyakatsi* (thatched huts). Farmers explain how important these resting huts are in their everyday work (see Focus, 5 and 6).

Herdsmen recount similar stories emphasising the importance of those resting huts. The particular behaviour for these herdsmen is that they confront the chief or local defence forces who attempt to tear their huts down or burn them down (Focus, 6). Actually, this very thing happened in one of the visited sectors in Eastern Province. Herdsmen normally stay with their cattle far from the residences in ranches or the bush where there are no

fences. This is where they build their huts in order to protect themselves against rain and sun. Perhaps they dare confront the local chief and the local defence force agents because they are staying in very remote areas far from other residences (Ibid.).

### **Pretending to ignore**

When farmers are caught doing illegal acts or are not doing what they are supposed to do, they generally apologise (SS/73/G; SS/63/R). There are many examples where farmers pretend not to know the illicit acts of their neighbours, when in truth they simply do not want to report them (SS/30/G; SS/64/R; SS/63/R). For example, ID/11 says that he refused to report a neighbour who was repairing his home which was about to fall down from within. He even revealed that he had helped him transport trees and put up them in order to support the roof which was about to fall in on its supporting walls (ID/11/G). He recounts the following:

It is strictly forbidden to build a house and repair the one that is damaged, if the house is not within the *umudugudu* site. Thus, we learn how to manage the situation in order to survive. A neighbour that I helped to repair his damaged home [...] we were caught by the chief and a local security agent, who accused my neighbour of cutting down trees. When they approached me asking if I didn't see him transporting trees, I vowed to have not seen anything. Although they knew that I knew the truth, I was aware that it can happen to me too, and thus, I simply refused to denounce my neighbour (ID/11/G).

It also happens that the dominant party, who is supposed to take an action against an illegal act, doesn't do so in order to protect her/his neighbour who performed the illicit act. In this context, some chiefs of *imidugudu* choose to not report forbidden acts such as repairing damaged homes in the scattered settlements. They told me that they do not necessarily do that out of fear of the consequences of reporting their neighbours or simply because they want to protect their relatives or because they are corrupt, but because they pity those who reside in such a damaged homes with very young children or very old people (SS/60/Go; SS/64/R). Some interviewees stated, for example, that it happens that local

chiefs behave as if they are not aware of what is happening in the village they represent, yet they know everything that happens there. Some interviewees believe that they do so because of gifts they get from those who transgress the rule (Focus, 7, 9).

### **Bribing the chief**

As just mentioned, some farmers believe that the chiefs of *imidugudu* are bribed and that it is normal since they are not paid; except the small plot of land they own, they don't have any other source of income. One of the farmers recounts what happened in a meeting held after the monthly *umuganda* (community work):

Truly some chiefs accept gifts, and it is helpful when you have something to give them. Many houses which were about to fall down have been saved with the help of the village chief. Although bribery is forbidden and punishable by law, local village chiefs have no fear when they bribes for a service. And to me it's fair because they perform lots of activities without remuneration (ID/19/S).

Indeed, village chiefs and their committees in rural areas survive on their farming activities as other the rest of the rural population, but in addition to that, the chief undertakes day-to-day administrative work such as preparing and organising meetings, spreading information from above and reporting to higher authorities, implement decisions taken from above and from the village residents, etc. (CLGF, 2011: 161). They do this voluntarily without payment. Certainly they are tempted by bribes and some of them can accept them at any time.

However, interviewees from Gako and Gahogo have specified that their chiefs are not corrupt at all. According to them their chiefs are *inyangamugayo*<sup>86</sup> (honest). They argue that, on the contrary, their chiefs have empathy with those who are affected by the local rule that forbids repairing homes in scattered settlements. Thus, they conclude, it would be unfair to claim that they are corrupt (see Focus, 2, 3).

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<sup>86</sup> *Inyangamugayo* are persons of integrity who live by certain values and virtues that are considered morally upright and worthy of emulation in a community (see Villa-Vicencio, Nantulya and Savage (2005).



This doesn't mean that the village chiefs are not in a situation of distress. For example, on many other occasions, after meetings, I had the chance of hearing from two chiefs from *imidugudu* adjacent to my research sites. They complained about performing daily administrative tasks without incentive. Some of them told me that their requests were based on the fact that because of administrative activities, they do not have sufficient time to take care of their fields or any other activity that may generate an income (SS/64/R; SS/67/G).

However, these requests do not concern everyone. Some are volunteers – *intore*, *inyangamugayo* and *abakangurambaga*<sup>87</sup> – and feel proud of their contribution to the improvement of their *umudugudu*. For that reason they do not claim anything (SS/65/R; SS/75/Go; SS/78/S). This is quite normal since they are also civil servants, teachers or administrative workers with a set monthly wage. This means that they are different from the former who survive on their gardening only. Bribing local chiefs in order to get an advantage or a quick service is not unique in Rwanda. This is reported in many other African countries as well. For instance, Silberfein indicates that taking bribes in matters linked to land allocation and settlement reform was observed in Zimbabwe. There local chiefs were accused of bribery and favouritism' when allocating land to landless and small-scale landholders among black Zimbabweans (Silberfein, 1998: 260).

### ***Resignation of local chiefs***

Some local authorities of the visited cells stated that farmers' reluctance to reform implementation leads to the delay of reaching their *imihigo* (performance contract). According to them, farmers' reluctance to accept or implement settlement reform affects leaders in such a way that they risk losing trust from above, which sometimes leads them to resign (SS/67/G; SS/62/R; SS/G/74; SS/80/S). When, for example, a local chief fails to prevent illegal constructions (SS/G/74; SS/80/S) s/he is often obliged to resign if guilty of turning a blind eye or accepting bribes (SS/77/G; ID/18/S).

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<sup>87</sup> *Abakangurambaga* are community volunteers who dedicate themselves to giving back to their communities. They are normally described as the agents of social cohesion (see the previous footnote).

In fact, the chiefs of the village do their job voluntarily. They don't get any incentive except appreciation as patriotic citizens whose conduct fits in with Rwandan values. That is, to avoid being greedy and selfish, among other qualities. For instance, in some areas farmers have threatened local chiefs in order to silence them, but chiefs refused audaciously to be intimidated and reported them (Focus, 4). However, it also happens that the so-called patriotic leaders – *intore* – encounter controversial situations where, instead of hurting their neighbours and relatives or endanger themselves, prefer to resign (SS/81/S; SS/79/S).

### **Argumentation<sup>88</sup>**

Although some Rwandans are still characterised by fear, some are not afraid to oppose the power by contending with the influence of local leaders (see SS/45/Go; SS/47/G; SS/25/G; SS/25/G; SS/53/S; SS/12/R). This category of fearless farmers is mostly found among those who, in addition to farming, have other occupations: i.e. primary school teachers, social and community workers from civil society, including employees of NGOs and churches, and so forth. They generally support government strategies of modernising the rural areas and improving living standards of the population, but criticise the approach through which reforms are initiated and implemented. They advise local leaders to perform things gradually without force, recognising that the majority of farmers do not have enough resources to support those reforms. They fearlessly warn local chiefs who pretend to not know the prevailing situation that forces farmers to implement very demanding reforms beyond their financial capacity (SS/3/R; SS/37/G).

These fearless advocates in favour of the poor refer to a set of contributions both in kind and in cash everyone has to make. In fact, during the meeting after *umuganda* (community work), chiefs report what happens in their respective villages. The points on the agenda are always the same, including the rough estimation of the value of the performed community work, the local security situation, social and economic activities performed during the month, various challenges and other local problems. The point that attracts the attention of many concerns the cash contribution to a

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<sup>88</sup> Scott (1985: 233–241) includes argumentation among the forms of everyday peasants forms of resistance.

number of activities, including *ironde* (or patrol in nights for local security), where each household contributes at least 1,000 Rwandan francs (1.50 USD) to: the construction of schools or additional rooms in order to increase the number of secondary schools up to nine and twelve years of basic education, *mutuelle de santé* (health care insurance), streets or road rehabilitation in case trucks and tractors are needed, construction of houses for vulnerable groups, SACCO (savings cooperatives), Bye-Bye Nyakatsi (or banning thatched huts) (only where this is applicable), relocation for those still living in scattered settlements (where applicable), etc. (ID/3/R; ID/8/G; ID/12/Go; ID/17/S; SS/57/S; SS/16/R; SS/31/G; SS/46/Go).

Interviewees believe that these cash requirements intensify grievance among farmers, but as I mentioned above, instead of openly opposing leaders' suggestion, most farmers keep their criticism to a whisper, yet some of them dare speak out audaciously but smartly. For example, a catechist woman of the Roman Catholic Church has, in a meeting after community work, raised her worry regarding requirements for reform implementation in general:

I'm really disappointed! To me this is unusual! When we talk about contributions in cash to all mentioned activities we don't think about where farmers get cash from. It's really too much for a peasant who survives only on a small piece of land which doesn't produce enough to feed his family. Even if we take our own example as employees; a teacher or a nurse for example, do you think s/he feels comfortable, with all other burdens and household expenses? Please think twice before you decide on certain things (SS/69/G).

This argument has excited and thereby inspired many participants who previously only whispered instead of speaking out. Some took the opportunity to advise local leaders to scrupulously examine the economic capacity of everyone before deciding the sum of the required contributions (SS/30/G; SS/31/G; SS/68/G). The local leaders were a bit embarrassed. Some of them, the local chiefs in particular, reacted by pointing out that they always consider the income of each household. They specify that decisions are generally diffused to everybody, but in practice they consider the

economic capacity case-by-case. For example, one of the chiefs stresses that the very poor do not contribute at all (SS/72/G). After this reaction the whisperings continued to increase among participants. From the noise of the crowd I heard participants saying:

[...] who is poor and who is not? How do they measure poverty? What monthly earnings are considered wealthy? Where do they classify themselves? You pretend not to know our poverty, yet you know it? If you were in our position, would you be able to cover all these obligations? Just accept that you are the instruments of others who ignore or pretend to ignore our situation (from the participants to the meeting after *umuganda* 29 October 2011).

These reactions were recorded during the meeting, but it was quite difficult to identify which individuals were saying what. However, at the end of the meeting I approached some of the participants among those who were whispering and surprisingly they repeated similar worries (SS/23/G; SS/26/G; SS/32/G). One of them argues that:

It is unimaginable that a son/daughter of a poor peasant pretends to not know the situation that prevails in villages where s/he was born and raised before s/he became what s/he is today. Not only the chiefs of the village, even the authorities at sector or district level – they are aware of our economic capacity but we don't understand how they can treat us as if we have hidden resources. Maybe they think we have a hidden treasure like people living in gold mines (SS/32/G).

For him, farmers should not be asked to perform what is above their financial capacity, and not attribute wealth to them that they don't have. To build or renovate a home is not something you think of today and implement tomorrow. Even the richest people in this world cannot take on such an adventure. "They should give farmers enough time if they want a sustainable transformation," one of the interviewees added (ID/7/G).

Similar complaints were raised in other areas especially in Shyogwe, Gahogo, Nyarubuye, and Kageyo. The common point is that none of them feels comfortable with the poor household categorisation. Some farmers argue that because of their dependence on farming, when the harvest is bad everyone becomes very poor (see Focus, 2, 4, 5, and 7). Therefore, some farmers suggest that categorisation of poor households should not be something static, but be adapted every year depending on many factors linked to their agricultural production, including, mainly, the climatic conditions. Indeed, due to rain scarcity the harvest can decrease, which affects the living conditions of small and poor farmers (see Focus, 1–10).

Some farmers claim that if the government had invested in irrigation on hillsides, everyone would move to grouped settlement which would make land consolidation possible, as they are sure that in such situations production would increase (Focus, 1–6).

### **Rural migration of underemployed youth**

Rural youth, if there are not in primary, secondary or professional schools, either work in the agricultural sector or in various areas of the private sector, including masonry, carpentry, hairdressing, bicycle or motorcycle transportation, etc. The majority of young people work in the agricultural sector, but as large-scale farmers are rare, the majority of them cultivate for themselves or for their respective families. However, with settlement reform, land scarcity and low agricultural output on hillsides, the majority of young people without professional skills are disappointed by the poor living conditions in rural areas and prefer to seek refuge in towns in search of jobs. Given that there is no more *umunani* (inheritance), *gushyingirwa* (parents support to the groom) and *kubakir'abana* (providing gifts such as a plantation or cows to the newlyweds), young people in rural areas are particularly disappointed by the effects of arable land scarcity. In addition to that, the majority are not able to purchase a plot and afford the costs of constructing their own house in the *umudugudu* (see Focus, 2, 3, 4, 7).

## Reactions in response to rumour

The reactions of farmers are numerous and diverse. For instance, rumour is considered resistance when it is spread in order to counteract official strategies. In many areas where this research was conducted, rumours have played an important role in contributing to either acceptance or rejection of reforms in general and settlement reform in particular. As noticed above, Jackson indicates that because of rumours, people, especially among the Hutu population, were frightened by revenge once grouped in well-known areas after 1994 Tutsi genocide (Jackson, 1999: 7). Similarly, others thought that maybe grouping them in villages would be a Tutsi plan to facilitate revenge or a way of controlling the Hutu so that once an opportunity arises they would kill all of them (see also Hilhorst and Leeuwen, 2000: 274; Jackson, 1999: 5). They also thought that the plan of grouping people in villages would be a way of confiscating their land and then bringing back *ibikingi* (large-scale grazing land) and *ubuhake* (clientele system) (see Jackson, 1999: 7; HRW, 2001). Similarly, one of the interviewees said:

In fact, we knew that once *inkotanyi* [another name of members of RPF party] win the war, they would exterminate us, especially because some of them were the sons or relatives of the victims of genocide. As the majority of us reside in the lands that belonged to them before they fled the massacres of the 1960s, we thought maybe they would repossess their land and bring back *ubuhake* [a form of clientelism]. Those rumours were spread everywhere before and continued after genocide when the re-settlement programme started (ID/2/R).

Indeed, some of the interviewees stated that because of feeling guilty for what happened during the 1994 genocide, the alleged genocide perpetrators in particular used to spread rumours in order to hide the truth or to justify that what happened was out of self-defence (SS/53, 56/S). According to one of the opinion leaders – a primary school teacher – some farmers believe that staying scattered was a way to hide in order to prevent mass murder; they were afraid of what happened and scared that the Tutsi would take revenge (SS/74/G). This is one of the rumours that circulated in the

countryside just after the 1994 genocide and the insurgency of 1997–1998 in the north and which has had an impact on settlement reform from the outset. One of the interviewees argues that the political ambitions of the defeated regime were behind the rumours inciting people to disobey the victorious RPA army and its mother political party RPF which was then in power (see Focus, 8).

However, as the fear of revenge or repossession of the land gradually decreased over time, farmers' reactions were no longer based on rumours of ethnic hatred, but on the experience of farmers who were claiming that relocating had neither solved their main problem of poverty nor that of increasing production. However there were also rumours of attracting farmers for settlement reform acceptance. One of the farmers in Gako cell said:

We moved expecting that in the close future we would say bye-bye to poverty. Rumours were circulating everywhere that once we build in the indicated *umudugudu*, our land would be merged and then with the use of tractors and fertilisers, the agricultural production would be multiplied seven times what we produce today, but you can see it was a lie (ID/10/G).

My interviewees relate that diffusion of information about the expected outcome of reforms as a kind of rumour, because according to them there was no official declaration and the source was unknown and indeed it was a lie given that there was no improvement till then (ID/10/G). Moreover, some farmers call it rumour based on the fact that it was a way of attracting them to implement reform (ID/10/G; SS/30/G; SS/34/G; SS/38/G). Actually, a rumour can be used to test whether recipients would accept a policy, in such a way as Michelson and Mouly argue, rumour becomes politically strategic (Michelson and Mouly, 2000: 340). Rumour can also be used to lure people in order to prevent the rejection of a policy if policymakers are determined to not modify in case it does not harmonise with the priorities of the recipient farmers (Ibid.).

With the above quotation, it seems like the intention of rumour was to incite farmers to accept grouped settlement, with the expectation that agricultural production would increase and contribute to poverty reduction. The impact of the false promise was that no farmer would accept to be lured in again; their trust to

the local leaders has declined. For instance, one of the other interviewees said that unless they are granted a house for free, those who are still scattered will not accept relocation since they consider local authorities liars (ID/10/G). They say that in areas where households are already grouped and land was about to be consolidated, farmers are still using their traditional way of farming (SS/30/G). According to some of the interviewees, the impact of rumours of false promise has contributed to the delay of grouped settlement implementation in many areas (SS/20/R; SS/39/Go; see also Focus, 7, 8).

As discussed in the above section, the point is that farmers condemn moving themselves from their scattered areas to the planned ones. Most of the discussed reactions are related to farmers' discontents with the way grouped settlement policy is implemented and the value attributed to their properties in case of expropriation and compensation. In the section below we discuss the reactions that could be considered acts of resistance and are interpreted based on the definition of resistance that I opted for in this study. The most recurrent words in interviewees' language (Kinyarwanda) that symbolise varied forms of resistance, including those that are similar to what Scott (1985: 296) calls "trivial coping mechanisms" were, for example: *guhanga* (to disagree or confront), *gupinga* (to oppose), *kwanga* (to refuse), *gusuzugura* (disrespect), *ntawabyihanganira* (no one would accept), *barakabya* (they exaggerate), *ni amaburakindi* (it's due to lack of alternatives), *nta bushobozi* (no financial capacity), etc.

## Acts of resistance

Acts of resistance are difficult to notice, especially when they are disguised (Scott, 1985). As mentioned previously, in this section we attempt to clarify which among the farmers' reactions discussed in the previous section should be considered acts of resistance. In order to highlight the acts of resistance to settlement reform, the interpretation of actors' reactions is not only based on interviewees' statements and the meanings they attribute to their reactions, but also to the interpretation of the targeted persons and observers.

The definition of resistance that I refer to is: *any acts of subordinates to express their discontent or refuse to comply with conditions imposed by the dominant person or institution*. Farmers'



reactions that would be considered acts of resistance are: spreading rumours in order to counteract government policy; building or repairing one's home when it is forbidden because the area where the house lies was designed for agriculture or for other purposes; bribing local chiefs in order to counteract the government policy or related local rule; chiefs pretending to ignore the farmers' illicit acts and chiefs who prefer to resign instead of harming his neighbours or relatives; silent defiance; argumentation or breaking silence, etc.

### ***Igihuha* (or rumour) as a form of resistance**

In the context of this research, rumour could be considered an act of resistance only when the person who spread it has the intent of counteracting the government policy of restructuring the countryside. Scholars of different scientific backgrounds (psychologists, sociologists and communication scientists) explain rumour in different ways depending on its nature and the intention behind its dissemination (Dalziel [Ed.], 2010: 5). For instance, Pendleton (1998) considers rumour as synonymous with 'hearsay' or 'mouth-to-ear' and argues that its source and truth are difficult to determine, and other scholars add that it is 'spontaneous', 'intentional', 'politically strategic', etc. (Michelson and Mouly, 2000: 340; Dalziel (Ed.), 2010: 5). The literature also informs us that 'negative rumours' seem to be easier to spread than positive ones (Allport and Postman, 1951; Gary Allan Fine, et al., 2005: 87). When its intention is to oppose the views of the dominant group, rumour becomes an instrument of inciting resistance, and by definition the act of doing so is in itself a sort of hidden resistance (Scott, 1990: 198). For instance, a way of concealing individual or collective resentment while resisting the dominant group can be found in examples where an individual spreads (true or farcified) information, without being recognised and with the intent to counteract the implementation of a policy (Chin and Mittelman, 1997: 31–2; see also Tilly, 1991: 596; Miller, 1998: 17). Generally this method is used by the weak, or subordinates, who feel unfairly treated and who are afraid to openly confront the powerful dominant group (see Scott, 1985, 1990, 2008).

Farmers who were still scattered during my fieldwork stated that they were reluctant to accept their granted houses after hearing wrongful information that some of them would be killed

once they are concentrated in the right place. For example, in Kinazi, around 1999, most of the houses built for the poor by a non-governmental organisation in one of the selected sites collapsed without ever having been occupied. However, during our interaction, those who refused to move regretted their act, because in other *imidugudu* farmers still resided in their scattered areas and granted their sons the house they had received from the NGO (SS/53/S). Other farmers revealed that this rumour was spread by people who thereafter disappeared and were never seen again, assuming that they were among those who fled to the Congo and did not return (SS/53/S; SS/56/S; ID/17/S).

According to some of my interviewees, the individuals who spread the rumour of discouraging resettlement in some areas of the countryside after the 1994 genocide were the opponents from the defeated regime or those who had certain resentment against the RPF regime, or were simply those against the use of private properties for *imidugudu* for fear that their land would also be used for that purpose (SS/53/S; SS/56/S). None of my interviewees declared that he/she has spread rumours, but a number of them motivated their discouragement with welcoming *imidugudu* policy by citing the rumours described above. They are the ones who have called them rumours, because these things never happened in their respective areas of residence (ID/5/R; ID/9/G; SS/53/S; SS/56/S; focus, 4 and 5). Referring to the literature on resistance, I can say that the act of spreading a rumour aiming to counteract government policy can be considered an act of resistance, since it is a way of contesting the conditions imposed by the then government of national unity.

### **Building at night and repairing one's home from within**

Generally in the countryside, as well as in some poor quarters of cities, people alone, with their neighbours, build houses secretly because there are not allowed to build any house or because it is forbidden due to the area being designed for some other purpose, such as agriculture or other public interest. As mentioned earlier, in the countryside, it is strictly forbidden to build a new house or repair the old one if the area is designed for land consolidation for agricultural intensification. Yet, some farmers violate this rule and some are caught in the act while others are not (SS/32/G; ID/16/S; SS/61/R; SS/79/S).

In fact, this is an example of counteracting the local rule since the actors know that it is forbidden to do so and they do it knowing that once they are caught they will be punished by being forced to destroy what they had built or repaired. Although interviewees consider most of their acts a survival arrangement or a trivial coping mechanism as Scott (1985: 296) calls it, acts of knowingly violating the law/rule are acts of resistance. Among the interviewees' statements, there are examples where instead of naively staying in a home which is about to collapse, one chooses to violate the rule. One of the interviewees said for example:

This house was about to fall in on us and as you can see, I'm unable to build a new house in an *umudugudu*. Since I didn't have any other choice, I decided to break the rule that forbid us to build or repair our homes in other sites than in selected ones for *imidugudu*. I bought only three trees and used them to support the roof which was about to fall in on us. Of course I did it from inside (ID/16/S).

This act can be considered an act of resistance since the actor violates the rule that forbids him/her to do so. Moreover, if his/her neighbours refuse to testify against his/her illicit act during the investigation, even if the act is done to protect lives as it is the case above, the neighbours' act can also be considered resistance (see similar act of resistance in Scott, 1985: 273). A similar example among many others illustrating the interviewees experience and reaction is as follows:

The rains had damaged my house so I asked permission to repair it but my request was rejected. Then I decided to collect needed materials for construction and after a certain period I called upon some of my neighbours to help me to put up two damaged walls and part of the roof in only one evening. When the local leader came to investigate on what I did, I declined and fortunately my neighbours also refused to testify about my illicit act (ID/1/R).

### **Building temporary resting huts in the field**

Similar to the previous acts of building or repairing houses in forbidden areas, building temporary huts in the fields and pastures

far away from the *imudugudu*, can also be considered resistance. Interviewees (farmers and herders) justify their acts as a being ways of protecting themselves against heavy rains or scorching sun; as ways of providing themselves with a temporary shelter for rest. And as explained above, since they knowingly break local rules, their acts are considered acts of resistance.

### **Turning a blind eye**

Local chiefs pretend to not know what is happening in the area under their control. This would not be an issue if the chief was not aware of the situation, but in the context of this study, he was aware and didn't want to penalise or report them to the upper authorities. Some interviewees who observed, and those who have experienced such scenarios, have revealed that the chief did that in order to protect them. For instance, farmers emphasised that the chief of their area is always worried about the problems of the population under his control. One of the interviewees said:

He understands and tolerates farmers who are caught in the act of violating the rule that forbids the reparation of houses in scattered areas. He has never forced them to destroy what they had put up and never reported them to upper authority. However, this doesn't prevent him to act with strict measures toward those who do so when they don't have particular problems. The very sensitive cases he tolerates include households with very young children and those with elderly persons living alone (SS/60/Go).

This is a particular form of resistance where a local chief (normally elected or nominated from the subordinate group), who is supposed to protect the rule or the interest of the dominant, pretends to ignore subordinates' acts of violating the rule with the intention of protecting them. This act of masking a fact in order to protect an offender can be considered an act of resistance. Scott (1990: 26) describes a different context where the subordinates, when given a chance to supervise other subordinates, become oppressive and exploitative more than the dominant to whom they work for. Actually, turning a blind eye, as described in the previous section, is a smart way of resisting the decision-makers. This example of local chief resistance seems exciting given that the local chiefs in

the context of reform implementation are usually supposed to implementer the decisions from upper hierarchy.

### **Pretending to ignore and resignation of the chiefs**

Two other phenomena have been brought up: when the chief pretends to lack awareness of the situation and when the chief opts to resign instead of supporting a rule that hurts his fellow farmers. However, there are some cases where chiefs resign out of fear of confronting defiant farmers who arrogantly violate the rule (SS/64/R; SS/60/Go). Another interviewee argues that the chief of their village was forced to resign because he was found guilty of complicity with farmers who had violated the rule (SS/80/Go).

Regarding the first possibility, if the chief really was afraid of confronting the offenders, it seems that he didn't resist, he simply opted to protect himself. But if he resigned as a way of refusing a rule that hurt his fellow farmers, the act becomes resistance. However, as he resigned without openly specifying the reasons of his act to his superior, one could say that he performed an act of hidden resistance comparable to what Scott calls an ambiguous message (Scott, 2008: 54), since he hid the reasons of his resignation from the upper hierarchy, but revealed it to his neighbours and the researcher (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Scott, 2008). And also since before resigning he willingly let farmers violate the rule, his act is thus a form of resistance (see also Scott, 1990: 198). The chief said that he was concerned about poor farmers who were suffering from the imposed rule, and recognised his act as an act of resistance since he opted to oppose to the local rule regulating settlement reform that he is supposed to enforce.

### **Fearful or defiant silence**

Silence has become something normal among Rwandans. In Malaysia, for instance, Scott reveals a situation where subordinates – generally poor peasants – used silence as a way to challenge the dominant rich farmers (see Scott, 1985: 234). Similarly, Lilja argues that silence can be used as resistance to silence the hegemonic discourse (Lilja, 2007: 141). However, the act of keeping silent is not always an act of resistance. It can be something else. Burnet believes that it can be a result of lived

experience, such as witnessing the massacre of the loved ones (Burnet, 2012: 115). Silence becomes an act of resistance only, as Scott argues, when subordinates (or farmers in the context of this study) keep silent with the aim to undermine the dominant group (represented by agents of reform) (Scott, 1985, 1990).

Farmers choose silence because they are in the position of the weak which constrains them from open opposition. Thus, through silence they hide their actual stance, which is a delicate way of challenging the dominant (see also Thomson, 2009). For instance, Thomson illustrates this stance through an example of a Rwandan prisoner who plays a dumb, silent, stupid and uses ignorance as a tactic to hide his real feelings from the prison guards (Thomson, 2011: 454–5).

The kind of silence I discovered in my fieldwork manifest in different ways. Based on their statements, some farmers prefer silence because their opinions are not taken into consideration, which means that they are silenced (see also Thiesmeyer in Lilja, 2007: 139). Indeed, just as for other political systems where the top-down perspective predominates, it's rare that the decision made at the top will ever be changed. That is why this perspective has been accused of being authoritarian and may entail the risk of resistance and failure (Paudel, 2008: 40).

However, during my fieldwork, there were some examples where farmers were instead encouraged to speak out and give their opinions in order find a consensual solution to a problem but still preferred to keep silent. For instance, at four of the meetings that I attended at the selected sites, farmers were rarely active, even if they were encouraged to speak out. Based on interviewees' statements after the meetings, their silence can be considered a form of resistance given that it was a way to express their discontent with decisions that they were not initially involved in, or to disagree with the approaches used to implement the reform/policy. The silence becomes a form of resistance that prevent farmers from the dominant penalty that would arise in case of open resistance (see Newbury, 2011). But as Scott (1985) argues, this kind of avoidance usually generates a kind of latent conflict between the subordinate and the dominant and can result in coercion on the one hand and resistance on the other.

## **From hidden to open resistance: smart argumentation and breaking the silence**

As just pointed out, many Rwandans are still characterised by fear of the possible recurrence of what happened during the 1994 genocide and its consequences. Towards the end of the emergency, in 2000, the Government of National Unity launched the long-term strategies for poverty reduction and development known as the Rwanda Vision 2020. It was soon implemented through medium-term through the PRSP I which started in 2002 and grouped settlement reform was among its priorities. During its implementation, local leaders worked as if every farmer was supposed to implement the required reform without assistance. Farmers among my interviewees, as well as some of those who, in addition to their main occupation such as teaching or administrative work are farmers, didn't hesitate to criticise such an attitude that coerces farmers. A similar reaction that Scott (1985: 236) describes is the peasants' revolts in form of 'war of words' against the oppression of landlords in Sedaka (Malaysia). However, as pointed out in the previous section, those who dared to speak did it smartly, either out of fear that they may be punished or just out of politeness.

Smart argumentation and breaking silence (Scott, 1990: 206) are both forms of daring to speak out and they involve the courage to overcome fear that as mentioned above has several origins. In an intimidating context, or when fear is rooted due to previous experience as it is the case in Rwanda, smart argumentation and breaking silence might be considered resistance. This, shifts from covert to overt resistance (see Chinese villages as an example in the 1990s). Scott believes that resistance can occasionally evolve from one form to another (Scott, 1990). Similarly, Li and O'Brien argue that overt resistance and covert resistance are not immutable; they change depending on prevailing circumstances (Li and O'Brien, 1996: 29). In the context of this study, there was no collective resistance to *imidugudu* or to any request of the dominant, but some of my interviewees have often openly expressed their discontents through arguments.

## Conclusion of the chapter

In this chapter, I have explored the experiences and reactions of farmers in relation to settlement policy and its implementation. Although farmers experience many negative effects in the process of the implementation of *imidugudu* policy, when the implementation is associated with other support like the *girinka* programme (one cow per poor household), poor farmers improve their living conditions. However, the number of those who benefit from such opportunities is still very limited, which means that the majority of poor farmers living in *imidugudu* still find themselves in poor conditions, even though they live in houses that are more or less comfortable. I have noticed that poor farmers who were forced to leave their *nyakatsi* (huts) experienced a particularly dangerous situation while waiting for support from the government and the community support, but once they received support they felt a bit better. Those who have certain resources face other problems, especially that of expropriation and low compensation. However, those who sell their land without the involvement of local leaders took advantage of dislodged people from neighbouring cities and have made a good deal of money. Those who complain are the ones whose land was selected as for the standard model of *umudugudu*, which then serves as model for neighbouring areas. These are doomed to accept official expropriation, which is, according to them, unimportant.

Farmers' reactions can be considered act of resistance depending on the interpretation of the actors themselves, the persons who are targeted or the observers who assist the phenomenon, including the researcher who observes the phenomenon and/or interprets the interpretation of others (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). In this chapter, I have illustrated and discussed acts that can be considered resistance in line with my definition that I discussed in chapters one and two. It has been argued that farmers' reactions only become resistance when the subordinates (farmers) express their discontent or refuse to comply with the imposed requirements. It has also argued that interviewees' statements which attempt to hide the intent of undermining power (with the pretext that it was simply a means of survival), are considered acts of resistance given that these actors knowingly broke local rules which forbid the construction or repair of houses without permission. The only acts that could not be



considered resistance are, for example, farmers' silence resulting from the fear that still characterises many Rwandans due to their experience of the past (see Burnet, 2012). That is, for instance, keeping silent because of their fear of speaking out – a behaviour that was developed among Rwandans because of the experience of the atrocious effects of war and genocide.



# 6

## Farmers' experience of and resistance to agricultural reform

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Overall, we found that peasants of all types were reluctant towards the formulated 'productivity enhancing' governmental policies. On the one hand, they value their own local production methods that allow them to minimize the multiple risks they are confronted with. On the other hand, they did acknowledge that some of the proposed measures could enhance their productivity but only under the 'right' conditions. Such conditions depend upon whether the present institutional constraints – all the more pressing for poor categories – can be removed (Ansoms, Verdoodt and Ranst, 2010: 27).

### Introduction

In the same manner as the previous chapter, this second empirical chapter discusses experiences of, as well as reactions and resistance to, agricultural reform. It answers the three research questions: (1) the question of how farmers understand and experience the agricultural reform; (2) that of how farmers react to agricultural reform implementation; and finally (3) the question of which of the farmers' reactions can be considered acts of resistance.

The chapter will present a picture of how farmers cope with the new practices of growing one selected crop (monocropping) and of using improved seeds and chemical fertilisers, while farming on consolidated arable land situated on plateaus, slopes and marshlands. It will also discuss how farmers cope with the restrictions on letting domestic animals graze freely and the enforcement of the zero-grazing system. The approaches that the agents of reforms use to implement the reforms and how they deal with farmers' resistance will also be discussed.

## **Lived experience of agricultural reform and its effects**

Although farmers acknowledge that the agricultural productivity has improved in some wetlands, interviewees in the areas relevant to this study seem to be disappointed by the policy of agricultural intensification on hillsides (Focus, 1, 3, 4). They claim to be frustrated not only because of the lack of means to support the implementation of the policy but also by natural conditions including long dry seasons, sudden shortages of rains or flooding in some areas of northern region and serious erosion in mountainous regions. Moreover, they feel discouraged by the crop regionalisation programme in which decisions were made without their involvement. According to some of them, some crops were compulsory in areas where they are not suitable (Focus, 3, 4, 7 and 8). In the Rugeramigozi marshland for example, farmers failed to grow maize and voluble beans. They requested that MINAGRI invest in this marsh and develop it in order to promote rice cultivation instead of maize. With rice, they were expecting to earn a lot of money like their neighbours of Ruhango district in Kabagari marsh (Focus, 3 and 4).

### **The uncertainties related to weather**

The uncertainties in weather prediction not only have to do with the economic distribution of gains versus losses from reform as Fernandez and Rodrik (1991: 1146) argue, but also they also affect agriculture and particularly agricultural reform in tropical regions, including where my research was conducted.

Fear of uncertainty is not unique to farmers. The agents of reforms, including agronomists and local leaders, also fear the uncertainty of unpredictable weather conditions. This increased reluctance to implement agricultural reform in many areas of the countryside. One of my interviewees from Rusheshe says:

In the season 2010b, we were trained how to use fertilisers and received a loan of maize seeds and fertilisers. Everyone was excited to grow maize because there was already a factory close by that would buy all our harvest. However, the first harvest was discouraging. Myself, I got only 60

kilogrammes of grain on a huge field of 30 by 60 metres, where I was expecting to harvest at least 300 kilogrammes of grain. This failure mainly resulted from insufficient rain and late sowing. Some of my neighbours also blame the effects of using chemical fertilisers without enough skills in that matter. The following season 2011a, most of us refused to accept another loan (SS/15/R).

Initially, farmers' reluctance increased due to the failures of other farmers' experience. Based on farmers' statements, I noticed that farming losses in different areas were not only due to the fear that rains would be scarce, but also other factors, such as misuse of fertilisers, bad quality of seeds, delays in sowing, etc. (SS/9/R; SS/52/S; SS/34/G; ID/20/S). For instance, one of the interviewees from Shyogwe stated:

[...] Last season [2011a] we had very bad harvest of voluble beans and maize in this marsh [Rugeramigozi I] probably because of using infected seeds. As you may know, we grow what the cooperative recommends. We could not refuse because the cooperative agronomist convinced us that the seeds that the cooperative was distributing were of good quality even if they were infected by insects. Yet, we ended up harvesting a very small quantity (ID/20/S).

Although other factors can be easily managed such as that of misusing fertilisers, rain scarcity due to unpredictable weather conditions and lack of an alternative solution such as irrigation system are the most frightening factors in agricultural sector. An interviewee from Gako describes the situation prevailing in their area:

The agricultural productivity in this area depends on rain. Of course some crops such as banana, cassava and groundnuts resist a bit of a longer dry season, but generally when the rains are scarce there is a risk of starving. The marshes are also affected by long dry seasons, but they are not like hillsides because at least there is the possibility of irrigation with the flow of water from small streams (ID/8/G).

Lack of accurate, local meteorological instruments has an impact on agronomists' rainy season predictions. The agronomists are very often wrong with their rain predictions due to lack of precise information in relation to weather vagaries. This situation, among others, has increased the mistrust between agents of reform and farmers. For instance, at the very beginning of my fieldwork, I met a professional farmer in one of the sectors in Eastern Province who revealed that he cannot follow the advice from the agronomists appointed at the sector level because, according to him, they are not well-skilled, they just apply their theoretical knowledge where they are not needed and do not take consideration to weather and soil variations and similar matters (Focus, 4). However, I believe that the newly recruited agronomists usually learn by doing. Although most of the agronomists at the local level are mainly theoretically skilled and have limited practices and experience, they learn a lot from the peasants. Therefore, they should not be blamed for learning by doing; this is common for inexperienced workers in their first careers.

In addition to technological constraints and lack of experience, reform acceptance needs skilled agents able to change farmers' mindsets and learn to be flexible where it is needed. In a similar context, Skidmore (1990: 120) argues that leaders' ability to influence followers is a prerequisite, and Matt Andrew, et al., (2010: 14) argue that the precondition for change is first and foremost a talented leader who has the "ability to foster acceptance for change and, [who is] able to enhance ability and empower his followers". Lack of these preconditions at the local level can fuel discontents among recipients of the reform, which generally leads to delays or failure of its implementation. Recipients of the reform are the ones who know which crop is adapted to their soil and weather conditions, even without modern techniques. Their involvement in the exercise of crop regionalisation is therefore crucial. Forcing them to grow a new crop selected by experts has, in certain areas led to misunderstandings, even though the crop could have been adapted.

### **Food and cash crops**

As we have seen earlier in chapter 4, traditional Rwanda had a specific way of farming geared toward family subsistence. The most well-known were sorghum and finger millet farming and

more recently the farming of yams, banana plantain and fruit/beer, squash, beans, sweet potatoes, maize, etc. In the mid-nineteenth century the colonial power introduced industrial or cash crops, including coffee, tea, pyrethrum and new food crops including wheat and Irish potato, etc. (Grosse, 1994: 15–6).

Fresh maize was mainly used for grilling before it was dried and part of it was dried and stored as seeds for the next agricultural season. Yet, with the agricultural reform, it was also included among the main cash crops (SS/82/K). Indeed, agricultural reform policy aims at improving crop production through the use of new agricultural technologies such as mechanisation and irrigation on hillsides; the use of chemical and organic fertilisers; and the use of improved seeds (Ibid.). Other new cash crops which were given the same importance as maize are rice, soya beans, voluble beans, pineapple, etc. (RoR-MINAGRI, 2001: 1, 2002: 1; 2010: 33; RoR-MINECOFIN, 2002). The shift from family consumption of some crops to cash crops is a challenge, especially when the harvest is compulsorily sold through cooperatives. Maize farming in particular is challenging, since farmers dislike being prevented from using it for consumption when its income through the cooperative is very small (Focus, 3). One of the interviewees of Shyogwe recounts:

In previous years, we were allowed to grow whatever we want in this marsh. The most cultivated crops were sweet potatoes, vegetables including cabbages and eggplants, and beans. With these crops it was difficult to make big money, but at least there was no food shortage in households, especially during dry season where harvest on hillside decreases (ID/17/S).

Indeed, as Nabahungu and Visser (2011) argue, marshlands are the foodstuffs granary. Generally, farmers have long been using marshes to supplement harvest from the hillsides and these lands were mostly exploited in regions where long dry seasons are frequent. For peasants who survive only on their hoe, marshes are vital to daily living. Therefore, it is logical that depriving them of that asset or using it for other purposes than that of providing them with foodstuffs, makes the users discontented.

## The implementation of agricultural reform

Similar to the implementation of the settlement reform, the agricultural reform has also been implemented using a top-down approach with some exceptions where a bottom-up perspective takes precedence. The most well-known bottom-up approach is that of *ubudehe* (a participatory approach of poverty reduction) whereby the poor themselves assess the problems related to their poverty by making a list of priorities and propose solutions. One of the *ubudehe* components is collective farming (see OSSREA-Rwanda Chapter report, 2006). In the context of agricultural reform, farmers have, after experiencing failures, influenced the shift from top decisions about crop regionalisation to their own preference. Such changes have been noticed in the areas visited in the northern and southern provinces. For example, the areas of Kageyo and Bukure were designed for growing wheat and maize respectively, but after unsuccessful attempts to ban banana, the imposed crops have been cancelled and farmers continued to grow banana like before (Focus, 7 and 8). Similarly, as mentioned above, in the Rugeramigozi marsh, farmers have proposed the plantation of rice instead of maize and voluble beans, which were initially imposed by MINAGRI. However, after much trial and error, MINAGRI abandoned the initial crops and invested in rice, the crop that the farmers preferred (Focus, 3 and 4). Meanwhile, interviewees and participants in group discussions revealed that they suffered from hunger during those periods of disagreement and trials and error (Focus, 7, 8).

In late 2011 and the beginning of 2012, when I was about to finish my fieldwork, I realised that the agents involved in the implementation of agricultural reform had learned to be flexible. According to some of my interviewees, the agents of reforms learned how to improve relationships with farmers through cooperatives, which contributed to the improvement of their working conditions and thus, to the success of agricultural reform implementation (SS/75/Go; SS/80/S; SS/52/S). In the Rugeramigozi marsh for example, the two new agronomists hired by MINAGRI and AAG (Agro Action Germany) recognised that the failure to produce crops in that marshland was due to the lack of adequate supervision and research. Indeed, according to Nabahungu and Visser, no reports or research indicate that Rugeramigozi had a particular problem related to microclimates



with a very low night temperatures or a higher probability of drought during periods of prolonged rain scarcity (see Nabahungu and Visser, 2011: 5).

As an answer to farmers' claims, through RSSP (Rural Sector Support Project), MINAGRI decided to invest in the Rugeramigozi marsh by constructing a modern dam for rice irrigation which enabled the shift from the cultivation of maize and voluble beans to rice. Moreover, local leaders in collaboration with the MINICOM, some staff were appointed to reorganise KIABR (a farmers' cooperative aiming to increase production) and created an environment where agronomists, cooperative leaders and farmers work hand in hand in order to change the mistakes of the past (SS/52/S).

### **Land use consolidation through monocropping**

One of the interviewees argued that the reluctance to accept land use consolidation in Gahogo cell was mainly motivated by poor explanations on the one hand and farmers' misunderstanding on the other (SS/75/Go). Two of the agronomists I interviewed assumed that after their demonstration, the attendees (including some small-scale farmers, local professional farmers and the representatives of the cooperatives) disseminated what they learned from them at the grassroots level. However, they wondered if the message had disseminated adequately, since delays in implementing agricultural reform on hillsides were still considerable (SS/75/Go; SS/80/S).

For instance, at the grassroots level, farmers describe land consolidation policy differently. For some it is just a matter of removing the hedgerows between each household fields so that all fields constitute a large collective field, and then deciding which crop among those they usually grow would be preferable (Focus, 5, 6). For many others it was just a matter of growing the same crop on a large area without necessarily removing the hedgerows between household fields as this could lead to conflicts (Focus, 1–10). Actually, none of the above arguments are correct or completely wrong in context of the Organic Land Law, which stipulates that, “land use consolidation is a procedure of putting together small plots of land in order to manage the land and use it in an efficient uniform manner so that the land may give more productivity” (see Organic Land Law n° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005

Art.2). Indeed, as one of the interviewees argued, hedgerows have to be removed in order to create large fields, but this is not sufficient if the owners of the collective field do not grow the same crop and have not agreed on the agricultural schedule. Therefore, monocropping is among other conditions of land use consolidation.

However, farmers' worries were mainly about how they would technically harmonise their activities in ploughing, sowing and harvesting if they are not coordinated. This would be possible if every farmer adhered to an agricultural cooperative, similar to the Soviet kolkhoz collectivisation of agriculture which eventually failed at its ambition of generating huge surpluses of foodstuffs (see Scott, 1998: 203). Moreover, it was difficult for farmers to understand how new cash crops would replace their traditional and more adapted crops to their specific soil and weather. For instance, cassava was not mentioned among the crops selected in Rusheshe and Gako, even if farmers preferred it due to its resistance to regular long dry seasons, whereas in Shyogwe, the issue concerned banning banana plants on hillsides and sweet potatoes in the close marshland had also raised farmers' discontents.

Indeed, there are some food crops known traditionally as *ingandurarugo*<sup>89</sup>, without which everyday life would be worse: this includes, for example, root crops like cassava, sweet potatoes, beans and sorghum in some areas, and peas and Irish potatoes in others (particularly in humid mountainous regions). In fact, sweet potato is particularly preferred in the countryside due to its short-term harvest, etc. (Focus, 1–10). One of the interviewees recounts:

To me, banning sweet potato is a sin like others. Sweet potato is the most basic food crop for everyday household survival and particularly during the periods between the two agricultural seasons of the harvest of other crops. We normally don't harvest it all at once. We keep it in the field and whenever someone is hungry we go in the field and pull a small quantity to cook or roast for immediate consumption. Why do they want us to merge our fields? Why do they force us to grow one and the same crop? We know what is useful for our everyday life (ID/14/Go).

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<sup>89</sup> *Ingandurarugo* literary means any resistant plant or crop that peasants use to feed their families with in critical times of famine or drought; it refers to crops such as squash, sweet potatoes and wild vegetables including amaranths, etc.

As we have seen earlier, land use consolidation is not only the act of merging individual fields but also of growing one crop on the merged space. Most participants have, in my study, shown their discontent not only with land use consolidation, but also with the “regionalisation of crops”<sup>90</sup> and the monocropping system. Some believed that regionalisation of crops and the monocropping system would deepen their starvation, since no one can survive on one single crop (SS/12/R; SS/34/G). In some parts of the countryside, farmers usually mix banana and beans or peanuts with wild vegetables as their preferable daily meal; while in others, it is a mixture of sweet or Irish potatoes and beans or peas with wild vegetables, etc., and each household grows all these food crops in the same garden. Therefore, it seems difficult to convince small-scale farmers of the advantage of crop regionalisation and the monocropping system of, for example, maize only in one agricultural season and soya or voluble beans in the next. Some farmers said that they do so in marshland because it is a state property and they do not have any other alternative since arable land is sufficient on hillsides (SS/68/G; SS/75/Go).

Indeed, except the marshlands where farmers grow rice and other crops sponsored by MINAGRI in order to multiply improved seeds, in other marshlands farmers would prefer to grow traditional crops for daily consumption. Some of those who grow maize have, for instance, declared that instead of improving their livelihood it has deepened their poverty (Focus, 3, 5 and 9).

### **Insufficient mentoring**

Interviewees have mentioned the insufficiency of supervision as one of the factors that increases inadequate use of fertilisers. Indeed, as we have seen earlier, some factors have deepened the unwillingness to implement the agricultural reform. These include the shortage of agro-technicians or agricultural extension agents who should assist farmers in the experimentation gardens (Focus, 4).

Although things improved during my fieldwork, interviewees indicated that previously there was an obvious

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<sup>90</sup> MINAGRI has opted for specialisation of crops by region to assure food security and increase household incomes. According to CIP, a MINAGRI programme, some crops are more adapted than others according to agricultural regions (RoR\_MINAGRI/RADA, 2010: 18).

shortage of skilled staff in the area of agricultural innovation. Some agronomists argued, for example, that farmers are absolutely right when they say that they failed to increase their yield because of lack of support in the field. The support to multiply and maintain the experimentation gardens is really limited, which justifies the need for additional trained agricultural extension agents per sector, at least one per cell (Focus, 1, 3 and 4). One of the interviewees emphasised this argument as follows:

[...] it is illogical that a single agronomist oversees all farmers in a sector where thousands of households have no other occupation than farming. It therefore happens that farmers use fertilisers and or sow seeds wrongly and certainly the results are disastrous. It also happens that they use expired fertilisers, which also contribute to bad results, which increases their unwillingness to participate (SS/74/Go).

As it was difficult for the agronomist to disseminate modern farming techniques, farmers who were successful in farming have played the interesting role in mentorship for their neighbours. For example, SS/74 is a 46-year-old, experienced farmer, who demonstrates to his neighbours how to improve their farming by using improved seeds and both chemical and organic fertilisers. He grows cassava and green banana on the hillside and rice in the Rugeramigozi marshland. He said that before he began using scientific agricultural inputs, he was an ordinary farmer like others with a very small income such that he could not make savings, even not for a small amount. However, with the new agricultural techniques, he was able to buy a motorcycle, and after only two years from the day he sold the first harvest, he had more than 700,000 Rwandan francs (equivalent to 1,077 USD in January 2010) in his bank account. He was planning to solicit a loan in order to build a commercial house in Shyogwe sector commercial centre (SS/74/S). He usually used these examples to persuade other small farmers about the benefit that agricultural reform brings so that they also follow his example. Local leaders, and the agronomist in particular, always used him to persuade other farmers.

## Farmers' economic capacity

Since the colonial era, Rwandan economic growth has been dependent on agricultural production. As mentioned earlier in chapter four, the colonialists introduced cash crops, mainly coffee, and attempted to improve food crops in order to prevent recurrent famine in Rwanda. The two post-independence regimes have followed a similar policy of basing the economic growth on improved farming. Tea and coffee farming have developed significantly, but subsistence farming hasn't successfully changed. The post-genocide regime has therefore opted to replace traditional subsistence farming with "market oriented agriculture"<sup>91</sup> so as to boost farming production and economic growth (RoR-MINECOFIN, 2000: 17; Diao, et al., 2010: 32). The majority of interviewees asserted that in many areas of the countryside, farming reform has really achieved positive outcomes. They pointed out how small-scale rice growers in wetlands have visibly improved their livelihood; and how both cooperatives and large-scale landholders have made a great step in the production of maize, soya beans and other crops (Focus, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8; SS/52/S). One of my interviewees from Shyogwe, who was among the farmers negotiating with local authorities and the agronomist for the replacement of maize by rice in the Rugeramigozi marshland, said:

You know, growing maize or any other crop cannot allow us to change our standard of living. Yet, farmers who grow rice in other marshlands have significantly improved their income. Some have been able to jump from the household category of poor to that of resourceful poor. A friend of mine told me that he was able to build a house in Ruhango town through rice farming (ID/20/S).

Another farmer from Gako – Rugende marshland – has bought some additional pieces of land from the poor farmers who failed to invest or who preferred to sell their pieces of land. This farmer told me that at the harvest he can easily make savings of 600,000 Rwandan francs (equivalent to 923 USD). Actually, Rugende marshland is one of the wetlands that MINAGRI had selected in

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<sup>91</sup> One of the six pillars of the Vision 2020 strategies, and the second-most supported by the government after good governance.

order to multiply improved seeds. In this marsh, farmers multiply improved seeds of soya beans and maize which MINAGRI buys at a good price and distributes them as seeds to other farmers in other areas of the countryside. According to some interviewees, except some poor farmers who preferred to sell their plots, the majority of farmers among the five hundred who exploit that marshland have significantly improved their living conditions (SS/22, 25, 28, 31/G; ID/7/G).

However, there are a number of other farmers from different areas who consider agricultural reform economically insecure, given that the price of unprocessed crops has continuously decreased<sup>92</sup> while the price of the processed food products of the same crops was exponentially increasing<sup>93</sup>. They actually asserted that they were unable to afford the processed products – such as packed maize and cassava flours and rice – for household consumption until the next harvest season (Focus, 3, 4; ID/1/R; ID/3/R; ID/16/S).

Although different reports assert that the government of Rwanda has reached a good step in poverty reduction (RoR\_NISR (2012; RoR\_MINAGRI, 2010), other reports argue that production per head has significantly decreased (Ansoms, Verdoodt and Ranst, 2010: 5–10) and this was confirmed by some interviewees (Focus, 3, 4). Indeed similarly to what a number of scholars have written, with agricultural reform also called green revolution or agricultural mechanisation, if the government of Rwanda doesn't pay attention, traders and other investors whose concern is to maximise profits will continuously 'get richer while the poor landless and/or small-scale farmers will remain poor or grow poorer' (see Shiva, 2008: 5; see also Stiglitz, 2007: 4; Scott, 1985; Ansoms, 2008: 14–16; 2010: 4).

However, other researchers (Diao, et al.) argue that compared to other developing countries that invested in green revolution and agricultural mechanisation since the 1960s, Rwanda is making a significant effort to reduce poverty among rural households by targeting the poorer/less-advantageous, while investing to promote agricultural growth in the rural areas (Diao, et

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<sup>92</sup> Factors affecting maize price in Rwanda include the effects of international agricultural trade, wherein traders sometimes minimise the price based on the offered quantity of maize from neighbouring Uganda (see Diao, et al., 2010: 40)

<sup>93</sup> The price of 1 kg of maize could be sold for between 80 and 100 Rwandan francs (RWF), while 1 kg of maize flour was 700 RWF.

al., 2010: ix, 47). Indeed, agricultural reform has reduced poverty in some areas (see the rice growers for example), but this doesn't prevent it from having harmful consequences on others. Actually, among my interviewees there were those who claimed to not have the right to own property in the marshland (Focus, 3, 4). However, according to some cooperative members and some agronomists, in order to acquire a piece of land in the marshland one needs to be randomly selected, which means that there is no favouritism in that exercise (SS/52/S; SS/46/Go; SS/62/R; SS/68/G; SS/80/S). However, as the number of plots is limited in marshland compared to the number of applicants, the majority of farmers do not have access to marshland (SS/75/Go; SS/80/S).

### **Associating farming and animal husbandry**

As we have seen earlier, agriculture and animal husbandry are the main source of income for farmers, but the purpose of livestock breeding is not always the same for all farmers or in different areas. For some professional farmers, the purpose seems to be to breed so as to increase the number of calves and the quantity of milk and meat for commercial purpose in general (Focus, 3, 4). But for others who do not have a large pasture to feed cattle, it's mainly a matter of receiving manure for their field and/or milk to feed their children (Ibid.). This can actually be generalised, given that in ten out of the eleven rural sectors I visited during my pilot study<sup>94</sup>, small farmers were combining animal husbandry and farming as a way to improve their yield. During our conversations, one of them highlighted the situation as follows:

When somebody grows crops without organic manure, especially when the soil is naturally poor, s/he is wasting time. When land is not overused, you can obtain a relatively good harvest but not as much as you would wish. On the other hand, when someone uses the manure, s/he can get a great yield. When we don't have cattle, the manure we normally use is from poultry and goats. Look at this banana plantation [points at it] for example and compare the plants close to the home to those far from it.

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<sup>94</sup> I visited ten sites in the countryside and one in the city centre of Kigali. At each site I interviewed one or two local authorities and some local opinion leaders and carried out group discussions in all of them except the city of Kigali.

You can see that those that are close to the house produce large bunches of banana compared to the others a bit further away. It is simply because when we sweep the goat shed, the poultry hut and our home, we just collect the waste and spread it in the closest area, and as you can see it's a very rich fertiliser (SS/6/R).

In the countryside where households are still scattered, farmers grow various types of crops in the gardens surrounding their homes. It's rare to see farmers using fertilisers other than the compost produced from the mixture of domestic animals' waste (dung for example) and decayed grasses. In certain regions however, including the areas selected for this study, the use of cattle and/or other small domestic animals has evolved tremendously. For instance, Gahogo and Shyogwe are not among the most developed areas in cattle farming in Muhanga district (former Gitarama prefecture), yet as in other areas of the district almost every household keeps at least one cow or another small domestic animal, be it a goat, a pig, etc. The purpose of rearing domestic animals, as one of the interviewees revealed, is not necessarily for balanced nutrition or breeding in order to own herds, but simply to acquire manure for their farming as their soil is depleted (SS/52/S; RoR\_RARDA, 2006: 3).

One of the interviewees residing in Shyogwe revealed that before the 1994 genocide their prefecture was far ahead of other prefectures in respect to possession of a large number of cattle. He even emphasised that even though Umutara district is the present leader, cattle remain in the hands of a small number of those who hold large grazing lands. In comparison, in Muhanga almost every household possesses a least one cow. Most of households in Rusheshe and Gako also possess cows and/or small herbivores, but large cattle farms are solely in the hands of the few large-scale farmers living in Kigali city (SS/65/R).

Indeed, in some areas, a number of cooperatives and professional farmers with large-scale landholdings use chemical fertilisers distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture or its main dealer partners. As a result, the agricultural productivity has significantly improved on the market (see SS/82/K), while small farmers are generally satisfied with the little resources they earn from their harvest without using chemical fertilisers (SS/32/G; SS/49/Go).



## **The state of on-farm income**

Most of my interviewees said that growing only one select crop has worsened their living conditions. One of them describes as follows:

In this area, the value of agricultural products has dropped significantly. We no longer get as much income as we were used to obtain. In the past we could grow cassava and after the harvest we could sell cassava flour. With that we were able to make savings or invest in buying a cow or other small domestic animals. We could also sell beer from our banana plantation and with this the income was not bad. But today it is forbidden to grow such kinds of banana plants for beer. We are only allowed to grow banana for cooking and/or fruits. For us, the small farmers, growing these types of banana is just for household use, not for generating any money. The market discourages us from investing in growing green banana for cooking. The banana we produce here are not big enough to compete with big ones from the eastern province and Uganda. Banana wholesalers from Kigali city cannot buy ours unless the suppliers from Ugandan and eastern province have particular problems of supply (ID/4/R).

Indeed, the Ugandan areas bordering along Northern Province and the north of Eastern Province, Rwanda are the best producers of banana in the region. During the harvest season they bring tonnes of banana bunches and sell at a good price compared to those produced in Rwanda. The consequences are that the suppliers from other regions withdraw or stop supplying banana because they are not competitive. Indeed, the law of supply and demand justifies this phenomenon. Actually when the quantity of a commodity increases more than the demand, its price decreases automatically. The result is that when the producers realise that they are losing money, they shift to another commodity and leave the first one to those who contributed to the fall of its value on the market (Rangarajan and Dholakia, 1979: 4; see also Forstater, Mongiovi and Pressman, 2007: 122).

Moreover, ID/4 emphasises that if small landholders don't work diligently, their families will starve and children will not attend school. The only option they have is described as follows:

The only option we have to feed our children and pay their education is to look for other jobs. This is why you will see a number of men and young farmers spending the days looking for manual jobs in neighbouring and trading centres, especially in Masaka, Kabuga and the new construction sites in the areas of the extension of Kigali City. We normally work as manual labourers in various areas such as construction, manual domestic works, transportation, etc. (Ibid.).

Similarly, in Gahogo and Shyogwe, farmers who do not get a manual job to supplement their little harvest from farming cannot afford the cost of food products in the market and ensure the education of their children. The small-scale farmers in these sectors have suffered extensively, since they haven't produce enough in the marsh of Rugeramigozi. One of the resident of Shyogwe recounts:

Poverty is getting higher than ever. Actually we were depending on this marsh, but since we started to grow maize and voluble beans nothing grows and this is why we starve. The hillside is arid and sterile; you can produce only if you have a cow to produce dung manure and if the weather is good. Jobs are rare in Nyamabuye and Kabgayi, in fact the number of jobseekers is much higher and the consequence is that you can always see people wandering everywhere in neighbouring towns and small commercial centres (ID/17/S).

Apart from those who survive off of farming and/or animal husbandry, and others surviving from manual jobs, there is another small group of poor farmers financially dependent on their children or other relatives living away, generally in Kigali City or abroad. Some of them have land but usually it is underused or leased in exchange for a small quantity of harvested crops or the equivalent in cash. Despite that they still need assistance (SS/32/G). According to SS/79, this group of vulnerable people needs

assistance from close neighbours because of *akimuhana kaza imvura ihise*, literally meaning that the outside aid comes after the rain (or the assistance delays generally) or that one should not expect too much on the aid from far away; rather, one should count on the fruits of one's own efforts and/or support from close neighbours (SS/79/S). Interviewees have emphasised this just to illustrate that dependent farmers can starve while they are waiting for assistance from their relatives living faraway. Therefore, neighbours are called on to support them. Usually the government assists some of them, especially the most vulnerable, by giving them a shelter and/or a milk cow, but some are unable to feed and take care of her (Ibid.; see also Focus, 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6).

### **The off-farm alternatives**

Through its long-term planning of the document Rwanda Vision 2020, the government of Rwanda has planned to develop income not generated through agricultural in rural areas as an alternative to reducing the dependence upon subsistence agriculture in a country where arable land is very limited (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000: 19). Given that the agricultural activities on hillsides have significantly decreased and marshlands were saturated since before the genocide, underemployment has become chronic in the countryside. Among the options that the post-genocide government of Rwanda has planned to strengthen are the development of vocational and technical training, encouraging skill development, promoting micro-credit schemes and small-scale entrepreneurs, etc. (Ibid.). However, these sectors of development are still embryonic. To survive, landless and small-scale farmers have to move around looking for farm or non-farm *ikilaka* (waged jobs). Non-farm wage works include stonework or brickwork, transportation of building materials in construction sites, carpentry, handcrafts and small business of foodstuffs and homemade beer from banana and/or sorghum. Other works are those provided by local leaders through VUP<sup>95</sup> or Vision 2020 *Umurenge* programme (for the poorer). They generally include terracing to fight erosion and regular maintenance of local roads.

At the sites where this study was carried out, off-farm jobs (such as local transportation by bicycle from one village to another

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<sup>95</sup> VUP is a programme offering labour to poor people as a way to improve their livelihood.

or to close trading centres and health centres, etc.) have been developed. But for long distances and hilly areas, motorcycles are the most-used. The rural youth is mainly attracted to local transportation, masonry, domestic works in close cities, etc. However, other off-farm jobs such as small business, handcrafts, street trading and small business in the marketplaces are not exclusively for youth, adult men and women (especially the landless and farmers with very small land) are attracted as well (Focus, 2, 3, and 4).

Some of my interviewees, especially the small-scale farmers, stated that even if off-farm activities contribute to generate additional income, they do not prevent them from performing farm activities. They are mostly done between the two periods of ploughing and sowing, and then between the latter and weeding and the whole periods after the harvest, i.e. mid-June to mid-August and mid-January to mid-February (SS/13/R; SS/31/G; SS/42/Go; SS/51/S). One of the interviewees explains how jobs are very helpful:

Even if I have two small plots and a garden at home, it doesn't mean that I don't do other generating income activities. I usually work at construction sites. I just go to the site early in the morning and the chief selects those he knows to be diligent workers. When I go there I'm selected because many chiefs know me already. From seven to three o'clock I get 1,000 Rwandan francs [1.50 USD]. I usually save the amount at home, but I sometimes use three hundred or less per day and save the remaining amount. The money I save after a week can solve many urgent needs that couldn't be solved otherwise (SS/51/S).

Some of the very poor, but physically strong, relate similar stories. The difference is that savings differ: most of them consume their daily income or save only 100 or 200 Rwandan francs [equivalent to respectively 0.15 or 0.30 USD]. They prefer off-farm than farm work since the former pays better. Young people are also attracted to this labour, but most of them prefer the transportation sector, especially those that provide services to all categories of the population and their goods towards different destinations including health centres, markets, schools, work, distant fields, etc. (Focus, 1–10).

Many underemployed young people prefer to work as bicyclists or motorcyclists rather than ploughing. With ploughing, they get 800 Rwandan francs per day but the average of what they gain in the area of local transportation<sup>96</sup> is far better (SS/3/R; SS/41/Go). One of the interviewees describes this:

Generally dry season in Rwanda is a period of harvest where farmers have plenty of cash. During this period, transportation by motorcycle can really enrich the owner. For example, it is very easy to earn between 5,000–8,000 Rwandan francs [7.70–12 USD] per day. If you are the owner you keep the whole amount minus fuel, but even if you hire it, there is a possibility that, after the deduction for daily payment to the owner, that you can save 2,000 to 3,000 thousand [3–4.60 USD] per day. The problem arises in rainy periods. During these periods we are almost unemployed (SS/32/G).

Indeed, during dry seasons, the population in general and farmers in particular generate cash from harvest. It's a time where firms and factories refund cooperatives and in turn the cooperatives pay farmers for the supplied harvests. It's also the periods when large-scale farmers and the owners of processing factories reimburse the accumulated delays of payments to their workers and suppliers (SS/79/S; SS/28/G). It's really a great period for the circulation of money and everyone earns her/his part including transporters.

In some areas especially where electricity is easily accessible, off-farm activities are developed compared to where there is no electricity. Some invest in small businesses (in small shops or markets), hairdressing, etc. but the interviewees argue that the income is too small (SS/67/G; SS/75/Go). They generally say that the majority of the population doesn't have the purchasing capacity to afford the increasing prices of food and basic stuff at the markets (Focus, 3, 4, 6 and 7).

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<sup>96</sup> With bicycles for example, they can earn an average of 1,500 Rwandan francs [2.30 USD] per day and with motorcycles the average per day is about 4,000 Rwandan francs [6.10 USD] after the deduction of expenses (mainly fuel). But with the latter, if they don't own the motorcycle, they regularly pay a constant amount of 3,000 Rwandan francs [4.60 USD] per day, and the excess amount serves as a daily salary.

Young boys and some girls from poor households are also attracted to street trading and small business. Some of them usually sell domestic and homemade items, either by themselves or for someone else. This includes, for instance, local banana beer, goat brochette, homemade bread, fruits, cigarette, etc. Some of the interviewees whose everyday life depends on such kind of small business argue that the small income they get from small business serves to supplement the meagre food they harvest from their gardening. According to one of them, gardening or farming on small plots doesn't meet the minimum household needs, so except pupils who attend schools during the day, everyone in the household has to find a way of generating an income (ID/14/G).

Other attracting off-farm activities, especially for youth, are domestic works in neighbouring trade centres and in Kigali city in particular. A number of interviewees among the poorer households have at least one of their daughters or sons doing domestic work in close cities and towns including Kigali city, Masaka, Kabuga, and Nyamabuye. Their daughters in particular take care of children and at each end of month they send a small amount of money to their parents to supplement the little food crops they produce (ID/1/R; ID/7/G; ID/11/Go; ID/16/S).

Apart that the farmers striving to find a substitute for farming, the government through MIFOTRA (the Ministry of Labour and Professional Skills) has established centres for professional skills, such as handcraft, entrepreneurship and training on how to run a small business, etc. in order to substitute farming. Such centres are still few in the countryside, the only one I visited is located between Rusheshe and Gako cells (in Masaka centre), but there was nothing similar in Gahogo and Shyogwe. Surprisingly, some of my interviewees stated that no one from their cells has so far been admitted to that centre. They claim that those who benefit from it are always from far away. They are generally sent by their *Agaseke* (basket) cooperatives and other handcraft cooperatives from different areas across the country to acquire additional new skills in handcrafts (SS/18/R; SS/26/G; ID/3/R; SS/62/R).

The above details describing non-agricultural activities generating income show how farmers who are somehow disappointed by agricultural reform, or are not able to bear the effects of agricultural reform and internal regulations of agricultural cooperatives strive to survive.

## Reform experience through cooperatives

Most farmers, especially those who were lucky to own a plot in the wetlands, generally experience agricultural reform through their membership in cooperatives. In fact, the government of Rwanda uses agricultural cooperatives run by farmers themselves to spread and implement its policies. It is accordingly opted to strengthen them throughout the countryside. The agricultural cooperatives are a channel through which MINAGRI initiates and implements the objectives of modernising the agricultural sector in order to increase agricultural productivity and curb recurrent poverty (RoR\_MINAGRI, 2004).

Although, the government has trusted the cooperatives, these do not seem to work based on the principles that regulate cooperatives. As Silberfein argues, for instance, the success of participatory development in a community depends on the quality of its leadership; the capacity of the leader to work with various groups; her/his skills to create a favourable environment within groups, strengthen ownership, build trustfulness and democracy involving cooperative members in decision-making (Silberfein, 1998: 223; see also Henry, 2005: 4; World Bank, 2008: 222). As Silberfein reveals, previous experiences are also determinants in the success of a cooperative. Similarly, it is argued by the World Bank that "... people are resistant to the new efforts to induce their participation when they have had negative experiences; [...] and those who have previously had positive experiences are more receptive to the new efforts" (World Bank, 2008: 223).

Indeed, previous bad experiences within some cooperatives are the main challenges to the success of the implementation of agricultural reform. The following example illustrates the effects of a negative experience within one of the cooperatives working in the Rugeramigozi marshland. This is the cooperative KIABR<sup>97</sup> which consists of a grouping a number of associations working in this marsh. This cooperative had experienced mistakes of not basing its activities on the principles of a good cooperative (Sentama, 2009: 66), especially that of democracy involving its members in decision-making. Still, farmers feel marginalised in the decision-making process. They claim to not be able to contribute to

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<sup>97</sup> KIABR stands for Koperative Impanirira musaruro w'Abahinzi-Borozi ba Rugeramigozi or (a Cooperative of Agro-Livestock Farmers seeking to increase yield in Rugeramigozi).

the decisions concerning the value that the cooperative leaders and the buyers attribute to the harvest (SS/76/Go). This situation is not unique to KIABR cooperative; the same problem occurs even in cooperatives where members have improved their livelihood, including COMUSS<sup>98</sup> of Rugende; COPAR of Rusheshe, and KOKAR of Rugeramigozi II.

One of my interviewees among members of KIABR said that they revived their cooperative by electing new leaders, expecting that they would consult them before any decision. However, the new elected leaders made the same mistake as their predecessors by making decisions on their own or with influential outsiders. In fact, they don't consult cooperative members who had elected them. For instance, the price of their harvest is decided between their leaders and businessmen or processing factory owners. In addition, the cooperative leaders also decide over the contributions deducted from individual income after each harvest period (SS/53/S). Farmers believe that if they were free to sell their products themselves, the payment might then not be delayed. Most of them, the poor in particular, have revealed that their families starve because of delays in payment. Moreover, they express their discontent with the extra deductions for the so-called cooperative development that is taken before the payment. These deductions include not only those related to inputs – fertilisers and seeds – but also those that poor farmers consider unnecessary such as spending money for socialising or picnics or useless travel missions of cooperative leaders, etc. (SS/27/G; ID/7/G; SS/56/S). One of the members of the KIABR agricultural cooperative said for instance that,

[...] it's strange that the concern of the cooperative leaders is to strengthen the economic capacity of the cooperative without worrying about its members. They don't worry about the poverty of its members, yet it is specified in its objectives that its purpose is to promote the economic capacity of its members (SS/53/S).

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<sup>98</sup> COMUSS stands for Coopérative des Multiplicateurs des Semences Sélectionnées or (Cooperative of Multipliers of Selected Seeds).



## **Animal husbandry under the zero-grazing system**

In Rwandan culture, the agriculture is always associated with animal husbandry. Therefore, in order to understand the phenomenon of resistance to agricultural reform implementation, this study has had to include both crop production and animal husbandry.

As indicated in chapter four, one of the main problems that rural Rwandans face, is land scarcity. Fallowing is no more possible and there is no more land reserves for pasture. Therefore, if not well managed, animal husbandry can affect the environment. In order to limit the effects of traditional practices of animal farming on the environment, the government of Rwanda has developed some policies (see USAID, 2008).

The “environmental protection policy”<sup>99</sup> and agricultural reform among other policies have contributed to limiting traditional practices of animal husbandry in Rwanda. Aside from the “North-East of the country”<sup>100</sup>, where pastures and other types of grazing land are still abundant, in other parts of the country grazing land is generally rare. As we have seen in chapter four, grazing was traditionally unplanned in such a way that farmers with a considerable amount of domestic animals could make a “transhumance”<sup>101</sup> far from their homes and could even go far beyond the current borders with the neighbouring countries (former kingdoms); this kind of practices is however, impossible today.

Against the background of land scarcity, the breeder has to be rational in order to be able to feed livestock. One method is the reduction of the number of domestic animals. The best way of achieving this has been to transform them through artificial insemination of improved milk races, or simply replacing local

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<sup>99</sup> Environmental protection policy was conceived to confront degradation of natural resources and biodiversity; energy crisis; pollution; disasters, etc. (MINITERE, 2003 in Havugimana, 2009: 176; USAID, 2008: 11–12).

<sup>100</sup> Gatsibo is also part of the former province of Umutara (split into districts including Gatsibo, Nyagatare and part of Kayonza with general administrative structure reform in Rwanda, (see the two administrative maps of before and after 2005 reform in Chapter 4).

<sup>101</sup> Transhumance is the “transfer of livestock from one grazing ground to another, as from lowlands to highlands, with the changing of seasons”. See Online: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com>.

cattle with modern races. This breeding technique improves the quantity of milk from a small number of cows affordable to feed and to keep in a small space or a barn as a way of rationally managing space (SS/82/K).

The policy of zero-grazing, or cut and carry, is a system of keeping animals in a stall and bringing fodder to them instead of allowing them to graze outside (see *The Beehive*, 2011). It is an intensive system that produces lots of milk from few cows and feeds them cultivated grass on minimal land. It has many advantages, such as preventing crops from damages that can be caused by wandering cattle; and their dung, when captured in a hole, can also be used to produce biogas<sup>102</sup> and fertilisers (see RoR-MINAGRI/RARDA, 2006: 15). The zero-grazing strategy is however not new in Rwanda. The Habyarimana administration had banned free grazing already before 1994 (Bigagaza, et al. 2002: 71). Through MINAGRI, the government of Rwanda has simply revived and strengthened the strategies of implementing it.

Thus, the current government has developed a new scheme of granting one cow to poor families (RoR-MINAGRI, 2006: 3; 2007: 17). As mentioned in the EDPRS (Economic Development for Poverty Reduction Strategy) report, this policy was developed to speed up the rate of poverty reduction and to promote opportunities to all by ensuring “equal access to welfare programmes” (see Sachs, 2004: 169). But the way the project was conceived and the preconditions<sup>103</sup> for a poor person to benefit from that scheme (RoR\_MINAGRI, 2006: 17) are quite intricate. This was highlighted by interviewees early during my fieldwork,

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<sup>102</sup> Biogas is a source of energy produced from the collection of cattle dung. It replaces charcoal and is therefore an alternative to prevent deforestation (see MINAGRI online: <http://www.minagri.gov.rw>).

<sup>103</sup> The beneficiary should not own another cow; they should own land that is no bigger than 0.75 ha; they should have controlled soil erosion on their land; they should have planted at least 20 acres of pasture or families that are close to each other should have set aside and planted the pasture; they should have constructed shelter to house the animal; they should have mechanisms for water harvesting and conservation for the animal; they should have at least two pits near the homestead and show good care for the environment; they should be growing and having a reasonable yield of one crop that is suitable for the particular area; they should be of exemplary character and should participate in development and other activities related to good governance and poverty reduction (see RoR, 2006: 17).

where farmers revealed many challenges that prevent the programme of one cow per poor family from attaining its objectives. Among the challenges poor farmers face include, feeding the cow that they obtain. Actually, a number of those who have already received the benefit of a cow from the scheme are not able to feed it, especially during the dry season (also see SS/64/R; SS/60/S). Other constraints on poor, vulnerable farmers include: the system of zero-grazing requiring manpower to carry food and fetch water; possessing of money to buy certain services and to be able to hire builders to build and/or rehabilitate sheds and pits, etc. (also see Ansoms, 2009: 304; RoR-MINAGRI/RARDA, 2006: 15).

These prerequisites challenge not only the poor who benefit a cow but also other herders without sufficient grazing land or a large field of grass. When we talk about poor people who have difficulty to manage given, inherited or bought cows we refer in particular to households headed by women, such as genocide survivors whose husbands were killed during the genocide and women whose husbands are in prison. In chapter four we have also seen that taking care of cows was not among women's roles in Rwandan tradition. It is therefore very challenging for them to perform all these activities including those roles traditionally known as men's roles. Some try to cope, but all need money to hire manpower, and when they don't find any they give their cows to neighbours who need manure and let them keep it until they get grass to feed it.

## **Farmers' reactions**

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, the agricultural reform aims to reduce poverty while boosting economic growth. In the process of its implementation, farmers are required to follow pre-established designs regarding the types of seeds adapted to each area, and replace them with the existing ones, the agricultural inputs and other modern agricultural practices. In this section, I discuss these requirements. I also highlight the stance of several farmers and their reactions, including: spreading rumours and its effects; silence or indifference in brief; speaking out against various requirements; opposing the cooperative mismanagement; refusal to sell the harvest; replacing improved seeds with local ones; secretly selling fertilisers; storing the stem of banana trees underground; grazing at night and stealing grass from others'

fields; leasing instead of selling parcels in marshlands; reporting to local justice institutions; taking refuge in prayer; and ironic or honest praise of top leaders in visit.

### **Reactions in response to spread rumours about agricultural reforms**

As discussed in the previous chapter, farmers react to reform implementation in different ways and spreading rumour or the response to its impact is one of those reactions.

Rumours against the implementation of reform fuel the reluctance among the recipients since it creates a kind of distrust between the reform initiators – the implementers – and the recipients (see also Chaturvedi, et al., 2009: 267). It motivates resistance when it is spread and being used to challenge the policymakers (Ibid., 301). Some farmers who were against the new policy of agricultural reform have spread rumours in order to prevent its implementation (Focus, 3 and 4).

For example, in Eastern Province where policies are usually piloted, farmers have spread a rumour to discourage other farmers from growing maize after they had realised that the expected outcome was very low. Indeed, after having compared their investment in kind (manual field labour), in cash (to buy fertilisers, seeds, pay manual labour for different work and cooperative membership) and the outcome of 80 Rwandan francs (equivalent to 0.10 USD) per kilogramme, they concluded that growing maize was useless for the farmer but beneficial to the traders and wanted to stop growing it. In fact, they were expecting that the processing factory owners or the wholesalers to whom they supplied their harvest could be influenced by their claims and increase their purchase price (Focus, 5). Similar reactions happened at other sites as well; one of the cooperative members of KIABR in Rugeramigozi marsh said for example that:

Due to the failure to make profit, we have attempted to discourage the cultivation of maize by spreading rumours among the cooperative members that growing is useless because it is unprofitable. By doing so we were expecting to grow other profitable crops such as rice (see Focus, 3).

Due to the rumour spreading from Eastern Province, farmers in others areas, including where this study was conducted, questioned the use of fertilisers (which were considered to have bad effects on their fertile soil) and the replacement of some crops with improved seeds of maize. Besides that, farmers knew that the maize yield is underestimated on the market and that, if they keep it longer in the granary, it would end up being damaged by insects which would exacerbate their poverty instead of improving their living standard.

During the distribution of seeds and fertilisers' loans in Rusheshe cell, a 56-year-old poor farmer described the diffused rumour that made them reluctant to believe the agronomists:

As you can see, we are called to grow the maize and use fertilisers we got as a loan, but we are not sure if we will be able to pay it back. You know, we are not the first to grow it; in Eastern Province they used to take a loan of both seeds and fertilisers, but to pay back that loan is still problematic. They want us to fall into the same trap. But, it is an order, we are obliged to do whatever they want [...] we heard that they were promised to find buyers after the harvest and they really got a very good harvest, but the wholesaler who went there wanted to buy their yield at the very cheap price of 80 Rwandan francs per kilogramme of maize. Farmers refused to accept the price, but because they could not find another buyer they opted to store their harvest of about ten thousand tonnes. The result was worse, because after one month the entire store was damaged by insects (ID/5/R).

In reference to this quotation and based on many other statements similar to this (see ID/7/G; ID/19/S and Focus, 1–10), I draw the conclusion that diffused rumour – as they call it – based on other farmers' experience has incited farmers to question what the officials tell them. Indeed, even though chemical fertilisers were used, some farmers failed to produce what the agronomists expected of them because of lack of motivation. They discouraged those who were willing to comply with the guidance of implementation. However, what the interviewees, particularly the local leaders, considered rumour had a certain truth, even if there was some exaggeration in it. As Dentith argues, once a rumour is verified and recognised as a truth, it ceases to be called a rumour

(Dalziel (Ed.), 2010: 4). Nonetheless, I still consider it a rumour, as there were some exaggerations with a certain purpose. Before my investigation, the agents of reforms used the concept of rumour to convince farmers that even if that would be partly true, the mistake that happened in other areas in the past would not occur in theirs.

According to agronomists I interviewed, there is an advantage to this awareness of mistakes that occurred in other areas. Namely, it is that agents of reforms have changed their approach to facilitation in the field (SS/62/R; SS/68/G; SS/75/Go; SS/80/S). That is, for example, to recognise that they are not the absolute experts regarding farming and to accept sharing experience with farmers who better-know their soil and which crops are adapted for their specific areas.

### **Silence or indifference**

The same as for grouped settlement implementation, farmers have also used silence in the process of agricultural reform implementation either as way of protecting themselves (Burnet, 2012) or as a way of silencing the hegemonic discourse (Lilja, 2007). Hence, in order to understand the meaning of farmers' silence in agricultural reform implementation, one may refer to farmers' silence during meetings concerning grouped settlement implementation (see chapter 5).

### **Opposing the cooperative mismanagement**

As I mentioned earlier, KIABR cooperative leaders were accused of mismanagement, incompetence and lack of accountability. Some of the cooperative members opposed such management and warned that they would withdraw their membership if the existing executive committee would not be changed (SS/52/S).

As it had previously encountered difficulties and stopped working effectively, KIABR was, in 2010, about to reborn. However, it was difficult to know the real problem because no one had accused the old committee explicitly. Cooperative members' discontent with possibility that latent conflict would explode was revealed by one of the local agronomists. He discovered the problem when he was investigating the real cause of farmers' reluctance to follow his advices and why their cooperative has weakened so much that it would collapse. His conclusion was that

the cooperative management committee was inefficient (SS/80/S). Indeed, in addition to the agronomist version, some of my interviewees – members of KIABR – revealed that the main cause of their reluctance to renew the membership resulted from the unwanted, corrupt, selfish and incompetent cooperative leadership (SS/52/S; SS/79/S; Focus, 4). Based on the agronomist's report, the executive secretary at sector level organised the election for a new committee. This is an example, among others, of how subordinates farmers in cooperatives express their discontent without quarrelling with the authority.

Another example of farmers' reaction within their cooperative is that of Rugende. Actually, in Rugende marshland, members of COMUSS<sup>104</sup> who are better-off than others are allowed to claim the plots of those who fail to invest and effectively exploit their plots. However, poor farmers who generally fail to meet the marshland regulations refuse to withdraw. Rather, their wish is to lease their plots instead of losing them for good or to sell them at a negotiated price rather than giving them a trivial value. As we will discuss below, leasing land to professional farmers for land consolidation is for small-scale farmers economically strategic than selling it and profitable for professional large-scale farmers (see Lerman and Cimpoies, 2006).

### **Leasing<sup>105</sup> instead of selling the parcels**

As mentioned earlier in chapter four, marshlands are state property, and the state leases it to whoever is capable of using it effectively. Private investors or farmers organised in cooperatives can use it. Farmers obtain plots randomly, and of course only those who are lucky obtain them. After receiving one, no one is allowed to sell or lease it. Although to sell or lease is illegal, farmers do so secretly. So, as just mentioned in the previous heading, poor farmers in some areas choose to lease their plots instead of selling them to the less poor. This is actually a way of keeping plots, expecting that in the near future they would again be able to exploit them (ID/2/R; see also ID/9/G; ID/18/S; SS/52/S). However, in addition to the act

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<sup>104</sup> COMUSS (see footnote 98).

<sup>105</sup> Article 2, paragraph 13 of the 2005 Organic Land Law describes Lease as a contract between a landlord and a third party so that the latter may exploit the former's land and harvests fruits but on which he or she has to pay a negotiated rental fee.

of leasing, those who are physically strong choose to do farm work for the tenants in order to survive. One of the farmers describes how she manages this situation:

Several years ago, the Rugeramigozi marshland was a field of trial and error. We were using it to grow sweet potatoes and vegetables including cabbages, cauliflowers and onions in one agricultural season and beans or peas in the other. [...] With the new agricultural reform which, in this area, started in 2009, we were forced to grow voluble beans and maize. But the result was disappointing. Because we were not able to continue to use loans of seeds and fertilisers, we decided to lease our plots to our neighbours. I personally decided to sublet it to another farmer and began ploughing for others, hoping to recuperate it at any time and use it effectively (ID/18/S).

Some cases of injustice have however been noticed in the arrangement between the poor small landowners and those who are less poor. As one of the interviewees argues, some cooperative leaders have attempted to confiscate unexploited plots or forced the owners to transfer them to other farmers if they fail to use them effectively. The poor farmers oppose that suggestion and opted to appeal for justice from local leaders. One of the interviewees, who was no longer a cooperative member but owned a plot that he leased to someone said:

One of the former leaders of KIABR attempted to confiscate plots belonging to other farmers or forced some of them to sell their plots for a very small amount. She has attempted to confiscate our plots several times because we refused the amount she proposed to us. She especially targeted those who, because of lack of means to meet the cooperative obligations such as using varied inputs, were about to seek short-term tenants. But finally some of us appealed for justice from the local legislative council, and quickly one of the council members was sent to the field to intervene. Finally, justice had been done in our favour. Then I decided to lease instead of selling it because I was expecting to use it again in the future. Indeed, now I'm planning to grow rice (ID/17/S).



ID/17 described this event in 2010 during my first visit in Shyogwe – Rugeramigozi marshland – and indeed, in February 2012 when I went back in the field, I found that as he had planned, he already had recuperated his plot, joined the cooperative and started to grow rice with other farmers in Rugeramigozi I. Actually, in 2011 the government, through MINAGRI\_RSSP, invested an important amount of money in Rugeramigozi, constructing a modern dam which conserves water from the upstream source and in 2012 it was full of water that allowed restarting the rice project that was initially started by GAA but couldn't sustain because of some factors including insufficiency of water for irrigation. This NGO, along with MINAGRI, still supports farmers growing rice (SS/80/S, SS/52/S).

A similar act of injustice and intervention occurred in Rugende marsh, but poor farmers went further and wanted to appeal to the Office of the Ombudsman, but their plots were given back before the Office of Ombudsman intervened (ID/7/G). The difference between both situations is that some farmers in Rugende have finally sold their pieces of land to the same famers who attempted to confiscate them. The only advantage that some former owners have is that they continued to plough and maintain the same plots for the new owners and get a wage of 1,500 Rwandan francs (2.30 USD) per day (SS/69/G).

Land leasing is common on hillsides as well. Generally, households choose to lease their plots especially when they fail to produce good yields due to various reasons, including drought, physical incapacity to exploit it, lack of means to pay for fertilisers and improved seeds, etc. (SS/52/S; see also SS/17/R; SS/48/G; SS/57/S) In the case of drought, the transfer is generally from the poor farmer to the less poor farmer who is able to cope with uncertainties and can afford all the requirements. However, it happens that conflicts emerge, especially when the tenants harvest and neglect to respect their agreement with the owner, mostly when the tenants fail to harvest (see similar context with Scott, 1985). But despite such failure, the land owner requires payment (SS/52/S). This kind of conflict is very common, but they are always resolved either amicably or through local justice

institutions such as *abunzi*<sup>106</sup> (or the mediators), *njyanama* (local legislature council).

### **Reporting to local justice institutions**

As previously indicated, *njyanama* (local legislature council) is the local legislative council in the Rwandan governance system. The role of its members is to verify whether the government priorities are performed in the interests of local population, but they also intervene in many local issues. Although, legislative council does not do justice in its remit, farmers who are unfairly treated by local authorities often use this body by mistake to seek justice. For example, as we saw earlier, there were some disputes between poor farmers and some members of cooperative leaders and/or local authorities who also needed a piece of land in the marsh. Nonetheless, farmers who were not able to use their plots in Rugeramigozi and Rugende marshes would not like to lose their plots. Rather, they wanted to lease them and get them back anytime they would need them. Yet, those who wanted to confiscate them based on the assumption that the owners were lazy, which means that they should let those who have the capacity to exploit them. The owner finally appealed to *abunzi* (the mediators), who later intervened in favour of the poor farmers (SS/23/G; SS/52/S).

### **Taking refuge in prayers**

Prayer can become a weapon of desperate persons imploring God to defeat their enemies or oppressors just as other tactics that subordinates use to undermine the power of the dominant. Indeed, faith is a weapon, or a refuge for the weak and desperate people in particular; it strengthens them when they feel scared or distressed. Some of my interviewees, the very poor in particular, used prayers as a weapon to cope with desperation and believe that God would

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<sup>106</sup> *Abunzi* means mediation committee members; they are, according to the Ministry of Justice, volunteers and the service they provide is free. In order to create an incentive MINIJUST now pays the cost of *abunzi*'s families' health insurance (*Mutuelle de santé*), then worth about 5,000 RWF [equivalent to 7.70 USD] per family per year. MINIJUST also supplies one bicycle per cell to help *abunzi* access all parts of their jurisdiction (Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 4 June 2003 revised on 8 December 2005. See J.O of 8 December 2005 Available Online: <http://www.amategeko.net>).

comfort and help them to overcome such a situation (ID/16/S; ID/11/Go). One of the interviewees has said for example:

In critical circumstances, we kneel down and pray imploring the powerful God to defeat our oppressors and rescue us from their oppression or change their mind so that they cease to abuse us. For example we have prayed that they stop to the ban on the cultivation of banana and indeed, they later stopped it (ID/16/S).

There are also some examples where religious belief leads to resistance to reforms. For example, one of the interviewees among the opinion leaders in Gahogo cell raised the issue of farmers who refuse to grow coffee, to participate in electing leaders, to oppose blood transfusion while one is sick and needs it (SS/29/Go). There are many other examples of fundamentalist religions that strictly forbid some of the practices and principles universally recognised, i.e. believed as normal in civilised societies. For example, there are those who refuse to join a political party or participate in organised elections of local or national leaders; others forbid growing tobacco, forbid saluting the national flag (where applicable), reciting the national anthem, the use of contraceptive drugs or devices to prevent unwanted births, encourage being martyred to protect one's religion, etc. Such proscriptions are very common in the Jehovah's Witnesses sect, but other religions have their own taboos. For example, the Catholic Church, which is the most important Church in Rwanda (encompassing more than 60% of the total population), doesn't accept the reform related to family planning such as the use of contraceptives and the decree that allows abortion (Focus, 3, 4). These are some of examples illustrating that faith is also a weapon of the weak.

Indeed, faith and prayer can be one of the forms of acts of resistance. This is emphasised by Lisa Westberg in a seminar held at the University of Gothenburg in November 2009. In her presentation she showed how "... having a faith provides a sense of persuasion, action for the good cause and strength, stability and endurance."<sup>107</sup> Islamic jihad<sup>108</sup> is one of the examples as used by

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<sup>107</sup> See Westberg (2009) "Faith, Prayer and Resistance". A seminar held 29 November 2009 at Annedalsseminariet, Campus Linné. The text was accessed on resistance studies website, [2011/03/28; 11: 46].

Islamic fundamentalists who are generally against the Western model of democracy and often wage war for Islamic dignity. While in Christianity, in cases where kingdoms were in opposition to the religion, some Christians have, for millennia, been ready to die<sup>109</sup> rather than renounce their belief (see Nuyombi, 2012).

### **Refusal to sell their harvest**

A bit similar to what Scott (1985: 295) discovered in *Sedaka* (Malaysia), some of my interviewees revealed that very often farmer's hide some of their yield and keep it at home expecting that the price would increase later after the period of harvest, or just keep part of it at home for daily food and supply the other half to the wholesaler through their cooperative, yet, they are supposed to sell their harvest to the input suppliers.

Actually, there is an agreement between the providers of fertilisers and/or improved seeds – MINAGRI or one of the recognised local dealers or private companies – and the farmers grouped in cooperatives who are obliged to supply their harvest to the suppliers<sup>110</sup> of the inputs. However, there is no mutual consent between farmers and cooperatives leaders on the selling price of harvest (SS/52/S).

Generally prices are negotiated by the inputs suppliers in collaboration with the leaders of the cooperatives but not involving farmers directly or consulting them before fixing the prices (SS/52/S). Unhappy due to the decisions, especially for the price of maize, some farmers hide part of their harvest if the occasion arises (ID/5/R; ID/9/G; ID/9/G; SS/26/R; SS/33/G). This is indeed one of the indications of their discontent.

However, as marshlands belong to the state and cooperative members use it to grow maize, once caught hiding part of their harvest, they are expelled from the cooperative and lose their plots. Therefore, to avoid losing their plots, some farmers learn different ways of coping with such harsh regulations imposed by cooperatives. Farmers developed, for instance, a stratagem of

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<sup>108</sup> Jihad is a holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty (see Merriam Webster Dictionary).

<sup>109</sup> See for example the Ugandan martyr saints who were burned alive by their king because of conversion to the Roman or Anglican Church in the late 1880s.

<sup>110</sup> All suppliers of inputs having a contract with MINAGRI do not necessarily have an agreement of harvest supply with cooperatives.

harvesting still-fresh maize before it dries, i.e. before the guards of the crops start their job (SS/28/G). Generally, when someone among farmers is caught harvesting fresh maize before it dries, while the cooperative regulations forbid it, they risk losing their plots if it is a state property, i.e. the marshland.

Again, Scott has described a similar phenomenon, where land renters and rice growers did what he calls “cheating” or “surreptitious harvesting at night before official harvest began [...] so as to claim crop damage and then implore landowner to reduce the rent” (Scott, 1985: 152).

Similarly, farmers learn how to dissimulate their disobedient acts, so that the person appointed by the cooperative leaders to oversee growing crops only during the harvest period, don't notice it (ID/9/G; SS/26/R; SS/33/G). A 39-year-old farmer in Gako recounts a brief story of what he does when children need fresh maize for grilling:

We are not allowed to harvest maize before it dries, and we are forced to sell the entire harvest to the cooperative, otherwise the plot is given to someone else. But we often do it unnoticed. I can for example uproot the maize tree from its roots and nobody can notice that I did it. We normally grow maize in sets of three seeds each with an interval of 50 centimetres between sets. When I uproot one of the three of each set, it is not easy to notice. I normally take this risk of doing so because it is unbearable to buy fresh maize for my kids when I have a field of maize ready to consume fresh too (ID/9/G).

The example of this farmer shows how the cooperative's regulations are somehow coercive, especially when the plot is temporarily leased. As we have seen above, the disobedience is motivated by the fact that farmers are dissatisfied with the outcome of their effort in growing maize. Thus, when an opportunity arises, they consume fresh maize and/or hide part of the harvest and sell it elsewhere or use it for *ugali* (homemade maize bread) immediate consumption (ID/9/G; SS/26/R; SS/33/G).

## Replacing improved seeds with the local ones

One of the residents of Rusheshe cell, a 46-year-old woman with three children, revealed that they often fail to harvest maize and tomatoes because of an unexpected rain shortage in hillsides and floods in Nyabarongo marsh, and that lack of experience in using chemical fertilisers<sup>111</sup> is also another factor of failure that some farmers usually raise. To avoid such bad experience from the previous agricultural season, she decided to divide her plot into two parts and used improved seeds on one part and then used ordinary seeds on the other part just to compare the outcome of both types of seeds. But again both seeds failed to generate as much as expected because of a long dry season. She did not feel comfortable with the reform of using improved seeds on the hillside because of persistent adverse weather conditions (ID/4/R).

This recurrent deficiency aggravated her deprivation to the point of being unable to feed her children. Her pain can be well-understood, since she was, as we saw it in the previous chapter, forbidden to use her garden because it was selected for *umudugudu*. In order to grow food crops, she had to lease pieces of land from her neighbours whose lands were not at the selected site. Despite all these depressing experiences, and regardless the risks of starvation or being thrown out by force, she was determined to stay in her home at the selected site even if she was not planning to renovate her house. She stayed, and was not afraid to say publicly that local authorities were unfair (Ibid).

Similar stories were reported in other areas. In the Rugeramigozi marshland for example, before the cultivation of rice, some farmers refused to grow distributed seeds of maize and voluble beans, claiming that they were damaged by insects and would therefore not sprout (SS/53/S; SS/56/S; ID/17/S). Nonetheless, one of the KIABR cooperative leaders told me that it was a pretext for boycotting growing crops other than rice. Actually, as previously mentioned, they were eager to grow it because their neighbours of Kabagari marshland, supported by GAA (Germany Agro Action), were successful. They knew the

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<sup>111</sup> She revealed that they used chemical fertilisers on hillsides and along Nyabarongo marsh but they couldn't harvest on the hillside because of unexpected draught and probably along the wetland of Nyabarongo due to lack of skills in using industrial fertilisers. She emphasised that they learned how to use them oral in the meeting and most of couldn't use them properly.

advantages of growing rice and how much it contributes in generating income, thus, they wanted to grow it at any cost (SS/81/S).

In fact, wherever I carried out interviews and group discussions, farmers were clear about how they were forced to grow some crops that, according to them, would benefit only the wholesalers and factory owners. In Kageyo for instance, they refused to grow wheat, while in Bukure, Shyogwe, Rusheshe and many other areas they refused to grow maize and in other areas they rejected cassava but unsuccessfully because they were forced to somehow (Focus, 1, 4, 7, 8). However, in other areas, farmers refused and succeeded to change MINAGRI's decision about the appropriate crops in their areas (Focus, 7, 5, 6 and 1). That is, for example, where banana was banned but accepted thereafter; and in other areas maize and voluble beans were also replaced by rice (Focus, 3 and 4). Hiding or cooking improved seeds and sowing the local ones could be a manner among others, used to challenge the imposed seeds.

### **Selling fertilisers secretly**

Except large-scale farmers who use agricultural machinery and other farming technologies, the small-scale farmers are generally reluctant to use agricultural inputs, especially chemical fertilisers on hillside since they generally use it to grow food crops for everyday consumption there (SS/52/S; SS/78/S; SS/63/R). One of them explains how manure costs nothing and is better than chemical fertilisers:

After my experimentation, I opted to no longer receive a loan of chemical fertilisers. I have tried both manure and chemical fertilisers in maize fields without mixing them, and the result was a little bit different. The harvest for chemical fertilisers was higher than that of the manure, but when I calculated the value of each minus the value of inputs and all other expenses, the harvest from the field where I used organic manure was far more profitable than the other, especially because the cash invested was minimal. Also, in the field where farmers use only organic manure, there is no worry about the attack of damaging

insects as often happens to the crops from where chemical fertilisers are used (ID/10/G).

The same as for seeds, use of chemical fertilisers on hillsides has been problematic. Out of fear that the uncertainties of weather would decrease their harvest and then fail to reimburse, some farmers prefer to use part of the fertilisers and sell or hide the remaining while waiting for a buyer (ID/4/R; ID/18/S). This happened in Eastern Province (Focus, 5), in Western Province (Focus, 10), and in Rusheshe (Focus, 1). Those who were caught in the act of selling or buying fertilisers were punished with a risk of imprisonment. Local authorities were very strict when handling the illegal sales of government subsidises, which aimed at establishing affordable price for every poor farmer (SS/62/R; SS/68/G; SS/75/Go; SS/80/S). One of the agronomists that I interviewed explains how such fraudulent act bankrupts the government investment:

[...] if for example a business man buys the fertiliser from the poor farmer who got it at half price, the government loses twice: firstly, it loses the intended harvest, which would prevent food scarcity in the country, and secondly there is a loss of the cash invested as subsidy in order to make the price a half of the normal price (SS/62/S).

Similarly, the agronomist in the Rugeramigozi marshland explains in details how the government supports farmers through subsidies in order to encourage them to implement its policy. He explains it as follows:

Normally, RADA brings in fertilisers based on the cooperative or sector's demand. The price per kg of fertilisers is determined by MINAGRI-RADA based on the costs of importation. But as the government policy is to support the agriculture reform so that the yield increases for food security, it has established a fund for subsidy which allows farmers to afford the cost of the fertilisers. Farmers pay only 50% of the cost. Here for example, farmers pay only 250 Rwandan francs per kg of "NPK"<sup>112</sup>, meaning that

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<sup>112</sup> NPK is an abbreviation of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K). See Shiva (2008: 101).



the government covers the remaining amount. They pay the same amount for “DAP”<sup>113</sup>, and both types of fertilisers are used while sowing. “Urea”<sup>114</sup> is another type used when crops reach a certain growth and it serves to complement the first ones, and it costs (minus the subsidy) 175 Rwandan francs. At that stage the roots need lots of balanced food. If there is no balance, either the growth is premature and ends without grains or becomes dwarfed in case of shortages or imbalanced ingredients (SS/80/S).

There are so many constraints related inputs, particularly the fertilisers. For instance, one member of the cooperative leaders added that when a farmer delays paying back the loan, s/he is fined a small amount of 20 francs (equivalent to 0.03 USD) per kilogramme (SS/79/S). Another leader acknowledged that when there is no follow up, farmers sell part of the acquired fertilisers to smugglers<sup>115</sup> so as to be able to pay back the acquired loan (SS/76/Go). Moreover, he recognises that farmers who do so are not ignorant about the benefit of using chemical fertilisers, but they are disappointed by the weather and have no other sources of income to reimburse the received loan (Ibid.). This is indeed justified by the fact that in marshlands where farmers grow rice or multiply seeds, fertilisers are used properly and collaborate closely with agronomists to avoid any mistake (SS/22/G; SS/52/S).

Some explanations claimed that poor small-scale farmers are not aware of the importance of using fertilisers (SS/52/S), which is not true, since some of them had precisely mentioned lack of capacity to pay it back due to insufficient harvest despite its utilisation. They claim that with their harvest, they can neither invest in other activities that can generate additional income nor get sufficient income to feed their family during the whole period between the two agricultural seasons A and B (SS/9/R; ID/6/G; ID/18/S). For those who prefer household manure, their concern was that it is difficult to acquire it without domestic animals (ID/8/G).

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<sup>113</sup> DAP is Di-Ammonium phosphate (DAP). See Ibid., 100.

<sup>114</sup> Nitrogenous synthetically produced.

<sup>115</sup> Fraudsters are itinerant business people who illicitly sell items from an area or a country to another.

## **Keeping the stem of banana tree underground**

Some participants stated that they always refused to cut down their banana plantation when they were asked to do so. Some however revealed that they did it during *umuganda* (community work) because everybody was supposed to participate otherwise they should be fined for disobedience. They revealed the secret of leaving the stems underground so that the tree sprouts again. With this stratagem as they revealed, they were sure that after a certain period the banana plantation would grow again and they could use it at least to feed cows during the dry season (ID/8/G; ID/17/S; see also Focus, 7 and 8). During our discussions, one of the participants in Kageyo sector said that they discouraged leaders to ban banana through determination expecting that they would give up:

Local leaders force us to abandon our most preferable crop of banana; as we cannot oppose we just let them do whatever they want. Usually they come and tell us that in our regional plantations of banana are forbidden, that they should be replaced by wheat. Because we know the value of banana we simply refuse to abandon it. They usually use the local defence force to cut them down and oblige us to uproot them and invite us to grow either wheat or voluble beans or maize. We normally do that but while growing voluble beans for example we also feed the banana stems left within the sol and usually when they sprouts everybody is astonished of the dimensions of its bunches. They cut it down twice but they finally gave up (see Focus, 7).

As we have seen in chapter four, traditionally, banana plants served farmers in many ways, but with the shortage of grazing land over the past few decades, they are also used as cattle fodder, especially during dry season (focus, 4).

## **Mixing crops**

Mixing crops with other plants or two different types of crops in the same field is forbidden especially, where the agricultural reform has been undertaken. However, as discussed previously, Rwandans were traditionally accustomed to mixing crops and other

plants. Some interviewees indicated that it was a way of maximising land use (Focus, 4), while others believed that it was due to limited arable land because in the past, pasture was the most important (Focus, 1 and 5). There were so many opinions, however, the purpose was not to know the reasons of mixing; it was to understand how farmers dealt with new regulations on banning mixing crops in the field.

Regarding uprooting crops for example, the interviewees said that on the hillsides no one has attempted to uproot their crops as it happened in other areas, especially in the eastern province (SS/12/R; ID/3/R). In marshlands however, farmers were obliged to obey, otherwise they could lose their plots since the marshes belong to the state. Indeed, all wetlands belong to the state; farmers only have the rights to use them but in line with what the state plans, otherwise local authorities or the agronomists who generally distribute the plots to farmers are the ones who retake and give it to somebody else. This happens if the requirements to use the plot are not respected (SS/62/R; ID/18/S). During our discussions, participants have described the importance of mixing crops:

In our tradition, we normally mix and rotate through a banana plantation a number of other crops some other crops such as beans, maize sorghum, peas, etc. Today, today with reform local leaders are attempting to discourage this tradition. But it is difficult to abandon it completely since most farmers do because they have small-scale land and prefer to mix crop expecting to harvest several crops on it. In order to ban it local leaders attempt to use force because no one accepts that reform of using only one crop willingly. It happens that they come with local defence and uproot only the unwanted crop. Some of us confront them but in vain. One of us who attempted to cut them with a machete was accused of being *interahamwe* [young militias who participated actively in genocide], he was then jailed and released but after having paid a fine of 10,000 Rwandan francs [15 USD] (Focus, 7).

Using excessive coercion in policy implementation expecting a high agricultural productive, makes us think of Lukes' argument that the use of power can make development possible (Lukes,

1974) or of Clegg's assertion that power occurs in the process of production and innovation (see Clegg, 1989).

The agricultural reform in marshlands progresses along the government line, while on the hillsides farmers still drag along. We have only seen agricultural reform succeed in Eastern Province and part of Northern Province where the success of resettlement was hastily implemented during the emergency. In other countryside sites that I visited some farmers blame others, saying that the delays were solely the fault of idle farmers (SS/46/Go; SS/37/G). I have also noticed that local leaders in general and the agents of reform implementation in particular, have over time learned to be flexible during the process of the implementation of agricultural reform on hillsides (SS/52/S; SS/25/R). By becoming sensitive to farmers discontent and recognising their priorities or by learning to become flexible when recipients manifest or express their discontents with coercive policy implementation, the agents of the reform tend to shift from power over (see Lukes 1974; Gaventa, 1980; Hardina, et al., 2007; Gomez, et al., 2010) to a more democratic power in the sense of Henry (2005) and others such as Townsend, et al. (1999) or Hind (1997).

### **Grazing by night and stealing grass**

In different parts of the researched areas, farmers have revealed that one of the consequences of land scarcity and the zero-grazing system is that herdsmen take the risk of leading their cattle overnight in fallow lands or wherever they can find grass; sometimes they lead them in the fields or fallows belonging to other farmers or steal grass from other farmers' fields, which sometimes escalates conflicts between neighbours (Focus, 1–10). Of course, in some areas neighbours use their resources to sustain community cohesion. One example is where farmers provide his stockbreeder neighbour with the skins of green banana after peeling off banana trees and banana leaves after having it harvested; in exchange, the stockbreeder gives them a quantity of dung as manure for farming (SS/47/Go). This kind of mutual complementarities between agriculturalists and stockbreeders is not new in Rwanda; it existed even before colonial times where one offered several days of farm labour in exchange for dung, butter or other nutritious substances from a cow (see also Kanyamacumbi, 2001).

In the context of this study, as we have seen earlier, there is a policy forbidding cattle or any other domestic animal from wandering and grazing in the fallow, in the bush or elsewhere outside of the fenced ranch or their barn. However, it usually happens that farmers take their cattle out of the barn to feed them in fallows, natural reserves, unoccupied land or the bush during the day in remote areas and at night in other areas where they otherwise can easily be seen. This type of cheating happens in many areas during dry season in particular because of the scarcity of grass for feeding domestic animals in their barn. Cheaters are mainly poor breeders without a ranch or a field to grow grass on. One of the interviewees revealed for example, that after the harvest of season-A (June/July) they used to negotiate with neighbouring farmers about pasturing their cattle in the fallows after harvesting sorghum or maize, but as it is forbidden to let animals wander, herders choose to drive them at night. They usually do it at night from 2:30 or 3:00 am up to 4:30 or 5:00 am before people wake up (SS/57/S).

It also happens that poor farmers steal grass from fields and this again is done at night. Because of land scarcity farmers generally grow herbs along and on the edge of terraces or along the marshlands. The same herders who graze animals at night also steal herbs in terraces or fields belonging to others farmers. Field owners often say that they know them but it is not possible to catch them since they are extremely violent, to the extent that even local defence forces fear them, when they don't have gunfire. However, even when local defence forces have guns, herders aren't afraid because they know they can't use it for a petty crime like stealing herbs (Focus, 4 and 7).

One of the herders I interviewed after group discussions in Eastern Province recounts:

[...] If you knew how much my boss loves his cows, it would not surprise you to learn that he also wanders during dry season in search of grass for his cows. Instead of seeing his cows starve, he allows me to graze them overnight in the nearest bush of course, I cannot accept it either. I do my best, going through households in search of banana trees and leaves, green banana peels and diverse fruits, and wild grasses. Sometimes, if there is no other alternative, I pick up grasses from others' pastures (Focus, 5).

As we have seen in chapter four, the cow is something precious in Rwandan culture, thus to limit cow breeders because the scarcity of grass is almost impossible. To have a cow in each household is a means of fighting malnutrition and poverty in general and was encouraged by the government through the programme of one “cow per poor family” (see RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007). However, there is no sustainable strategy of feeding them during critical periods of prolonged dry seasons. Thus, farmers or stockbreeders without pastures or very small fields of grass to feed their cattle with, usually violate local regulations that forbid stealing grass from others’ fields. A comparable situation is the one Scott calls “trivial coping mechanisms” (Scott, 1985: 291, 296), the words that he uses to describe poor peasants’ act of stealing paddy from other poor peasant’s fields at night in order to survive (Scott, 1985: 302). For example, one of the herders interviewed at the beginning of my fieldwork said that their cattle would die from starvation if they did not do so when grasses are rare. However, even if this act can be compared with a trivial act of coping with difficult periods of dry seasons, since they know that stealing grasses or related other crimes such as grazing in others’ pasture are punishable, their act should be considered resistance.

### **Praising ironically or honestly**

Senior leaders including the President of the Republic, ministers and state ministers, permanent secretaries at the ministries etc., occasionally make field visits to explain new policies, listen to the population and find solutions to their problems while involving them. Hence, local leaders, including the mayor of the district, other staff and the executive secretaries of visited sectors, prepare the population in general and farmers in particular to welcome those eminent visitors through traditional dances, songs and slogans.

For instance, people express their satisfaction through songs and traditional dances. Generally, their songs emphasise the goals achievement and remind the population that their role is crucial in the implementation of government policies. However, they sometimes sing lies. They mention for example, what they have achieved in reform implementation while most of them are reluctant to implementing them, or use to say that such reforms

have not contributed to improve their living conditions. For example, while they sing, they claim with funny gestures that the maize has contributed to increasing their income, but during one-to-one interviews they recount the opposite. To gain insight into what they were hiding, I discussed with some of them after the event asking them to explain the meaning of their contradictions, given that their songs contradicted what they had said during the discussions and interviews with most of them. This can be compared with what Wahl, Holgersson and Höök consider “collective ironic practices” (see Lilja, 2007: 191) – a way that the powerless use to handle power relations (Ibid.).

One of the interviewees explained their hidden attitude in the following words:

You know, we have to praise our visiting leaders even if we don't do what they expect from us. In fact, what people do when they are in such events is different to what they have in their hearts. You may however know that those who sing loudly are the *Intore* (cadres) and we just accompany them, repeating their refrains, but this doesn't mean that we are happy (SS/48/Go).

When I asked him the reason of their unhappiness, he added:

There are many things that local leaders requires us to do when we don't have the capacity of undertaking them. It could, for example, be easy to pay for medical insurance, pay for children's education and contribute to various other activities, if they had allowed us to continue growing sorghum, but as you may know, with maize we almost gain nothing. It's therefore clear that most of us are not happy. We just praise them, nothing else...! (Ibid.).

Similar complaints were heard in other areas I visited, in particular where growing maize is compulsory. However, a participant to group discussions in Shyogwe cell had said that those who grow other crops, such as rice, praise leaders honestly because rice has really changed their living standard (Focus, 4).

Indeed, some farmers praise leaders honestly especially when their ago-business flourishes. I noticed this during my last visit to Shyogwe cell in the beginning of 2012. At that time

farmers were excited by the accomplishment of a modern dam for irrigation of the Rugeramigozi marsh. Comparing with how the ambience was before starting the construction of that dam and after its completion, farmers were extremely excited. Most of those I met during the last visit stated that with rice farming they will get rich as their neighbours from Kabagari, a neighbouring sector with a large marsh where rice prospers (Focus, 4; SS/54/S).

## **Acts of resistance**

In the previous section I discussed different reactions of farmers during the process of agricultural reform implementation. This section focuses on reactions that are considered acts of resistance according to my definition and interpretation. To understand whether farmer's reactions are acts of resistance or not, I'm guided by the definition that relates partly to Scott's definition of resistance (1985: 290), that is *any acts of subordinates to express their discontent or refuse to comply with conditions imposed by the dominant person or institution*.

The subordinates in the context of this study are the farmers who are compelled to implement government policies of reforming the agricultural sector. While the dominant group in this context is the whole bureaucracy involved in this reform, i.e. from the top policymakers to civil servants at district and lower levels of the supervision and implementation. However, those most targeted are the fieldworkers who initiate, enforce or supervise the implementation in the field and are in daily contact with farmers. They include, inter alia, the agronomists in collaboration with the leaders of agricultural cooperatives and the chief of the village and all others involved in the implementation of the reform that I identify as the agents of reforms.

As shown in the previous section, farmers' re-actions vary depending on their experience of agricultural reform implementation. Some of them seem to be coping or survival mechanisms, while others aim to limit the success of agricultural reform. Those whose acts seem to be survival are supposed to not have the intention of resisting, but to respond to an immediate need; while those whose acts aim to limit the implementation of the reform are considered acts of resistance aiming to undermine the power of policymakers or the efforts of agents of reform implementation (see Scott, 1985: 290, 301). However, as it is



discussed in the theory chapter, to determine if an act is a form of resistance, the actor's intention is not always of paramount importance. The person who is targeted and other observers can also determine through their interpretation if the actor's act is an actual form of resistance or not (see Hollander and Einwohner, 2004: 544).

In this study, there was no specific question about the meaning of resistance; however, during our probes about farmers' reactions some wordings contained an idea stressing the meaning of resistance. For instance, most interviewees believe that resistance is simply about *guhangan* (confront or disagree) or *kwanga* (to refuse) or *gusuzugura* (to disrespect). Others believed that resistance is to say *oya* (no) to any order from someone, be it a parent, an authority and even any other person who would like to impose his opinion or decision. Although, my interpretation is based on farmers' views, I essentially relate that interpretation to the meaning of resistance according to the definition that I proposed for this thesis.

As we have seen in theory chapter, the literature informs us that there are many variations of forms of resistance. Some are overt and more easily researchable, while many others are covert and difficult to notice (Scott, 1985; Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). For instance, it is difficult to ascertain that compliance can in some contexts become a form of resistance if this is subtly or covertly manifested. As just mentioned above, the researcher finds out only if the actor tells her/him what is hidden behind the subtle compliance, or if the observers and the targeted person are able to understand the meaning of the act. *Kuryarya* (or false compliance) is among other words that interviewees used to show that in some circumstances they were not allowed to disobey, but used diplomatic manner in order to avoid confrontation which could lead to harmful consequences (see for example SS/43/Go; SS/52/S; SS/33/G; ID/5/R; ID/6/G).

Indeed, in the context where the subordinates are imposed or threatened to achieve something by the dominant group, they occasionally learn subtle ways of resisting while avoiding the adverse consequences of their reactions. Scott argues, that subordinates use tactics of hiding their actual intent or identity through calculated compliance (Scott, 1985: 290, 301; see also Wallimann, Tatis and Zito, 1977: 233).

Such calculated compliance was observed in Southern Province where farmers had refused to grow the new type of cassava plant, demonstrating that they were of poor types of crops. As they were forced to, they ultimately submitted while attempting to subtly discourage the programme through inverting the normal way of planting cassava. This behaviour was motivated by circulating rumours that the new type of cassava provides poor quality flour (SS/52/S). Their calculations ceased after several sessions of agronomists' facilitation, showing that cassava can also generate income. To motivate them, the government, through MINAGRI, ensured them a permanent market and a modern cassava factory (Focus, 4). With this guarantee, farmers' will to grow cassava has gradually increased to the point of reaching the quantity required for the operation of the Kinazi<sup>116</sup> cassava plant at the beginning of 2012 (SS/80/S).

As detailed earlier, despite the success of the government of Rwanda in producing crops like rice and Irish potatoes through MINAGRI in close collaboration with agricultural cooperatives, some farmers are reluctant to invest on hillsides to sow improved seeds and use of chemical fertilisers. Many factors that make them less-motivated are, among others, the fear of adverse weather conditions such as long dry seasons; the use of loans for agricultural inputs without guaranteed harvests; small-scale farmers who instead of implementing the monocropping practice, prefer status-quo of multiple cropping in order to optimise the utilisation of their small fields but because they are afraid to take risks; the cultural believe that local crops are better than those imported, that is for instance to resist damaging insects; pricing that favours the factory owners over the farming producers; and the less motivating approach of the reform implementation (Focus, 1–10; see also ID/1/R; ID/6/G; ID/12/Go; ID/20/Go; SS/29/R; SS/65/R; SS/73/Go; SS/79/S; SS/82/K; SS/54/S).

Although the approaches of reform implementation vary from one local context to another and from one agent of reform implementation to another, the beginning of the process of the implementation of agricultural reform was characterised by the use of power over or coercion (see Paudel, 2009; see also Townsend, et al., 1999; Mayo and Craig, 1995; Veneklasen and Miller, 2002). This approach has raised discontent among farmers with various

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<sup>116</sup> Kinazi Cassava Plant is a cassava factory located in Kinazi sector (adjacent to Shyogwe sector), district of Ruhango, in Southern Province.

reactions that can be considered forms of resistance. Indeed, as Jackson argues “where there is power we may expect resistance” (Jackson, 2000: 7; see also Foucault, 2002). However, out of fear of penalties, farmers use various tactics to undermine power. Some tactics are overtly or subtly performed in such a way that the actor cannot risk prosecution, and others are covertly performed and need meticulous analysis in order to be recognised as acts of resistance (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; see also Scott, 1985, 1990).

Farmers’ reluctance to ease the implementation of agricultural reform is in many cases fuelled by spreading rumours<sup>117</sup> that crops are of bad quality, or chemical fertilisers poison the soil, etc. Some of the local leaders, including the agronomists, considered that behind such rumours there would be a hidden political interest to discourage or delay the government assignment targeting to achieve sustainable development by meeting MDGs and EDPRS (RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2007). However, as interviewees had no evidence that there was a hidden political interest, it would be wrong to assert, otherwise we could refer the spread rumours to what Scott (1990) calls hidden transcripts, or a form of resistance against domination and hegemonic schemes.

Besides reluctance that characterises many farmers due to various factors as listed above, some farmers dare to overtly or subtly speak out against the cooperative mismanagement and unwanted seeds. This kind of manoeuvre is often used by educated farmers including teachers, Roman Catholic Church catechists and religious leaders from other churches, or other local opinion leaders who in addition to their main respective occupation take care of their own fields and gardens (SS/63/R; SS/66/G; SS/76/Go; SS/79/S; SS/81/S). This example of the subtle way farmers use to undermine power has had an impact on the implementation of agricultural reform. I have, for instance, shown earlier that KIABR cooperative members opposed growing improved seeds of maize and voluble beans, which finally resulted in a decision by the authorities to abandon them in favour of the farmers’ choice, i.e. investing in a modern dam that thereafter allowed the farming of rice in the Rugeramigozi marshland. Some other crops, including wheat, tea, and maize were cancelled or temporarily abandoned in visited areas of Northern Province (Focus, 7, 8) and Southern

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<sup>117</sup> Rumours are themselves a method of resistance in which the identity of those spreading them is at least obscured if not hidden (see Dalziel, 2010).

Province (Focus, 3 and 4). The crops that were temporarily abandoned but successful thereafter are cassava, mushrooms, green and fruit bananas among others (Focus, 1–10).

Although farmers' reactions were generally covert, there were also some overt reactions against the reform. Covert reactions were mainly manifested through acts such as hiding improved seeds out of fear that the yield, grains especially, would be damaged by insects; and thus replace them with the local ones; hiding fertilisers aiming to sell them so that they get money for refund; and continue to use manure, etc. Actually, they feel secure when they use organic manure than chemical fertilisers (Focus, 1–10; see also SS/21/R; SS/34/G; SS/46/Go; ID/4/R; ID/17/S).

Similar hidden forms of resisting the power were identified among farmers who opposed the proscription of banana farming. However, as farmers were convinced that nothing would substitute banana's importance in their daily living conditions, i.e. providing not only food and fruits but also juice and beer. The latter seems more important in Rwandan culture due to its role in strengthening sociability and friendship among neighbours (Focus, 7). Moreover, in regions where rains are rare, banana trees and their leaves serve as a substitute of grass that generally feed cattle during long dry seasons (ID/8/G; ID/17/S).

For these various reasons, farmers refuse to comply with a policy that prohibits banana. However, in areas where the implementers used force, by for example, uprooting banana trees, farmers developed a way of coping with such situation. They for instance left the underground stems and feed it with manure so that it sprouts. For instance, when, in 2012, I went back to one of the sites that I had visited in 2010 when the plantations of banana were razed to the ground, I was surprised to see them again with big bunches of healthy bananas (see Focus, 7).

Mixing crops is an overt act of resistance, since by doing so farmers disobey openly the order that prevents multiple cropping. Actually, by doing this, farmers attempt to undermine the power of the authority (see also Scott, 1985) despite the warning of uprooting the inserted crops. Interviewed farmers revealed that they mix crops even though it is forbidden because they know how much it helps. They wonder how people's lives can rely on only one crop. Indeed, even though farmers grow several crops in order to balance their nutrition, an act that they consider a way to survive

(see Ibid.); their acts are considered as resistance given that by refusing to conform, they undermine the will of the policymakers.

Similarly, some poor farmers choose to not abandon or sell their plots located in marshlands at a low price even if they are forced to do so. They oppose cooperative leaders and other influential farmers who attempt to confiscate or force them to sell their plots, as they are determined to invest in them in the future. Turning to public institutions such as *njyanama* or ombudsman to seek justice is one way that subordinates farmers use to resist the prejudice that they are unable to invest in marshland, which other farmers use to deprive them of the right to own a plot in the marshland.

In the context of this study, poor farmers appealed to local justice or legislative institutional power to undermine the power of local elites who attempt to use it for their own interest. For instance, some of the former leaders of the KIABR cooperative used their social positions to dishonestly take ownership of poor farmers' plots either by imposing them to relinquish or luring them with an unimportant amount of money. This can be better understood through Lukes' first dimension of power, where he argues, in line with Dahl, that "A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests" (Lukes, 2005: 489; see also Dahl, 1957). Local elites' power is compared to A's power that attempts to affect B's, or farmers' interests. There is however, another power that undermines A's power in favour of B's interest. That is the power of the local justice/legislature provided by *njyanama* or the ombudsman officer that undermines the cooperative elites' power in terms of authority affecting poor farmers. To seek justice can therefore be one of the forms of resisting local repressive power. Hence, through the power of justice, the acts of resistance of subordinates can undermine the power that attempt to affect them. This phenomenon can be linked to the argument that power is not a possession restricted to particular individuals or institutions but a circulating phenomenon, i.e. power is multi-dimensional and operates from and to all directions – from top-down and from bottom-up –and it is not exercised upon the ruled only but also on the rulers (see Walzer, 1986 in Sadan, 1997: 58–59).

In this study, silence<sup>118</sup> has also been considered a form of resistance, especially when some farmers opt for keeping silent

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<sup>118</sup> See Scott, 1985: 234.

instead of contributing in meetings to find a solution to, for example, the delays to the implementation of agricultural reform. Actually, silence can be considered act of resistance in case the actor intends to undermine the power discourse through muteness (Thomson, 2011: 453; see also Lilja, 2007). This argument can be related to the silence that some Rwandans used in order to hide the truth through *ceceka* (or keep silent) aiming to silence the judges during Gacaca<sup>119</sup> court. Rettig relates it to a kind of collusion among Hutus that averts them not to testify against other Hutus (see also Rettig, 2008: 40). Actually it is a silence that intends to silence the continuation or the success of Gacaca court system, which is a form of resistance (see also Thomson, 2009).

It was observed that despite that the agronomists and other agents of reform spare no efforts to make the reform faster, delays were still huge on hillsides. Some of my interviewees revealed that they prefer to keep silent during the meeting because their opinions were always rejected, and therefore, they prefer not to talk. I asked such questions, because I realised that after meetings, those who were quiet discreetly complained in groups along the way to their respective homes. This kind of behaviour can be related to what Scott (1990, 2008) call the “hidden transcripts” with the intention of for example “[...] mitigating the process of change” (Chin and Mittelman, 1997: 31–2; see also Tilly, 1991: 597). Therefore, silence can also be a weapon that the subordinates use to undermine the power, but it can also be a stratagem to protect oneself (Burnet, 2012). Indeed, when farmers prefer to keep silent during a meeting and complain discreetly in groups, they actually show that silence was a protective way resulting from fear that the dominant could silence them or that their opinion would be useless as they used to say during our interaction (see also Scott, 1985: 234; Burnet, 2012: 114).

## Conclusion of the chapter

Agricultural reform in Rwanda is veritably improving in wetlands and some farmers who have access to it are generally experiencing an improvement of their livelihood through it. Land consolidation through monocropping is obviously successful in marshlands and rarely on hillsides. Agricultural productivity has tremendously

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<sup>119</sup> *Gacaca* court is a renovated community justice which was traditionally used to solve petty crimes in the community.

improved through the use of improved seeds and fertilisers of different kinds including chemical fertilisers. Rice farming is the most prosperous and contributes significantly to the improvement of farmers' livelihood. Other crops including maize, soya and voluble beans have also been developed in wetlands and contribute to the improvement of farmers' living conditions too, especially when MINAGRI uses them as seed multipliers through cooperatives. Cooperatives serve to organise farmers and represent them, but they also serve MINAGRI in channelling its policy of using modern agricultural technologies.

However, in order to work with cooperatives and benefit from the government subsidies through MINAGRI, there are minimum prerequisites, including being healthy, having a minimum of other resources to sustain the family and not completely depending on the income from what is produced in the marshland. Actually, those who were totally dependent on marshland production have withdrawn early and chosen either to sell or lease their plots and become the labourers of other farmers, sometimes even labourers of the tenants of their own plots.

Although the cooperatives organise and represent their members, the members usually complain about their functioning. They generally accuse the cooperative leading committee of serving the interest of wholesalers and factory owners than the farmers they represent. Besides seeds multipliers, this kind of complaint was particularly heard from small-scale farmers who generally grow maize.

On hillsides, especially where my fieldwork was conducted, agricultural reform is not developing as expected and the reasons are many. Firstly, land consolidation is very slow due mainly to delays in grouped settlement and monocropping rejection. Secondly, farmers are reluctant to invest and implement agricultural reform on hillsides due to weather uncertainties and the lack of a guarantee that the outcome could cover the cost of inputs and make profit and thus guarantee food security for their family. Thirdly, there is a serious problem of land fragmentation and scarcity in the countryside in general and in the areas of my fieldwork in particular. This problem results from an increasing population in a small country where the majority of its population survive through subsistence farming.

The reactions of farmers to the implementation of agricultural reform occur in different ways and result from

farmers' experience of the process of reform implementation. Spreading rumours that chemical fertiliser corrupts the soil and that improved seeds are not resistant to insects has fuelled reluctance to implement the agricultural reform on hillsides. Some farmers have also reacted against unfairness within their cooperatives and *imidugudu* (grouped settlement) through argumentation, silence or indifference, especially at occasional meetings or regular ones after *umuganda* (the monthly community work). Some of them, especially the poor, who risked losing their small plots in the marshlands, directed their pleas at local justice institutions such as *abunzi* (the local mediators) and they often received fair justice that generally favoured them. Other reactions included: refusing to sell their harvest at a cheap price, mixing crops when the reform agents urged them to consolidate their land through monocropping, keeping banana stems underground so that it would sprout after being cut down (since it has to be replaced by maize or wheat on hillside), etc.

Based on farmers' reactions and the meaning they attribute to their acts and based on the definition of resistance used in this thesis, I would say that although some farmers attempted to justify their acts as a way of coping with hardship, i.e. trying for example to meet some human basic needs (see Zalenski and Paspas, 2006: 1124), their acts are resistance since they knowingly violate the law that imposes agricultural reform implementation.



# Conclusion

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## Introduction

With this thesis I have intended to analyse the phenomenon of resistance to settlement and agricultural reform implementation in post-genocide Rwanda. This phenomenon has been explored by analysing how selected farmers have experienced and reacted to the reforms. In addition, it has also been imperative to explore local power structures in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under study.

A number of studies on settlement and agricultural reforms in Rwanda criticise the official reports presenting the policies' goals achievement. Generally, researchers have shown that reforms in Rwanda, particularly settlement and agricultural reforms are implemented through coercive and repressive approaches (see Huggins, 2009; Ansoms, 2009, 2013; Newbury, 2011).

However, except Ansoms (2013) who explored the resistance to new varieties of improved banana seeds in some areas of the Great Lakes Region, others were critical to the policy implementation in general but did not base their critique on a deep analysis of the meanings which peasants attributed to their acts. Contrary to others, this study has gone deeper regarding the issue of farmers' resistance to reforms by showing various instances of actions and reactions of farmers and agents of reforms implementation. The study has found that although the government officially states that it prioritises a participatory approach and bottom-up perspectives in the process of policy implementation, the top-down approach is actually the most used.

In this concluding chapter, I first briefly summarise the different chapters of this thesis, then begin responding to the following questions: What did this study discover and what did we learn from it? (This question is accompanied by a summarising overview of the findings.) What was known before and what is new? (The answer to this question highlights the most important available literature of resistance in Rwanda in relation to the

empirical findings in comparison with what was discovered in this study.) Finally I discuss the empirical and theoretical implications of this study for resistance studies; i.e. its relevance, contribution and lessons gained. Then the chapter concludes with some recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## Summary

### An overview of the study

The aim of this thesis has been to seek an understanding of the phenomenon of resistance in the context of contemporary Rwanda. This has required an understanding of the very context in which the resistance manifests itself. Thus, it was crucial to provide a background of the reforms under study.

For a better understanding of the context, a detailed historical context of settlement and agricultural policy reforms was presented in chapter 4, where we have seen that the government has developed long-term strategic planning – Rwanda Vision 2020 – in order to curb the recurrent famine and poverty which are considered main factors that fuelled violent conflict between Rwanda’s two main ethnic groups. In fact, regardless the implementation of re-settlement programme during the emergency (i.e., between 1994 and 2000 when the Rwanda Vision 2020 document was introduced), the settlement policy reform in rural areas was conceived as a strategy to smooth the progress of agricultural reform by means of land consolidation. The scheme of consolidating land along with the use of agricultural inputs and improved seeds were in fact the foundation of transforming Rwanda’s subsistence agriculture into a productive and highly effective market-oriented agriculture. Moreover, some approaches to policy implementation and policymaking which are based in Rwandan culture (such as *ubudehe* and *imihigo*) were also explained (see details in chapter 4).

Although the assessment reports and research publications show that those two sectors of rural development have been making good progress, they also show discontent among the recipients of those reforms, resulting in resistance to their implementation and attribution of them to authoritarian and coercive approaches of policy implementation (see for example Ansoms, 2009, 2012; Huggins, 2009; Newbury, 2011). In addition

to my own observation during a national survey on settlement policy, the reports from other researchers have inspired me to carry out an in-depth study of farmers' experience of, reactions and resistance to, settlement and agricultural reforms implementation. That is actually how was born the idea of the topic of this thesis.

The aim of this thesis was *to understand how farmers experience the implementation of settlement and agricultural reforms and how they react to and resist them* while the research questions arising from this aim are:

- (1) How do farmers experience the implementation of settlement/agricultural reforms?
- (2) How do farmers react to settlement/agricultural reforms?
- (3) Which of the farmers' reactions can be considered acts of resistance? (See details in chapter 1).

In order to understand the phenomenon of resistance, a theoretical framework was imperative. We have seen in chapter 2 that one cannot comprehensively understand the phenomenon of resistance without exploring that of power (Abu-Lughod, 1990: 41–42; see also Scott, 1985; Foucault, 1982; Barbalet, 1985; Ortner, 1995). Moreover, as the phenomenon of resistance is explored through policy/reform implementation, theories related to the process of policy implementation were also necessary to found a thorough understanding of the context in which acts of resistance are manifested. Policy implementation makes use of power and recipients react either with compliance or resistance. In this study the power of the implementers is embedded in their action to influence or facilitate the implementation of reforms that aim to replace the traditional scattered settlements in the countryside and discourage the dependence on subsistence farming (see chapter 2).

The study was carried out between September 2010 and February 2012 through a qualitative approach and multiple methods involving a combination of the phenomenological and case study methods of inquiry. Data collection was basically conducted through focus group discussions, one-to-one interviews and, to a certain extent, participant observation. The face-to-face interviews are comprised of in-depth interviews with twenty poor farmers and semi-structured interviews with sixty more farmers (selected based on closeness with those selected for in-depth interviews) and twenty-two others including opinion leaders and local authorities and one top official from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (see chapter 3).

Although the main fieldwork focused on four selected sites, namely Rusheshe and Gako situated in the rural part of Kigali city, and Gahogo and Shyogwe located in Southern Province, the analysis and interpretation of findings were not restricted to these only. I also used data from group discussions (focus group) and semi-structured interviews carried out before the main fieldwork. This decision allowed me to have a broadened picture of similarities and differences of farmers' experience, reactions and acts of resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms (see details in chapter 3). Moreover, the study focused not only on the hillsides where farmers reside and grow crops for their food but also on the wetlands closest to the selected areas (see chapters 4). Now I will summarise and discuss the conclusions of each of the three research questions based on the two major themes of the study, i.e. settlement and agricultural reforms.

### **The empirical findings: settlement reform**

For chapter 5 – the first empirical chapter – I intend to summarise and present the results of the study by highlighting the approaches through which settlement reform was implemented and farmers' experience and reactions and then discuss those that among farmers reactions would be categorised as acts of resistance.

#### *Farmers' experience of settlement reform*

Through the first research question, I explored how farmers experience settlement reform through their everyday living conditions. For instance, through interviews, I learned how farmers experienced the implementation of settlement policy and their expectations from it.

In fact, farmers told me that what happens in the field is that farmers are asked to abandon their scattered settlements and to go resettle at the indicated site and that no one is exempted since those who are vulnerable are accommodated through the local administration assistance. However, as in some areas poor farmers are many, all are not accommodated for free; some are on the waiting list of those who should be assisted but others are requested to accommodate themselves, especially those who have resources but irrationally exploited. For instance, during my fieldwork farmers have told me that in some areas, the resettlement of poor farmers from their *nyakatsi* (thatched huts) has affected

them considerably. In fact, based on the collected information and local newspapers, it seems that the eradication of *nyakatsi* (a campaign launched nationwide in 2011) has affected poor farmers in general, and especially those who were removed from their huts while they were still on the waiting list of those who were supposed to be accommodated for free.

Other categories of farmers who have also experienced similar effects of forced relocation (including those who were moved from their properties to *umudugudu*) have experienced the effects of the long distances from the new residences to their crops' field. It is difficult for them not only to transport manure, but also to harvest and to guarantee the safety of their crops. At the same time, most farmers could not move as they could not afford a piece of land at the selected sites and build new houses by themselves. In fact, without government support or support from any other aid organisation, only a small number of farmers have voluntarily moved to *umudugudu*.

There is also a category of farmers whose land was selected for public use and thus had to be expropriated and compensated. For instance, in Rusheshe (one of the four areas selected for the main fieldwork) farmers were given two options: either to sell properties including their house or to sell the land and keep only the small portion of land on which their house sits, on the condition that the owners renovate that house following the standard given by the *umudugudu* planners (i.e. to build a house in the same shape as the type of houses required in that site). These farmers have experienced problems with these requirements given that the cost of renovation seems far higher than the amount they receive or were expecting to receive from the expropriation and compensation. In the cases where farmers were not able to afford the costs of renovation, they were simply asked to sell their house and the piece of land on which it sits.

Generally, farmers who sold their land for common interest were discontented with the official land price per square metre. In contrast, those who sold their land to someone else didn't experience any problems given that the price of their properties was freely negotiated irrespective of the official tariff of land price per square metre and the value of other properties.

Another example is that of poor farmers who had received an accommodation for free and who are fortunate to be able to reside in a more or less decent accommodation, but who had

declared that they are starving due to decreasing crop production in their abandoned small fields. According to them, this situation has resulted from the lack of household compost that they regularly spread in their fields when they were living at their homestead close to their crops' field. However, those who, in addition to the accommodation, received an additional assistance such as *girinka* (or a milk cow), were generally satisfied.

Moreover, interviewees who were still living in scattered residences in the four selected sites for the main fieldwork were not allowed to build new houses or repair their old ones either because their areas are planned only for agriculture or for any other public infrastructures or simply because the area was chosen for a certain standard of housing, which means that those who were unable to afford such standard were not allowed to stay.

Farmers have experienced many other problems generated along with re-settlement such as unemployment and underemployment. Interviewees' statements show that these problems are generally experienced by the youth and landless adults and their number increases continuously such that they choose to migrate in large number to the closest towns and commercial centres in search of a job. Most of my interviewees have revealed having at least one young male or female in the closest town working as domestic worker, in a construction site or any other unknown jobs in close towns (see chapter 5).

#### *Farmers' reactions and resistance to settlement reform*

The reactions that my interviewees described and those I personally witnessed are varied. There are, for instance, acts of obedience, spreading rumours, silence, breaking silence, etc. Regarding obedience or submission, Hollander and Einwohner (2004) consider it the absence of resistance while Scott (1985, 1990) sees it not only as submission or compliance, but also talks about it as false obedience/compliance when the subordinate uses subtle acts to defy the dominant through, for example, showing humility and friendship in his/her presence but in secret spreading odious discourses against him/her (see Scott, 1990: 4–5). However, obedience can be a result of many factors including, the flexibility of the dominant on the one hand, and his /her oppression on the other (see Scott, 1985). In oral tradition and according to some researchers, Rwandans are generally obedient. This cultural propensity was, according to Prunier (1995) and MINEDUC

(2006), reinforced in the Rwandan mind for centuries in order to orders from the king and his chiefs. In the context of this study we have realised that farmers' obedience has mainly resulted from the acts of social welfare (i.e. supplying the poor with free accommodation) in combination with the spirit of 'good citizens' who are ever-ready to welcome any decision from the top leadership.

The act of spreading rumours was used not for testing the acceptance of a policy as Michelson and Mouly (2000) argue, but as a hidden way of opposing the implementation of *imidugudu*. It was, according to the interviewees, a way of amplifying disobedience among farmers. This kind of hidden act of inciting disobedience is used particularly in political competitions where opposing parties attempt to put the ruling party into jeopardy (see a similar example in chapter 4). For instance, rumours were considered acts of resistance since they were spread in order to counteract the implementation of the policy or with the intention to incite farmers to disobey. For example, some interviewees stated that during the emergency – between 1994 and 2000 – rumours were spread in order to discourage *imidugudu* policy in its initial stage.

I also highlighted how farmers have learned subtle ways of counteracting local regulations discouraging scattered settlement through proscribing the construction of new houses or repair the old ones in scattered areas. For example, despite the restrictions in place, some farmers dared to construct new houses when no one could see them, for instance when it was dark, and others dared to repair their old houses from within. According to some of the interviewees, there are those who do it with intention of challenging the decision-makers or the agents of policy implementation in order to continue staying in their farmstead while others – the poor in particular – do it as a way of coping with the effects of *imidugudu* policy has on their living conditions. However, no matter their justifications, since they break the law or local regulations which prohibit building or repairing houses in scattered areas, their acts should be considered acts of resistance (compare with the definition of resistance for this thesis).

In the literature it is also proven that the accumulation of similar negligible acts which do not immediately disturb the dominant can, sooner or later, lead to acts of resistance in the form of, e.g. protests, collective demonstrations or even revolution (see

Li and O'Brien, 1996; Scott, 1985). For instance, in the contexts where political opportunities are restricted, political opponents can take advantage of those trivial acts and transform them into actions likely to undermine the prevailing dominant power (see example in chapter 4).

Silence is also interpreted in many ways. Some researchers believe, for instance, that silence is a way of self-protection (see Burnet, 2012), especially in a situation where people are intimidated or repressed. However, it can also be a way of, as Lilja (2007) argues, silencing the dominant. Silence can also be manifested in form of feigned ignorance, which is a form of everyday resistance to the dominant (see Scott, 1985; Houston and Kramrae, 1991). Silence was observed in this study as well and the way it was interpreted shows that both silence as a result of fear and as a way of silencing the reform agents or other local community workers constituted a kind of covert resistance against *imidugudu*.

Such kind of silent acts are included in the category of defiant silence and can only be considered an act of resistance through actors' own declarations thereof. That is, for instance, as it was revealed in this study, when, instead of speaking about their discontents or disagreement during the meeting, most farmers opted to keep quiet but to complain or show their disagreement about what was debated or presented once they are away from the control of the authorities. Their acts can be considered act of resistance, similar to what Scott has called hidden transcripts, where, for instance, the subordinates use to develop their discourse behind the scenes (see Scott, 1990: 4).

Speaking against the compulsory local contributions in kind or in cash was as well a form of resistance; but this is an overt resistance against certain local leaders' requirements which farmers experienced as too demanding, such as individual contributions for rehabilitation of streets, for night patrol, etc. Li and O'Brien (1996) have found similar actions of exaggerated taxation that fuelled resistance among Chinese villagers. Other forms of resistance include breaking the rule that bans building new houses or repairing the old ones in areas planned for other activities such as land consolidation for agriculture, for entertainment or other public infrastructure, etc.

Building temporary huts while it is forbidden was another form of resistance even if some interviewees consider it as a way



of coping with hardship conditions. Such action was noticed in some remote areas of Eastern Province where herders or farmers built temporary huts for rest and protection against harmful weather conditions. Although the actors didn't want to recognise that their acts were a way of resisting local regulation proscribing the construction in scattered areas, their acts are considered resistance since the actors violated it knowing that it was official.

Among the acts of resistance there were some cases where the local chiefs turned a blind eye or resigned in order to protect their fellow neighbours and relatives who violated local regulations. Such acts were considered acts of resistance given that the role of the chief was to enforce the policy and not to tolerate those who break it.

The local chiefs who turned a blind eye while they were supposed to report or take a decision against those who infringe the rule were considered resisters in this study. Moreover, offering a bribe to the chief in order to break the rule was also considered an act of resistance, but it is shared by both parties since one dared to perform this act and other accepted the bribe thus disregarding the ramifications of doing so. Accepting the bribe and permitting the violation of the rule or resigning instead of supporting regulations are all considered acts of resistance for reasons similar to those explained above.

### **The empirical findings: agricultural reform**

Agricultural reform is among the main pillars the government uses to curb poverty, which is one of the major factors fuelling recurring ethnic conflict and violence in Rwanda. Thus, they promoted increasing productivity by replacing subsistence farming with market-oriented agriculture in order to achieve that aims of agricultural reform. As mentioned earlier, it should be noted here that modern agriculture on hillsides depends on the availability of consolidated land, which makes grouped settlement a precondition for agricultural reform implementation in the hillsides.

The aim of agricultural reform is to replace the existing low productive subsistence farming with cash crop production, promoting intensive agriculture with increased productivity through the use of high varieties of seed and intensive fertilisers (see RoR\_MINECOFIN, 2000).

Many reports and publications show that Rwanda's agricultural reforms have been successful, especially in the wetlands. However, some also indicate that there exist cases of resistance against coercive approaches of policy implementation (see Huggins, 2009; Ansoms, 2009, 2012, 2013). As with settlement reform, in order to understand farmers' reactions to agricultural reform, we must first explore their experience of its implementation.

### *Farmers' experience of agricultural reform*

Interviewees reveal their experience of agricultural reform implementation in different ways. Most poor, small-scale farmers stated that they were the most affected by the agricultural reform, but rice producers in marshlands declared the opposite. Nonetheless, most farmers were reluctant to invest on hillsides for fear of failure to produce harvests due to unpredictable weather conditions, risk aversion, cultural values as a barrier to change, poverty or lack of means to invest in cash crop production, etc. Most of the interviewees recognised that the wetland farming is successful with high production, but also recognised that food is expensive in the market, which makes small-scale farmers invariably complain about their purchasing capacity. Those who grow maize in marshlands revealed, for example, that despite high production, their income doesn't allow them to purchase the minimum of what they need in the market.

Actually, the same as in other areas of the countryside, in the area of this study the wetlands are more supported by the government through the MINAGRI than the hillsides. However, compared to the total number of rural population, those who have a piece of land in the wetlands are only a very small group; wetlands cover only 10.6% of the surface of the country (see Oedraogo, 2010: 7). This means that the agricultural production from the wetlands alone is not sufficient to feed the entire population including the urban population who depend on rural food production.

Generally, farmers residing near wetlands are privileged if they obtain a piece of land but still the number of those who would like to have one in these areas is substantial. Thus, access to these areas is randomly allotted. Nonetheless, the right to exploit wetlands requires certain conditions, for instance, growing certain modern crops and banning traditional ones. The most prioritised

crops are, among others, rice, maize, soya beans and voluble beans. Among those banned are *ingandurarugo* (literally meaning crops for survival), including short-term crops like sweet potatoes, beans, cabbage, eggplants, etc., which poor farmers prefer as they can grow them quickly in both agricultural seasons A and B. With traditional crops, farmers with a piece of land in the wetlands were protected from starving, especially during the long dry seasons. The ban of traditional crops was resisted by my, but as the wetlands belong to the state resistance did not lead to any amendments.

In the areas where this study was conducted, the most disliked crop was maize. According to my interviewees, maize doesn't assure daily household subsistence. It is strictly commercial crop to the extent that no one is allowed to use it for household consumption; it has to be sold through the cooperative that manages the wetland. The interviewees also revealed that the money they receive from maize is not enough for buying food for everyday household survival. Those who tried to grow it on hillsides abandoned it because of its failure in sustaining their daily consumption or being economically profitable.

In one of the selected areas for this study, farmers had grown maize and used chemical fertilisers in the hillside but after realising that the deficit was huge, they had stopped growing it. The result was that farmers continued their usual practice of traditional farming even where settlement was no longer a barrier for land use consolidation.

In contrast, growing rice was supported by many, even if those who benefit the most are still the less poor farmers who lease or buy the plots of the very poor who are unable to invest in rice farming. Moreover, farmers who use the marshlands for seed multiplication, including maize and soya beans, generally did not complain given that their harvest is highly valued compared to similar crops cultivated by other farmers.

The next heading combines the discussions of the second and third research questions. It serves to explore farmers' reactions to agricultural reform implementation.

#### *Farmers' reactions and resistance to agricultural reform*

Like with settlement reform, interviewees reacted to agricultural reform implementation in different ways. Reactions included: rumour; breaking silence or argumentation; open opposition

against cooperative mismanagement; refusal to sell plots with the expectation of being able to instead lease them; reporting unfair treatment to the local justice institutions; refusing to sell the harvest; replacing improved seeds approved by the Ministry of Agriculture with local seeds; selling fertilisers secretly; keeping the stems of banana trees underground instead of permanently uprooting them and introducing the required crop monocropping; letting cattle graze by night and stealing grass from the fields or ranches belonging to other farmers; praising ironically or honestly depending on the purpose of the visit of the top leadership, etc.

Just as with resistance to settlement reform, interviewees frequently resisted agricultural reform through rumour, silence and breaking silence. These acts were especially clearly demonstrated to acts of resistance when the actors themselves declared them to be so in various interviews.

Rumour has, for instance, been used to oppose growing maize in many areas. It was also used in order to discourage the use of chemical fertilisers and improved seeds. While silence was, in most cases, used to silence the local leaders (see Lilja, 2007). This was made clear by their conversations in their villages, especially in pubs where they sometimes revealed the reasons for their silence at meetings. Acts of resistance were also identified during meetings. Farmers would whisper instead of loudly and clearly expressing their opinions, then afterwards they would speak freely about their feelings in relation to what was discussed at the meetings. However, this situation should not be generalised about meeting sessions as farmers occasionally broke their silence and openly opposed acts of injustice, for example the imposition of unprofitable crops or monocropping which disregarded the importance of other food crops for everyday survival.

Other acts of resistance include mixing crops where only monocropping was allowed and the repetition of the same act of mixing crops even when the previous crops were uprooted, which indicates that farmers engaged in resistance. All the reactions listed above were considered acts resistance, including those that interviewees considered a way of seeking alternatives in order to survive.

Other acts also considered acts of resistance (since the actors knew in advance that their acts were prohibited) include stealing grass from neighbours' fields, grazing by night in others' pastures or in fallows to feed cattle during grass or grazing land

shortages or drawn-out dry seasons. Herders stated for example that they had had no choice when they decided to graze by night and steal grass. They also added that if they had had other alternatives, i.e. their own pastures, they would not have done so. Yet as I mentioned above, whatever their justifications, since they violated local rule, their acts are considered resistance in this study.

Due mainly to social welfare assistance (such as providing one milk cow per poor household), there were cases of obedience. There were also cases of false obedience, such as accepting loans in the form of improved seeds and chemical fertilisers, but instead of using them for their intended purpose farmers would replace the seeds or sell the fertilisers in order to be able to pay back the imposed loan (see chapter 6).

### **Other key findings**

Some unexpected cases of overt resistance were observed through cooperatives operating in marshlands. The most interesting information encountered was that some cooperatives were not committed to empowering their members and were not based on cooperative values and principles. For example, they lacked the autonomy of being able to decide the prices of their harvest or growing crops according to their own preference. Some agricultural cooperatives were not committed to responding to the priorities of their members, some members were favoured over others and the wholesaler buyers were the most favoured because they gained a lot compared to what the producers gained. Interviewees revealed that the unfairness was measured by comparing the value of raw agricultural products with those processed ones available in the market.

These experiences left an impression on me, given that the official documents and speeches supporting the goal of strengthening cooperatives explicitly promote increasing the living standards of cooperative members and solving the problem of national food security (see RoR\_MINICOM, 2007; RoR\_MINAGRI, 2004). Nevertheless, a cooperative's basic values – including democracy, equality, equity, openness and honesty, to mention but a few (see Sentama, 2009: 66) – are ignored or neglected, which makes the majority of the cooperative members, especially the poor, feel unjustly treated. Thus, farmers' resistance

is motivated by unfairness and the selfishness of some cooperative leaders was a significant finding of this study.

For instance, the cooperative members (of KIABR) at one of this study's sites have expressed their discontent with such practices of operating contrary to the cooperative values. As a result they decided to negotiate with the local authority in order to dismiss the executive committee of their cooperative. Such an act of ordinary cooperative members can be considered an act of overt resistance, although it gradually evolved from covert resistance. However, the replacement of cooperative managers did not change much given that the purchasing capacity of farmers remained the same while the price of food at the market continued to increase.

Another significant finding includes, as mentioned earlier, the chiefs who were part of the hierarchical system of authority, but who resigned and joined the farmers' side instead of enforcing settlement reform. There was also an example of those who play two sides, serving both the interest of the upper hierarchy and that of the grassroots farmers, which I consider a particular form of a covert act of resistance. This phenomenon of being part of power and resisting it at the same time is not common when top-down policy/reform implementation reigns; it's a particular form of resistance rarely described in the literature of resistance in Rwanda and elsewhere in Africa. Actually, in resistance studies, with reference to James Scott (1985, 1990) and many other scholars, there is a clear dichotomy between the subordinates and the dominant which makes this phenomenon of playing two sides uncommon in the literature of resistance. Another rare form of a local chief's act of covert resistance was that of turning a blind eye to the acts of breaking rules from above.

Generally in matters of policy/reform implementation, we have learnt from the literature that in China for example, cadres and local leaders are more loyal to the state than to the population. In many South-East Asian countries and China in particular, cadres and local authorities were the most oppressive in the process of enforcing state policies (see Li & O'Brian, 1996; Scott, 1985; 1990; Gupta, 2001; Turner & Caouette, 2009). Similarly, in some African and Latin American countries, the enforcement of policies is repressive and local leaders played an important role in repressing their fellow peasants (see Scott, 1998; Silberfein, 1998; Ansoms, 2009, 2008; Ansoms, Verdoodt and Ranst, 2010; Ankersen and Ruppert, 2006).

# Discussion of previous research and contribution of this thesis

## Previous research

In the field of policy assessment, some researchers have observed the existence of resistance in Rwanda. For instance, researchers such as Newbury (2011), Hilhorst and Van Leeuwen (2000), Jackson (1999), HRW (2001) conclude that Rwandan peasants, during the emergency, used everyday resistance to contest re-settlement. Although, Newbury's publication on grouped settlement policy is from 2011, her analysis relies on data collected during the emergency, which means that the data needed to be brought up to date and reviewed, considering that the circumstances had been evolving for over a decade. Moreover, their reports do not show explicitly how peasants have resisted; they only present their observations and the statements of local leaders. The only updated independent researchers on grouped settlement are Isaksson (2011) and Hahirwa and Naramabuye (2009), but the intent of the former was to link household income generation within grouped settlement in comparison to that of scattered homestead and she bases her analysis on EICV<sup>120</sup> data at province level, while the latter made a socioeconomic assessment of 30 selected *imidugudu* among the existing *imidugudu* of Rwanda's 30 districts. However, none of them examines the aspect of resistance to *imidugudu* policy (or villagisation as Isaksson would say).

The reactions found in the field of this research of resistance to settlement reform implementation are unique in the literature of policy analysis and resistance in Rwanda. Some of the above mentioned studies argue that peasants' acts of everyday resistance are the response to an authoritarian regime that privileges a top-down approach of policy implementation but they do not put enough emphasis on other factors such as the effects of genocide, cultural barriers, the financial incapacity of the state to invest in sustainable housing, farmers' economic incapacity to implement *imidugudu* policy, etc. (See chapter 4, 5 and 6).

As we mentioned in the context chapter, the genocide has had varied effects on Rwandans, including reshaping their

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<sup>120</sup> EICV stands for *Enquête Intégrale sur les conditions de Vie des ménages* or Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey.

behaviour (see chapter 4). With regard to this study, genocide effects have had an impact on farmers' behaviour such that most farmers, instead of resisting overtly when they are unfairly treated or deprived the right to decide, choose a subtle way of manifesting or expressing their discontents or a safe way of resisting, i.e. covert forms of resistance. This argument is based on my own experience of Rwandans' behaviour before and after genocide. Political opportunities were limited under both regimes but before genocide, Rwandans were generally more fearless, such that they could, for example, dare confront the dictatorship of the former regime while after genocide they seem to be fearful (see Chapter 4).

With regards to agricultural reform, there is no significant difference in matters of implication compared with that of settlement reform. The main difference is that with agriculture reform implementation there are important improvements due to the flexibility of the agents of reforms resulting in most cases from farmers' resistance. However, the same weaknesses within the approaches of policy implementation identified in the study of resistance to settlement reform implementation are also raised in agricultural reform implementation. Similarly, some researchers attribute the achievements and failures to the overall political system, particularly the regime led by the RPF, which according to them is coercive, repressive or authoritarian (see Huggins, 2009; Ansoms, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012). Generally, Rwandan policy analysts including those who have analysed the judicial systems such as Gacaca and judicial conventional systems, unity and reconciliation, etc., attribute the motive behind the presence of everyday resistance to the authoritarian regime (see also Thomson, 2009, 2011; Sebarenzi, 2011; Longman. 2011). Their conclusions rely mainly on the fact that Rwandan peasants face a repressive regime, therefore fear open resistance, which would be true to a certain extent.

Similar to the scientific reports about settlement reform, researchers have in general disregarded the effects of 1994 Tutsi genocide (which affected Rwandans of all ethnic groups) as well as the government's financial incapacity to satisfy all poor peasants (which are estimated to be 44% of the total population according to the EICV3 report– and even higher in the previous EICV report ) (see RoR-NISR, 2012).



## **Contribution of the thesis**

First, one contribution of the thesis has been to combine policy implementation literature (see different perspectives) with resistance studies. In fact, analysis of the phenomenon of resistance enables us to see (from the point of view of the policy/reform recipients) how farmers experience the reform implementation as well as the agency/power they have to oppose them in different ways. The idea of hidden resistance is important here – in so far as this is less visible and if you only take a policy implementation perspective you may miss seeing how recipients of reforms actively engage with/protest against the reforms and the way they are enforced. Given that this thesis introduces new forms of resistance specific to the context of this study, it also contributes new knowledge.

The analysis of the phenomenon of resistance to reforms has allowed us to discover a number of other forms of resistance different from those that exist already in the literature. Among uncommon forms of resistance, there are, for instance, the acts of local chiefs who play double roles or simply resigned from serving the upper hierarchy rather than continuing to support the directives that hurt their fellow farmers (such as forbidding the repair old houses in scattered areas). There were also some examples where decisions approved by top policymakers were cancelled and replaced by those suggested by recipients of the reform. Some of them were, for instance, the cancellation of approved crops and the change of the approach of enforcing settlement reform. Based on these few examples among others, one may say that the phenomenon of resistance to reforms under study has had an impact on the decisions of the dominant considered the agent of reform implementation in the context of this study.

In fact, through an in-depth analysis of interviewees' everyday experience of reforms implementation and the way they express their discontent or satisfaction, this thesis has gone beyond others' conclusions (see Mendras, 1976: 9). For instance, most scholars attribute the reasons of farmers' resistance to state domination, especially the ruling party's restrictions on participation of the recipients of reforms in decision-making, and to the coercive approach of policy implementation. However, they disregard some other aspects, such as the impact of the environmental degradation and its consequences on farmers'

acceptance to participate willingly in agricultural reform implementation.

Actually, through this study we have also learned that, out of fear of losing due to uncertainties of weather conditions, farmers are generally reluctant to invest in agriculture, especially on hillsides. Moreover, scholars have often disregarded the effects of genocide that resulted from the impact of Rwandan history and systems of domination that prevailed since before colonial power as one of the factors that, in certain circumstances, can lead farmers to resist what they are required to do. From the conclusions of this study, the reader would understand why certain reforms fail to meet the needs of small-scale farmers while the government states that it spares no effort to support their implementation for the benefit of Rwandans in general and the poor in particular. The reader will also learn that resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms in Rwanda can in some contexts have an impact on power. One of those I have noticed is the sudden shift from stiffness to flexibility of some agents of reform implementation. Thus, where some researchers predict negative effects of resistance, I assume, on the contrary, that resistance can lead to positive effects where, instead of persisting in their stubbornness, agents of reforms become flexible and advocate amending certain decisions in order to adapt the policy to the context and priorities of the recipients. A few examples were seen in agricultural reform where some crops were cancelled and priority given to those preferred by the recipients (see chapter 6).

I would also say that resistance not only contributes to improving the strategies of reform implementation for curbing poverty but also once the decision-makers acknowledge farmers' discontent, I presume that recurrent violence could be prevented, which would also contribute to sustainable peace and development. However, as Galtung argue, (sustainable) peace would depend on many other factors, including seeking solution from outside Rwanda through an integrated cooperation with neighbouring countries and with financial support of developed world (see Galtung, et al., 2002: 275–6). Moreover, I would dare say that through this study, one can learn how to improve the way of implementing reforms while preventing conflict escalation and build a long-lasting peace through the study of resistance in relation to power.

The study has not only revealed the weaknesses of reforms implementation but also that the agents of reforms implementation often disregarded consideration of the problem of the financial capacity of small-scale farmers when they compelled them to implement settlement reform in particular. Moreover, studying resistance seems important given that it allows the researcher and the audience to understand the relationships between the ruled and the rulers. Whatever the form of its manifestation, the acts of resistance allow the ruled to reveal their discontents which usually awaken the rulers' decision and sometimes lead to their amendment. The rulers' awareness of resistance among the ruled may either lead to the prevention of the failure or fuel the repression. There are some examples of both possibilities in this study where agents of reforms in some areas became flexible while others were determined to reach their goal by all means (see Machiavelli in Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991: 89). Therefore, resistance can allow change, curb poverty, limit repression, and pave the way for more democratic policy implementation.

The methodological contribution of this thesis is that apart from exploring the personal meaning interviewees attributed to their experiences, we have, by referring to other interpretations, been able to understand the interviewees' reactions and identify their acts of resistance to reform implementation. In fact, this methodology combines two approaches: the first being based on an interpretive phenomenological approach where the researcher seeks to understand the meanings of interviewees' experience, through unstructured questions in order to collect detailed information of their everyday life and the interpretation of their reactions (see Smith and Mike, 2008). The second includes others' interpretation of actors' reactions by means of semi-structured interviews; and these approaches are supplemented by the researchers' observations. This combination provides diversified interpretations of farmers' reactions to reforms and allows us to identify which ones seem to be acts of resistance to reforms implementation. We have also attempted to broaden our findings about reactions and resistance to reforms under study by involving in the process of the analysis and interpretation the results collected from a long pilot study in several sites of the countryside.

## **Implications for resistance studies**

Unlike previous studies, in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of resistance, the analysis of resistance to settlement and agricultural reforms implementation in this study has taken into consideration several perspectives including psychosocial aspects such as fear linked to the effects of genocide, a violent past and its effects on living conditions of Rwandan population, the cultural aspect that highlights the value of land and other traditional values for a farmer in the Rwandan context; the political aspects that link the use of authority or power in decision-making and policy implementation, the economic capacity of the farmers and the values of the productivity in the market and their effects on farmers' purchasing capacity, and the ecological aspect that link the productivity and weather conditions in the rural, etc. (see Chapter 4, 5 and 6). All these aspects were given particular consideration while studying the aspect of resistance to the reforms under study. The empirical findings reveal that disregarding these aspects or some of their components when making or enforcing policies/reforms may lead to resistance.

Among the aspects that researchers have not given sufficient attention is that of cultural values as one among the main motives to farmers' resistance. Interviewees have for instance shown their discontents with the decisions of detaching them from their cultural bonds with land, some customary food crops and other varied traditional values in their everyday life.

Although the top-down approach and the use of coercive power in the process of policy implementation were mentioned by previous researchers on policy assessment and implementation as the main motives behind resistance, very few among them related resistance to risk aversion due to unpredictable weather in some specific areas. In fact, they did not put enough emphasis on the link existing between this factor and the recurrent interethnic violence that interfered with good governance, which usually would not only seek to promote the livelihood of its citizens but also to protect its environment. The other aspects that have been raised in some research but neglecting some important components are, for instance, household and state incapacity to invest in sustainable reforms, especially lack of investment in housing with durable materials and the incapacity to substitute the insufficient on-farm income with off-farm activities (see Ansoms, 2009; Isaksson,

2011). These aspects have significantly contributed to poor farmers' discontents and led to resistance to reforms under study. These aspects were key since the number of very small-scale and landless farmers is large in rural areas.

As mentioned previously (see contribution), there are, among this study's empirical findings, particular acts of resistance to agriculture and settlement reforms implementation that no one can see in the literature. Only rumour, silence, argumentation and other forms can be found in the literature of resistance with fine distinctions between contexts (see Chatuverdi, et al., 2009; Burnet, 2012; Lilja, 2007; Scott, 1985), but others such as breaking the rules that forbid constructing or repairing one's house situated in scattered homestead; take refuge in prayers; grazing at night; chiefs who turned blind eye or played a double game pretending to ignore the situation prevailing in the area under their control, etc., seem to be unique in the literature of resistance.

Although many acts of resistance found in this study were covert, some were overtly manifested; such acts are, for example, breaking silence, argumentation, the decision of dismissing the cooperative executive committee through local leaders, mixing crops when monocropping is compulsory, refusal to relocate, refusal to releasing one's plot in the marsh for sale, seeking justice from the ombudsman or other local institutions when the citizens are unfairly treated, etc. Another example of seeking justice overtly when coerced at the local level but observed elsewhere is that of reporting complaints on the occasional visit of the President of the Republic, where he calls everyone to present their complaints.

## **Recommendations**

In order to avoid that the neglected covert resistance transform into overt to the extent of becoming a revolution or violent conflicts such as those that happened in Rwanda, the examples discussed above can be a preventive lesson. Actually, repressive public institutions and other community organisations should learn how to be flexible in decision-making or assigning the responsibility of decision-making to their members. With regard to this thesis, it's crucial to acknowledge local needs and priorities and adapt certain policies to the uniqueness of each area. Moreover, the recognition of resistance among the recipients would also be a foundation for improving performance at the local level. This would be a way of

preventing risks of overt and violent resistance that could perhaps lead to the delay or failure of reform implementation. As a small country which needs a rational land management, other recommendations to the leading group should for example be of:

- prioritise the budget for any grouped settlement programmes in order to properly invest in modern housing in flats along with the necessary infrastructure and other services;
- readapt settlement and agricultural policy documents according to what recipients and local practitioners or the street-level bureaucrats suggest and what is ecologically sustainable;
- consistently apply what is written in the policy documents (such as Vision 2020 Umurenge, Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Human Settlement Policy, etc.), but also develop the routine of flexibility among the agents of reform implementation and local planners of *imihigo*;
- prioritise the pillar of human resource development and a knowledge-based economy, especially by strengthening vocational training of unskilled youth and promote rural industry in order to decrease underemployment and unemployment, which would limit unnecessary internal migration of the unskilled population towards cities and prevent the escalation of violence in those cities.

Weather uncertainties are one of the challenges that affect reform in agricultural sector on hillsides; thus, the possible solution would be to:

- invest in hillside irrigation while promoting and protecting the environment;
- provide full autonomy to farmers' cooperatives based on cooperative values and principles, using local schemes and institutions such as *ubudehe*, *umuganda*, *imihigo* in order to promote and strengthen peace and development;
- promote and use more democratic forms of power in the process of policymaking and implementation at grassroots level avoiding any repressive form of power.

The only recommendation to farmers is that they would seize the opportunities of official discourses and official documents, constitutions, etc. and learn how to overcome their fear by using what Li and O'Brian have called policy-based resistance, whereby one justifies their actions or resists with support from official documents (see Li and O'Brien, 1996).

## Further research areas

Since this study was particularly limited to the understanding of experience, reactions and the phenomenon of resistance at the grassroots level where policies are implemented without linking it to the whole political system and the top level of decision-making, I would suggest that an in-depth study of political factors underlying acts of resistance be carried out. I would also suggest the following:

- conducting an exhaustive survey at national level on settlement and agricultural reform achievements, exploring the impact of reform implementation on recipients' living conditions and that of resistance to the process of reform implementation; conducting a survey at national level on the impact of settlement and agricultural reform on the assigned goals of curbing recurrent conflicts, poverty and ecological disaster at national level; making a survey on strategies of promoting off-farm activities as an alternative to land dependence in rural Rwanda as well as assessing the impact of resistance in the process of change;
- making a critical analysis of the evolution of the phenomenon of resistance in relation to political power competition in the close future in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes Region where power struggle between political parties on power and others is increasing and with determination than previously.





## **SAMMANFATTNING (summary in Swedish)**

Denna avhandling studerar bönders erfarenhet av, reaktioner på och motstånd mot reformer i Rwanda. Den fokuserar på två stora reformer genomförda i syfte att återuppbygga landet och minska fattigdomen efter folkmordet som drabbade landet på 1990-talet: förflyttning av folk till byar samt modernisering av jordbruket. Avhandlingen har svarat på följande forskningsfrågor: (1) Hur har bönderna upplevt reformerna? (2) Hur har de reagerat på kraven att anpassa sig till reformerna? samt (3) Vilka av böndernas reaktioner kan förstås som motståndshandlingar?

Undersökningen genomfördes mellan september 2010 och februari 2012 med en kvalitativ ansats som kombinerade fenomenologiska perspektiv med fallstudiemetod. Datainsamlingen skedde genom fokusgruppsdiskussioner, individuella intervjuer och, i viss mån, deltagande observation. Intervjuerna bestod av djupintervjuer med 20 fattiga bönder som direkt påverkats av reformerna, samt semistrukturerade intervjuer med ytterligare 60 bönder som levde nära de 20 bönder som var studiens huvudsakliga fokus. Dessutom intervjuades ytterligare 22 personer som var lokala opinionsbildare och myndighetspersoner, samt en hög tjänsteman.

Den första frågan fokuserade på hur bönderna upplevde att reformerna påverkat deras levnadsvillkor. I intervjuerna framkom att alla bönder, utan undantag, uppmanades överge sina tidigare, geografiskt spridda, bosättningar, för att i stället bosätta sig i nyskapade byar. De mest utsatta fick assistans från lokala myndigheter för att bygga ett nytt hus på den nya platsen. Men då det i vissa områden bor många fattiga kunde inte alla som hade stora ekonomiska behov få assistans. Vissa placerades på väntelista för hjälp, medan många förväntades själva bekosta den nya bostaden. Detta har haft svåra ekonomiska konsekvenser för många bönder. En kampanj som lanserades i hela Rwanda 2011 för att eliminera boendet i traditionella hyddor också har visat sig drabba fattiga bönder då de i vissa fall blivit avhysta från sina hyddor trots att de ännu inte tilldelats nya modernare bostäder.

Andra kategorier av jordbrukare har också upplevt negativa effekter av tvångsförflyttningarna, inte minst de som flyttat till de nyetablerade byarna. Till exempel uppstår problem med de långa avstånden från de nya bostäderna och böndernas fält, som låg i närheten av den tidigare bostaden. Detta skapar svårigheter att

transportera gödsel, samt att skörda och att skydda grödorna från stöld. Många bönder som ålagds att flytta har inte kunnat göra det eftersom de inte har råd med mark på de platser som de hänvisats till och inte heller har råd att bygga nya hus själva. Utan statligt stöd eller stöd från hjälporganisationer är det endast ett litet antal jordbrukare som frivilligt flyttat till de nyetablerade byarna.

Det finns också en kategori bönder vars mark exproprieras för att användas för de nya bosättningarna. På en av de fyra platser i Rwanda där det huvudsakliga fältarbetet utfördes för den här avhandlingen gavs bönderna två val: antingen skulle de sälja sina ägor, inklusive hus, eller så skulle de sälja marken och bara behålla tomten där husen står och renovera huset enligt en given standard (dvs. se till att det är av samma typ som de hus som krävs i den nyskapade byn). Dessa bönder har haft problem med dessa krav då kostnaderna för renoveringen är långt högre än de belopp som de får som ersättning för sin mark. I de fall där bönderna inte hade råd med kostnaderna för renoveringen blev de helt enkelt ombedda att sälja sitt hus och sin tomt. I allmänhet var bönder som sålde sin mark missnöjda med det officiella markpriset. De som däremot sålde sin mark privat upplevde inte några problem då de var fria att själva förhandla priset. Ett annat exempel är att fattiga bönder som tilldelats gratis bostad och därmed hade ett anständigt boende i vissa fall berättade att de svalt på grund av den minskade produktionen av grödor på sina fält. De menade att detta berodde på brist på hushållskompost som de regelbundet brukade sprida på fälten när de bodde i deras närhet. De som förutom nytt boende fått ytterligare hjälp såsom en mjölkko var i allmänhet nöjda.

Andra bönder som intervjuades vittnade om att de som fortfarande bodde kvar i sina gamla bostäder tilläts inte att bygga nya hus eller reparera sina gamla hus, eftersom deras områden enligt reformerna skulle användas enbart för jordbruk eller annan infrastruktur, eller för att myndigheterna krävde en viss typ av hus på platsen. Detta betydde att de som inte hade råd med denna standard tvingades flytta.

Ytterligare problem som bönderna upplevt i samband med folkomflyttningarna är arbetslöshet och undersysselsättning. Intervjuerna visar att dessa problem främst drabbar unga och vuxna som saknar mark. Dessa personer blir fler och fler och många väljer att flytta till städer och kommersiella center i jakten på arbete. De flesta av de bönder som intervjuades i studien hade minst en ung släkting i den närmaste staden som arbetade som

hemhjälp, i byggbranschen eller med andra jobb.

Intervjupersonerna beskriver ett antal olika strategier för att bemöta folkomflyttningsreformen och dess negativa inverkan. Det fanns exempel på bönder som visade lydnad, men också bönder som spred rykten om reformerna som ett sätt att motverka dem. Det fanns de som mötte myndigheterna med tystnad och de som bröt tystnaden, samt exempel på bönder som bröt mot reglerna genom att bygga hus när det var mörkt eller reparera sina hus från insidan. Det fanns också lokala ledare som valde att se mellan fingrarna på bönder som inte följde instruktionerna samt de som accepterade mutor för att tillåta brott mot reglerna.

Jordbruksreformen är en av regeringens viktigaste pelare för att stävja den fattigdom som är en central faktor bakom de återkommande etniska konflikter och våldsamheter som förekommit i Rwanda. Efter folkmordet 1994 har regeringen gjort stora ansträngningar för att öka produktiviteten genom att ersätta självförsörjningsjordbruk med marknadsorienterat jordbruk. Jordbruksreformen är nära sammankopplad med folkomflyttningarna, eftersom modernt jordbruk i Rwandas bergssluttningar är beroende av sammanhängande markområden, vilket skapas genom förflyttning av människor till byar.

De intervjuade bönderna upplevde jordbruksreformen på olika sätt. De flesta fattiga småbönder uppgav att de påverkats mest av reformerna, medan de bönder som producerade ris i våtmarkerna menade att de påverkats mest. De flesta bönder var tveksamma till att investera i jordbruk i bergssluttningarna på grund av den stora risken att skördarna misslyckades på grund av oförutsägbara väderförhållanden. Kulturella värden, brist på resurser att investera i marknadsinriktad produktion och riskminimering bidrog också till att bönder var tveksamma till att genomföra reformerna. De flesta som intervjuades ansåg att odling i våtmarkerna var framgångsrik med hög produktion, men menade också att det var mycket dyrt att köpa mat på marknaden, vilket gjorde att många småbönder beklagade sig över sin bristande inköpskapacitet. De som odlar majs i våtmarkerna avslöjade till exempel att trots hög produktion tillåter deras inkomst inte dem att köpa ett minimum av vad de behöver på marknaden.

Liksom i andra delar av landet visade den här studien att jordbruket i våtmarkerna får mer stöd från staten än jordbruket i bergssluttningarna. Detta trots att den del av landsbygdsbefolkningen som har land i våtmarkerna är betydligt

mindre än de som odlar i bergsslutningarna; våtmarker täcker endast 10,6% av landets yta. Det innebär att jordbruksproduktionen från våtmarkerna inte är tillräcklig för att föda hela befolkningen i Rwanda, inklusive stadsbefolkningen.

Generellt sett klarar sig bönder som bor i närheten av våtmarker om de får tillgång till land, men det är fortfarande många som önskar mark här. Rättigheter att odla i dessa områden är slumpmässigt tilldelade. Icke desto mindre krävs det att de som odlar i våtmarkerna anpassar sig till vissa regler. Till exempel åläggs man att odla vissa moderna grödor medan vissa traditionella grödor är förbjudna. Bland prioriterade grödor finns ris, majs och sojabönor. Bland de förbjudna återfinns sötpotatis, bönor, kål, aubergine, etc., som fattiga bönder föredrar eftersom de kan odla dem snabbt i både jordbrukssäsong A och B. Med traditionella grödor var bönder med en bit mark i våtmarkerna skyddade från svält, speciellt under de långa torrperioderna. Förbudet mot traditionella grödor ledde till motstånd från bönderna som intervjuades i studien, men eftersom våtmarkerna tillhör staten har det inte lett till några ändringar. I de områden där denna studie genomfördes var majs den gröda som ogillades mest. Det är en strikt kommersiell gröda i den mån att ingen har rätt att använda den för hushållens konsumtion; den måste säljas genom lokala kooperativ. De intervjuade visade också att de pengar de får från majsförsäljningen inte räcker till för att köpa mat till hushållets dagliga överlevnad. De som försökt odla majs på bergsslutningar övergav detta på grund av bristande lönsamhet.

Däremot stödde många bönder odling av ris, även om de som gynnades mest av risproduktion var mindre fattiga bönder som hyr eller köper mark från de mycket fattiga som inte har råd att investera i risodling. Bönder som använde våtmarkerna för utsäde såsom majs och sojabönor tenderade inte heller att klaga då deras skörd inbringade god inkomst.

Bönderna reagerade på jordbruksreformerna på ett antal olika sätt. Reaktionerna inkluderade rykten, argumentation, öppen opposition mot misskötsel av kooperativ, vägran att sälja mark i hopp om att i stället kunna hyra ut marken; rapportering om orättvis behandling till lokala rättsliga institutioner; vägran att sälja skörden; användande av lokalt utsäde i stället för det förbättrade utsäde som godkänts av jordbruksministeriet; samt försäljning av gödsel i hemlighet. Det fanns också bönder som behöll stjälkar av bananträd under jorden när de ålades att införa andra grödor, de

som lät boskapen beta på natten trots förbud eller som stal gräs från andra bönders fält för att ge mat till sin boskap. Att ironiskt eller ärligt hylla de som var ansvariga för reformerna förekom också. Precis som vad gäller motståndet mot folkomflyttningsreformerna så gjorde de intervjuade bönderna motstånd mot jordbruksreformer genom att sprida negativa rykten. Ibland kunde tystnad ses som en motståndsstrategi, och ibland gjorde bönder motstånd genom att bryta tystnaden. Motståndshandlingarna var speciellt tydliga i de fall då aktörerna själva förklarade att de syftade till att göra motstånd. Andra motståndshandlingar inkluderar odling av blandade grödor där endast en gröda tillätts. Att bönderna fortsatte att blanda grödor också efter det att myndigheterna ryckt upp deras tidigare grödor tyder på att de engagerade sig i motståndshandlingar.

Andra handlingar som kan förstås som motstånd (eftersom aktörerna i förväg visste att deras handlingar var förbjudna) var stöld av gräs från grannars fält, att låta boskap beta på natten på andras betesmarker eller fält i träda när det rädde brist på foder eller under torrperioder. Boskapsägare uppgav att de inte hade haft något annat val än att göra på detta sätt, annars skulle de inte gjort så. Trots dessa motiveringar förstås handlingarna förstås som motstånd i denna studie, eftersom de medvetet brutit mot lokala regler.

Lydnadshandlingar motiverades ofta av den socialhjälp som erbjöds (till exempel mjölkkor som skänktes till fattiga hushåll). Men det fanns också fall som kan betecknas som falsk lydnad, till exempel då bönder accepterade lån i form av förbättrat utsäde och konstgödsel, men istället för att använda dem för avsett ändamål bytte man ut utsädet eller sålde gödselet för att kunna betala tillbaka de lån man ålagts att ta.



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