The status of the Twa minority in Rwanda in the past and the present: a post-genocide policy challenge

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The Status of the Twa Minority in Rwanda in the Past and the Present:  
A post-genocide policy challenge

Toshie INUI

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Abstract

After the 1994 Genocide, the government of Rwanda (GoR) prohibited ethnicity-based separate identification of citizens. The ID card no longer shows the ethnic identification of the card holder, and all citizens are called only Rwandese. However, the Twa, an ethnic group that has been marginalized historically in Rwanda, is now called a “Historically Marginalized People/Population” (HMP). Since my first field visit in 2011, I have witnessed social and economic discrimination against the Twa in Rwanda, and confirmed this in various reports published by human rights NGOs as well as UN organizations, despite the fact that the GoR is trying to remove the prejudices, inequalities and discrimination against the Twa. Such discrimination deprives the Twa of the freedom to live in dignity, as well as the freedom from want and fear.

This article presents an analysis of inequalities and differences between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese from the perspective of horizontal inequalities (HI), which encompass political, economic, social and cultural-status dimensions. These inequalities are discussed in terms of political participation, income, employment, access to education. This article also discusses policy issues regarding the Twa by examining the transformation of Rwandese society after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Finally, it concludes that the support from the GoR, although still insufficient, is having some positive effects on the life of the Twa.
Keywords
Rwanda, Twa, minority, livelihoods, HIs (horizontal inequalities),

I. Introduction

It is 53 years since the Republic of Rwanda (Rwanda) achieved independence in 1962. After independence, Rwanda became politically and economically unstable. At present, Rwanda is stable after experiencing the 1994 Genocide and determining that it would never happen again. The 1994 Genocide is usually described as a genocide committed by the majority Hutu against the minority Tutsi and the moderate Hutu. However, another minority group in Rwanda, the Twa, was also targeted during the 1994 Genocide, a subject that is rarely mentioned in academic research. After the genocide, Rwanda launched Vision 2020 in 2000 as well as other policies for economic development. Also, the indication of the name of ethnicity on ID cards was abolished after the genocide. Now, Rwanda is widely regarded as one of the success stories in Africa because Rwanda is trying to rebuild “New” Rwanda through “unity,” “work” and “patriotism.” But to what extent has Rwanda changed since the 1994 Genocide and do its policies include all citizens?

The Kingdom of Rwanda was formed in 1468 by the succession of the throne of Ruganzu I Bwimba. The kingdom did not expand its dominion for 300 years after formation, but it started to attack regions around the kingdom from around the 18th century and extended its territory. However, the dominion was unstable for a long time until it was colonized by Germany in 1899. The League of Nations approved the mandate for Belgium in 1924. The identification card (ID) system, which mentions the name of ethnicity was established during the Belgium mandate. With this system, the three ethnicities in Rwanda, the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, were clearly divided and Belgium established a system in which the Tutsi were rulers and the Hutu were ruled. This European power brought such ethnic distinctions to the kingdom of Rwanda based on the Hamitic Hypothesis. The sudden death of the king in 1959 triggered mistrust

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2 Ibid.
4 The Hamitic Hypothesis was advocated by a British explorer John Hanning Speak. Ham,
between Tutsi elites and Belgium and then Belgium tried to enforce the relations with Hutu elites called PARMEHUTU. Then, in 1959, an ethnic massacre led to about 200,000 refugees fleeing the conflict, which triggered the transformation of the politics from the Tutsi elites’ monarchy established by Belgium to a Hutu elites’ dominated structure. Three years later, Rwanda became independent on the 1st July 1962. The second generation of refugees from the conflict in 1959 formed anti-government forces (Rwanda Patriotic Front; RPF). The 1994 Genocide occurred on the 6th of April in 1994 with the assassination of President Habiyalimana and it terminated on the 18th of July 1994 with the assumption of the RPF. About 500,000 to 800,000 people of the Tutsi, moderate Hutu and Twa were killed during the 1994 Genocide, and instability continued after the ceasefire. Rwanda tried to integrate the people by abolishing the indication of ethnicities from the ID cards, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICRT) and Gacaca courts were established in Rwanda.

There were three ethnicities, the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, in Rwanda, but the GoR abolished the indication of the name of ethnicities on the ID card after the 1994 Genocide. The GoR has also prohibited the ethnicity-based separate identification of citizens. According to Lewis and Knight, the Twa is “the third and the lowest-status ethnic group, class, ‘caste’ or echelon of Rwandese society, and are recognized as being one of the ‘Pygmy’ people of Central Africa. The Twa are Banyarwandans sharing a common language, religions and culture of the Rwandese people as a whole.” Actually, the Twa were not only outsiders but also had the perspective of insiders during the 1994 Genocide. The Twa numbered no less than 28,000 and 30% of them were killed during the 1994 Genocide. Interahamwe, which is a group of extremist Hutu, intimidated male

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5 Takeuchi, Schinichi, “Ruwanda ni Okeru Hutatsu no Hunsou jenosaido wa Ikani Kanou ni Natta Noka (Tow Conflicts in Rwanda How did the genocide happen)”, Syakaikagaku kenkyu (Research of Social Science) 55(5-6), 2004, p.107.
8 Lewis, Jerome & Knight, Judy, op.cit., 1995, p.93.
Twa into participating in Interahamwe. However, academic research on the 1994 Genocide does not focus on the conditions of the Twa.

The Twa are described as “Historically Marginalized People/Population (HMP)” in Rwanda today. The name, HMP, reflects their history of discrimination, prejudice and exclusion in Rwanda. All people who have Rwandese nationality are called Rwandese, but the Twa are called HMP as well as Rwandese. The Twa have suffered discrimination and prejudices historically, and have not been able to benefit sufficiently from the policy of the GoR, so they are finding it difficult to make a living. Article 14 of the Constitution mentions compensation for the genocide survivors, but the Twa’s welfare is not indemnified in the Constitution. Thus, the Twa are the most vulnerable people in Rwanda today.

This research focuses on Rwanda, which has abolished the indication of the name of ethnicities from ID cards and is attempting to construct a new multi-ethnic nation. Also, it examines the differences and gaps between the Twa and other Rwandese, making use of the notion of Horizontal Inequalities (HI), which includes the perspectives of politics, economics, societies and cultures. The research also examines the current situation of the Twa and how they are treated in Rwanda. The Twa are a historically forgotten group, but the present GoR is offering them support. There are few studies on the Twa, and this research aims to clarify the current issues confronted by the GoR from the Twa point of view, and to understand how Rwandan society has changed since the 1994 Genocide by focusing on the discriminated people, the Twa.

Section 2 of this article provides an overview of the Twa people. Section 3 focusses on two policies the GOR implemented for poverty reduction and examines the policies of the Kagame Regime since 2003. Section 4 describes the current status of the Twa. Finally, Section 5 analyses the inequalities between the Twa and other Rwandese from the perspectives of politics, economics, society and culture by adopting HIs and clarifies the current policy issues for poverty reduction of the Twa.

* This article does not aim to separate the nations of Rwanda but it aims to elucidate current policy issues relating to the Twa in post-genocide Rwanda. As such, this article does not transgress Article 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda.

II. The Historical Status of the Twa

This section presents a historical overview of the Twa in Rwanda and the ethnicities that used to exist formally in Rwanda. There were three ethnic groups in Rwanda, the Tutsi, the Hutu and the Twa. Now they are all called Rwandese. There is much discussion on the origins of the Tutsi and the Hutu. Both the Tutsi and the Hutu have their roots in the Bantu. The Tutsi are usually regarded as the Bantu who not only
adopted the food production system of yams but also engaged in cattle breeding. The Hutu are also considered to originate from the Bantu and to have migrated from the frontier between today’s Cameroon and Nigeria. The Twa is one of the names for the pygmies who used to be hunter gatherers in central Africa. At the beginning of the 19th century, the language, Kinyarwanda, became the common language of the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. Then, the Twa started to integrate into society, which was dominated by the Tutsi and Hutu. Originally, the Twa lived in the forest and made their living by hunting and gathering, but the livelihoods of the Twa gradually transformed to pot-making because of the large-scale deforestation in the 19th and the 20th century.

According to the Unrepresented Nations and People Organization (UNPO), the Twa people live in the Great Lakes region, especially around Lake Kivu and Lake Edward. Also, the report by Minority Rights Group International (MRG) says that the Twa are the original inhabitants of the forest in equatorial areas. From these descriptions, the Twa should be regarded as indigenous people in Rwanda. However, the Twa are not admitted as an indigenous people because of Article 33 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. There was no rigid hierarchy between the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa before the colonial period, but such a hierarchy was created especially during the time of Belgian colonial rule. Ethnicities in Rwanda were formed after the establishment of the Kingdom of Rwanda in 1468, and further divided into classes and strengthened during the colonial period so that Europeans could control the Kingdom of Rwanda more easily.

The name Twa is commonly used in Rwanda and Burundi. This means that the same group of pygmies is called by different names in different countries in Africa. They are called Aka or Bambendjelé in the Republic of Congo, Bagyeli, Baka or

14 Article 33; Freedom of thought, opinion, conscience, religion, worship and the public manifestation thereof of 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 punished by law.
Medzanin in Cameroon\textsuperscript{15}, Twa, Mbuti or Bayanda in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Bayanda in Uganda\textsuperscript{16}. The number of Twa in Rwanda is estimated to be from 28,000 to 33,000\textsuperscript{17}. Also, there are from 69,500 to 87,000\textsuperscript{18} in the Great Lakes region.

The Twa of Rwanda are not formally called Twa but HMP because of their history of marginalization, discrimination and segregation. For instance, they could not eat and sit with other Rwandese\textsuperscript{19}. It is very difficult for them to make a living because they possess little or no land. Mwami (the king of Rwanda) distributed land to some of the Twa in 1961, but most of the Twa had to rent land in exchange for belonging to a group of Hutu and supplying labor and products to them. Rwandese except the Twa possess land that had been kept from their ancestors in accordance with an executive order in 1966, but the Twa could not do so because they lived in the forests at that time. According to research on the possession of land of the Twa community conducted in 1993, 604 out of 4,553 Twa possessed no land, and 3,876 had some land but not enough, while only 73 had enough land\textsuperscript{20}. Therefore, the Twa had to maintain their livelihoods by begging, working as farm laborers or making pots. In addition, the land law in 2005 had negative impacts on the Twa. The Twa could not possess land legally because the land law was based on the executive order in 1966. Thus, the Twa could not possess land in that year and there was no land for them to possess in 2005 when the land law came into effect.

In addition to the question of land ownership, the Twa do not have sufficient access to education. Primary education in Rwanda is obligatory and tuition is free. However, the families of students have to bear the costs of text books, uniforms, shoes, bags, lunch and others, which are burdensome for poor households. This situation makes it difficult for the Twa to go to school because they generally do not have enough money. An annual report in 2004 by COPORWA, an NGO supporting the Twa, states that only

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{17}{Lewis, Jerome, \textit{The Twa Pygmies: Rwanda’s Ignored People}, London: University College London, 2006, p.3.}
\footnote{18}{UNPO, http://www.unpo.org/members/7861 (accessed on 1/Dec/2012).}
\footnote{19}{Lewis, Jerome, \textit{op.cit.}, 2006, pp.6-7.}
\footnote{20}{Lewis, Jerome and Knight, Judy, \textit{The Twa of Rwanda: Assessment of the Situation and Promotion of Twa Rights in Post-war Rwanda}, Chadlington and Copenhagen: World Rainforest Movement and International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs, 1995, p.35.}
\end{footnotes}
23.4% of Twa could read and write and only 34% of Twa went to school\textsuperscript{21}. The literacy rate of Rwanda in 2000 was 64.9\%\textsuperscript{22}, so this figure is low compared with the rate of the whole country of Rwanda. In addition, it was reported in 1993 that some Twa children were bullied by other children and teachers because they were Twa\textsuperscript{23}.

Many male Twa were sent to jail after the 1994 Genocide with some of them being arrested based on false accusations, and the ratio of male and female Twa outside prisons was said to have become unbalanced as a result. This affected Twa society. Usually, the Twa make their living by making and selling pots as well as by getting and carrying clay. There were too few male Twa who could work as manual laborers, especially carrying clay, which meant that not enough pots could be made and incomes were reduced.

Although the Twa are experiencing the difficult conditions described above, the situation has started to change recently. Clause 2 of Article 82 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, which is about the composition of senators, mentions that “eight (8) members appointed by the President of the Republic shall ensure the representation of historically marginalized communities”\textsuperscript{24}. Besides, as one of the policies for poverty reduction, the GoR declared the principle of “One Family, One Cow.” The GoR give a cow to each poor family under the policy, so five Twa families got a cow each. The policy is aimed at benefiting the Twa, but giving a cow may ultimately change their lifestyle from pot making and/or cultivation. Thus, the GoR may have to revise the policy so that their culture of pot-making is protected and respected.

III. The transformation of Rwanda under the Kagame Regime

This section focusses on two policies for poverty reduction in Rwanda under the control of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), the Kagame Regime. One is the policy adopted by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) in 2002 and the other is one adopted by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) in 2011.

In 2003, a new Constitution was enacted and a presidential election based on universal suffrage was implemented. The incumbent president, Paul Kagame, won the


\textsuperscript{23} Lewis, Jerome and Knight, Judy, op. cit., 1995, p.46.

\textsuperscript{24} The Republic of Rwanda, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, Kigali, 2003, Article 82.
election with 95% of the votes\textsuperscript{25}. The RPF won the election for the chamber of deputies. The senate is composed of 26 members nominated by each province, Kigali city, a historically marginalized community, the forum of political organizations and universities. In addition, Article 82 of the Constitution prescribes that at least 30% of the senators must be women.

President Kagame has enacted many reforms in Rwanda. He is especially energetic in poverty reduction efforts, and MINECOFIN and MINALOC have taken charge of policies for poverty reduction. The contents of these policies are discussed below.

1. National Poverty Reduction Program: PRSP

In 2002, MINECOFIN launched the Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP), focusing on economic development and poverty reduction. The PRSP defines poor people as those who lack certain amounts of land, income, provisions, clothes, medical treatment and education. More specifically, it defines the poor as those whose expenditure is less than 64,000 Rwanda Franc or whose expenditure on provisions is less than 45,000 Rwanda Franc\textsuperscript{26}. PRSP maintains that the GoR should try to stabilize the economy by means of gradual inflation, developing the private sector, including the informal sector, and nurturing good relationships with donor countries.\textsuperscript{27}

In addition, it includes agriculture, health, education and the economic infrastructure. The agricultural sector focuses on productivity and the development of fertilizers\textsuperscript{28}. The health sector should address the increase of quality of medical treatment and its access, the prevention of HIV/AIDS, family planning and deterring population growth\textsuperscript{29}. Goals related to the educational sector include an increase of the literacy rate, promotion of girls’ education and education about HIV/AIDS in schools\textsuperscript{30}. The economic infrastructure should be built up in order to accelerate the development of land, air and railroad transportation, as well as that of energy and communication\textsuperscript{31}.

In addition to the contents described above, the PRSP emphasizes the necessity of strengthening support for vulnerable groups through cooperation with MINALOC and

\begin{itemize}
  \item Ibid., pp.40-48.
  \item Ibid., pp.40-99.
  \item Ibid., pp.59-62, 68-73.
  \item Ibid., pp.63-66.
  \item Ibid., p.74.
\end{itemize}
NGOs. The vulnerable groups include genocide survivors, children in difficult situations such as orphans and disabled persons. Although some funds are available for them, the Twa are not regarded as a vulnerable group and it is difficult for the Twa to join in community activities\(^\text{32}\).

2. National Social Protection Strategy: NSPS

This strategy was drafted by the MINALOC in contrast with PRSP, which can be elaborated with the aid of international organizations such as the World Bank and UN agencies. NSPS defines vulnerable groups as elderly people over 65 years old, widows, patients, orphans, young people, genocide survivors and HMPs (Twa). The GoR emphasizes support for genocide survivors with such measures as the provision of income and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups. The strategy also aims to expand social welfare, increase access to financial services, establish a social security fund for Rwanda for informal sectors and agricultural sectors and so forth. Finally, it stated that the GoR would try to reduce poverty systematically through collaboration among ministries and communities.\(^\text{33}\)

As mentioned above, PRSP may be affected by the will of the development partners, which is sometimes no more than their speculations regarding the development of Rwanda. The PRSP document focuses only on the economic aspects such as income and expenditure. It defines genocide survivors, children in difficult situations and disabled persons all together as vulnerable groups. Some sections discuss the Twa, but the Twa are just described as Batwa and there is no deliberation on the historical background of this group. In addition, there is no clear definition of vulnerable groups in the document. For example, what kinds of people will be regarded as genocide survivors, children in difficult situations and disabled persons? Furthermore, each strategy has its own policy goals, but it does not spell out how they will be achieved.

On the other hand, NSPS explains the nature of vulnerable groups explicitly. The document also covers the guarantee of income and employment, support for people living under poverty, and improvement of development efficiency by intensification of cooperation between government and civil society. The target period is the 5 years between 2011 and 2016. The aims and objectives of NSPS are clearer than those of PRSP because the latter was more specific about the vulnerable groups and it would be easy to notice vulnerable persons. Like PRSP, NSPS still lacks a detailed definition of vulnerable groups. But, NSPS has concrete programs for achieving missions and plans with the ministries and communities such as cash grants with requirements for genocide

\(^{32}\) Ibid., pp.93-94.

\(^{33}\) The Republic of Rwanda Ministry of Local Government, National Social Protection Strategy, 2011, pp.34-43
survivors and vulnerable people and investment plans for increasing the incomes of vulnerable people. NSPS also focuses on increased access to financial services by vulnerable people and expanding the social security fund to other areas. These programs and plans tend to focus on economic aspects, but NSPS is more explicit about addressing poverty reduction from all aspects. NSPS was probably drafted chiefly by the GoR because the genocide survivors are emphasized in this policy compared with PRSP.

The Twa were not directly discussed in PRSP, but NSPS mentioned their name as HMP and the support for them. The situation of the Twa seems to be improving even though the policies and support from the GoR for the Twa are insufficient. However, why are the Twa, who had been marginalized and discriminated against now being accommodated in society through policy measures? Foreign aid might have an impact on such a shift as its ratio in the development budget of the country is still very high. The ratio of foreign aid in 2012 in the national revenue of Rwanda was reduced from 85% to 41%\textsuperscript{34}. Rwanda will face many difficulties if the aid is further reduced. Therefore, the GoR might utilize the Twa in order to appeal to donor countries to help the plight a small minority from a humanistic point of view. Thus, the GoR, which is controlled by the larger minority group the Tutsi may give support to the Twa as the same minority group in Rwanda to prevent future conflicts based on minority-majority politics. The reasons why the government wishes to support the Twa may be open to speculation, but the increased support for the Twa should be welcomed even though the reasons may be political rather than humanitarian.

IV. The Current Situation of Twa

This section describes the current situation of the Twa through interviews that were conducted in 2012 in cooperation with the NGO, Communauté des Potiers de Rwanda (COPORWA). I conducted interviews at six villages in Nyaruguru district, Southern Province. The discussion in this section is based on the results of the interviews.

In this interview research, I used the focus group method. “A focus group is a special type of group in terms of purpose, size, composition, and procedures. The purpose of a focus group is to listen and gather information. It is a way to better understand how people feel or think about an issue, product, or service. Participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group.”\textsuperscript{35} One of the positive points of the focus group method is that it enables

\textsuperscript{34} Alex Perry, “Strong Man, Rwanda’s Battle-hardened President, Paul Kagame, Is Under Attack by the West. He’s Ready for the Fight.”, \textit{TIME} (Europe, Middle East and Africa version), 24, September, 2012, p.34.

interviewees to speak their mind and say what they think about the topic to interviewers naturally.

The authorities limited the interviews to only two days. One of the most likely reasons why COPORWA agreed on such a limit on the research may be related to the characteristics of Rwandese society. There are not many foreigners in Rwanda especially in rural areas. If foreigners walk around alone or in a group, Rwandese people watch them. Sometimes, they notify the sector or the cell office about the foreigner(s). Then, such public offices will interrogate the foreigner(s) and keep an eye on them. In such conditions, COPORWA would face difficulty in conducting their activities if I were closely watched by public officials.

The questionnaire of the interviews covered the following topics:

1. The numbers of family members and persons in the village
2. Daily meals
3. Way of making a living
4. What they want to change in their life
5. The number of children going to school
6. Discrimination in school
7. (Changes brought by Vision 2020)
8. (What they feel about the name of HMP)

The interviews were conducted in the following places: Village V (8 families and 80 people), Village K (12 families and 30 people), Village RW (12 families and 35 people), Village B (15 families and 40 people), Village R (10 families and 40 people) and Village N (21 families and 42 people). I asked the Twa the above interview questions from 1 to 6. When there was time during the interview, I also asked Questions 7 and 8.

The possession of cow is a symbol of wealth in Rwanda. Goats are also important domestic animals in Rwanda because they can be bred and sold in markets. Some of the Twa were given goats and cows by the GoR as a policy. The Twa are usually thought of as making their living only by pot-making, but usually they combine pottery, agriculture and farming domestic animals such as goats and pigs.

They commonly live in modern houses in the capital city, Kigali, and the central area of the main regions, but they live in houses made of clay in rural areas and in the suburbs of the main regions. Extremely poor people often live in houses made of clay without doors. Most of the Twa people whom I met during the interviews lived in such houses. Therefore, the level of poverty could be measured by the type of houses and the possession of domestic animals. A brief summary of my findings from the field visits
follows.

Village V: people in this village made their living only by pottery-making. They make two pots per day, with the price being 100 Rwanda franc per pot, and they sell ten pots per week. The dresses that people wore were dirty and they did not have shoes. The houses were made of clay with roofs but no doors.

Village K: people in this village made their living by agriculture and pottery. They made tiles in addition to pots. They dressed very well and all women wore African costume made of African cloth. Village K also received modest support from the GoR, so their houses had doors even though they were made of clay.

Village RW: people in this village mainly made their living by pottery but also by agriculture. They made 15 pots per week, but they did not reveal the prices and how many pots were sold. Few people wore shoes, but the village was supported by the GoR and the houses had doors, though the walls were made of clay. Some women wore African costumes made of African cloth, which was largely ragged.

Village B: people in this village mainly made their living by pottery but also agriculture, and rearing domestic animals. They did not wear shoes and their clothes were dirty. There were no indications that Village B received support from the GoR, but they said that they could join social activities such as community meetings and Umuganda36 because of the GoR. They looked happy and appreciated being able to attend social activities with other Rwandese.

Village R: people in this village mainly made their living by agriculture but also pottery. They had more land to cultivate than that of the other five villages. The houses were made of clay and had doors. They were dressed well but not so cleanly.

Village N: people in this village mainly made their living by pottery but also agriculture. They sold their pots for around 150 Rwanda franc per pot, but they did not disclose the sales amount and their total income from the pots. Few of them wore shoes. The women dressed well with African costumes made of African cloth. The village had modest support from the GoR, so the houses were made of concrete and bricks and had doors. One woman, who looked like the leader of this village, had a cellphone.

36 Umuganda is one of obligatory social activities in Rwanda and held every final Saturday on every month. Those who do not attend it have to pay some amount of penalty. Required activities include cleaning or repairing the public roads.
The interviews with villagers revealed that there were three similarities among villages: the daily meal, what they want to change in their life and what they feel about the name of HMP. They ate potatoes and beans once a day in the evening and they wanted to change their daily meal, and they wanted to change the way they made a living from pottery to agriculture and rearing domestic animals because they made little money from pottery. There was little demand for the old-fashioned looking pots made by the Twa in the market. Furthermore, the consumer goods markets were full of cheap pottery goods from China. On the other hand, some of the Twa said that they wanted to improve the quality of their pots. However, the Twa who mentioned this were not in good economic condition. Perhaps they had identified some needs on the part of some customers who were willing to buy their pots.

Regarding the name HMP, they generally thought that they had to accept the name but did not understand why they were given such a name. The GoR authority is quiet about this terminology, so they cannot do anything about it. However, during the interview some Twa said that the GoR intended to change the name HMP.

There are two differences among villages in terms of their reactions to the questions: the changes in village life occasioned by Vision 2020 and the discrimination in school. Village K, RW and N received visible benefit or positive impacts by the implementation of Vision 2020, and the residents of those villages appreciated the efforts of the GoR. On the other hand, in those villages that did not receive any positive impacts, namely, Village V and B, villagers did not express any particular feelings toward the GoR. At the same time, they did not know what they could do to get jobs because most of them had not received education. Thus, they had little idea about how to increase their income.

There were two types of opinions about discrimination in school. Some said there was discrimination in school, and others did not. Some children did not go to school because they could not concentrate on classes due to hunger. As a result, they dropped out of school. On the other hand, some of the Twa indicated the persistence of discrimination in school. Some Twa children were discriminated against by teachers when they wore nice or new uniforms that had been provided with support from NGOs. They also faced discrimination in their daily lives. For instance, if something went missing in a market when a Twa child visited, the child tended to be suspected of being the thief.

The interview research has revealed that the situations against the Twa are changing little by little. Given that the criteria for obtaining support from the GoR are not clear, it is important for the GoR to treat all villages equally. I felt that some of the Twa had no hope for their future because they could not escape poverty even though they produced
as many pots as they could. Most of the Twa received no education, and the lack of educational opportunities makes it difficult for them to get jobs. If the GoR believes that people are the most important asset of the nation, it is important to give them educational opportunities as well as domestic animals and houses.

V. The Current Policy Issues in Rwanda from the Perspective of Horizontal Inequalities (HIs)

This section examines the relationships between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese from the perspective of horizontal inequalities (HIs) and then explains the current issues that the GoR face with regard to the Twa. HIs are inequalities between culturally-defined groups rather than between individuals. Cultural elements that define group boundaries include ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, race, and region. The inequalities are analyzed from the perspective of politics, economy, society and culture. “Economic HIs include inequalities in access to and ownership of assets-financial, human, natural resource-based, and social. Social HIs include inequalities in access to a range of services such as education, healthcare, and housing, as well as in educational and health status. Political HIs include inequalities in the distribution of political opportunities and power among groups, including control over the presidency, the cabinet, parliamentary assemblies, the bureaucracy, local and regional governments, the army, and the police. Cultural status HIs include disparities in the recognition and standing of different groups’ languages, customs, norms, and practices.”37 In places where HIs are high in all dimensions, violent conflicts triggered by inter-group inequality in terms of cultural-status are more likely. It is important to analyze HIs in Rwanda to meet the countries aim of never repeating genocide and violent conflict.

1. Political HIs

Disparities in representation in parliament is an important part of political HIs. Eight senators are elected by the HMP communities due to Article 82 of the Constitution38. Thus, the equitable participation of the Twa in politics is constitutionally guaranteed, but in reality, only one senator was elected by Twa society in 201139. Besides, it is not clear whether this person elected by the Twa community is Tutsi, Hutu or Twa. The person was just elected from the Twa community, so he or she may be

Filip REYNTJENS, a political scientist and a professor of the University of Antwerp, discusses Tutsitization in Rwanda. He said that “over 80 percent of mayors, most permanent secretaries and university teachers and students, almost the entire army command structure and the intelligence services were Tutsi.”

Although ethnicity is still a key factor in Rwanda with the Tutsi taking important posts in the regime, political stability has been maintained and there have been no demonstrations against the Kagame Regime even though anti-government groups may be regulated strongly by the GoR. If such situation should occur, the GoR would be required to make more efforts to achieve transparency and accountability in politics. The way of selecting senators from the Twa community should be clearer because it might a part of “Tutsitization” if the selected person is neither Twa or Hutu.

2. Economic HIs

Economic HIs include inequalities in income, employment, assets and others. The GNI per capita of Rwanda in 2011 was 570USD, which is about 359,000 Rwanda Franc. On the other hand, a report by COPORWA in 2004 noted that the income of Twa was 40,932 Rwanda Franc. Most Rwandese engage in agriculture, but the main occupation of the Twa is pottery. It is difficult for the Twa to make a living by pottery because demand for pottery is decreasing. A report by COPORWA in 2007 states that 9% of the Twa work in agriculture, 71% in pottery and 20% in others, and 92% of other Rwandese work in agriculture, 2% in pottery and 6% in others. Even though many of the Twa aspire to change their jobs from pottery to other jobs such as agriculture or become paid workers in town, this would be difficult because of the lack of land and education. In addition, Rwandan society is an academic career-based society, so it is difficult for those who do not graduate from university to get highly paid jobs in Rwanda.

Thus, it is difficult for the Twa to get jobs in other sectors and their income is very low compared to that of other Rwandese. The availability of land in Rwanda is limited, so it is difficult to distribute land to the Twa. The GoR should provide educational

40 Filip Reyntjens, “Rwanda Ten Years On: From Genocide To Dictatorship” African Affairs, 103, 2004, p.188.
42 COPORWA(CAURWA), Rapport annuel enquête sur la condition de vie socio-économique des ménages bénéficiaires de la communautés rwandais, Kigali, 2004, p.34.
opportunities to adult Twa as well to enable them to find jobs in new economic sectors.

3. Social HIs

This section focuses on access to education and health. The gross and net enrolment ratios of primary schools were respectively 127.3% and 95.9% in 2011 and those of secondary schools were 35.5% and 25.7% in the same year. Tuition at primary school is free in Rwanda. However, all Rwandese have to pay for school supplies such as uniforms and textbooks, and the Twa do not have enough money to bear the costs. A survey conducted in 2004 by COPORWA revealed that no less than 51% of the Twa had never gone to school. Also, the actual ratio of Twa children who went to school in 2004 was only 34%. According to the World Bank, they do not mention the net percentage of the primary school enrolment in 2004 of Rwanda, but the ratio in 2003 was 90%, and the gross percentage of 2004 was 132%. In addition to the ratio of access to education, the income of the average Twa household in 2004 was 40,932 Rwanda Franc (about 100 US dollar in 2004). On the other hand, the World Bank mentions that gross nation income per capita in 2005 of Rwanda was 260 US dollar. It is clear that there is a large gap in income between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese. This is why the Twa cannot afford school.

In addition to education, access to healthcare especially access to health insurance is insufficient for the Twa. The ratio of Rwandese who have health insurance was about 91% in 2010. The cost of health insurance depends on income and ranges between 2,000 and 7,000 Rwanda Franc, so poor people pay 2,000 Rwanda Franc, but even this

49 COPORWA, op.cit., 2004, p.34.
is too high for most of the Twa.

There is inequality between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese, and the amelioration of social HIs depends on the improvement of economic HIs. If the Twa’s income were raised, they would be able to go to school and have increased access to healthcare. The GoR offers the educational opportunity of primary school to all Rwandese as compulsory education, but data from the World Bank and COPORWA indicates inequalities between Rwandese and the Twa. Tuition in primary education is free, so more children would be able to go to school if the GoR were to provide school lunch and facilities for free. Thus, the GoR should enact social security for poor people to improve their health and education.

4. Cultural-Status HIs

Twa culture is associated with pottery-making in Rwanda and this is also regarded as part of the culture of Rwanda in general. 71% of Twa work at pottery and only 2% of other Rwandese work at it53. The pots are sold from 100 to 150 Rwanda Franc and it is difficult to boost sales of the pots because of insufficient local needs for pots. Thus, it is difficult for Twa to earn enough money to live on from pottery. Therefore, many of them want to change their job from pottery to agriculture. However, it would be difficult to change their way of making a living to agriculture because the access to land is limited in the case of the Twa.

The GoR has launched the policy of “One Family One Cow,” based on the cow as a symbol of wealth. Although the GoR has distributed cows to poor families, it did not distribute one cow for every Twa family, so its intention to change the lifestyle of the Twa may be doubtful. However, in the long term, it is expected that the distribution of cows will gradually change the livelihoods of Twa and that the number of potters could decrease.

In Rwanda, there are issues with transparency and accountability with regard to how HIs are dealt with in policy-making. Socio-economic HIs could be addressed by increased access to education and measures for income generation targeting the Twa. The improvement of cultural HIs hinges upon the protection of pottery as part of the national cultures of Rwanda and the promotion of the pottery industry if Twa wish to continue to make their living by pottery. Thus, it is important to tackle the issues comprehensively in multiple fields.

Conclusion

This research focused on the experience of Rwanda, which has abolished the indication of ethnic names from ID cards of citizens and tried to construct a new nation. This country could serve as an example of a multi-ethnic African nation. The research also examined differences and gaps between the Twa and other Rwandese through the perspective of horizontal inequalities (HIs), which encompass politics, economy, society and culture.

Since the 1994 Genocide, the RPF has been in office under the banner “Never Again.” The GoR decided to ban the formal distinction of ethnic groups: Tutsi, Hutu and Twa, and tried to integrate all of them into the single Rwandese. At the same time, Rwanda has made efforts towards development and poverty reduction. The poverty ratio has decreased and the ratio of the gross nation income (GNI) and gross domestic product (GDP) has gradually risen. Therefore, Rwanda has achieved massive economic and social changes since the 1994 Genocide.

The society of Rwanda may be changing positively little by little as seen by the change in attitude toward the Twa. However, the Twa are still living in extreme poverty. There is a lack of infrastructure such as electricity and water supply, as well as provisions to satisfy basic human needs such as clothes, provisions, houses, medical treatment, and education. The HIs between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese will be ameliorated with higher and more effective participation of the Twa in national and local politics, income generation, employment creation, and access to education and health. It is also important for Rwandese to show respect to Twa culture, especially, pottery making. The GoR has made some progress on poverty reduction since the 1994 Genocide even though HIs are still very high in Rwanda and there are still bias in light of ethnicities. The policies of the GoR have not equally affected the life of all Rwandese, as the HIs between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese persist. The policies should match the Twa’s needs to improve their own living conditions. Thus, the GoR should provide social security to cover basic human needs of poorer populations, especially those of the Twa. General policy measures such as the introduction of the compulsory educational system may not be sufficient to remove the social and educational inequalities that persist in Rwandan society because various conditions discourage the Twa from going to school. Only when the HIs between the Twa and the rest of the Rwandese have been effectively removed can it be said that Rwanda has truly changed.

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