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Education reform in Rwanda: impacts of genocide and reconstruction on school systems

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**EDUCATION REFORM IN RWANDA:
IMPACTS OF GENOCIDE AND RECONSTRUCTION ON SCHOOL SYSTEMS**

by

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**A dissertation submitted to the
Educational Foundations and Leadership Department of the
School of Education of George Fox University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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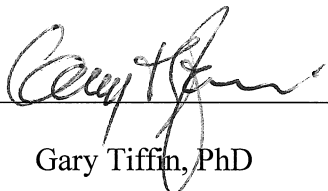
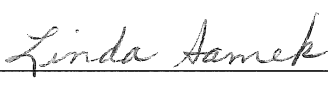
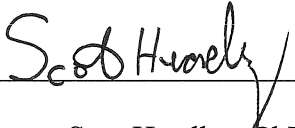
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“EDUCATION REFORM IN RWANDA: IMPACTS OF GENOCIDE AND RECONSTRUCTION ON SCHOOL SYSTEMS,” a Doctoral research project prepared by JAY MATHISEN in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in the Educational Foundations and Leadership Department.

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Abstract

This study is an historical dissertation on the topic of education reform in the East African nation of Rwanda. Determining the impact of the Rwandan genocide of 1994 on three reform initiatives that followed is the central aim of the study. The framework of the study is assembled as a three-part timeline upon which three initiatives of education reform are overlaid for analysis, 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language and 3) enrollment developments. Focusing on those three initiatives in the context of a timeline that details each in the decades prior to the genocide, and in the years that followed it, allows for a discussion of how the genocide changed educational systems in Rwanda. The genocide's impact on instructional methods was subtle and did not appear immediately. Language reform in schools has been more dramatically impacted by the genocide. Enrollment developments provide for a discussion of immediate purposeful reconstruction from the genocide and ongoing impacts in decisions made to broaden access. Primary Rwandan government documents, outside aid agency reports and secondary analysis by experts comprise a balanced collection of sources throughout the study.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements must first recognize the invaluable support and partnership of teachers and administrators in Rwandan schools who have opened their classrooms and facilities to me in recent years. Of primary note is the contribution of the directors, trainers and teachers associated with International Education Exchange (IEE) who have been generous in allowing me to partner in pursuit of teaching and learning with their team.

Second, appreciation to the technical contributions of the dissertation committee and other professors in the Educational Foundations and Leadership Department of the School of Education of George Fox University cannot be overstated. Their contributions transcended the realm of academia, and have shaped my thinking of how one should live with others in pursuit of justice.

Finally, love and appreciation goes to my wife, Shannon, and daughters, Daisy and Molly. We will share Rwanda in the seasons ahead, as we travel to that place together. Thank you for sharing Rwanda with me in the seasons of this work, the cost of which was separation and time apart in studies both here and across the Atlantic. *Kurenganura* is the Kinyarwanda word for justice to those who have experienced injustice. It is my hope that *Kurenganura* will guide you each individually, and us together, in seasons to come.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A Rwandan Story

My journey to Rwanda has been a one-way trip to this point in time. Though still residing and working in schools in the United States, Rwanda has a claim and hold on my professional mind and my more intimate educator soul. The work that employs me as a school district administrator in the state of Oregon, has been enhanced and altered due to the work that has a call on me as an educator across the Atlantic in that East African nation. I am hoping to never purchase the figurative return ticket. The justice that can be shared by improving teaching and learning in Rwandan classrooms is too important. For a country desperate for its children to become critical thinkers in order to lift itself from poverty, the work is too critical. For survivors of the genocide of 1994, who now look to schools to raise generations of critical thinkers capable of preventing another free fall from ignorance to mass slaughter, the work is life saving. There will be no return ticket purchased.

I sat with children in classrooms when the downpours of the rainy season pounded on the corrugated metal roof, creating a din that made it impossible to hear words being shouted by the teacher. I have seen the tears in the eyes of students without scraps of paper and pencils to copy the notes being written on the chalkboard by the teacher that will be content on the national exam. I have heard the frustration in the voices of teachers who have not been paid for months at a time, who are exhausted from ten-hour double-shifted schedules that place them in classrooms with 50 – 70 students at a time. A return ticket is not an option.

I have seen the hope in the eyes of teachers who discover that sharing the thinking being done in a classroom with their students is the best teaching. I have heard the

laughter and focused dialogue of students working together to solve problems posed by their teachers, rather than the silence of students in traditional teacher-centered teaching and learning. It is those experiences, the critical nature of the challenges and the rays of hope produced by change, that will prevent me from purchasing that figurative return ticket.

Roughly two and one-half years ago, I traveled to Rwanda for the first time. As a doctoral student at George Fox University, I was accompanying professors and administrators who were exploring the possibility of establishing a graduate teaching program in a University in Kigali, the capitol city. While on the ground during that spring trip in 2009, I became acquainted with the work of a small NGO (non-governmental organization) focused on training teachers in methods and philosophies of learner-centered pedagogy. Their fledgling work was built upon a model that placed mentor teachers, who worked as instructional coaches, in local schools on a long-term basis. The vision was one of ongoing job-embedded professional development of Rwandan teachers, by Rwandan teachers.

This seemed to be work that was tilting away from the traditional development models that are too often characterized by westerners “fixing” things that appear to western eyes as broken. Woven throughout this dissertation will be evidence that western fixes for developing world problems have often fallen short. The work of International Education Exchange (IEE) in Rwanda is rooted in a more modern development philosophy that pursues a balance of indigenous local control and accountability to the original vision born in the minds of those from the outside willing to help.

Framing the Question

However, this is not a study that will seek to promote the work of one development philosophy or one development partner. No single reform or development entity or movement will be cast as the hero against the backdrop of educational reform history in Rwanda.

Rather, this study is aimed at analyzing the impact the genocide of 1994 had, and still may be having, on education reform. This central question became clear after returning from a third visit to Rwanda in the last 25 months. Working in schools for weeks at a time, then returning to the United States for months before heading back to Rwanda has provided an interesting perspective on education reform efforts there. The changes I have witnessed in the last 25 months, through the lens of three separate visits, seem to be taking place at an amazing pace. The aggressive nature of reforms, and the changes brought about by those reforms is startling.

Perhaps this window into the changes in education in Rwanda that I am looking through are like those of a person who witnesses the growth of a tree that they only see once or twice each year. Certainly the growth of the tree seems to be dramatic upon each visit, as the gradual change is not observed in process. This dynamic of rapid reform is significant in the central question to be addressed in this dissertation.

Also critical in the framing of the central dissertation question is a brief snapshot of the background of Rwanda that will follow. Components of this brief snapshot include details of the genocide of 1994 and brief descriptors of poverty in modern Rwanda.

Rwanda background: A snapshot. Rwanda is an East African country of 10 million people that is one of the most densely populated nations in the world. It is a place best

known in modern history for what is now an 18-year old genocide in which conservative estimates account for the slaughter of 800,000 Rwandans, approximately 10 percent of the population at the time. Though unique from neighboring African nations because of the horrific genocide and its impact on the country, Rwanda has much in common with other African nations regarding its attainment of independence in the middle of the 20th century, and its current goals of development.

Facing poverty levels that are higher than other sub-Saharan African nations, more than 57% of the population lived below the national poverty line defined as \$125 US dollars per year in 2010 (East African Community, 2012). Extreme poverty can be measured by the amount of money needed to provide a person with 2100 calories of food per day. Approximately one third of Rwandans live below that severe poverty line and go hungry on a daily basis (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2007). Those levels marked a stubbornly slow decrease in poverty levels between 2001 and 2006 of only 3.5% (Chiche, 2010). According to Chiche, though the Rwandan economy has grown more than those of other neighboring African nations in the last five years, inflation and rapid population growth conspire together to keep poverty levels high.

Like many other sub-Saharan African nations, Rwanda recognizes the need for education as a tool in the building of a nation that is globally competitive, while at the same time providing economic and social security for its citizenry (World Bank, 2011). The Rwandan government (GoR) and international donor agencies and governments have pursued education reforms and improvements as a means to battling poverty and encouraging development.

The Millennium Development Declaration adopted by the General Council of the United Nations in 2000 served as a call to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development in poor, undeveloped nations of the world. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were drawn from that effort, and have since been the dominant force shaping the dialogue around international development. Though some criticize an over-reliance on the MDGs as an incomplete framework for international development, limited by language that focuses too narrowly on poverty reduction (Maxwell, 2005), the MDGs continue to be foundational for entities working in development around the world.

Development efforts in the education sector have clung to MDG2, which is aimed at achieving universal primary education. MDG3, focused on gender equity, has also found champions in educational development circles. External agencies have used these two quantifiable measures to set targets and track progress as they have poured money into efforts that mandated school attendance for both boys and girls up to a certain grade or age in many sub-Saharan African countries. Rwanda's own efforts towards poverty reduction have included education reforms that have been influenced by these MDGs (Hayman, 2005a).

A frame finished: Question. The context for educational reforms in East African nations crosses borders. The causes and conditions of poverty in East African nations are similar whether in villages and streets of Rwanda, Tanzania or Burundi. The hopes pinned to education by leaders and citizens in those countries are also quite similar across borders. Education reform efforts in African nations often are characterized by broad goals, and a lack of clear priorities (Moulton, Mundy, Welmond, & Williams, 2002).

This study will examine the possibility that the genocide, as horrific as it was, was itself a catalyst of change that may have led to a unique pace and progression of reforms. The reforms, and rate of those reforms, appear to be unique among African nations. The possibility of a link between the genocide, the reconstruction efforts that followed, and education reforms in Rwanda lead to the central dissertation question:

How has the genocide of 1994 impacted educational reforms and systems in Rwanda?

If the genocide had not occurred, education reforms and systems would likely not be the same as they are today in Rwanda. Uncovering why that is so, and what the specific impacts are, will be the aim of this dissertation. Identifying and detailing connections between the genocide and the changes in education that followed the slaughter of the spring of 1994 will be the problem pursued.

Analyzing key education initiatives in Rwanda, with an eye on the impact that an emergency such as the genocide of 1994 had on the system, is of increasing importance in today's world. There is no question that education systems are increasingly a target in civil wars and violence around the planet (Obura, 2003). School systems seem to be an irritant to warlords, rebels and oppressive regimes. Those bent on using the cruelest of measures to achieve their aims often target children and education as they are viewed as threats to the oppressors. This has been the case in African nations such as Rwanda, Uganda, Congo, Angola, Sudan and Somalia. Along with burning and looting schools, tactics included killing children, stealing materials and equipment and abducting children from classrooms (Obura, 2003). In Rwanda's case, teachers were also specifically targeted for slaughter (MINEPRISEC/MINESUPRES, 1994). Lessons that can be learned from studying education

reform in a violence battered timeline in Rwanda's history, will likely be informative for those seeking to rebuild in other corners of the globe in years to come.

Methodology

As an historical narrative, this dissertation is not the documentation of an experiment, or a study in the field of education. Its purpose is not to utilize scientific models to produce new learning in the field. Rather, it is a critical review of history that will produce analysis leading to the new contribution. Rather than a separate chapter on methodology, a brief narrative of how the research was conducted will be placed in this introductory chapter of the piece to provide that context to the narrative literature review that follows as Chapter 2.

Significant attention and study was given to the genocide. Clearly, understanding that event is central to the thinking presented in this study. Significant efforts were made while on the ground in Rwanda to learn about the genocide. Visiting multiple genocide memorial sites was emotionally challenging, but necessary to understanding the violence and the factors that led to it. Those visits to memorials often included conversations with memorial staff or volunteers that have become increasingly focused around the question of this dissertation.

Interviews and informal conversations with genocide survivors have also informed this study. Learning from those who lived through the violence cannot be underestimated. Asking teachers who survived the spring of 1994 about their experiences is cherished, not to be taken lightly, and supremely valuable towards helping to build a knowledge context for this study. Learning the stories of those who were children and students when the

violence began is similarly crucial in shaping a context for this study and the data related to those years.

Reading was intentionally sequenced to begin with a broad study of education issues and reforms in African countries. At this point in the research, it was not critical to focus singularly on Rwanda. In fact, the broader African perspective has proven to be quite valuable in evaluating the unusual pace of education reform as the research and study narrowed to Rwandan reforms around the question as posed earlier. An understanding of the changes in education systems in other African nations has provided a comparison base.

Some of the most important research in this broader African survey of educational reforms and issues are contributions written by African authors. Those proved especially valuable as the study narrowed by providing sensitivity to the indigenous voice. The power of the indigenous voice in academic research into foreign cultures adds a depth and filter that is valuable when reading what outsiders have written. The indigenous voice was especially powerful in discussing the colonial and post-colonial impact of the western world on African education systems.

After multiple visits to Rwanda that included numerous visits to schools and conversations with educators and students, and after the broader contextual study of African educational issues and reforms; the scope of the research was narrowed to three initiatives, 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language, and 3) enrollment developments. These three reform initiatives are studied along a three-phase timeline, 1) independence to genocide, 2) genocide through reconstruction, and 3) reconstruction to the current day. That construct serves as the framework for the narrative literature review, and body of the dissertation that follows. This research has included a variety of written sources.

Academic journal articles, books and articles in relevant trade periodicals, government reports and documents, foreign aid agencies and funding donor reports and post-graduate theses and dissertations were accessed in an attempt to maximize the scope of the voice to be included in this research.

Limitations

The first limitation of discussion here is purposefully sequenced. Following the genocide that began in April of 1994, few teachers were left. Schools were especially targeted. Those who were educated and educators were singled out, at disproportionate levels, in order to eliminate thinking people with influence (Obura, 2003). Rwanda did not have the ability to lean on an educated class of people to lead the reconstruction of its country and education system. It needed its education system to produce an educated class to replace those who fled or were killed during genocide (Bridgeland, Wulsin, & McNaught, 2009).

The level of knowledge and experiences held by those who were killed is significant. The loss of those educators limits the number of Rwandans who can speak to education prior to the genocide and compare pre-genocide and post-genocide systems in its education sector.

Closely linked to the limitation of the loss of educators, is the loss of documentation, materials and facilities during the genocide. The sheer damage and loss of these physical archives of a pre-genocide education system limit the amount that could otherwise be gained in an historical study of education systems. Attempting to accurately piece together evidence of systems by utilizing the documented history that supports those systems is made quite difficult as much was lost in the violence.

This study is also limited by the expectations contained within the relationships between the Rwandan government and outside funding institutions. To varying degrees, aligning government goals and initiatives on paper to the goals and initiatives of outside agencies distorts the true reform priorities of the Rwandan government at the implementation level (Moulton, et al., 2002).

In unvarnished terms, developing nations are boxed into producing reports that convey alignment to priorities of outside funding agencies in order to receive funding necessary for reform. Upon receiving funding, often a different set of priorities become evident as policies are implemented by local governments. This is a limitation when using both local government primary documents and reports from outside funding agencies. Though stated goals may match, implementation priority conflicts between national governments, local communities, and outside institutions may lead to little being accomplished (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005).

Another limitation mentioned here is that of inequity of resources and systems between rural and non-rural schools. My own experiences and interviews with teachers have led me to note that a majority of teachers in rural Rwandan schools have no post-secondary training in any academic pursuit, much less education. Often, non-rural students who do not score well enough for preferred academic career preparation pursuits are given access to only a teacher training college for further study. Many rural teachers began teaching immediately after completing secondary school. The inequity of rural and non-rural schools makes it difficult too when accessing and utilizing data to be confident that conclusions drawn are accurate (Lynd, 2010). What may be true in schools in the capitol

city of Kigali may be far from the truth in a rural town such as Kidaho, located amid the volcanoes of the northwestern region of the country.

A final limitation mentioned here is the lack of a significant body of academic research and study on Rwandan education reforms. There are a small number of academic pieces written that evaluate reform efforts. The field is wide open for this type of study to be conducted. The number of reform efforts, and the access to modern data and resources for such research are favorable to future studies of this nature. However, the lack of those evaluative studies, both quantitative and qualitative, must be noted as a limitation at the current time.

Delimitations

It goes without saying that being mindful of the perspective and voice of the author(s) of each source cited is critical in any bit of research. Here, when researching a topic situated in the developing world, it is crucial. Failing to understand and evaluate sources based on their own goals and perspectives is not only disrespectful to the indigenous developing world culture; it is faulty research.

Caution should be advised when using reports from the western world funding agencies. Those entities typically have a set of goals and priorities that have been established in isolation from the indigenous national government and local communities. Though the work is often helpful, the perspective brought to the goal setting, implementation and reporting is viewed through outside eyes, and aimed at its own development targets (Moulton, et al., 2002).

Similarly, caution is advised when pulling data from primary documents from indigenous government reports. Authoring agencies are often beholden to the priorities of

western outside funders. A tension exists that pulls indigenous reporters to report in a manner that will promote further funding from the external source, often a western aid-providing agency.

The solution, or delimitation, to the concern that is mentioned above is the employment of both sound research practices of triangulation and conscious usage of source information in the research. Handling conflicting data from multiple sources requires the wisdom to discern the perspective of the author(s) or report providing entity.

The final delimitation focuses on sound research when interviewing. Resisting the tendency to over-generalize statements and experiences discussed by one interviewee is also important. Similarly, placing too much emphasis on a single observed experience can also be poor research. When interviewing or observing in classrooms, I sought to triangulate and balance each individual experience or interview with the body of research.

Chapter 2: Narrative Literature Review

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to imbed an evaluation of the literature into a narrative framework. The framework is a chronological movement through three timeline phases. The chronology begins with independence in 1962, moving through the 1994 genocide period and the reconstruction that followed, and concluding with developments in the last fifteen years up to the current time. Three initiatives, 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language and 3) enrollment developments, will be examined within and across the timeline phases. The placement of the genocide in this chronology will allow for a special focus on those initiatives and systems that supported them in both pre-genocide and post-genocide years.

The evaluation of the literature will be imbedded in this Chapter 2 review. Though not a traditional literature review format, the style here will be appropriate to an historical piece, as the evaluation will be firmly rooted in the framework of the study. A more detailed discussion of the role of both the timeline and the initiatives of the framework of the study follows.

Changing Role of Education – Timeline of Three Periods

Rachel Hayman provides a useful chronological timeline in her 2005 study for the Centre of African Studies at the University of Edinburgh. That report focuses on the link between post-basic education and poverty reduction. Hayman's timeline is used as a foundational chronology in this piece.

Education has not always been a tool used in the pursuit of poverty reduction and sustainable development. The current relationship between the classroom and economic development is a recent one. It is helpful to look at the progression of education in Rwanda

along a timeline, broken down into three phases or periods (Hayman, 2005b). The first of these, from independence to genocide encompasses the years 1962-1994. The second phase begins with the genocide in the spring of 1994 and extends through a period of genocide reconstruction marked by some as ending in 1998. The third phase begins in 1998 and continues to the present. These three phases are not universally agreed upon as the only timeline lens through which to examine education in Rwanda. Others choose other milestones in Rwandan history or educational development as timeline markers. The phases that Hayman presents are useful, as well as accessible as they are inclusive of the most significant milestones in Rwandan history beginning with independence.

Though caution should be used in the simplistic embracing of the genocide of 1994 as a marker, significant change in government players and policies are directly linked to that event. It is legitimate to distinguish between pre-1994 and post-1994 for the purposes of studying education reform as well as other societal shifts in Rwanda (Hayman, 2005b).

It is the intent of the author to examine more closely each of these periods in order to provide further background on Rwanda, and a portion of a framework within which to analyze three reform initiatives in Rwandan education. These three specific reform initiatives: 1) student enrollment developments, 2) language of instruction, and 3) student-centered pedagogy will be defined and detailed following an introductory look at the three timeline periods in this introductory first chapter. This study of three initiatives over the course of the three timeline periods will provide for an historical study that analyzes past movements and shifts in the education sector, as well as a discussion of current challenges and goals for Rwanda.

1962-1994: Independence – Genocide

Once reserved for a minority elite of Rwandans as a means of managing the masses, education was westernized in the Belgian tradition and selectively offered to Rwandans prior to independence in 1962 (Hayman, 2005b). Evidence of the elitism that defined education in pre-independence Rwanda is found in a 2003 study that focuses on the role of education in poverty alleviation and globalization in Tanzania and Rwanda. That study documents a total population of just under 3 million at independence. Tikly and co-authors of this report commissioned by the British Department for International Development further noted that Rwanda had only 386,000 primary pupils and 11,000 secondary pupils in 64 secondary public schools (Tikly et al., 2003).

A report authored by Bridgeland, Wulsin and McNaught documents an ethnic divide that dominated the elitist dynamic of education in pre-independence years. This brief report points to education as the avenue towards a prosperity marked development for Rwanda. Prior to 1959, the minority Tutsis were the recipients of a disproportionate majority of the seats in Rwandan classrooms as a result of their relationship with the Belgian colonial masters. The most respected school in the country during colonial times was Astrida College. Even though Tutsis made up only approximately 10% of the population, enrollment quotas contributed to Astrida enrollments that heavily favored Tutsis by awarding more than three times as many seats to the minority Tutsi students (Bridgeland, et al., 2009).

Following a 1959 uprising of the majority Hutus that eventually led to independence as a Hutu-led republic following independence in 1962, the situation was reversed. Anna Obura's seminal report on post-genocide reconstruction of the education sector is cited

here to support this reversal of the ethnic imbalance of student enrollment that was ushered in with independence in 1962. The majority Hutus then became the beneficiaries of a Hutu-friendly quota system that ensured classroom seats for the Hutu masses and the severe limiting of Tutsi educational opportunities (Obura, 2003).

Jill Salmon, in her paper, "Education and Its Contribution to Structural Violence in Rwanda", written for Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, (2004), notes that education has been used as a tool to perpetuate injustice in Rwanda. Salmon's paper makes a powerful contribution to the literature in strongly connecting the use of education as a means of maintaining power along ethnic lines in Rwandan history. Whether favoring Tutsis, as during colonial years, or Hutus following independence, education served the political status quo by enforcing the injustice of prejudice and division (Salmon, 2004).

Hayman (2005) notes that independence did not bring about a sweeping democratization of education in Rwanda. Obura (2003) refers to the post-independence years as the beginning of national education in Rwanda. However, the systems and practices remained rooted in the colonial tradition long after the Belgians officially granted independence to the nation of Rwanda. At independence, 1962, Rwandan curriculum was heavily academic in a westernized tradition.

Abdi and Cleghorn (2005) make a strong case, with evidence from multiple African nations, that education systems continue to reflect the culture and practices of past colonial masters long after independence is achieved. Their book on issues in African education is written from a comprehensive sociological perspective. Their work makes a critical contribution to the broader literature of African education issues and movements. Due to

the ongoing impact of colonialism, that remained a powerful cultural force following independence, education systems continued to reflect westernized practice and philosophies while remaining reserved for a small elite minority (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005). This impact continued to impact the curriculum as western philosophy, religion and language were dominant courses of study (Tikly, et al., 2003).

In 1975, the World Bank published a report that called for democratization of the Rwandan school system (IBRD, 1975). This report was an early call for changes in this elitist manipulation of education as a means of power protection. Increasing efforts to make education accessible in rural areas, as well as focusing on agriculture and other vocational focuses of study were recommended. These recommendations were foundational to the first reform of education in Rwanda, which took place in 1977 (Obura, 2003). Indigenous culture was also emphasized in pursuit of relevance for this broader population of students in classrooms (Hayman, 2005b). Reform efforts such as this, characterized by a ruralization and democratization of schools with a vocational focus, were consistent with reforms in other African countries during the 1970s.

Three initiatives: 1962 - 1994

With regard to the three initiatives of student-centered instruction, language and enrollment, the 1977 reform and reforms of the early 1990s had significant impacts on two of the three, enrollment systems and language of instruction. As Rwanda emerged from formal colonial rule and began making more of its own decisions around its school system, thinking about teaching methods, language of instruction and enrollment systems were now representing those of an independent nation struggling to come to terms with that independence amidst the struggle for development across all sectors.

Student-centered instruction. Pedagogy, or teaching methods and practices, was not significantly addressed and remained quite didactic and traditional (Bines & Woods, 2007). The comparison case study of four East African nations authored by Bines and Woods notes that teaching methods had not been significantly addressed in any reform efforts of the four countries in the region included in their study. Those included were Rwanda, Tanzania, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

This resulted in the maintenance of a status quo left behind as a western colonial legacy that became frozen into practice in Rwanda. Teacher-dominated classrooms characterized by students taking notes and passively participating in the learning process, modeled after traditional European pedagogy, was the norm. How to teach was not a topic of reform in the African systems changes of the post-independence period leading up to 1994. What to teach, with a shift towards vocational subjects more relevant to Rwandan culture and development needs, became a topic of those reforms. However, teaching practices were not addressed in the reforms of the period. Therefore, this reform initiative is relatively recent work, and lacks decades of developments and changes.

Language. French had been the language of schools and government during the years of Belgian rule. Prior to Belgian colonization, during the period of German rule at the end of the 19th century through World War I, a collection of German, Swahili, and Kinyarwanda was used for instruction in schools by French missionaries. Swahili was the most dominant of those during that period (Rosendal, 2010). Rosendal's doctoral dissertation on African languages focuses primarily on Rwanda and Uganda. As such, it provides a key comparison that identifies the unique nature of language policy in Rwanda and the connections to education. That dissertation documents the fact that, during this

phase immediately following independence, the small elite who filled student seats in classrooms was allowed access to formal schooling through the language chosen by the colonizer.

A report produced prior to a “promotional mission” between Gambia and Rwanda in 1999 highlighted the language landscape as being unique. Prior to a visit of Gambian government personnel, a briefing report on Rwanda was produced by Nyirindekwe. This report serves as a novel bit of evidence that Rwanda’s language landscape is indeed unusual.

The Constitution for the newly independent Rwanda, written in 1962, stated that Kinyarwanda was the national language, though it would be joined by French, as both were stated as “official” languages of the nation at that time (Nyirindekwe, 1999). The unique nature of the language policies and practices in Rwanda would become even more interesting as English would be added later in our timeline as an official language. However, French remained the primary language of instruction in schools up until the reforms of the 1970s that were focused on expanding access to education.

This increased focus on a practical education that would be distributed to the masses included an increase in the use of the national local language, Kinyarwanda, as the language of instruction (Hayman, 2005b). This was a move away from French as the language of instruction. Following World War I, the League of Nations mandated that Belgium be the European colonial master of Rwanda. French language and culture dominated during the colonial period, and following independence. French was the language spoken in government and classrooms, where it was taught to the small minority of children who were enrolled as students.

An article written by Lewis Samuelson and Warshauer Freedman is a foundational contribution to the body of literature regarding language policy in Rwanda. This article's primary focus is on the years of the reconstruction period moving forward to the current time. However, the historical context it includes is one of the strongest pieces covering language practices and policies during the pre-genocide years.

The reforms of 1977 made school a possibility for children who up until that time would not have had access to a classroom. This democratization and ruralization coincided with a shift back towards the national language, spoken by nearly all Rwandans (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Kinyarwanda was increasingly heard in classrooms filled with this new wider demographic of students, (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). The pendulum that is language of instruction swung slightly towards indigenous culture and relevance.

However, Rwandan schools would continue to reflect the fact that up until 1994 Rwanda was considered a Francophone nation, and was a member of *La Francophonie*, the global group of nations that are French speaking (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). French remained the dominant language of government and power up until the genocide.

Enrollment developments. The reform of 1977 also began a significant increase in student enrollment that led to a pre-genocide enrollment figures considered to be solid compared to other African nations. The decade of the 1980s ended with Rwanda recording a gross enrollment rate (GER) of 65% in 1990 (Obura, 2003). That figure represents a significant increase in the percentage of children enrolled in school when compared to the 46% GER in 1973 (Obura, 2003), prior to the first major reform of the pre-genocide

period. Ultimately, the increases in enrollment indicate a substantial broadening of access to education.

Obura (2003) also notes that Rwanda was successful in achieving gender parity in primary enrollment as evidenced by a difference of less than one percent between male and female primary school enrollment figures. This gender parity has continued to be a bright spot in the system in Rwanda as other African nations struggle to approach levels of parity regarding girls and boys in schools (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005).

The Rwandan Ministry of Education reports that 1.7 million children enrolled as primary students in Rwandan schools in early 1994 (MOE, 1998). This number represents higher enrollment levels than other East African countries leading up to the genocide beginning in April of 1994. Prior to the violence in that spring of 1994, Rwanda was tackling the issue of school coverage, and finding success in enrolling an increasing percentage of children in schools. Without being skeptical of these figures provided by the Ministry (MINEDUC), it is important to note that significant numbers of records and documents were destroyed in the genocide. The 1998 MINEDUC report likely was difficult to compile and produce, as it was published during the reconstruction years.

Of special interest in the discussion of the initiative of enrollment in this dissertation will be the structural changes that the education system has undergone since independence. Each of the changes in the structures of systems led to an impact on student enrollment. Rwanda has experimented with different structures marked by different numbers of years for primary and secondary schools. Numbers enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary levels have been impacted by shifts in structure and government mandates related to those structures. In the period of time between 1962 and 1994, Rwanda shifted these structures

multiple times. The impact of these shifts in system structures as related to enrollment figures will have become increasingly relevant as the Rwandan government has continued to pass mandates requiring more schooling of all children in recent years. Again, enrollment developments can be strongly linked to efforts to broaden access in the reforms that impacted the number of children attending school.

Obura's historical account provides a valuable contribution to the history of these enrollment impacting structural changes to educational systems in Rwanda. A brief experiment with a primary structure of 4 years lower and 2 years upper in the mid-1960s did not take root (Obura, 2003). A structure of 6 years primary school, 3 years lower primary and 3 years upper primary, followed by 3 years of lower secondary and 3 years of upper secondary existed from independence until 1977. The 1977 reform ushered in a structure of 8 years of primary, marked by 3 + 3 + 2 that moved grades 7 and 8 into the primary level as a means of including more grades in the then government required primary level. This structure was phased out in the early 1990s, during the most significant reform efforts since the 1977 changes, as the system returned to 6 + 6 structure for primary and secondary levels (Obura, 2003).

Susan Hoben's study focused on educational reform in Rwanda provides a powerful contribution as it was written in 1989, prior to the genocide. The timing of Hoben's research, pre-genocide, makes it a unique contribution in that the focus is around the reforms that followed independence that continued into the 1970s and 1980s. Her study will provide specific contributions of what she refers to as the reform of 1979, which includes further details of the structural systems changes that impacted enrollment previously mentioned in Obura's report (Hoben, 1989).

Along with changes to the structure of the system during the post-independence period, infrastructures were challenged in the years leading up to 1994. Many teachers were not qualified. Many school buildings were in disrepair or lacked the space to accommodate growing enrollments. Equipment and materials, such as textbooks and other curriculum, were lacking or insufficient (Obura, 2003). The educational system was working through reform efforts, as the reform begun in the 1970s was being reworked in the early 1990s (Obura, 2003), and challenges of infrastructure when the early 1990s violence between Hutus and Tutsis exploded into genocide in April of 1994.

Though challenged in the years leading up to 1994, Rwanda was widely believed to be quite successful in circles of international education development. Contributions in the education sector came from foreign governments, such as France in the area of teacher training, and Belgium in the area of curriculum. Germany and Canada made significant contributions in vocational training. The World Bank, the African Development Bank, and a variety of UN agencies provided a net of support and funding for an eclectic set of education initiatives that was often not coordinated or focused by the Rwandan government (IBRD, 1975).

Others more critical of those efforts point to the body of work that evidences the number and wide range of reform efforts attempted during these years. The lack of cohesion between forces promoting change often led to a lack of clear focus of implementation efforts in developing African nations. (Moulton, et al., 2002).

Latham, Ndaruhutse and Smith's 2006 report on Rwanda's educational reform efforts is written in the context of a series of studies on Sub-Saharan nations. This comprehensive and relatively current history of the reform efforts in the education sector

is provided by an outside western development effort located in the UK, the CfBT Trust. The report refers to the “carving” of the Rwandan education sector by outside aid agencies each driving its own project or set of education reforms, often to the detriment of national and local aims (Latham, Ndaruhutse, & Smith, 2006).

East African neighbor, Tanzania, provides evidence that Rwanda’s own shotgun approach to reform was not unique in the developing region. Mushi’s study of the history of education in Tanzania provides many similar stories of well intended efforts that lacked a cohesive focus (Mushi, 2009).

A comprehensive analysis seems to indicate that reforms during the pre-genocide years that followed independence were scattered and limited in their successes. However, it is also equally clear that there were indeed successes and reforms that were significant during these years. Rwanda, not unlike its developing neighbors in the region, was moving forward in education sector reforms as the genocide approached.

1994 – 1998: Genocide and Reconstruction

It is critical to provide a background history of the genocide of 1994 before proceeding into the reconstruction years. To do so, a brief history of Rwanda and its people that stretches back prior to independence will be presented. This study is not intended to provide a complete context to the events and factors that led to the genocide. Rather, the intent here is to provide the reader with sufficient knowledge of the dynamics that marked the road to genocide in order for the reader to better understand the significance of the educational system changes during the years that followed the genocide.

Understanding the progression of the three initiatives of: 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language, and 3) enrollment developments all require an understanding of

the genocide from which Rwanda was reconstructing and the future development goals its leaders pursued. The genocide that covered the three months from April up to July of 1994 resulted in a total government collapse, including the education system (Latham, et al., 2006). Understanding what led to genocide, how the genocide unfolded, and the larger societal challenges left to tackle in the aftermath of genocide, provide a rich and critical context for understanding the choices made by Rwandans in the years that followed as they rebuilt their education system. To that end, the story of the genocide is shared here in this introductory section.

Genocide

There is no shortage of literature providing descriptions and accounts of the Rwandan genocide. Sources used in this dissertation were largely selected for their contribution to the role and impact on dynamics between the genocide and education. Detailing the genocide is not the intent of this study. Though an accurate accounting of the events is necessary and provided here and laced throughout the piece.

Nigel Cantwell provides a unique contribution to the literature of the impacts of genocide. In his report published by UNICEF, Cantwell focuses on the plight and rights of children in the first two years of the reconstruction that followed the genocide in 1994. Written in 1997, Cantwell's report provides a mid-reconstruction look at the impacts of the genocide, including significant analysis of the impacts on education. Cantwell's report and Prunier's (1995) report, which is an accurate general history of the genocide, are used in tandem here to provide a brief accounting of events and forces widely believed to contribute to a climate conducive to genocide.

Rwanda transferred from German colonial rule to Belgian colonial rule following the redrawing of maps and transferring of colonies between the western world following World War I, as proclaimed in the 1926 mandate by the League of Nations (Cantwell, 1997). The Belgians, using Eugenics as the “science” of the day, created a mythology that justified the superiority of the minority Tutsi tribe (Prunier, 1995). Using a combination of biological and economic distinguishers, the Tutsis were anointed as a ruling class superior to the majority Hutus and tiny minority Twas in the 1920s by the Belgians. The herding Tutsis, at one point any who held more than ten head of cattle were considered Tutsi, were known to often be taller of stature and set apart by distinct facial features.

The Belgians issued identification cards to Rwandans in 1933, assigning people to tribe membership (Cantwell, 1997). Hutus and Tutsis had lived in relative peace prior to this effort to distinguish between the tribes in order to establish a ruling class from which to select native rulers as part of a colonial management system (Prunier, 1995). Tutsis were established as the superior tribe, and granted authority in the form of government positions and institutional power. Rachel Hayman, a widely quoted authority on Rwandan education reform notes quotas were established that led to a majority of seats in schools being reserved for the minority Tutsi elite in the years leading to the Hutu rebellion of 1959 (Hayman, 2005b).

The Survivors Fund published multiple reports on the history leading to genocide. In their ongoing work with genocide survivors, they have provided a sharp focus on the elements that combined and contributed to the ethnic tension. Once the status of the Tutsi was elevated to serve the purposes of the Belgians, conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis spilled into violence at multiple points in the following decades. Tribal violence led to

thousands dying and fleeing as refugees multiple times in the decades that followed independence, often with the minority Tutsi on the losing end of the bloodshed (Survivors Fund, 2008).

Hoben's 1989 study is haunting in its accounting of the ethnic tension and the role education systems played in perpetuating those tensions. From the vantage point of the late 1980s, Hoben documents growing animosity between Hutus and Tutsis. Though not a prophetic piece, stopping short of predicting the horror of 1994, Hoben's study could have served as an alarm call (Hoben, 1989).

In 1990, current Rwandan President, Paul Kagame led a rebel group of exiled Tutsis from neighboring Uganda back into Rwanda in an attempt gain access to their home country and to challenge the Hutu majority government. The time period between independence in 1962 and April of 1994 was marked by what some call the Civil War, in which peace talks were interspersed with violent incidents between Hutus and Tutsis. Following the signing of an agreement between the majority Hutu government and the Kagame led rebel Tutsis, named the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1988 (Cantwell, 1997), President Habyarimana's plane was shot down as he returned to Rwanda from neighboring Tanzania. The President had been viewed as increasingly moderate by extremist Hutu leaders for participating in meetings seeking to bring peace between Hutus and Tutsis to Rwanda. His plane was shot down over the Kigali airport in his home country (Cantwell, 1997). Both sides blame the other for the assassination of the Hutu President. Blaming the Tutsis for the assassination, the Hutu majority ignited what had been a carefully planned and rehearsed course of genocide in the spring of 1994. Total extermination of the Tutsi was the aim of the Hutu genocidaires, known as the

interahamwe. The killing of Tutsis and moderate Hutus began immediately after the assassination. The RPF advanced from Uganda across Rwandan borders two days later in a last ditch attempt to stop the violence that had resulted in exile and fear for masses of Tutsis since independence and the ushering in of majority Hutu rule (Cantwell, 1997).

What developed of the next 100 days has been well documented and analyzed by many. In the end, more than 800,000 Rwandans were killed in the genocide of 1994. Another 2 million, nearly one-third of the population, fled to neighboring countries, while another 1 million were displaced but remained inside Rwanda's borders (Obura, 2003). Disease, starvation and wound infections continued to claim lives months after the killing had stopped (Obura, 2005).

The international response to the genocide has been much maligned in analysis in the years that followed. Failing to prevent the Hutu killing mobs, the nations of the world turned away rather than confront the brutality with a response that would have been appropriate to save lives. In a feeble and misguided international act, the United Security Council had approved of the French designed and led Operation Turquoise. Safe zones were set up in which aid was provided to the displaced (Cantwell, 1997). The timing was such that those who took most advantage of the international aid provided in the safe zone were the perpetrators of the genocide. These were Hutu extremists who were forced to run from the RPF, which had taken much of the country including the capitol of Kigali by July 4. The successes of the RPF prompted a reversal of the exile from the previous 30 years in which Tutsis, many long term exiles, returned to Rwanda (Cantwell, 1997). The failure of the international community, and the perceived support of the killers in the form of

Operation Turquoise, led to significant mistrust of the international community by the new post-genocide government in Rwanda (Cantwell, 1997).

Impacts of genocide

The destruction also had impacts beyond the refugee counts and the death toll. Rape was used as a weapon during the genocide. A valuable contribution to the literature on the impacts of the genocide on education due to the fact that it was written by Rwandan officials in the weeks that followed the 1994 genocide, a report from the Rwandan Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education noted the issue, but admitted that rape victim numbers were unknowable (MINEPRISEC/MINESUPRES, 1994). Some have noted that virtually every female 13 years of age or older was a victim of rape by the perpetrators of the genocide (Cantwell, 1997). The number of girls and young women who were victims of rape who would give birth in the months after the genocide had significant impacts on the lives of all involved and on the education system. There is no way of now knowing how many of the girls returned to school after giving birth. Ninety percent of rape victims were reported as not wanting to carry pregnancy to delivery. Abortion and post-birth abandonment were evidence of both trauma and social stigma attached to rape and children born under such circumstances (Cantwell, 1997).

Some estimates indicate that 60% of women became the household head following the genocide. Child-headed households were numerous in the many cases in which both parents were killed (Obura, 2003). The ripples that marked the impact from the slaughter spread into all arenas of society, including government and economics.

The impact on the education system was immense, and can best be described as complete devastation of systems and facilities. Schooling came to a sharp halt with the

ignition of the killing in April of 1994. Teachers and students were among those killed, and conducting the killing. The loss of teaching and learning capital was significant. Though those who survived would never be the same as they returned to post-genocide classrooms, many did not survive.

However, the schooling system cannot be viewed as only a victim in the story of the Rwandan genocide. Schools were responsible for deepening the divide between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, and perpetuated a societal antagonism between the groups. Enrollment quotas based on tribe, curriculum that emphasized ethnic stereotypes and teacher dominated pedagogy all contributed to a school culture that fostered division (Hayman, 2005b).

School facilities were damaged, destroyed and looted until they were empty shells of what the once were. Prior to the genocide, 1836 schools had been in operation. Of those, nearly two-thirds were damaged. Fewer than 650 were operational in October of 1994, several months after the killing had ended (MINEPRISEC/MINESUPRES, 1994).

The ministry of education was crushed, both in terms of facilities and structures being destroyed, and in regards to the loss of life for many who had served as leaders in the education sector. The primary building housing the Ministry was badly shelled and gutted by looters. Documents were scattered and lost (MINEPRISEC/MINESUPRES, 1994). Many were massacred. Nearly a decade later, it was still impossible to know accurately how many had been injured, killed or fled as fugitives (Obura, 2003). In July of 1994, a new Minister of Education took charge of beginning the extraordinary task of rebuilding education. At his disposal were virtually no resources. Equipment was a total loss, and trained manpower were either dead or displaced (Cantwell, 1997). In the August following

the killing, only 10 staff from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MINEPRISEC) remained to attend a meeting to begin planning the reconstruction of the education system in the aftermath (Cantwell, 1997).

The ranks of teachers impacted the events of the genocide, and were significantly reduced as a result of the killing. Teachers were purposefully targeted. As symbols of elitism, the largely Hutu mobs sought out the educators with purpose (Obura, 2003).

Others, who taught, used their positions to rally their students to participate in the killing. Students simply followed the instructions of their teachers into the madness as killers (Obura, 2003). Along with quotas that had prevented equity in secondary and tertiary enrollment along tribal lines for decades following independence, teachers contributed to thinking that promoted division. Even primary schools were known to foster the division that laid the groundwork for genocide (Bridgeland, et al., 2009). As the genocide began, one educator remembered a teacher who posed the following question to the class as a mathematical story problem, "If you have 100 Tutsis and you kill one, how many are left?" (Abrams, 2008). Abrams' article was written for a newspaper, but is clear documentation of a widely told tale that is cited by others.

Children who lost their parents or became separated from them were classified as unaccompanied children. Providing accurate numbers of such parentless children proved to be very difficult. Parents were often killed, or families were separated as they fled in 1994 across borders into neighboring countries as refugees. The risk of separation was also considerable during a 1996 forced return to Rwanda that included those who had fled.

Evidence supporting the difficult task of accounting for these unaccompanied children is provided in conflicting reports. A joint report written by UNICEF and the

Rwandan government in 1996 stated that 100,000 children were unaccompanied (UNICEF, 1996). Save the Children Fund (SCF) reported, in 1998, that there were between 400,000 and 500,000 such children living without their parents (SCF, 1998).

It is not difficult to understand how difficult the task of identifying and counting lost and transient children was in the chaos of the reconstruction months. Regardless of the discrepancy in the actual reported numbers by various entities, unaccompanied children and orphans presented a challenge to the education system and Rwandan society beyond the short term issues of survival (Obura, 2005).

Another group of children, with significant overlap to those defined as unaccompanied or as orphans, became the heads of their own households. Some children lived on their own, as their parent(s) were imprisoned after the genocide. A 2002 estimate indicated that 45,000 households were headed by children in Rwanda. Ninety percent of those were headed by girls (UNHCR, 2002). Some children spent three days each week visiting parents in prison and providing meals and medical attention (SCF, 1999).

The trauma witnessed by children was horrifying in its scope and in its lasting impact. UNICEF provided a seminal report in 1996 that documents the struggle of children following the genocide. Graphic in its storytelling, and horrific in the stark usage of shocking statistics, this report is a key piece of the reconstruction literature that is widely cited by others.

UNICEF survey results from the 1996 report indicate that nearly eighty percent of children experience the death of a family member during the genocide. Seventy percent of children witnessed someone being killed or injured, with their own eyes. Eighty-eight percent reported seeing dead bodies or body parts. One-third reported witnessing

children committing violence. Sixteen percent reported hiding under dead bodies to avoid killers during those dark days (UNICEF, 1996). Children lost any trust in adults. They considered them murderers, and sources of violence and fear (SCF, 1999). The Save the Children Fund 1999 report is clear in its presentation of this dynamic of mistrust that points to the role educators played in the violence. Returning to classrooms in which adults were in positions of authority would be challenging to those who witnessed trauma such as this.

Reconstruction

Though some parts of Rwanda were devastated more completely than others, the nation's infrastructure and services were almost totally shut down in July when the genocide ended. Kigali, that nation's capitol had been the hub of infrastructure systems. It was also home to the most severe violence and death. Kigali was nearly deserted when the RPF took possession of it on July 4. As a result, that nation as a whole was without any recognizable infrastructure in those July days. Telephone and radio communications were a total loss. Along with schools, most health centers and hospitals were not operating due to significant facility damage and loss of trained personnel. Water lines were not operational. Livestock and crops were largely destroyed. Those making decisions were truly starting with nothing (Cantwell, 1997).

July 19 marked the installment of the new Government of National Unity. This new government was staffed by a mixture of those who had been in hiding inside the country who were government officials, and Tutsis returning from international exile. Efforts were made to include both Hutu and Tutsi in the new government that was now faced with a seemingly impossible task of reconstruction from a human tragedy without measure

(Cantwell, 1997). A stark reminder of their task was the fact that the overall population was down from a pre-genocide level of eight million to what was estimated at around five million in July of 1994 (Cantwell, 1997).

Graca Machel, humanitarian and third wife of Nelson Mandela, noted in a groundbreaking UN report that education is vital in rehabilitation or emergency situations, but is rarely a priority for governments and outside agencies focusing on relief and early reconstruction (Machel, 1996). The government of Rwanda, and outside relief agencies, would prove that Rwanda would be an exception in the efforts that followed the genocide. There was a shared awareness among those contributing relief efforts that education could provide a needed sense of normalcy and routine to children that no other entity or system could offer (Cantwell, 1997). UNICEF placed its Education Project Officer in Kigali the day after the new government had been instituted. Rwanda's own Ministry of Education reopened primary schools in September, only two calendar months after the genocide had ended, but while the emergency situation was still being assessed. This effort was followed by the opening of secondary schools on October 20, beginning with grade 12 students in an attempt to lose as little ground as possible in preparing those students for the final examinations (Cantwell, 1997). Obura (2003) attributes a growing concern for education in emergency situations, by the international community, as a legacy that is one of few positives to come from the Rwandan crisis.

Three Initiatives: 1994 - 1998

Rebuilding from the destruction that resulted across the country during the days of killing was made more difficult by the fact that Rwanda does not have significant natural resources that provide revenue that could be targeted towards reconstruction efforts.

Without natural resources that could provide for economic growth, Rwanda turned towards its people in its efforts to rebuild. The government recognized that though people were responsible for the genocide and destruction, it had only its human capital to turn to as a resource for rebuilding (Ministry of Education Science Technology and Scientific Research, 2003). That realization inspired the rapid focus on the educational system after July of 1994. Without an educated class of people to jumpstart the renewal, educating all Rwandans became the clear target (Bridgeland, et al., 2009).

The initiatives identified for study in this writing changed as a result of the genocide. Indeed, the lens of reconstruction dominated the thinking of education decision-makers from the middle of 1994 into 1998. It would be impossible to view schools, and make decisions going forward, without being informed and motivated by reconstruction during this period. The initiatives of pedagogy, language and enrollment were now couched in the context of this rebuilding work of this emergency period.

Student-centered instruction. Though numerous changes in education would be born during this time, pedagogy continued to be dominated by the status quo. Obura (2003) mentions that many organizations that provided aid to schools in Rwanda during these years, included some form of teacher training in their efforts. However, documenting what was included in that training, and any results that could be connected to the trainings, has proven elusive. A 1996 UNICEF sponsored report by Chorlton noted that there seemed to be no assessments of any teacher training programs that provided pedagogical focus during this emergency period.

Obura suggests (2003), the possibility that some of the trauma alleviation training that teachers received may have led to teachers listening to students in classrooms more

than had been traditionally witnessed. It is possible that the student-centered focus of trauma alleviation activities may have influenced the teaching techniques of those who received the trainings. However, Obura (2003) is quite clear that this is impossible to know. It appears as if this emergency reconstruction period would not provide any more focus on pedagogy than did the years prior to the genocide. The question of, how to teach, was not significantly addressed during this post-genocide emergency period.

Language. Language policy in Rwanda has been an emotionally charged issue in the years that followed the genocide. Schools have been forced to flex frequently and adapt to new language of instruction mandates since 1994. In the years immediately leading up to the genocide, Kinyarwanda had been the language of primary grade instruction, and French had dominated much of the higher grades. That would change as a result of the genocide. In 1996, less than two years after the genocide ended in victory for the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), English was declared as a third official language for the nation (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Joining French and the indigenous Kinyarwanda as official languages, English would begin to battle for airtime in classrooms across the country.

There are multiple factors that led to changes in language of instruction during the reconstruction period of 1994 – 1998. The language reforms during this period can be characterized as a movement towards a trilingual education system (Rosendal, 2010). Perhaps the most pressing of these factors was the return of refugees from the Diaspora that had lasted for decades prior to the 1994 victory of the RPF under the leadership of Kagame. Many who returned to Rwanda were not French or Kinyarwanda speakers. Those who returned home brought with them a significant knowledge of English (Lewis

Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). For those English speakers of school age who returned, access to continued education required that English become a language option in Rwandan schools.

Another powerful motivator was the fact that the French were seen as fighting on the side of the genocidaires during the killing. The French led effort, Operation Turquoise, added salt in the wound, as the killers were seen as finding refuge and funding from France as they retreated across borders in the face of the RPF homecoming. French was viewed as the language of the Hutu perpetrators of the genocide, and as such, its influence on Rwandan culture began to wane following the fighting. French was viewed by some as the language of the killers (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Rebuilding during the period that followed the genocide meant that Rwandans would have to juggle the dominant indigenous language of Kinyarwanda and two foreign languages, French and English, in its school system.

Enrollment developments. The emergency period was witness to shortages of teachers, supplies, school buildings, textbooks and other school system needs. Perhaps none of those areas of shortage trended upwards as abruptly in the first years after the genocide as did the number of pupils in classrooms. This success, bringing students back to schools, was often outpacing the efforts to catch up that were being made to alleviate shortages of resources. Regardless of resources, children once again became students in Rwanda.

As stated earlier, Rwanda had been considered successful in enrolling primary age children into school in the pre-genocide years. The initial drop off in those numbers, reported by the Ministry of Education (2004), was stark as schools opened weeks after the

killing ended. However, primary grades enrollment trended upwards quickly over the next several years. By 1998, steady growth in primary enrollment had added back approximately half of the thirty percent precipice that had resulted from the genocide (Obura, 2003), with nearly 1,300,000 primary students in the fall of 1998 (Hayman, 2005b).

Enrollment in secondary schools nearly dropped even more sharply than did primary enrollment immediately after the genocide. Secondary schools were reopened in October of 1994. Across the nation, secondary schools were only filled by approximately 3000 students. That was a drop of from 1993 enrollment numbers of well over 50,000 secondary students. By the fall of 1997, the pre-genocide high marks from the 1993-1994 school year were surpassed, with nearly 60,000 secondary students (Obura, 2003).

The 6 + 6 system that included 3 years of lower primary, 3 years of upper primary, 3 years of lower secondary, and 3 years of upper secondary was largely unchanged in the emergency years following the genocide. Efforts would be made towards providing more children with access to each of those three-year levels. Abolishing the ethnicity-based quotas was a key first step. Shifting from an emergency rebuilding context to one of sustained strategic development would lead to further changes that would impact enrollment and the 6 + 6 system in the years that followed.

1999 - Present: Post-Reconstruction Development

As years passed, the genocide became more of an event that had occurred, rather than a current nightmare that was still seen at every turn by Rwandans and those with whom Rwandans interacted globally. Though the genocide is still the first thing many think of when Rwanda is mentioned, the transition to life after the emergency was being made as early as the late 1990s. It was during this time that the government and international

donor agencies began shifting their focus from recovery from the nightmare to development for the future.

Evidence of the focus on development is drawn from a variety of government reports that document development strategy. The evidence that education was a critical piece of Rwanda's development strategy following reconstruction can be found in work beginning in the late 1990s and moving into the first years of the new millennium. The Rwandan government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was finalized in 2002, but was being written in the late 1990s. This foundational development document clearly indicates that reducing poverty was the driving focus of the government's development thinking and efforts (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2002). This strategy paper became the most significant policy package for coordinating internal and external efforts towards development (Hayman, 2005a). Alignment between the PRSP and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is clear. As a signer of the UN MDG Resolution, Rwanda declared that poverty reduction was its focus as it transitioned from reconstruction into a new millennium as a developing nation (UN, 2000). The nation's long term strategy towards development, Vision 2020, builds a foundation for the PRSP in the larger global context of pursuit of MDGs (Hayman, 2005a). The road map to achieving the MDG goals of development included education as a central avenue to be driven upon.

Three Initiatives: 1999 - Present

In the fourteen years that have followed the end of the reconstruction period in 1998, the initiatives analyzed in this dissertation have been significant players in the educational efforts to contribute to development. Pedagogy, language and enrollment have each been included in the education sector's strategic planning, experimentation, risk

taking, political navigation and funding puzzle making. Tracing those initiatives in the years that followed the reconstruction from the 1994 genocide is a fascinating finale to the historical look at education reform in this three-by-three structure of three time periods as a contextual timeline for three initiatives.

Student-centered instruction. The issue of pedagogy, or teaching methodology, is one that has gained far more attention in this third of the three phases of the timeline in this historical study. In the first period, independence to genocide (1962 – 1994), methods were teacher-centered. Students were passive participants in the learning environment. This was largely taken from the European colonial model of education that had dominated during the colonial years in the first half of the 20th century in Rwanda. During this second timeline period of genocide and reconstruction (1994 – 1998), pedagogical issues were not a focus of the rebuilding efforts (Obura, 2003). Obura's discussion of continuation of teaching practices inherited from colonial days is the strongest analysis of lack of reform in instructional practices during the reconstruction period and the early part of this modern timeline phase.

Organized play activities were conducted with an intent to add normalcy and emotional healing to children during these years. Often cited by others, and considered as foundational sources on these activities in Rwanda are the works by Aguilar & Retemal (1998), and by Aguilar & Richmond (1998). Both reports note that some learner-centered activities in the areas of peace education or trauma counseling also occurred. However, focusing on teaching methods and practices would not be work that rose to the top of the education priority list during those emergency years.

The third and current period of educational development, that began in post-reconstruction years beginning in 1998 and is continuing presently, did not begin with any more focus or attention to matters of pedagogy. In 1998, the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) produced a curriculum for primary and secondary school in areas of mathematics and science. The curriculum was teacher-centered, required rote learning, and continued to define a passive role for learners in classrooms. The curriculum was content laden and did not promote best practices of instruction (Barwell et al., 2007). Again, reform efforts around curriculum focused on the content to be taught and gave scant attention to instructional practices.

Recent years have provided a shift resulting from recognition by Rwandan education officials and outside supporting entities of the need to focus on instructional practices. In 2010, MINEDUC identified the need for changes in pedagogy in its most recent five-year plan for the education sector. This Educational Sector Strategic Plan called for a work force of critical thinkers. Passive roles for learners would no longer suffice. Improving teaching and learning is a theme of this most current goal setting plan for action to improve education (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Both the Ministry and a growing number of NGOs have contributed towards efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Rwandan classrooms in recent years. This third time period, reaching to the present day, is one that has seen a dynamic shift towards matters of pedagogy in Rwandan education reform efforts.

Language. In regards to the initiative of language, one daring and drastic development dominates the period stretching from 1998 to the present. In late 2008, the Rwandan government mandated that English be the language of instruction in Rwandan

classrooms (McCrummen, 2008). The trilingual system in which students were able to choose French or English as their language of instruction beginning in P3 and continuing through secondary school came to an end. The vision of students literate in all three official languages of the country proved to be unrealistic (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

The trilingual system was dropped for a variety of reasons that will be discussed in detail in this study, French was dropped as an official language, and English was elevated to the sole language of instruction beginning in P4 through secondary schools (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Economic development, regional alignment, the return of English speaking refugees from neighboring Uganda and the politics of revenge all played a role in this unusual move calling for an overnight change in the language of teachers and students inside the classroom walls.

Teachers, many of whom had graduated from a Francophone system, were forced to begin taking night and weekend English classes or risk losing their jobs. These same teachers were then attempting to pass along those same English skills to their students in the lessons they taught (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Failure to comply has been used as evidence of the crime of promoting “genocidal ideology” as English was being promoted as the language of reconciliation by the Kagame led government (Rwanda Development Gateway, 2008).

The challenges of this swift and decisive mandate from the government are significant. Language of instruction literature argues as to the wisdom of such a move when weighed against possible lost content or thinking in the classroom. Those arguments

and the progress made in the few years since the mandate was be further discussed in a more detailed literature review and body of the study to follow.

Enrollment developments. The World Bank often serves as a resource for current statistics in the sector of education in developing nations. The contribution made by the World Bank in doing so is critical. Current World Bank studies are foundational to research such as this study. Enrollment numbers at all levels have grown, both in raw numbers of students and in percentages of children enrolled in school (World Bank, 2011). In the decade stretching from 1998 to 2008, the six grades of primary, three grades of lower secondary (*tronc commun*), and three grades of upper secondary schools all saw tremendous growth that began with efforts during the reconstruction period from 1994 – 1998.

Primary schools nearly doubled in that decade from 1.2 million students to nearly 2.2 million students. Lower secondary grades enrolled more than 183,000 students in 2008, up from 68,000 students in 1998. Upper secondary nearly tripled its enrollment in that ten-year span, totaling nearly 105,000 students by 2008 (World Bank, 2011). This growth would be the foundation for legislative change that would shake landscape in education sectors in developing nations.

In 2007, President Kagame announced plans to launch a Nine Year Basic education policy. This law required all students to attend school for the six years of primary school as had been previously mandated. In addition, now Rwandan children were required to complete the lower three years of secondary school (World Bank, 2011). The impacts of such a system shift proved to be significant and produced great strain and challenges for practitioners in the schools.

However, moving swiftly, in his re-election campaign run in 2010, President Kagame announced his plan to provide for a free twelve-year education system for Rwandan students. Local Rwandan media outlet, The Rwandan Focus, asserts that this campaign promise was implemented in February of 2012 (Rwirahira, 2012). Focusing on successes, and learning lessons from struggles, of the nine-year basic efforts from just three years prior, Rwanda has blasted ahead in offering free education for all children from pre-primary through twelve years of primary and secondary schooling.

Rotating the Framework: A Concluding Note on Structure

The narrative literature review above is written chronologically. Each of the three time periods is briefly described in historical context. Each of the time periods also contains some introductory comments for each of the three initiatives examined in this study. This is done to provide a chronological context that can serve as a resource during further portions of this dissertation, and as sort of a front door into the work of education reform in Rwanda over the last 50 years.

The three chapters that follow will be structured topically. Each of the three initiatives will serve as the legs or building blocks of the piece. With necessary nods to the context from the colonial era and a focus on the three time periods defined here, this rotation of structure will serve to enhance the study by serving as a complementary foothold for accessing the three-by-three heuristic comprised of the interplay of the three initiatives and three timeline periods or phases introduced in Chapter 2.

Chapter 6 will provide conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions will likely include some analysis of the interplay of the three initiatives. Isolating the three will serve

the purpose of providing a clean framework for study and presentation in this piece. However, it will be necessary to discuss how the three influence each other in order to accurately draw conclusions regarding the research question formed around the impact of the genocide on those initiatives. They cannot only be analyzed as separate and isolated from each other.

Recommendations in Chapter 6 are intended to be helpful for those orchestrating current and future reform efforts in Rwanda. It is also likely that those recommendations may provide insight for other developing countries that may be recovering from a devastating event that significantly damaged the infrastructures of their country and educational systems. It is possible that Rwanda can serve as a model to other nations in their time of most dire need.

Chapter 3: Student-Centered Instruction

The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis of teaching pedagogy and instructional practices over time in Rwanda. That analysis will center upon recent government efforts emphasizing student-centered instructional methods that promote critical thinking in schools. It is reasonable that efforts towards education reform include some addressing of the “how” of teaching. Historically, as noted in the literature review of Chapter 2, this reform effort is not one of the first priorities of developing nations. The list is often long on reforms that receive attention before pedagogy or teaching practices are examined. That certainly has been the case in Rwanda.

Beginning with a brief discussion of pre-colonial instructional practices and methods, the timeline will progress towards colonial years of the early 1900s. The comparison between instructional practices of pre-colonial informal education and colonial formal education will provide evidence of sharp differences. Analyzing instructional practices from independence in 1962 to the current day will provide informative discussions around additional education reform efforts that were given attention during the most recent decades. Understanding reforms that made the list of priorities before teaching practices made that list is helpful in building a contextual knowledge and backdrop for this chapter and those to come.

What did teaching look and sound like over time, and why? Those questions will be addressed along the chronological timeline leading up to the current efforts of student-centered instruction. Of key significance in this chronological look at pedagogy will be the genocide of 1994. With an eye on addressing the key question of this study, the impacts the slaughter of 1994 had on teaching practices will be given significant attention.

Determining what impact if any the genocide had on teaching practices in classrooms will be the primary concluding analysis point as we develop this reform initiative in this chapter.

In this study, three initiatives, 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language, 3) enrollment developments, have been selected for analysis. Admittedly, this first initiative to be discussed in detail is one that has not seen dramatic change until very recent years in Rwanda. Why would student-centered instruction, or a somewhat broader conversation around pedagogy, be included in this historical study if there was not significant change in instructional methods for much of the timeline at hand? The answer, and the call for inclusion in this study, is built on the importance of this reform initiative.

The evidence that points to the quality of teaching as the most critical school level factor that impacts student achievement and learning is massive (Darling-Hammond, 2000). For Sub-Saharan Africa, the stakes around the quality of instruction are significantly higher. Teacher effect is credited with accounting for five percent to fifteen percent of student achievement. In a study of 9 Sub-Saharan African countries, that effect size linked to teaching accounted for twenty-seven percent of student achievement (Dembele & Lefoka, 2007). Evidence points to the claim that the poorer the country, the more teacher quality matters in regard to learning and achievement (Heyneman & Loxley, 1983). It is not difficult to conclude that this increased effect size attributed to teaching exists in the context of African schools that are so primitive and devoid of many other factors that are present in developed nations.

Some believe that the quality of teaching has declined in Sub-Saharan African schools since independence in the early 1960s. Others contend that it has remained the

same, and not improved from its low level (Dembele & Lefoka, 2007). Both camps agree that learning achievement is lower in the region than in other regions of the globe (UNESCO, 2004). If teaching matters more in Africa, including Rwanda, then this first initiative to be further developed here in Chapter 3, must be included in this analysis.

To understand pedagogy in colonial Africa of the early 20th century, one must examine the purposes of colonial education in Africa. Comparing pre-colonial education instruction to colonial teaching practices is informative in this discussion. Beginning with an analysis of the purpose of education in pre-colonial and colonial eras will shed significant light on the instructional methods used during those eras.

Pre-Colonial Instruction

The purpose of pre-colonial education has been discussed as being a two-fold aim:

- 1) to preserve the culture and heritage of the family, clan, society and
- 2) to connect new members of that society to that historical culture in order to prepare them to meet the challenges of their own futures within the context of that culture (Mazonde, 1995).

Methods used by “teachers” who were often tribal elders and family or clan members, included formal and informal means. These included the telling and re-telling of tribal legends and histories by the fireside. They also included informal means that were highly student-centered. Riddles were used to interactively test judgment. Plants, trees, animals and other local vocabulary and language were accessed as boys herded and planted with their fathers, and as girls contributed to work in the fields and the village with their mothers. Play was used as pedagogy as girls organized family and clan systems as they

played with dolls, while boys staged battles and made models of huts and fields for imaginary farming (Mazonde, 1995).

The purpose of the learning was focused on the indigenous culture and the needs that were relevant. With a relevant purpose underpinning the system of education in pre-colonial times, the methods of instruction followed suit and were interactive or student-centered. As noted in one report,

As such, in current analysis, traditional African philosophies of education would be closer, though not identical, to Deweyan and Freirean thoughts and perspectives on understanding and helping the learner, via the creation of curricular and schooling environments that are relevant, inclusive and selectively workable and productive.

(Abdi & Cleghorn p. 31)

The connection between relevant purpose and student-centered instruction is evident in the pre-colonial era. It is evident that pre-colonial informal education had a relevant purpose and was characterized by student-centered instructional practices. Students were doing, dialoguing and apprenticing as they built knowledge and skills that were relevant to their culture.

Colonial Instruction

With the imposition of a new purpose for education during the colonial era, a shift in teaching methods and practices ensued. It is important to note that the footprint of colonial education on the education systems of Rwanda are relatively small compared to other African nations that have histories marked by centuries of colonial rule (Hoben, 1989). Both German and Belgian colonial spans were significantly shorter than other regions of East Africa that were more easily accessed and held greater economic promise

through natural resources and trade routes. However, there is no denying a profound impact left behind by western colonial powers in the school systems in Rwanda.

The impact of colonial influence in education should be traced to a change in purpose of instruction. Schools were meant to serve the colonial master's aims rather than meet the needs of the indigenous culture and society. This can be seen clearly in the mission schools established by both Catholic and Protestant missions in the early 1900s in Rwanda (Nyamnjoh, 2012).

German colonial rule made way for Belgian rule following World War I. The Belgians and Germans handled education similarly during their Rwandan colonial periods. Neither government considered education to be important enough to support with significant resources. The church was more than pleased to fill the role left unattended by colonial governments and to coordinate education systems (Hoben, 1989).

Schools were viewed by the church as tools to be used for conversion of the masses. Prior to the 1900s, Cardinal Lavigerie envisioned a Christian Africa that called on mission schools to provide a low level of learning to the rural masses so that they might be able to master the catechism and accept church teachings. Lavigerie's vision also included a small number of elite Africans educated at a higher level in order to serve as priests. He believed that African priests would better be able to produce African converts (Hoben, 1989).

The purpose of the schools drove the instructional practices of the schools during mission dominated colonial systems. Conversion required acceptance. Schools existed to promote only the skills required to "accept" rather than a level of education that produced critical thinkers and those willing to engage in the learning. This colonial purpose for

education was reflected in the instructional practices that were teacher-centered, lecture dominated and provided in a language foreign to the learner (Nyamnjoh, 2012).

A typical model of African colonial education would lend itself to the establishment of small rural schools that provided low-level reading and morals instruction. The elite were selected and sent on to seminaries for ordination preparation (Hoben, 1989). Altbach points to the small number of Congolese with access to higher education at independence as evidence that Belgium viewed higher levels of education for indigenous peoples as “bad policy” (Altbach, 1994). As a geographic neighbor, it is reasonable to believe that this same thinking was driving the work of the Belgians in Rwanda.

This model faced a unique challenge in Rwanda. The Tutsis, considered the dominant tribe by the Belgians, were suspicious of Belgian mission schools. The Tutsi monarchy’s power was rooted in its own indigenous religion. Tutsi youth were prohibited from attending Belgian mission schools, for a time, as a result. In time, Tutsi leaders realized the advantages of the formal Belgian education that was being provided primarily to Hutu youth, and relented. Still considered the favored tribe by the Belgians, Tutsi students far outweighed Hutu students in the years leading up to independence (Hoben, 1989). But even as the ethnic ratio of Hutu to Tutsi shifted under Belgian colonial rule, the purpose remained the same. Closely linked to that purpose, were the instructional methods that required a passive role for the student in a teacher-centered environment.

1962 – 1994: Independence to Genocide

Independence was not preceded or followed by political peace in Rwanda. Prior to independence in 1962, fighting between Hutus and Tutsis led to massacres of Tutsis between 1959 and 1961. Refugee streams of exiting Tutsis continued until 1964 (Obura,

2003). The First Republic began to disintegrate, leading to a coup in 1973 that ushered in a second president. That coup was followed by another round of Tutsi slaughter and exodus at the hands of the Hutus (Obura, 2003). It was against this political backdrop that education planners made decisions regarding systems and reforms in those years.

The Rwandan government did recognize the importance of education and the need to provide an education system that would meet the needs of the nation. The goals of schooling were revisited and in some cases revised in the 1960s by government educational planners. The priorities of the first post-independence reform efforts were to establish a national university, and to broaden the availability of basic education (Hoben, 1989).

These relatively minor reforms are often not evaluated as significant enough to register with some who document the history of Rwandan reforms (Hayman, 2005b). Though small in comparison to the reforms of the late 1970s, some measures were taken that are worthy of note here, as much for what is excluded from the list of reforms as for the items that are included. Social studies curriculum underwent minor revisions. Alternatives to formal secondary schools were explored and subject to experimentation. Double-shifting was added to the first grades of primary education as more students flowed into lower primary classrooms (Hoben, 1989). Notably absent from this list of initial post-independence efforts is any mention of teaching practices or pedagogy. The relationship between teacher as holder of knowledge and student as passive recipient would be a colonial inheritance that would continue following independence (Diamini, 2008).

A call for further reform, not uncommon in Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1970s, was issued in large part by a 1975 World Bank report. Between independence and the reforms of the late 1970s, often referred to as the 1979 Reform (Hoben, 1989), that were conducted in large part in response to the World Bank report, there is no evidence of any reforms regarding instructional methods or pedagogy. Formal schooling, conducted inside classroom walls was a transplant from European colonialism. The pedagogy that took place within those classroom walls was the only pedagogy connected to formal schooling in the experience of Rwandan teachers and students alike. Teacher-dominated teaching practices were the only formal school models of instruction that had ever been in place in Rwandan schools. To Rwandan educators, classrooms and the formal schooling environment were connected to teacher-dominated instruction. It is not difficult to understand why independent Rwanda did not rethink and transform the systems of formal education brought to them during colonial rule (Diamini, 2008).

The relationship between the government school planners in the newly independent nation and the long established mission schools is also part of a colonial legacy. Due to inadequate resources to provide free public education for all students, many private schools were, and still today are partially funded by the government. A typical funding agreement would require the government to pay the salaries of the teachers and other recurrent costs. All other operational costs would be considered the responsibility of the funders of the private school (Obura, 2003). In these and other ways, much more would remain the same in the years immediately following independence than would change.

It is also informative to examine the reforms of the late 1970s in Rwanda to identify what was addressed even as student-centered instruction was far from the priority list. Examining reforms that do not include teaching practices provides a broader context that will enhance the study of these initiatives. The focus of the reforms in education during the 1970s was identified by an assessment study of the system conducted by the World Bank in 1975 that provided recommendations for reform efforts.

The problems highlighted by the 1975 World Bank (referred to as the Bank Group at the time the report was issued) report included:

- 1) an “over literary” primary education that provided little practical relevance for the majority of primary students who would not go on to secondary education
- 2) inadequate facilities
- 3) lack of cohesion in secondary schooling (Bank Group, 1975).

This report clearly identified curriculum, facilities and systems coordination as priorities in the decade that followed Rwandan independence. Discussion of the quality of teaching or pedagogy had not yet risen to the list of urgent reform priorities.

This report provides an excellent example of the relationship between external priorities, external funding and local reform efforts and decision-making. The World Bank report is a project description, complete with a funding analysis near the conclusion. The analysis conducted in this report, contributed to the list of priorities for the reform efforts of the late 1970s in Rwanda.

Also shaping those, priorities was the 1974 Hanf report, written as a consulting report by a team of German experts led by Theodor Hanf. UNESCO recommended the Hanf team and analysis (Hoben, 1989). The report from the German team produced a similar

stream of recommendations as did the World Bank report. Both called for an increased focus on work force preparation, and less emphasis on liberal arts (Hanf, 1974).

Though not all recommendations from the Hanf report were implemented in the years to come (Hoben, 1989), the UNESCO recommended Hanf report of 1974, paired with the World Bank report of 1975, demonstrates how outside goals, when tied to outside funding, can drive the goals of development (Moulton, et al., 2002). This was indeed the case with the reforms of the late 1970s in Rwanda.

The Second Republic's education reform efforts were significantly more ambitious than were the smaller reforms of the 1960s. Launched as part of the larger Second Development Plan 1977 - 1981, Hoben states (1989), "The educational reform of 1979 called for the radical restructuring of educational institutions, from the ministries to the schools, as well as for a complete revision of the curriculum" (p. 17). However, the Reform of 1979 was similar to the earlier reforms in its silence regarding teacher quality or instructional methods.

Instead stated aims included:

- 1) Increasing access with attention given to the problematic ethnic quotas and raising enrollment in rural areas;
- 2) Creating a Rwandan curriculum and returning to Kinyrwanda as the language of instruction at all levels;
- 3) Repurposing education at all levels with an emphasis on vocational and professional training, in order to produce students capable of immediately producing in an economic effort to develop the nation; and
- 4) Reducing drop out rates at all levels (Hoben, 1989).

Not only did the stated goals exclude any mention of improving teacher quality or reforming instructional practices, the means selected to assist in reaching the stated aims do not hint at instruction that is more student-centered or altered in any way from the teaching that was largely a colonial inheritance. It seems reasonable that with so much effort aimed at reforming the curriculum, some attention would be given to delivery of that curriculum. That was not the case.

Means of reaching the goals of the 1979 reform included automatic promotion during primary grades, additional two primary grades (year 7 and 8) with an emphasis on vocational skills, and eliminating the three-year secondary core curriculum in exchange for further work skill training and readiness efforts (Hoben, 1989). The shift away from western liberal arts and literacy was dramatic. Even more dramatic is the fact that this practical indigenous focused reform did not take steps to shift the instructional model away from the western teacher dominated model.

Textbooks were written in Kinyrwanda in many subjects for nearly all levels for the first time. The writing, printing and distribution of the new curriculum materials was a massive challenge that moved slowly. Ultimately, many schools eventually received new textbooks, but never had any chance to preview the materials or plan for instruction that aligned with the new course matter and materials (Hoben, 1989).

Implementation of the Reform of 1979 dominated the decade of the 1980s. As the genocide approached, the Ministry of Education had revised portions of the 1979 Reform in 1991 and 1992. The work that resulted from the reform revisions of the early 1990s again lacked attention to pedagogy and instructional practices. Though any of the revisions

receiving attention in the early 1990s never were implemented to any significant level as the ethnic tensions and resulting violence began to escalate (Hayman, 2005b).

That revision work included redistributing teachers who had been teaching in the newly added grade 7 and 8 additions to the primary cycle. That particular 1979 Reform item had failed, and those grades had essentially been closed in the years prior. This led to 1991 reform revisions calling for a return to the six-year system of primary school. More work on curriculum, specifically focusing on winnowing content while adding new initiatives such as HIV/AIDS instruction also was highlighted. Significant concern also centered on the lack of facilities and the growing state of disrepair that existing schools were evidencing (Obura, 2003). Though Rwanda could claim successes in certain reform efforts following independence, there was growing concern that more reforms were needed.

1994 – 1998: Genocide and Reconstruction

Evidence indicates that instructional practices did not shift with the establishment of an independent Rwanda in 1962. Though the education decision makers did begin with a number of reform efforts in the decades between independence and the genocide of 1994, it is clear that instructional methods did not make the priority list of reforms.

Schools did close their doors for instruction during the months of the violence in the spring of 1994. Upon reopening for classes, decisions would be faced that called for prioritization between basic relief efforts and forward thinking reform visioning.

Historically, education was not a focus of global emergency relief efforts during the 20th century. Meeting basic needs of food, water, medical care and shelter often edged out any funding for education recovery (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). This would not be the case

in Rwanda following the genocide. Significant and immediate resources and efforts were made to restart and rebuild the education systems (Hayman, 2005b).

There is some variance in recommendations from those who have studied large scale emergency situations and the role education plays both during the emergency and in the recovery efforts that follow (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998; UNHCR,1995).

Recommendations differ around the use of innovation in educational practices during times of recovery. Some see the disruption of the crisis as an opportunity to make changes with an eye on long-term development. Others call for status quo as the best means of maintaining a sense of normalcy and reclaiming stability.

1995 UNHCR guidelines identify three phases for working with children during times of crisis: 1) recreational/preparatory, 2) non-formal schooling, and 3) re-introduction of the curriculum (UNHCR, 1995). Aguilar and Retamal (1998) note that these three phases are not meant to be isolated, and that they must be understood as flexible and fluid when implementing educational responses during emergencies (Aguilar & Retamal, p. 10). Both the idea of establishing routines aimed at normalcy and a “window of opportunity for educational development and innovation” are listed consecutively in a bulleted list highlighting the need for attention to education during crisis situations (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998).

The first phase identified in the UNHCR recommendations, organized play and activities is agreed to by many as a critical first step in post-emergency education efforts. Organizing games and play activities for children during and after times of crisis is considered critical for children under the stress of emergency situations, in order for building self-esteem and psychosocial well-being development (Kilbourn, 1995). Examples

of activities that provide for this type of healing are plays, dance ensembles, musical performances and festivals, athletic competitions and peer outings (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). Using teachers and schools to organize these events eases the transition to the next phases of informal and formal schooling mentioned in the UNHCR report. The activities suggested by the experts noted here are clearly ones that are student-centered. The first phase of rebuilding education systems calls for engaging students in activities that promote healing and learning.

The second phase is that of non-formal schooling. This second phase is a bridge between the initial healing and therapy focused plan stage and the third stage of formal schooling (Obura, 2003). In this phase, students experience a learning environment that begins to look and sound more like the formal school setting. Learning of basic core skills is the goal, though typically diplomas and certificates are not earned (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). Including themes such as conflict resolution, cooperation and health related practices is recognized as a component of this phase (UNHCR, 1995).

An inter-agency effort produced a tool called a teacher emergency program (TEP) that is helpful to analyze in an effort to understand this second phase of emergency response education. UNESCO and PEER (Programme for Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction) developed a school in a box kit that was first used in Somalia in 1993 (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). The kits included materials such as pencils, dusters, slates, chalk and exercise books for two shifts of 80 students. Teacher materials included blackboard paint, a brush and a tape measure to be used to create a makeshift chalkboard. Also included were chalk, pens, pencils, wooden "alphabet" blocks, markers, letter and number cloth wall charts and an attendance book. Perhaps of greatest note to our study

was the inclusion of a teacher's guide which detailed lesson content and methodology for teaching basic numeracy and literacy in the indigenous language. The kit was intended to serve as a tool for first through fourth grade instruction over a period of six months (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998).

The TEPs encouraged inclusion of student-centered activities and dialogue that were different from the standard colonial model of teaching and learning. This key tool of this transitional second phase between the recreation focused first phase and the formal school approach of the third phase pulled methodology from the first phase into the classroom (Obura, 2003).

Two different Rwandan case studies provide a window into how the TEP was used to bridge the phases outlined in the UNHCR report of recreation and formal schooling/curriculum re-introduction. The first took place in what was at the time the largest refugee population on the planet. Over 700,000 Rwandan refugees made their way across the border to neighboring Tanzania as a result of the genocide violence. Educating children in those refugee camps took considerable effort by the international community (Aguilar & Richmond, 1998).

Organized play activities were implemented that focused on teamwork and aimed at providing healing and psychosocial well being development in some of the camps, as called for in the first phase. TEP kits were sent to the camps, where international workers and Rwandan educators translated materials into Kinyrwandan and further adapted materials to meet specific needs. In a period of months, 40 schools, serving 60,000 students were established in the camps of Rwandan refugees (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998).

A second Rwandan case study was being undertaken nearly simultaneously. The refugee efforts for Rwandans who had crossed the borders into Tanzania had begun in May of 1994. Those efforts provided learning that informed the effort that began in July of that same year. This effort would focus on the entire nation. This was the first attempt at using the TEP, school in a box, tool to facilitate second phase informal schooling during an emergency on a national scale (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998).

Approximately 11,000 teachers were trained in the methodologies and materials included in TEPs. That represented nearly 60% of the primary school teaching ranks prior to the genocide (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). Those trainings were two-day courses. The first day included content on basic teaching theory and modeling of TEP methodology. The second day included a practical focus on the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills via the methodologies recommended in the TEP (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998).

A further training, a third day, was delivered to a core group of 60 teachers with the expectation that they would train other teachers in a systematic train-the-trainer delivery system. This third day included a six-page additional written training document that explored techniques and theory related to trauma, grief and other emotional issues related to the horrors that children experienced during the genocide (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998). The cascade dynamic of the train-the-trainer plan involving the TEPs was never fully realized (Chorlton, 1996).

There may have been other factors at play in the wilting of this effort to further distribute the materials and methodologies of the TEPs in this transitional informal stage. Some suggest that post-emergency efforts aimed at innovation in instructional practices will fail due to the pull of the status quo anchored in the desire for normalcy. Some go so

far as to question the validity or need for the second phase identified in the UNHCR report, this transitional informal schooling phase. Obura (2003) states:

Schools know formal schooling, they are familiar with their old curriculum and, whatever forward-thinking internationals think of the perhaps classical and maybe dull pre-war schools and curricula, teachers prefer to go into class and start teaching what they know best, especially after the unsettling experience of war.
(p. 82)

Obura (2003) goes on to claim that even proponents of TEPs admit that the contribution the tool kits made to informal schooling in the area of teacher training was characterized best by a morale boost and an introduction to classroom management (p. 63).

Rwanda's reconstruction years certainly provide evidence that the three phases as identified by the 1995 UNHCR report are indeed fluid, and impossible to isolate into contained stages. The preponderance of evidence from those years gives credence to Obura's questioning of the phases. The efforts with TEPs and any instructional methods they recommended did not take hold. Though Aguilar and Retamal propose the idea of a window for innovation as an opportunity for educational planners to move dramatically towards development during times of crisis, (Aguilar & Retamal, 1998) Rwanda's experience did not prove this to be the case following the genocide of 1994. Those teachers who survived the genocide chose to accept the materials in the TEPs, but also taught classes in the ways that they did prior to the genocide in the years that followed (Obura, 2003).

As the reconstruction years came to a close in 1998, it was clear that instructional practices had not changed significantly or in any manner that would stand the test of time.

Though short-term changes may have resulted from the use of emergency relief kits, TEPS, those materials were not distributed to all schools, and were used up. Teachers were left without tools that promoted or facilitated the small changes in instruction that may have resulted in the first reconstruction years.

1999 – Present: Post-Reconstruction Development

In July of 2010, the Rwandan Ministry of Education released its five-year plan guiding educational planning and efforts for the years, 2010 – 2015. In the introductory pages of that document, the successes and achievements from the previous five years are identified. Successes hailed do not include progress made in improving teaching or ground gained strategically in the area of instructional methodology reforms (MINEDUC, 2010). Indeed, the five year plan that was produced by MINEDUC just two years prior, meant to cover the years 2008 – 2012, did not call for changes in instructional methods aimed at student-centered approaches and critical thinking (MINEDUC, 2008). This provides evidence that inside the Ministry, teaching practices had not yet reached a level of high priority by the year 2008, when that five-year period of time began. MINEDUC also published a report focusing on teacher development and management in 2007 that was also largely silent on the idea of implementing student-centered instructional methods, or teaching practices that promote critical thinking (MINEDUC, 2007).

By contrast, murmurs of the need to change pedagogical practices to promote student learning in science and mathematics was a topic of discussion in the middle of the 2000s. The 2006 national mathematical curriculum reform stressed curriculum and teaching practices that promoted critical thinking, problem solving and argumentation (Uworwabayeho, 2009).

The winds of instructional change were beginning to blow, and were howling by the time of the 2010 MINEDUC five-year plan. That plan identified educational quality as a key objective. Considerable language is given to improving teaching practices by focusing on learner-centered or student-centered approaches that promote critical thinking (MINEDUC, 2010). It is during these years, within the last decade, that the lever of how teachers teach has become a theme of reforms aimed at the quality of education in Rwanda.

Today, it is common to hear educators and others mentioning critical thinking and the instructional practices that promote it, as a chief aim of the educational system. A survey of *Rwandan Times* newspaper articles produced multiple articles in the last year that talk of this goal for the education sector. One such article states:

The mission of the Ministry of Education is to transform Rwandan citizens into skilled human capital for the socio-economic development of the country by ensuring equitable access to quality education focusing on combating illiteracy, promotion of science and technology, critical thinking, and positive value. (Mugisha, 2012).

The poverty fighting nature of development is often the focus of education reform publicity, as students are referred to repeatedly as human capital. However, alongside the economic motivation for educating citizens who can think critically is the notion of producing a population that can solve problems, critically question, act for causes such as equity and justice and possibly prevent violence of the sort that led to and became the genocide of 1994 (Lynd, 2010). This second, non-economic motivation is a noble call for instructional methods that can lead to quality of life and societal improvements that cannot be measured by Rwandan francs. It is here that we find a significant connection to the central question

of this study, the role the genocide played in reform initiatives. The genocide did not immediately set in motion reform of instructional practices. However, it adds a layer of need much deeper than the typical use of education as a tool to develop human capital for the global marketplace.

The call for a focus on instructional practices cannot be pinpointed to a single act, declaration or event. However, it became clear to outside entities and Rwandan decision makers that access to basic education alone was not sufficient to produce the ultimate results of an education system that produced citizens capable of leading development and eradicating poverty (Lynd, 2010). This realization mirrored the thinking being expressed by others in the developing world who were analyzing the connection between Millennium Development Goals specific to education and the lack of delivery achieving those goals seemed to demonstrate (Hayman, 2005a).

The Millennium Development Goals that have been key in developing nations' efforts to fight poverty called for the education sector to provide basic education to all, and to eliminate gender disparity in schools. Rwanda had demonstrated some successes in both of those goals the MDGs include for the sector, both before and after the genocide. However, the results of forward progress towards providing basic education for all, while eliminating enrollment differences between boys and girls in primary schools, seemed to not be leading to the poverty crushing effect for which many had hoped. Some pointed to this dissatisfaction with those results as the reason that education decision makers began to look for next steps in reform (Hayman, 2005a). Those began to call for other levers of reform that could be pulled to further fight poverty and produce development, as reaching MDG aims was falling short (Vandemoortele, 2005).

The questions around equity and access to education were being answered, and targets were being met. However, new questions around the quality of that education, now available to so many more students, were cropping up in the minds of the education sector planners. Previous school quality priorities had included items such as the number of latrines available to students, the availability of textbooks and other resources and class sizes (World Bank, 2011).

When the more specific issue of teacher quality was raised as an issue to be included in a larger conversation on the quality of education, pedagogy or instructional practices was not part of the conversation. Instead, teacher program training, teacher absenteeism, and teacher motivation are measured in the traditional discussion of teacher quality in developing world contexts (Heyneman & Loxley, 1983).

In Rwanda, this acknowledgement of the need to focus on instruction that promotes student-centered learning was made in the late years of the decade of the 2000s. Lynd wrote in a 2010 report produced for USAID as an assessment and proposal design for further investment, about a disparity between neighboring Uganda and Rwanda in the area of teacher instructional practices (Lynd, 2010). By that point in time, Lynd noted that the language of child-centered or student-centered instruction and schools was common in educational circles in Rwanda. However, he noted that there is a significant implementation gap, as Rwandan classrooms still mirrored the teacher-directed colonial models that had been the norm for decades following independence. In the introduction to his report, he told of a Ugandan teacher who moved to Rwanda to teach and used student-centered methods. The teacher's instructional practices were met with resistance, as they did not match the typical chalk and talk methods Rwandan teachers are accustomed to

using. The Rwandan teachers and the headmaster called for the Ugandan's removal due to the innovative teaching techniques (Lynd, 2010).

Students seated in rows passively listening and taking notes is still the norm in Rwandan classrooms as noted in the USAID report that Lynd produced (Lynd, 2010). Lynd notes (2010) that though the words "child-centered" are in print and spoken in various educational discussions, the experience from the seat of the student in a classroom has not significantly changed in most cases (pg. 14). That observation, reported in Lynd's USAID report in 2010, matches my own observations during visits to dozens of classrooms in numerous schools during the years, 2010 – 2012. Any deviation from the chalk and talk teacher-centered instructional practices is the exception rather than the rule.

Though not yet present in most classrooms, the call for instructional methods that are student-centered and promote critical thinking has been issued. Movement in student-centered instruction and teaching practices in Rwanda has begun in the form of formal goal setting and target identification in reform effort planning. The start of the shift is evident in the language being used in both government and outside agency reports that have been documented above. Calling for these changes in formal reports from government officials and donor agencies is the start. However, the true challenge of changing how teachers teach lies ahead to large extent.

One effort that is mentioned as promising in USAID's 2010 report is the work of International Education Exchange (IEE). This small NGO has been successful in implementing a mentor-based approach to professional development in schools throughout Rwanda in recent years. This effort will be detailed more fully in Chapter 6 in a discussion of successes and recommendations. Other NGOs have written goals and

implemented projects around instructional practices in recent years as well (Lynd, 2010). The work is a patchwork of efforts that has yet to result in a critical mass of teachers changing practice.

There are reasons to be hopeful that these pilot efforts can be scaled up to produce a culture in classrooms where student-centered teaching practices promote critical thinking. Lynd notes (2010), that there is a willingness on the part of Rwandan teachers to adapt and change their own practice as instructors. Past evidence of the level of cooperation from teachers in the face of significant change is evidenced from the move to double shifting that resulted from increased access and the explosion of enrollment in schools in the years following the genocide. Further evidence that Rwandan teachers are willing to make significant changes that impact their work in classrooms is the 2009 move made to change the language of instruction in most grade levels to English from the native Kinyarwanda (Lynd, 2010). My own experiences over the last three years, spanning multiple visits to Rwanda to work with teachers in schools, verifies that this unique move in the language of instruction has seen dramatic success. That success in such an ambitious reform effort is a testament to the adaptability and willingness to change of the Rwandan teachers.

A qualitative case study of science education reform efforts support these sentiments of hope. Though obstacles are significant in the study conducted by Earnest in 2003 in Rwanda, there were changes made in the practices of teachers who were exposed to significant professional development opportunities. These teachers changed their own teaching practices in ways that involved learners and promoted critical thinking in spite of the difficult circumstances of teaching in environments that are littered with hurdles to such change (Earnest, 2003). Another case study examined the dynamics of change in the

teaching practices of Rwandan mathematics teachers. That study also concluded that Rwandan teachers were willing to change in ways that made space in the learning environment for students to think critically and share their thinking (Uworwabayeho, 2009).

Student-centered instruction that promotes critical thinking has clearly been identified as a chief aim of Rwandan educational policy makers, and the outside donor agencies that continue to fund much of the reform efforts in Rwanda. Pilot projects from a smattering of NGO groups have shown promise. The government has made attempts to scale up the instructional reforms, but has not been successful on a large scale.

The chief obstacle has been the inability to provide expert teachers to act as trainers to the Rwandan teachers currently instructing in classrooms. Efforts to hire Ugandan teachers to act as trainers have sputtered. A plan to employ hundreds of Kenyan teachers to train Rwandans did not get off the ground due to disagreements over the payments that would be made by the Rwandan government to the Kenyan trainers (Cheryl Blackwell, personal communication, July, 2012). A similar effort to contract with IEE, the NGO previously mentioned with a focus on teacher training, failed due to similar pay considerations (Betty Kabeera, personal communication, July, 2012).

This particular reform initiative is one that has been elusive in the relatively short time that it has been a high priority of educational decision makers. Improving teacher quality through a focus on teaching practices that involve learners and develop learners as critical thinkers is work that is high on the priority lists of many nations, developing and developed. Rwanda's pursuits are taking shape. Models exist that can be replicated. To date, large-scale reform of teaching practices remains work to be done.

Chapter 4: Language of Instruction

This chapter provides a focus on reforms in the area of language in schools. Rwanda is a fascinating case study in regards to language of instruction, or language as a medium of instruction (MOI). In many ways, the timeline of changes connected to language reform in Rwandan schools mirrors that of other African nations moving from colonial rule to independence to 21st century, with an increased focus on globalization. Much of what has shaped the issue of language in schools in Rwanda is common to other African nations, and a broader array of developing nations around the globe (Hornberger & Vaish, 2009). However, once more, we will give significant attention to the unique event of the genocide of 1994 in this chapter. Seeking to answer the critical question of this study around the impacts that the genocide may have had on this particular education reform initiative, analysis will focus on how that event influenced language policy in education.

Rwanda is unique in that 99.4% of its people can speak Kinyarwanda (Rosendal, 2009). Of those, 90% only speak Kinyarwanda (Munyankesha, 2004). This unique monolingual status is seen as a unifier by Rwandans (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009), particularly following the genocide as unifying forces are emphasized and bolstered by government policy. Kinyarwanda is clearly the language of the masses.

It is also the language of instruction in primary grades. It is commonly spoken on the streets and at official public functions (The New Times, 2007). Though Kinyarwanda is used widely, mass literacy in the language remains elusive. Most Rwandans rely on the radio or television for news and information in their native language (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Much of the signage in the form of billboards and other was in French and English as reported recently in a 2009 study (Rosendal, 2009). There are

some quality textbooks, periodicals and newspapers distributed that are written in Kinyarwanda. However, the language of the masses does not dominate the printed media in Rwanda (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

The lack of literacy and printed materials in the language of most Rwandans is not an uncommon tale in the histories of post-colonial Africa. Colonial powers tended to leave behind education systems that were dominated by European languages. Those school systems continued to use the language of the colonial master even after achieving independence. This was the case in Rwanda, as the language of instruction in secondary school grades remained French for the period between independence and the genocide.

Chapter 4 begins again with a nod to pre-colonial education, specifically language. The colonial era that dominated the first half of the 20th century will also be examined in order to determine how colonial education implementers influenced this initiative of language. Independence in 1962 and the years following that led up to the genocide involved some shifting policies and practices around language of instruction. Modern globalization dynamics have influenced the language of instruction in many developing nations in the last two decades. Rwanda's recent history, during the last two decades, differs from neighboring African nations and other developing nations of the world in large part because of the genocide. That event has been a critical factor in the specific policy decision regarding the language of instruction in schools.

Pre-Colonial Language

It is believed by some that the Twa people, an ethnic group of pygmy hunters, were the first to populate the area that is modern Rwanda. Some date this settlement back as far as the 8th century BC. Centuries later, a farmer ethnic group, the Hutus settled amidst the

Twas. Prior to the 15th century, the cattle herding group, the Tutsis, moved down from the north and added a third ethnic population to the mix. Those groups assimilated over time and eventually all shared a variety of the same Bantu language, Rwanda, which is most often referred to as Kinyarwanda today (Rosendal, 2010).

It is clear that Kinyarwanda was used in the informal education experiences that dominated the pre-colonial era. Apprenticeships, legend sharing, games and other means of indigenous pre-colonial education were conducted in the language available to both teacher and student.

Colonial Language

Ailie Cleghorn makes the point that language of instruction is influenced by, and an influencer of, economics, politics and pedagogy (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005). It is impossible to analyze the reform initiative language of instruction in isolation from the cultural and historical context in which it exists. It is also impossible to examine language of instruction in isolation from matters of pedagogy and other reforms in educational systems. The colonial period of Rwandan history reinforces these two points.

During the period from 1906 – 1916, Rwanda was considered part of German East Africa. Missionary schools, the first formal schools established in Rwanda, primarily used German, Swahili and Kinyarwanda. Though under German rule, the missionaries who started the first few schools were French. As such, French was likely spoken in classrooms as well, even if not as a formal language of instruction. Of these, Swahili was used as the medium of instruction (MOI) in schools, as it was common to most of German East Africa (Kabanza, 2000). This move, to establish Swahili as the MOI in these first colonial schools, provides a significant commentary on the European colonial mindset. Not only was the

local language, Kinyarwanda not used in schools, but the choice of Swahili seems to lump Rwandans in with any other Africans under German rule without thought or regard for local indigenous language and cultural differences.

For most of its colonial history, Rwanda was under Belgian rule. In the great colonial lottery that followed World War I, Belgium established control over Rwanda and maintained that mastery until independence in 1962. During the period of the Belgian administration, three specific language reform efforts were implemented.

The first of these was ushered in upon Belgian mandate when power shifted from Germany to Belgium. French was the language of the Belgian government administration during the tenure of Belgium's colonial power in Rwanda. So, in 1917, French was introduced as the language of instruction, or the MOI.

Beginning in upper primary grades, P4 – P6, French was used in classrooms alongside the indigenous language. But, in the lower primary grades, the indigenous language was used almost exclusively. For a brief period during this first reform Swahili was still employed as the “indigenous” language, as carryover from short period of German control. However, Swahili was not the native language of most Rwandans. As such, the policy that established Swahili as the “indigenous” language was not adhered to or ever successful in its implementation. A return to a realistic policy ensued when Kinyarwanda replaced Swahili in that role in a move that returned the true indigenous language back into formal usage in classrooms (Rosendal, 2010).

In 1929, a division between rural schools and those in urban areas developed in regards to language practices. In urban schools, students were taught in French, while in more rural areas instruction often was a bit more skill-based and often taught in

Kinyarwanda (Kabanza, 2000). This division is one that is interesting to note, as it still exists in de facto form to some extent today. Employing teachers with language skills in any language other than Kinyarwanda has proven to be more difficult in rural areas. Whether in urban or rural schools, all teaching was done in Kinyarwanda up until grade 4 (Rosendal, 2010).

A minor reform in 1948 allowed for the usage of other languages in schools. Examples included the usage of Gujarati in Hindu schools in places such as Byuma and Ruhengeri. Swahili found its way back into a small number of Muslim schools that were primarily located in commercial centers that attracted Muslim foreigners for business purposes (Rosendal, 2010). Even Dutch, a significant language in Belgium, was introduced as a second language of study in some schools (Shyirambere, 1978). Kinyarwanda remained the MOI in the majority of schools, though French became the MOI in schools that more closely followed a European system beginning in grade 1. This reform represented ground gained by French as a language of instruction by moving it down into lower primary grades in a number of schools, as well as ground gained by languages other than French and Kinyarwanda.

The economics and politics at play in language of instruction decisions and efforts are easily identifiable. The small number of elites who had access as students in Rwandan schools during colonial years were groomed in the colonial language for much of their schooling. The goal of producing a small number of Rwandans who could fulfill local government and economic roles drove language policy in schools during those years. French was the colonial language of prestige and power (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Colonial ambitions and systems determined that access to that language

and the opportunities that resulted from exposure to it would be limited in order to maintain colonial balance. Educating large numbers of the population in the language of government, commerce and power did not suit the needs of the colonial relationship, which only required a minority elite of Rwandans to be literate in the non-indigenous language.

1962 – 1994: Independence to Genocide

As discussed in Chapter 3, independence did not spur significant and immediate reforms in education. Schools continued to operate as they had been operating under colonial rule for decades in many regards. This continuing status quo defined the lack of impact that independence had on the language of instruction, just as it defined the methods and practices of instruction mentioned in Chapter 3.

Following independence, there was a small shift to move the study of French, as a subject rather than as the language of instruction, down into grade 1 (Niyitanga, 2003). The MOI continued to be Kinyarwanda in most schools up to grade 4, when the shift was then made to French as the primary language of instruction in the years that immediately followed Rwandan independence.

A school law of 1966 determined that Kinyarwanda should be the MOI, but allowed for the minister of education to permit other languages to fill that role. That post-independence school law also mandated that Kinyarwanda and French were both compulsory subjects of study in secondary grades (Kabanza, 2000). Without substantive decisions by the government to address the language of instruction any differently than in colonial decades, the status quo remained. A minority elite of children were provided with instruction in the language of power. This status quo, rooted in the colonial era, provides

further evidence of the strength of the colonial legacy that maintained a tight hold on educational systems even as Rwanda became its own nation.

The reforms of the late 1970s were based around the central theme of a “rwandization” of the education system. These late 1970s reforms are often referred to as the Reform of 1979. This reform that focused and swung the pendulum away from western colonial-influenced practices included changes to language in schools.

Part of this reform included changing from a 6-year primary school system to an 8-year primary school system. A goal of this change was to provide more schooling in the primary level, in order to increase the level of education that students would have access to, as secondary access was limited. This particular systems change will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5. Here though, it is important to note that this change to an eight grade primary system also mandated that the MOI for all eight primary grades would be Kinyarwanda (MINEDUC, 1978).

In the 1979 –1980 school year, over 12,000 students in 77 schools in Rwanda were following this system that incorporated Kinyarwanda as the language of instruction through the eight years of primary school (Rosendal, 2010). A significant effort was made to write, publish and distribute textbooks and other materials in Kinyarwanda. Though Kinyarwanda had been a written language for more than a century, and a dictionary had been produced in 1912, linguistics experts agree that an established orthography was lacking in the late 1970s (Mutanguha, 2005). This made the production of school printed materials a uniquely challenging task. To tackle the issue of needing to establish written vocabulary and rules of a written language, a special government office was established and charged with creating terminology needed in school subject areas to fill in the gaps that

existed (Rosendal, 2010). This effort was successful in producing curriculum materials, and providing them in Kinyarwanda to many schools.

This reform of the late 1970s also mandated that French would be the MOI at the secondary level, which now included grades S3 – S6 (Rosendal, 2010). This continuance of official recognition of French as the language of instruction at the secondary level ensured that French would continue to be the language of prestige and power a generation after independence had been achieved. Small numbers of Rwandans enrolled as students in secondary schools. That elite minority continued in a francophone system that was the ticket to tertiary education and government employment.

In 1991, a reform package much less significant than the changes in the reform of 1979 reintroduced Swahili to secondary and tertiary levels as a subject of study. This would only last until the late 1990s, when Swahili again began to lose its place in the curriculum in Rwandan classrooms. The effort to include Swahili had been part of a larger push to unify East African nations (Ntakirutimana, 2002).

The last significant change in the language landscape in Rwanda prior to the violence of 1994 was the result of test data that indicated poor levels of understanding of French in secondary school exams. French would again be placed as a subject of study, not the language of instruction, in the lower primary grades. Poor secondary student achievement data led to the inclusion, once again, of French as a subject of study in primary grades, dipping down into P3 as the first year in which it would be included in the curriculum (Niyitanga, 2003). With this last change of language policy of the period from independence to the genocide, French strengthened its claim as the language of significance in schools and in larger Rwandan society in the early 1990s.

1994 – 1998: Genocide and Reconstruction

Some consider the first significant shift in language policy that followed the genocide to be a practical matter resulting from the influx of English speaking refugees who had been living outside of Rwanda. English was the language carried back across the borders, into Rwanda, by many who returned. Schools would increasingly be faced with demand for English inclusion in instruction. Some reports indicate that nearly the same number of refugees returned after the genocide as the number of people who were killed during the genocide, some 800,000 people (Prunier, 2009). Most of those who returned were English speaking who had lived in neighboring countries and learned as they lived in an Anglophone influenced nation. Smaller estimates document that approximately 5% of the Rwandan population by 1996, 331,896 people, had returned from Anglophone countries with significant knowledge or fluency in English (Rugira, 1997). Regardless of the difference of numbers regarding the returnees, it became clear that English had arrived in Rwanda, as hundreds of thousands returned with the ability and experience to speak it.

The majority of these refugees were Tutsis, some who had been living in exile for decades due to the ethnic tensions prior to the 1994 genocide. The most influential of these were the members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) who were led by Paul Kagame. It is the RPF who returned and ended the genocide by routing the Hutu perpetrators. RPF members returned as victors, and as such were often able to attain powerful positions in the reconstruction era government (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Most of the RPF had lived in Uganda and trained in the Ugandan military as they awaited the opportunity to return to their native land. In Uganda, they had used

English as they lived in that Anglophone neighboring nation. English was truly the language of the victors (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

However, French has retained a powerful place in Rwandan society. As recently as 2009, public signage utilized more French than English (Rosendal, 2009). French speakers who returned from neighboring Congo after the genocide joined Hutu elite, who had been educated in Rwanda's francophone system (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). As late as 2009, it is estimated that as many or more Rwandans speak French as do English (Rosendal, 2009). It is agreed that these two elitist groups retain characteristics of rivalry in today's Rwanda (Hintjens, 2008).

This unique linguistic landscape, largely propelled by the genocide, led to the 1996 government decision for Rwanda to move ahead and become a trilingual nation, with Kinyarwanda, French and English all receiving formal status as official languages. In theory, all three were afforded equal status as they were recognized officially by the new post-genocide government (LeClerc, 2008).

The impact of this trilingual policy would be significant in Rwandan schools, as the education system was to be used as the vehicle to educate future Rwandans in all three languages. The initial decision that was made was to allow students who spoke French as a second language to continue studying French as a subject in secondary schools. Similarly, English was a subject of study for students who chose to continue to pursue it as a second language (Rosendal, 2010).

Primary teachers and students were expected to learn all three languages simultaneously, with Kinyarwanda being established as the MOI for grades P1 – P3. This expectation was evidenced by a 1997 curriculum revision produced by the Ministry of

Education (MINEDUC, 1997). In primary grades P4 – P6, French and English traded places with Kinyarwanda and were established as the languages of instruction, as Kinyarwanda was relegated to a subject of study (Niyitanga, 2003).

For those students who were fortunate enough to receive a seat in a tertiary institution to continue their education, they faced the expectation that they be capable of producing academic level work in both French and English (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). This would of course be an expectation that would prove to be difficult for a nation that was desperately working to expand tertiary opportunities for its citizens.

This system would continue until 2008, when another major language policy, promoted by President Kagame, was mandated that called upon schools as the chief tool of implementation (Rosendal, 2010). Transitioning to a trilingual society and school system would be an enormous challenge to even the most successful and robust educational system in a developed nation. To mandate this trilingual program in a developing world nation, wracked with destruction following the slaughter of 1994, was perhaps an example of letting visioning outpace the resources needed to implement. In any event, Rwanda moved to a trilingual education system within two years after the genocide. As such, reconstruction would continue within a context that honored all three languages.

1999 – Present: Post-Reconstruction Development

The trilingual Rwanda of 1996 – 2008 would come to an end in favor of English, and to the detriment of French. In late 2008, at the direction of President Paul Kagame, French was dropped as an official language by Rwandan law, and English was elevated to a new status (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). In October of that same year, the Rwandan Cabinet directed the Minister of Education to put an intensive program into place

that would require English in all Rwandan classrooms at all levels (Statement on cabinet resolutions of 08 October 2008, 2008). The 2008 decisions favoring English mandated that English become the language of instruction all the way down to the 1st grade level in primary schools. The dramatic overnight move from a trilingual system to English only as the MOI in schools dominates the language reform initiative during this period of years that followed the reconstruction period.

This abrupt change in policy was challenging in that it called for an immediate change in practice to be accomplished seemingly overnight. However, an emphasis of English over other languages, even those indigenous to a country, is not unique. Favoring and mandating English as the language of instruction is a growing worldwide trend (Brock - Utne & Hopson, 2005). Rwanda's efforts to adopt English as the language of instruction are not without models to observe from other parts of the continent and globe. Many developing and developed nations are considering policies around the usage of English as the medium of instruction (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Continental neighbors, Namibia (Harlech-Jones, 1990), Mali (Canvin, 2007), Botswana (Magogwe, 2007), and South Africa (Heugh, 2007) have all attempted language policy changes in recent years that favor English in schools (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). In other parts of the globe, such as China (Hu, 2007), Pakistan (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007) and South Korea, decisions that elevate English instruction in schools are being made that also reflect this trend (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

In Rwanda, the decision to pursue English as the language of instruction is more complex than in some other nations. Often, English is viewed as a means to economic development in a global marketplace. To developing nations, seeking a seat at the table of

the developed world that would provide some relief from the crippling effects of poverty for its people, English is often part of a larger economically motivated effort towards development. That economic factor is present in the minds of policy makers and people in Rwanda as well.

The appeal of the rise of English in Rwandan society is often economic in the minds of the typical Rwandan who views English as a tool of hope. Along with the belief that the English speaking world is a more reliable source of economic and development aid than is France, Belgium and the rest of the Francophone world community, Rwandans believe that English is the language of progress (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). However, there was much more than this typical economic factor at play in the minds of the decisions made around language in recent years.

The genocide proved to be a pivotal event in the relationship between France and Rwanda. In the years that followed the killing in 1994, multiple indictments in French courts were filed against members of the RPF, the Tutsi led group that ended the slaughter at the hands of the Hutu extremists. Included in the French post-genocide attacks on the RPF were claims that President Kagame was directly responsible for the assassination that unfolded as then President Habyarimana's plane was downed (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). Linking Kagame to the event that triggered the genocide did not prove to be popular with the Kagame-led government that is still in power today.

In response to the French court and government campaign against Kagame and the RPF, Rwanda accused France of supporting the Hutu extremists by providing aid and training to the genocidaires in the refugee camps that sprung up in neighboring countries in the months that followed the RPS's victory (Mamdani, 2001). The bitterness between

the two nations festered in the years that followed the genocide, with claims and allegations being exchanged between the two nations. In 2008, Kagame's chief of protocol and former RPF officer, Rose Kabuye, was arrested as a result of the French court indictments. This is largely viewed as the key triggering event for Rwandan government's decision to drop French as an official language, and to drive English as the language of instruction down into even primary grades in Rwandan schools (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

It is interesting to note that the growing animosity between France and Rwanda is viewed by some in France within a larger context of a Anglophone conspiracy to reduce the relevance of the Francophone world community. Some French scholars support this thinking by pointing to the geographic location of Rwanda as straddling the French speaking Africa to the west and English speaking Africa to the east (LeClerc, 2008). If such a sinister plot exists, French actions in recent years seem to have played into the plotters' hands remarkably well.

Also playing a role in motivating the language reforms of the post-reconstruction period is the Rwandan government's ongoing efforts to eliminate ethnic differences that are seen as fertile soil for the genocide of 1994. In order to fully understand Rwanda's language policy, it is necessary to understand the efforts being made to "eradicate genocide ideology". Beginning in 2006, President Kagame began an official campaign aimed at that eradication (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

Central to the campaign to eradicate genocide ideology is the issue of ethnic identity. Rwanda has taken a unique stance on ethnic identity in recent years. In short, Rwanda has taken the stance the ethnicity does not exist inside its borders (Lewis Samuelson &

Warshauer Freedman, 2009). It is no longer allowable for citizens to discuss differences, or to even identify, between Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Though outsiders continue to question and pursue ethnic lines and identities of those groups, that work is not a topic of discussion inside Rwanda (Eltringham, 2004).

The simplicity of the campaign's goal is stark. If the lines between Hutu and Tutsi do not exist, then conflict cannot be rooted in ethnic differences. In 2006, the Rwandan Senate adopted a definition of an ethnic group that assigns a common ethnicity to all Rwandans who share a common language, culture, religion and territory (Rwandan Senate, 2006). From the perspective of a development-focused government, this definition is supported by the move to English as the language of schools and education.

The government asserts that as nearly all Rwandans shared Kinyarwanda as a common language prior to European colonization, it was the colonists who separated Rwandans into Hutu and Tutsi in ways that otherwise would not have been determined. That shared language of Kinyarwanda is proof of the single ethnicity of Rwanda prior to colonial meddling. Language had become a proxy for ethnicity in the years that followed the genocide in the trilingual culture and policy context. This was to be turned back with the adoption of English only as the MOI in schools, while Kinyarwanda would continue to be the language in homes for many (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

The definition of ethnicity that was adopted by the Senate in 2006 served its purpose, though is overly simplistic in the assessment of some. Shared language, religion, customs and culture do not necessarily equate to a single ethnicity. Other distinguishing features often play a role in separating people into ethnic groups (Eltringham, 2004). The story told of a single ethnic group, Rwandans, does not necessarily eliminate differences

that allow people to separate into groups. Though the words Hutu and Tutsi are not spoken, and as ethnic labels are not used inside Rwanda, other differences are present that permit Rwandans to categorize. Some of these are occupation, wealth and region (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009). To that end, the goal of eliminating differences between people by mandating English as the language of instruction, and outlawing tribal divisions of yesteryear will likely continue to be elusive.

The 2008 government insistence on English in schools was the result of a number of factors arising from the hope that English would deliver on a number of aims. Economic development, increased foreign aid, revenge in the midst of tensions with France, and the elimination of genocide ideology via the denial of ethnic differences all played a role in the decision. To outsiders, the move by the Rwandan government in late 2008 came as a surprise. Similarly, Rwandans did not receive much, if any, warning. The 2003 Education Sector Policy outlines the continuance of a trilingual system. The Education Sector Plan for 2008 – 2012 follows that policy, and details further trilingual system direction and measures (Rosendal, 2010). Neither report gave Rwandans any hint that a change that would drop French from the trilingual system and elevate English was being considered.

Understandably, the surprise nature of the policy change led to some confusion as to how and when the policy would be implemented. As 2008 wound down, there were still no official documents to be found at the Ministry of Education relating to the jump to English as MOI, even though the implementation was said to begin in 2009. Others could be heard discussing a two-year phased implementation. Some at the Ministry were hopeful of such a gradual shift and were planning to submit a proposal to that end (Rosendal, 2010). In the end, implementation began in 2009.

The policy change of 2008 led to English being forced into action as the MOI in all three primary grades. This practice was contradictory to the advice of outside experts and African experts working on such language issued in education in developing world countries. Both UNESCO (UNESCO, 2003) and the African Union, through the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN, 2010), called for educating students at least through the first three primary grades in the indigenous language. There are risks posed by this growing trend to adopt English (Cummins, 2000). Rassool stated that people who were once colonized “often make linguistic choices that reinforce existing social, political, and economic inequalities; and in doing so, collude in their own collective disempowerment and/or dispossession” (Rassool, 2007, p. 2). Those risks Cummins details may best be described as a backfiring of the shift to English, both in the context of learning in the classroom and in a broader cultural context.

Ultimately, policy writing and policy implementation must be examined to determine impacts of any rule making by decision makers. It is not unusual for classroom practice to stray from education policy and intent in both developing world and developed world classrooms.

Rwanda’s efforts towards language reform in schools prove to be a case that demonstrates the difficult nature of policy implementation in education systems. Prior to the 2008 dramatic policy change, the trilingual era was rife with policy writing and implementation practices that did not align.

The reality in the classroom was often quite different from the ambition of this aggressive trilingual policy. In numbers of schools in Kigali, French was actually being used as the language of instruction for the first three primary years, and often beyond. Though

this stood in stark contrast to the official trilingual policy mandates, it appears that schools began making the shift to French in the lower grades around 2003 and 2004. French as the MOI in primary schools was bluntly denied by authorities, but was observable in many schools in the capitol city during those years (Rosendal, 2010). It is likely that the decision to use French as the MOI in lower primary grades was aimed at improving the 4th grade exams, which were administered in French.

Further misalignment of policy and implementation is evidenced by a practice referred to as code-switching. Teachers and students often reverted back to their native language of Kinyarwanda when French or English became an obstacle to the content (Rosendal, 2010). In sub-Saharan Africa, code-switching occurs when teachers and students use a language other than the officially sanctioned MOI, which is most often a European language. Typically, one or more African language is used when either the teacher or the students are not able to comprehend and communicate in the required MOI. Particularly in rural areas of Rwanda, code-switching existed prior to and after the 2008 change to English only. Using Kinyarwanda when necessary to handle the subject content was observed and documented as normal practice in upper primary (P4 – P6) and in secondary grades in rural schools (Ball & Warshauer Freedman, 2004).

In African nations, this practice is often frowned upon by authorities who call for a European MOI at all times in specific grades. Using languages other than the official MOI causes angst for most teachers in African nations, as they know they are not adhering to government policy. It is understandable that when researchers observed in South African classrooms for purposes of studying language usage and policy, teachers and students used the MOI more than they did when they were not being observed (Probyn, 2006).

Code-switching is often used in African nations when teachers use the indigenous language for purposes of classroom management (Canagarajah, 1995). Teachers also code-switch when giving task instructions and organizing students into groups for group work (Altinyelken, 2010). Teachers engage in code-switching more when teaching a vocabulary specific subject such as science, and typically alternate language more at the beginning of a lesson introducing a new concept (Ndayipfukamiye, 1994).

Though considered taboo, or an underground practice in sub-Saharan African schools, code-switching is often used in multilingual classrooms in developed nations strategically and with purpose (Clegg & Afitska, 2011). Multiple theories of bilingual education support a form of code-switching in regular instruction of students (Clegg & Afitska, 2011). This is common practice in two-way bilingual education programs in the United States (Garcia, 2009). Code-switching is common in multilingual classrooms throughout the world. In planned multilingual programs, the language alternations are characterized by short-term alternations (Clegg & Afitska, 2011).

Code-switching, considered best practice in multilingual classrooms in developed nations, is not approved of by the government in Rwandan classrooms. However, that lack of sanctioning by the government does not prevent Kinyarwanda from being spoken by teachers and students. In fact, my own observations over the last three years indicate that the practice is quite common in Rwanda. Schools in and around the capitol of Kigali use less code-switching than do rural schools. This is often due to the differences in the level of education between teachers in Kigali and rural areas (Nathan Hamilton, personal communication, June, 2010). As in other African nations, alternating languages is an

outlawed practice in Rwanda that is widely used in classrooms serving upper primary through upper secondary level students.

In multiple schools in various parts of the country over the last three years, I met with Rwandan teachers to discuss their challenges and successes. Invariably, the conversations turned to language of instruction challenges that most are facing. Teachers express how difficult it is to learn English, which is new to most teachers, and simultaneously instruct in that language. Lewis Samuelson and Warshauer Freedman cited an interview with a Rwandan headmaster in which the school leader expressed a sense of hopelessness regarding the ability of his staff to teach lessons in English (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009, p. 207). I have heard that same concern from headmasters in schools that I visited.

As Rwanda continues to move ahead with its ambitious English-only initiative, the concerns are significant for students as well. Teachers who cannot instruct adequately in English resort to desperation driven code-switching that does not provide the adequate instruction to build student literacy in either language. This will predictably lead to students who do not develop adequate literacy skills in either Kinyarwanda or English (Lewis Samuelson & Warshauer Freedman, 2009).

Chapter 5: Enrollment Developments

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of developments that relate directly to changes in enrollment systems in Rwandan schools. Multiple factors led to changes in enrollment figures and trends during the timeline of this study. Colonial interests and motivations, Rwandization efforts, ethnic quotas rooted in tensions, modern global efforts to provide primary education for all, and recent government mandates that make schooling through secondary grades mandatory for all children, have all played a role in changing enrollments patterns in Rwandan schools.

Those changing patterns of enrollment have in turn impacted the education system in numerous ways. Teacher, materials, and facilities shortages have all been compounded by increasing numbers of students crowding into classrooms. Recent aggressive legislation requiring secondary schooling for all has strained systems on each of these fronts in dramatic fashion.

Studying the causes and effects of developments related to enrollment provides a necessary contextual component that informs the analysis of the two reform initiatives previously addressed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. Understanding the reform efforts relating to enrollment sets the background for reform efforts in the areas of student-centered instruction and language.

Pre-colonial and Colonial Enrollment Developments

The first formal school was established in Rwanda in 1900 (Hayman, 2005b). Prior to that, during the pre-colonial era, schooling was informal and enrollment figures and systems were not relevant. That changed when Europeans determined to establish a small number of schools that were patterned after the western schools of the early 20th century.

That first school, and those that followed were largely established and operated by the Catholic Church. Schools continued to be the work of the church during the period of formal Belgian colonial rule from 1919 to independence in 1962 (Hayman, 2005b). Up until the 1950s, schools offered access almost exclusively to the minority Tutsi elite.

A new generation of Catholic missionaries working in schools in the 1950s was integral in expanding more access to Hutu children. The efforts of these missionaries were driven by sympathy and a desire to be more equitable to the Hutu in ways that promised upward mobility across Rwandan society (Prunier, 2002). The effort to provide more access to Hutus was fostered by Tutsi demands for independence in the late 1950s that in turn added tension to the relationship between that minority group and colonial Belgians (Chretien, 2000). This shift towards access for Hutus in the late 1950s also resulted in Hutus being granted access to post-secondary education for the first time (Prunier, 2002).

At independence, fewer than 400,000 students were enrolled in primary and secondary schools, with just over 11,000 of those in secondary schools (Tikly et al., 2003, p. 28). Primary level enrollment figures ranged from 217,000 (Erny, 1978) to 386,000 (Tikly, et al., 2003). The discrepancy is evidence of the difficulty of collecting data from the colonial era. Erny reported that 217,000 to be a significant increase from the 160,000 primary students in 1960, two years prior to independence (Erny, 1978, p. 236). Whether actual primary figures were closer to the low end or the high end of that range, this represented a very restricted enrollment system, as the general population stood at 3 million people (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2004).

1962 – 1994: Independence to Genocide

Due to an effort to consolidate primary schools throughout the country, there was a decline in the number of primary schools from 2017 in 1968 (Erny, 1978, p. 236) to 1884 by early 1994 (MOE, 1998). Erny reported that there were 5059 classrooms in the entire country in 1965 (Erny, 1978, p. 236). That number would grow dramatically over the next three decades, to approach a total of nearly 19,000 classrooms by 1990 (Obura, 2003, p. 40). The Ministry of Education typically chose to add classrooms to existing facilities rather than construct new schools. This resulted in an uneven distribution of schools throughout the country that was noted in a 1992 UNICEF report (Cooksey, 1992), and documented by Obura over ten years later as still being an uneven pattern of geographic distribution (Obura, 2003).

Until the major education reforms of the late 1970s, the system was organized to provide six years of primary education and six years of secondary education. Each of those 6-year periods was divided in half with the first three years of each being referred to as “lower” and the second three years as “upper.” The system was often noted as being a 6 (3+3) primary system followed by a 6 (3+3) secondary system (Hayman, 2005b). That system was changed to an 8-year primary system in the late 1970s. The secondary cycle was reduced to a 3-year span, and funneled a small stream of students into vocational strands in keeping with the focus on practical skills that were emphasized by those reforms. However, retention and completion rates failed to keep pace with the significant rate of growth in enrollment and classrooms during this period (Obura, 2003). In 1972, only 7 percent of primary students transitioned to secondary schools. That number crept up

slowly and had reached a transition rate of just over nine percent in 1990 (Gakuba, 1991, p. 8) and ten percent by 1992 (Obura, 2003, p. 127)

The changes in the primary and secondary cycles during the reform of the late 1970s were largely aimed at producing a workforce that was more skilled in practical agricultural and other vocational skills, particularly in rural areas. Post-secondary vocational training centers had been set up prior to independence in 1962. The centers that enrolled girls focused on craft and home care skills. Boys were taught agricultural skills that were key to the subsistence farming that would dominate the work lives of many in the years to come (Obura, 2003). Those skill centers were transformed into rural training and study centers called CERAI (*centres d'enseignement rural et artisanal integre*), in the 1970s that taught limited academic subjects alongside vocational skills themed curriculum.

CERAI grew in enrollment during the decade that followed their launch. Enrollment rose from less than 17,000 in 289 centers in 1982 to nearly 27,000 students in 328 centers by 1988. Transition rates from primary grades to CERAI had not reached twenty percent by 1991 (Obura, 2003, p. 42). Other vocational training was provided to students of post-primary age through an eclectic collection of venues under the purview of the Ministry of Youth. Those included Youth Training Centres, Youth Work Camps, Youth Apprenticeship Centres, and Training and Production Workshops (GoR, 1990). This hodge-podge of training programs failed to deliver graduates with the skills that had been envisioned by those who wrote them into existence during the late 1970s. Students who left these centers did not possess literacy or vocational skills that they would need. This led to

widespread disillusionment in the early 1990s with the CERAI, which were not restarted after the violence in 1994 (GoR, 1991).

A second reform effort was launched during this period between independence and the genocide, beginning in the early 1990s. In response to the failure of the CERAI and vocational training efforts, officials returned to a system with six years of primary and six years of secondary. The final three years of secondary were streamed towards specific skills and trainings, as they had been prior to the rise of the reforms of the late 1970s. This change meant that grades 7 and 8 would no longer be a part of the primary cycle, but would again become the first two years of the three-year lower secondary cycle (*tronc common*) (Obura, 2003).

Throughout the pre-genocide period, most schools continued to be established and managed by churches. The government was not able to provide for construction and other funding to meet the growing demand. Because of the limited capacity provided by government run schools, those who could afford to pay for private schooling for their children did so. Wealthy Tutsis partnered with churches to construct and run schools due to limited enrollment and the growing tensions surrounding the quota system for those seats (Hayman, 2005b).

Following a common African trend established in Rwanda during the 1920s, a system had been established that blended church and state in providing for education. Though most schools were owned by the church, the government provided funding, including the cost of teacher salaries, through a system called *libre-subsidie* (Obura, 2003). This arrangement usually resulted in the government taking responsibility for curriculum, salaries and other yearly costs. In turn, the church agreed to be responsible for

construction, maintenance and daily responsibilities of management (Cooksey, 1992). This blending of church and state in schools systems would continue following independence.

According to the SNEC, the Secretariate National de l'Enseignement Catholique, seventy percent of students were enrolled in catholic schools in 1990. The remaining thirty percent were divided between government schools, that Americans would refer to as public schools, and other privately run schools (SNEC, 1992). This system of shared ownership and responsibility led to confusion and tensions that flared up frequently in the decades prior to the genocide. Though both sides tended to speak of a system that provided for constructive collaboration, the reality was that both sides were unhappy with the work of the other, and tended to point the finger of blame (Obura, 2003). This system, a blending of church and state that requires partnership between the public and private sectors, still exists today.

By the 1970s all government schools and schools assisted by the government, *libre subsidie* schools, were determining enrollment access for students based on ethnic and regional quotas (Obura, 2003). It is difficult to find documented evidence of the discriminatory practices of these ethnic quotas prior to the genocide. However, it is generally accepted today to make it clear that the quotas were monitored and analyzed regularly. A report from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in the 1989 – 1990 school year organizes enrollment figures by ethnicity for each province in the country (MINEPRISEC, 1990).

Access to secondary schooling was based on a competitive process that was shrouded in mystery. Eighty-five percent of secondary students were selected based on performance and ethnic quotas. Ten percent were selected by the churches connected to

schools, and five percent were chosen by the Ministry of Education (Obura, 2003). The results of exams taken at the end of primary school to determine access to secondary level education were not published. The criteria that was used when analyzing exams for enrollment consideration also remained a mystery (Obura, 2003). Government policy left space for decisions based on ethnicity. The Education Act of 1985 states that selections to secondary seats were made with respect to student results with attention being given to ratios relative to ethnicity and gender (MOE, 1985). The confusion and secrecy around enrollment opportunities, coupled with the tension resulting from the quota system, amplified the larger societal animosity between Hutu and Tutsi.

1994 – 1998: Genocide and Reconstruction

Though the doors to schools re-opened in the fall of 1994, many students were missing from classrooms. There was a thirty percent decrease in the number of primary school students from the pre-genocide numbers when primary schools reopened in July of 1994. (World Bank, 2004, p.32). Some of that decrease is due to the number of children who were killed or became refugees in neighboring nations. For the nearly forty percent of children who were orphaned by the slaughter, school often was not available through circumstances beyond their control (Bridgeland, et al., 2009). For some, working for survival became the most pressing need. Often, foster parents or others who provided care forced children to work (Obura, 2005). Some between the ages of 14 and 17, children who were found to have been perpetrators of violence, were placed in detention centers (Cantwell, 1997).

Obura emphasized, “It has to be appreciated today how very difficult it was for parents to believe that it was safe to bring their children back to school in late 1994”

(Obura, 2003, p. 57). Schools and churches had been supposed safe havens during the violence. Many who fled and gathered in those places were often slaughtered by the same teachers or church leaders who had earlier gained their trust in those roles. Sending children back to schools would be difficult for many. Obura reports the following account (Obura, 2003, p. 57) observed during a visit to a school in 1995: Teachers and children went about their lessons in the midst of earthen walls that were damaged from the violence. A dirt playground had a patch of unmaintained grass that was littered with clothing and bones of children who had been killed there. It would be some time later before the remains would be given the proper respect of a customary burial. To these places, with stories steeped in horror, children returned as students.

Radio Rwanda, once used to encourage the killers to be vigilant about their bloody work, was used by officials to encourage teachers and students to return to schools (Cantwell, 1997, p. 36). The newly appointed Minister of Education travelled from community to community to meet with teachers and parents, encouraging the return of students. He often brought local leaders to serve as a home-grown lobbyists for school enrollment (Obura, 2003).

The students who did return to schools often came back to crowded classrooms. Though student numbers were diminished, those who returned were faced with overcrowding resulting from a shortage of teachers. In an effort to address that teacher shortage, grade twelve students who graduated in the months after schools reopened were recruited to be primary school teachers. When schools reopened, there were approximately 11,000 teachers. By 1997, the number of teachers had grown to 19,000. Though the growth was significant, seventy percent of these were not sufficiently qualified

(Cantwell, 1997). These unqualified teachers often had only two days of training and were equipped with only emergency teacher packages of curriculum and materials provided by UNICEF. Each package contained materials for one teacher and 80 students (Latham, et al., 2006).

The reconstruction years were marked by rapid student enrollment increases. The deficit in enrollment numbers that resulted from the violence quickly trended upwards as students and families overcame obstacles to send children to school. Analysis by the World Bank indicates that though the genocide caused a decrease of nearly one-third of the pre-genocide primary enrollment total of 1.2 million students (World Bank, 2004). By 1998 primary enrollments had risen rapidly to surpass the 1993 pre-genocide total. Not only had the primary student enrollment numbers eclipsed the pre-genocide totals, those 1998 totals matched the pre-genocide trend for projected enrollment for 1998. Between 1975 and 1993, primary enrollment had risen at an average rate of 3.9% per year (World Bank, 2004). If the genocide had not occurred, and that rate had remained constant for the years between 1994 and 1998, primary enrollment figures would have been approximately the same as they were four years after the genocide (World Bank, 2004).

Primary enrollments had been a source of some success prior to the genocide. Gross enrollment at the primary level had outpaced the average rate for Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2004). However, the opposite was true of pre-genocide secondary enrollment rates. Rwanda's secondary gross enrollment rates lagged significantly behind their Sub-Saharan neighbors prior to the genocide (World Bank, 2004). It was at the secondary level that post-genocide enrollment growth did not have pre-genocide success to call upon. Already far short according to continental comparison, the Ministry aggressively

pursued increases in enrollments in those grades. There were near immediate gains in secondary enrollment rates. Secondary school enrollment figures rose dramatically during the years immediately following the genocide. 1996 secondary enrollment stood at 50,000 students. That number would begin rising at a rate of more than twenty percent per year to reach a 1998 total of approximately 90,000 secondary students (World Bank, 2004, p. 32).

The growth in secondary school enrollments is a testament to the Ministry's work and successes in a sector that had previously been supported to an unusual extent by private schools. The World Bank reported that a sample of twenty-five African countries indicates that twenty percent of secondary schools were private schools. In Rwanda, that rate was forty-five percent in 1996 and remained constant during the remaining reconstruction years as raw enrollment totals soared (World Bank, 2004, p. 33). This provides evidence that the Rwandan government did not solely rely on international support even in a pre-genocide area of weakness following the violence. Even as secondary enrollment figures rose dramatically, the ratio of public to private remained constant. The government chose to tackle secondary enrollment rates, rather than wait for the world to solve the issue through an increased percentage of private schools at that level.

Those who were working to bury the dead and dig out from the rubble of the genocide often pointed to schools as an institution that had failed Rwandan society at large. It was no longer permissible for teachers or students to distinguish themselves or others based on tribe or ethnicity (Bridgeland, et al., 2009). All would simply be known as Rwandans. Though much of the division fostered in schools had been a result of informal curriculum, school officials worked to intentionally use curriculum to rebuild, heal and

move forward in a way that prevented divisions of the past. Romain Murenzi, former Minister of Education, noted in a report delivered at a National Curriculum Conference that curriculum had been silent when it should have spoken, and spoken when it should have been silent in years leading up to 1994 (NCDC, 2002). Shifting the curricular messages would be key work in years that followed the genocide.

The government identified two core roles for education in the years that followed the genocide. One of those was to provide an education system that promoted peace and reconciliation (Hayman, 2005b). This value-aimed role was coupled with a recommitment to reducing poverty through an education system that produced citizens who could positively contribute to the economic development of the nation. These two roles were clearly identified in the Ministry of Education's 1998 study of the education sector that was produced with support of UNESCO and UNDP (MOE, 1998)

Formal curricular changes were made during the reconstruction years that included launching of multiple peace education initiatives (Abebe, Gbesso, & Nyawalo, 2006), and reconciliation curriculums (Bridgeland, et al., 2009). Abeba, Gbesso and Nyawalo authored a United Nations report that documented work around the world in the area of peace education (Abebe, et al., 2006).

However, the Rwandan government took other curriculum measures as well in an effort to influence the nation away from ethnic division. The government banned the teaching of history in both primary and secondary schools, until decisions about the content of that history were made (Obura, 2003). Language was emphasized as a subject of importance, with both French and English elevated in the curriculum. Less attention was given to mathematics and sciences as a result (Obura, 2003).

Supplying learning materials to support these reconstruction era changes in curriculum proved to be difficult. Pre-genocide Kinyarwanda language and mathematics textbooks were reprinted out of desperation, though this conflicted with the new emphasis on other languages of instruction (Obura, 2003). These core, and other, textbooks were slow to make their way into schools throughout the country. Many schools did without any textbooks for three school years after the genocide due to instability, lack of direction and lack of resources (Obura, 2003).

The problems to be addressed during the reconstruction years were many. The Rwandan government has been commended for its efforts across the varied challenges during these years. Significant loss and trauma for students, teachers and families dominated schools as the doors re-opened. Losses and damage to facilities and equipment were widespread. Enrollment increases were pursued and achieved, as student numbers reached unprecedented highs only a few years after the genocide. Curriculum reforms were designed and implemented. Texts and other learning materials were in short supply, and efforts were begun to provide those in support of new curriculum reforms. To do any single piece of this work in education reform would have been a significant challenge. To pursue each of these, during the months and years that followed the horrors of the genocide of 1994 is remarkable.

1999 – Present: Post-Reconstruction Development

The system of six years of primary followed by six years of secondary remained unchanged in the years that followed reconstruction, and continue today. Though the structure of that system remained constant, Rwanda aggressively implemented changes in pursuit of significant change in the student enrollment flow in that system. This was

pursued primarily through two different measures related to access. These two measures, eliminating school fees and requiring school attendance, had different levels of impact on enrollment growth and widening of access during these years. Of these two, the requirement of school attendance has been the most impactful.

Primary school enrollment had been an area of success for Rwanda in the years prior to and immediately following the genocide. Gross enrollment rates had been significantly higher than in other parts of the continent for grades P1 – P6. This would continue to be an area of growth and success in the years that followed reconstruction.

Enrollment in primary school grew at an average annual rate of 5.4% between 1998 and 2009. This resulted in raw enrollment number increasing from 1998 totals of more than 1.2 million to 2008 – 2009 numbers just under 2.2 million primary students. According to a 2012 EICV Household Survey, between the 2005-2006 school year and the 2010-2011 school year, the primary level net enrollment rate rose from 86.6% to 91.7% (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012). Those figures are slightly lower than those gathered and published by the Ministry of Education for that same time period, but are considered to be more accurate (Paxton, 2012).

A continuing challenge for Rwanda is the primary completion rate. Though initial enrollment rates compare favorably to other Sub-Saharan nations, the primary completion rate has historically been lower than continental neighbors (World Bank, 2004). Improving the completion rate has required attention to drop out prevention and retention policies. Gains have been made, and 2010 data indicates a 78.6 primary completion rate (Paxton, 2012).

School fees were eliminated for the 2003 – 2004 school year. Surprisingly, the elimination of school fees for primary did not result in a significant increase in enrollment as indicated in growth rate, raw totals of students or gross enrollment rate. This lack of impact based on fee elimination is considered to be evidence of success in primary enrollment that had reached a degree of saturation that led to an effect of diminishing returns. Also at play is the likelihood that decisions made by families to not enroll children in schools were made for reasons other than an inability to pay the school fees (World Bank, 2011).

The 2003 -2004 school year also saw the elimination of school fees in the lower secondary grades (World Bank, 2011). A 2010 USAID report states that secondary fees were not reduced until 2007 (Lynd, 2010). The conflicting reports on the timing of fee reductions or eliminations at the secondary level are likely evidence that implementation of this policy decision was inconsistent during those first years, as the government grants meant to replace student fee revenue was not always forthcoming (World Bank, 2011).

Gains in secondary enrollment were sharp in the decade of years from 1998 through 2008. Enrollment in S1 – S3 rose from 68.4 thousands students to 183.3 thousand during that period (World Bank, 2011, p. 59). The percentage of private secondary school students decreased from nearly fifty percent to just over twenty-five percent between 1998 and 2008 (World Bank, 2011, p. 62). This trend, coupled with the near tripling of *tronc commun* students is clear evidence that children are enrolling in public secondary schools who previously would not have extended their education beyond the primary years. The growth in enrollment in S1 – S3 is the result of continued increases in primary enrollment

and the fee elimination that has been implemented at the secondary levels (World Bank, 2011).

Higher secondary grades have witnessed increased enrollment trends similar to that in grades S1 – S3. Enrollment in grades S4 – S6 increased from just under 37,000 in 1998 to just under 105,000 in 2008 (World Bank, 2011). Most of the growth in enrollment in the higher three secondary grades were included in what is referred to as the general section. The general section is typical of a comprehensive high school in western systems. More specific vocational training exists in specialty programs designed to align to specific vocational training. Specialty upper secondary programs that focused on such vocational training did not see significant growth, with teacher training programs actually seeing a reduction in enrollment due to poor working conditions and pay associated with being a teacher (World Bank, 2011). The resulting strain from smaller numbers training to be teachers and rapid increases in student enrollment is obvious to predict and is currently a chief challenge of the system. An increase in students that is not matched by a similar increase in teachers being added to the system is the result. The student to teacher ratio has increased to 68:1, and is likely continuing to rise under the strain of successful efforts to increase enrollment (Lynd, 2010).

The most significant reform effort that has impacted enrollment developments in the period following the genocide is the effort to require schooling for all children beyond the primary grades. Millennium Goal 2 calls for completion of primary level schooling for one hundred percent of children. President Kagame set his sights higher than just the meeting of that goal in 2009 when the government passed into law a uniquely aggressive 9-years basic education policy (9YBE). This law requires one hundred percent of children to

complete all six year of primary school and the first three years of secondary school, or *tronc commun* (Paxton, 2012).

In theory, enrollment rates for the first three years of secondary school should have rocketed upwards following the 2009 9YBE policy. It is clear that more children are staying in school longer, but the progression rate from primary to secondary school still represents a dramatic number of students who don't continue on to secondary education. In the three school years, from 2009 to 2011, the Ministry of Education reports increases in primary completion rates from a 2009 mark of nearly seventy-five percent to a 2011 mark of just under eighty percent. During those same years, the Ministry reported progression from primary to secondary grades trending upwards from a 2009 rate of nearly thirteen percent to approximately twenty-six percent in 2011 (MINEDUC, 2012). The gap between those completing primary schooling and those who are enrolling in secondary schools is projected to close as more students complete primary education on time. The percentage of primary completers who are older represent those who have been retained or began primary school late. Those numbers are trending downwards, leading to more primary completers completing earlier. Completing primary on time raises the chances of transitioning into secondary grades (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2012).

In 2012, Rwanda continued its extraordinary policy making in regards to compulsory education compared to other developing nations. Just three years after the unique 9YBE policy was launched, those seeking to reform by requiring school attendance through higher grades took the next logical step. The January 23, 2012 edition the newspaper, *The Rwanda Focus*, announced that beginning in February, twelve years of education would be required of Rwandan children (Rwirahira, 2012).

Citing successes achieved and obstacles overcome, in the three years after 9YBE had been launched, government officials spoke confidently of the ability to extend the compulsory education commitment to include grades S4 – S6. The announcement was not a complete shock. President Kagame had claimed 12-years basic education as a promise included in his 2010 re-election campaign platform (Rwirahira, 2012).

The challenges are not difficult to identify related to the ambitious policy that is only months old. With a profound shortage of qualified teachers in classrooms, and a real shortage of physical classrooms in schools to hold students and teachers, extending schooling for the last three secondary grades for all will not be easily accomplished. The timing of these most recent two policies requiring attendance first through nine grades, and then three years later through twelve grades, is likely not lost on the students in the first class of those impacted by the laws. The same class that began S1 under 9YBE is the group of children who are now the charter class held responsible under 12YBE policy. The eyes of educational development analysts will be watching Rwanda's bold initiatives extending education for all through grade 12 in the years to come.

Equity in access has largely been achieved related to initial primary enrollment. Analysis of disparities by gender, location and socioeconomic status indicate that Rwanda has improved significantly in providing access to primary school for children across the spectrums of those three factors. However, beyond initial primary enrollment, gaps exist that expose differences advantaging some children over others all three of those factors.

Initial primary enrollment figures point to near identical enrollment rates for males and females. The intake rate reported in a 2011 World Bank detailed status report of the education sector noted that the primary intake rate is ninety-six percent for both boys and

girls (p. 76). This points to a good start towards reaching MDG Goal 3 around equity in primary schooling between males and females. However, completion rates demonstrate that girls drop out of primary school at a faster rate than do boys. The probability of a girl reaching P6 is thirty-four percent. For boys, that probability is thirty-nine percent. That trend continues through secondary completion rates of eight percent for girls and twelve percent for boys (World Bank, 2011). This is typically due to gender roles that call upon girls to participate in household chores, or to cases of child or juvenile marriage involving school-age girls (UNICEF, 2010).

There is near equity based on the factor of location in regards to initial primary enrollment. Children from urban areas have only a two percent better chance of beginning primary school than do children from rural areas. However, the gap based on location widens quickly to nineteen percent for children entering lower secondary school, and to seventeen percent for children entering S4, the initial upper secondary grade (World Bank, 2011).

The story is similar when analyzing socioeconomic differences and schooling patterns. Upon initial enrollment, children from the poorest quartile of homes enroll at nearly identical rates to children from the wealthiest quartile, with only a two percent difference between richest and poorest. But then again, a gap develops and widens in the years to come. The poorest children enroll in secondary education at the paltry rate of seven percent. While the wealthiest continue their schooling into the secondary level at rate of 36 percent. The trend extends to only three percent of the poorest children completing secondary school, while twenty-four percent of the wealthiest children

complete S6 (World Bank, 2011). Though the gap is wide between rich and poor, it is worth noting that secondary completion rates are low for all income groups.

Though Rwanda is still on track or nearly on track (Paxton, 2012) towards meeting Millennium Development Goal 2, aimed at one hundred percent completion of primary school, and Millennium Development Goal 3, pursuing gender equity across primary grades; much work remains to be done in the area of enrollment development at the secondary level. President Kagame's government has been remarkably aggressive in its efforts to broaden access to secondary schooling. Policies requiring nine years of education and twelve years of education were unveiled three years apart, in 2009 and 2012 respectively. Though obstacles remain, trends indicate that ground is being gained in the pursuit of secondary schooling for all.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 6 provides both conclusions and recommendations for each of the three reform initiatives of the study, 1) student-centered instruction, 2) language, and 3) enrollment developments. Conclusions are aimed at addressing the impacts of the genocide on each of the reform initiatives, the central question of the study.

Recommendations point to next steps for decision makers to consider as they chart the course for Rwanda's education systems in the coming years.

Student-Centered Instruction: Conclusions

A review of our timeline in regards to student-centered instruction reveals that this particular reform initiative is one of late interest to education policy makers and educators in Rwanda. Significant curriculum reform efforts were made throughout the period analyzed. However, those reform efforts from each era did not purposefully address the matter of instructional practices. The changing curricular focus from one reform package to the next was not reflected by similar thoughtful change work around teaching pedagogy. This dynamic of changing curriculum and stagnant instructional practices resulted in a misalignment between curriculum and instruction that hampered multiple reform efforts.

Pre-colonial curriculum was relevant to Rwandans. The apprentice system in which boys and girls learned practical and value-laden lessons from local experts was connected to a need that was evident to all in the society. Children likely did not ask the question of those "teaching" these lessons, "Why do I need to learn this?" The curriculum was relevant. The need for the learning was clear.

Instructional practices were student-centered and hands on. Boys and girls imitated, practiced and discovered. This is a case of curriculum being relevant, and instructional

practices being aligned and similarly relevant. That harmony between curriculum and instructional practices was interrupted with the introduction of western formal schooling that was brought by European colonialism in the 20th century.

During the colonial decades, the curriculum was greatly altered from the pre-colonial apprentice based system. The colonial curriculum was not aimed at Rwandan needs indigenous to local culture. Instead, foreigners introduced new subject matter to a small elite minority of Rwandans. The curriculum was selected in order to produce a few who could work as cogs in the colonial machinery. To most, that curriculum was not relevant to Rwandan life. To those few, who were fortunate to be students, the curriculum was somewhat relevant to a future occupation, though foreign to their own culture and values.

The instructional practices inherited from formal western school systems were teacher-centered. Sitting passively and listening to lectures was the role of the student in this foreign system of schooling. Colonial schools provided a curriculum that was largely irrelevant, and instructional practices that relegated students to the role of receiver of knowledge rather than an active participant in learning. The colonial era was dominated by irrelevant curriculum and similarly irrelevant and foreign instructional practices.

With independence, there was little immediate change in either curriculum or instruction. However, in the later part of the 1970s, significant curriculum reform was driven by a desire for more relevance in subject matter. The indigenous language was emphasized. Courses of study, particularly vocational programming at the secondary level, provided opportunities for students to learn skills that would be used in their lives as

members of Rwandan society. Curriculum reform was shifting towards relevance in the years that followed independence that preceded the genocide.

However, instructional practices remained largely unchanged. Except for the case of specialized vocational programs for secondary students, students continued to learn in classroom environments that had been transplanted from western colonialism. The teacher was the giver of knowledge. Students were expected to learn what the teacher taught and produce evidence of that learning in summative exams.

Though, curriculum began to shift towards relevance, that shift was hampered by a lack of change in instructional practice. School was still experienced by students as a place that was foreign to the rest of their life and culture. Though the content being learned may have held a bit more relevance, the environment and systems in which that content was set still remained at odds with Rwandan life. Instructional practices lagged behind changing curriculum.

Following the genocide, there was an immediate call for schools to address the issues of trauma and reconciliation. Efforts were made, with significant leadership and support from western aid agencies, to provide curriculum and materials to meet those needs. The need was shockingly clear. No one could argue that children did not need assistance in dealing with the trauma of the genocide, or that Rwandan society did not need to address reconciliation and prevention of future ethnic violence.

Schools responded with curriculum changes that addressed those issues. However, implementation of curriculum that addressed grief, trauma, peace and reconciliation was far from comprehensive. The teachers and students who were fortunate to have access to such curriculum benefitted from these disjointed efforts. Others did not receive access to

such curriculum. However, it was clear that curriculum was developed and implemented to some extent that was relevant to life in Rwanda after the horror.

There is a small amount of evidence that suggests that instructional practices changed in alignment with these curricular changes. Allowing for student voice was critical in curriculum areas such as trauma and peace. In instances where teachers and students had access to this curriculum, they also typically had access to lesson designs that promoted student-centered instruction.

Clearly however, most teaching and learning continued to be modeled after the teacher-centered system that was the only formal schooling that Rwandans had been exposed to dating back to the classrooms of the colonial era. There continued to be a disconnect between curriculum changes, both small and disjointed, that sought relevance and instructional practices that only allowed for teacher voice.

Recent years have seen the first recognition by decision makers of the need to make room for student voice in instructional practices. Current education planning documents point to the need to promote critical thinking and problem solving. There is some understanding that this cannot be accomplished through traditional chalk and talk methods of teaching. The government pursued multiple projects aimed at teaching teachers how to teach in ways that foster student-centered learning. Outside development agencies have jumped on board the effort to teach teachers. Multiple efforts have been made, and are still ongoing, to provide such professional development for teachers.

It is interesting to note that while instructional practices are beginning to tilt towards relevance of student-centered approaches, the curriculum is somewhat less relevant due to recent changes in language of instruction policies that will be discussed in

the next section of this chapter. The alignment between relevant curriculum and relevant student-centered instruction is still not true. For the first time, it is possible that the curriculum, to the extent that language of instruction is considered curriculum, may be the hindering element preventing alignment.

It would be an error to exaggerate the impact the genocide had on instructional practices. In the short term, in the months that followed the violence, there is some evidence that points to limited and sporadic change in teaching practices. Those changes in methods of instruction did not outlive the kits of materials and lesson plans that were provided by aid agencies to address issues such as trauma alleviation, peace education and other conflict related themes.

However, it would also be an error to ignore the impact that the genocide had on recent decisions to focus on critical thinking, problem solving and the teaching methods that foster those practices by students. Though somewhat subtle, pursuing critical thinking and collective problem solving has been driven by the experiences of the genocide and its roots of ethnic tension.

It is clear that economic global development is the greatest motivating factor behind decisions to train teachers to teach in student-centered ways. To battle poverty effectively and develop economically requires a citizenry that can solve and prevent problems that are complex and unique to one's culture. That has been the most pressing need that is driving this change in instruction.

However, reflections on the slaughter of 1994, and the events that led to it, are also part of the case being made by policy makers and educators for student-centered instruction. The ability to solve problems collectively and communicate about solutions is

important, as is the ability to see problems from another's point of view. Those critical thinking skills are part of what makes the case for student-centered instruction. Educating students who can do those things is viewed as preventative of another genocide.

Student-Centered Instruction: Recommendations

Decision makers recognize that combatting poverty, developing globally and promoting a peaceful citizenry are all goals that can be better achieved if schools are producing critical thinkers who can actively engage in collective problem solving. The chief input needed to truly shape instruction so that it is student-centered is that of teacher training. Without teachers who understand and have the ability to teach in ways that foster critical thinking and promote student voice in the pursuit of solutions to problems, any policy document that mentions student-centered instruction is relegated to empty rhetoric.

Efforts to train teachers in student-centered teaching methods must be made in institutions that educate preservice teachers. Those who are being trained to teach must experience student-centered teaching in that training. It is imperative that teacher training institutions not lecture to passive students about the need for and elements of student-centered teaching. Those who train future teachers in these institutions must teach in a student-centered manner.

It is also critical that ongoing training be provided for those currently teaching in Rwandan schools. Infrequent conferences or workshops in instructional practices will not effectively produce the changes on the ground in the classroom on the scale needed. Real change will require ongoing support and mentorship of Rwandan teachers.

The teacher training model being implemented by International Education Exchange (IEE) is a mentor approach that provides such ongoing support for teachers.

Professional learning is imbedded in the job of the teacher, as trainers work alongside teachers for entire school years, day after day, to model and coach teachers in student-centered instruction.

Instruction cannot be isolated from curriculum as they are partners in reform efforts that impact classroom teaching and learning. Rwandan officials should work to update textbooks and other curriculum in an effort to produce materials that promote critical thinking and problem solving. Once produced, it is essential that distribution of those curriculum materials be equitable throughout the country.

The Rwandan government has recognized the success of that particular training program. To date, it has not been able to fund an effort that would scale up the mentoring approach. Failing to address the issue will doom efforts to change instructional practices throughout the country. Teachers need coaching and mentoring while they are on the job in order to learn how to change their practice as teachers.

Language: Conclusions

The early history of language of instruction reforms in Rwanda begins very similarly to the experiences of other African nations who were introduced to a European language during the colonial era. French was the language that was brought by the Belgians. To be fortunate enough to have a seat in a formal school meant that a student would be one of the few who would learn the language of the colonial ruling power. The future opportunities that were possible for those who knew French far outweighed those of the majority who did not have access to the language of power. French remained the language of formal schooling in upper primary and secondary grades after independence and up to the genocide in 1994.

Language of instruction is the reform initiative included in this study that was impacted the most dramatically by the genocide. Immediately following the genocide, English rose in stature in the multilingual society. The RPF brought English from Uganda, where they had gained military training and English proficiency, back with them to their homeland in Rwanda. The language of the victors was English.

For a time, during the years of reconstruction and beyond, a trilingual Rwanda was the vision many held. Kinyarwanda, French and English were viewed by policy makers as coexisting in a “more is more” mentality around language. Schools were called upon to produce students who were proficient in all three languages. However, English and French would prove to not coexist as envisioned in this trilingual system, as deep international political tensions mounted in the years following the genocide.

The roots of the Francophone system ran deeply back into the colonial era, and tenaciously held their ground. English began to challenge French as the language of schools and government, particularly in the circles of the Tutsis who made up the RPF refugee population. But French did remain the more dominant of the two foreign languages in the realms of education, government and commerce for more than a decade following the genocide.

Through all of this tension between French and English, the indigenous language, Kinyarwanda, remained the language of the people. Children would learn in schools and be exposed to English and French during classroom hours. They would return home to families and villages where the adults only knew their indigenous language. That remains the experience of the majority of Rwandans still today.

However, that did not prevent language being used as a weapon in the international political arena in recent years. In 2008, President Kagame struck a death blow to French, and shocked the world community, by declaring that English would be the language of instruction in schools. Responding to ongoing French claims that the RPF was responsible for the assassination of President Habyarimana in the event that triggered the genocide, and other atrocities, the government jabbed at France by demoting her language. Tensions between France and Rwanda had been brewing in the years that followed the genocide. France was perceived to have abandoned Rwanda in its time of need during the genocide, and then compounded that absence by assisting the Hutus who fled as the RPF fought to end the killing of Tutsis. When the English-only decision was announced, it was a surprise to education decision makers who had recently produced planning documents that indicated the trilingual system would continue to be the course pursued in classrooms.

Other reasons played into the decision to elevate English above French as well. Chief among those is the hope that English will result in future development for the nation beyond what a Francophone system could provide. The belief that English will open more development aid doors, and provide for global opportunities to continue to build economically, was the reason most often given for the language change. However, the behind the scenes political animosity between Rwanda and France was clearly a key factor in the shift.

In schools, the mandate that English would be the language of instruction in all grades quickly proved to be impractical. Currently, English is the language of the classroom for teachers and students in grades P4 through secondary. This provides for Kinyarwanda to be the language of instruction during the first three primary grades. This

has proven to be very difficult to implement in the four years since the change was passed as policy.

Teachers struggle to instruct in a language that is new to them. Many teachers do not know English well themselves. Teachers may take English courses and training in evening hours and during school holidays in an attempt to learn enough to be a step ahead of their students. The English used by many teachers is often very poor. Words are pronounced incorrectly, and grammatical errors are passed along to students in lessons in which teachers struggle to discuss complex topics in a language they do not know well.

This struggle is heart breaking to observe, particularly in rural schools. In communities not located near the capitol of Kigali, access to English training often does not exist for teachers. Fewer rural schools have teachers who are confident with their own English proficiency levels.

However, over the course of the last three school years, I have seen improvement in this area. In multiple visits to schools in Kigali and in outlying areas, it is evident that the level of English proficiency of teachers is improving. As more teachers are trained in English through the course of their own schooling, including their tertiary level teacher training, this trend will continue. Though still one of the challenges identified by teachers most often as a source of difficulty, there is hope that the worst years of transition to English as the language of instruction may be behind for Rwanda's teachers and students.

Competing tensions result from tackling the reform initiative of student-centered instruction simultaneously to that of English only. Teaching through rote learning and lecture are difficult in a situation where the language of instruction is not understood well by teachers and students. Attempting to engage students in critical thinking tasks that

require communication and collective problem solving is even more daunting. Taking on both of those initiatives is viewed as truly Rwandan, as big vision and ambitious reform are commonly unveiled and pursued in recent years.

Language: Recommendations

The theme of recommendations around language is balance. Currently, the English only mandate has produced fear in teachers who do not know English well. Sneaking bits of Kinyarwanda into secondary lessons is often done with guilt and apprehension. The cost of forcing teachers to teach in English, who do not have a level of proficiency necessary to do so, is significant for learners. Thinking deeply about complex subject matter cannot even begin without the ability to communicate adequately.

As stated above, the initiatives of student-centered instruction and English only instruction seem to be in conflict. Pursuing English only instruction has had a negative effect on the amount of critical thinking and problem solving that is evidenced in lessons being taught in classrooms. It is obvious that tackling complex issues in the classroom requires communication of those ideas in language that is understood well by both teacher and learner. Dialogue and discussion around deep subject matter, hallmarks of student-centered instruction aimed at critical thinking and problem solving, cannot happen in classrooms where teachers and students are struggling to learn the language of instruction.

The recommendation here is not to drop the emphasis of English as a language of instruction. The reasons for shifting to English were significant, and have been stated. However, I do believe that code-switching needs to be formally recognized as best practice in instruction in language situations where students are being taught in a language other than their indigenous tongue. Teachers need to be able to use Kinyarwanda and English in

the classroom in ways that can provide access for all students to the content or subject matter. Otherwise, language becomes an unnecessary barrier to the type of thinking and learning that is being pursued.

Balance between Kinyarwanda and English is a path that will allow more teachers and students to engage in high level teaching and learning. If done strategically, with training and purpose supporting and driving it, code-switching promotes language learning and critical thinking in student-centered classrooms. Leaning too strongly towards a language policy that excludes the indigenous language will cost learning. Leaning too strongly towards student-centered instruction, with no effort towards learning English, will cost development of the skills and means to communicate, function and develop globally. Finding a balance that teaches all students to communicate in English without sacrificing instruction that promotes problem solving and critical thinking will lead to success in both of these reform efforts.

Enrollment Developments: Conclusions

Increasing enrollment figures are evidence of a broadening of access to education for Rwandans. Historically, access to formal education was very limited dating back to the early 20th century when formal schooling began during the colonial era. As has been discussed, school enrollment was reserved for a minority of elite who were destined for opportunities designed to serve colonial rule. Enrollment was granted as a colonial favor or privilege to the few who would fill the need of the outside ruling power.

With independence in 1962, the limited scope of access did not immediately change. Though enrollment figures do trend upwards steadily in the decades that followed

independence, it was still a minority who were educated. During the period between independence and the genocide, Rwanda outpaced neighboring nations in primary enrollment, and also found unique success in gender equity in enrollment in the primary grades. The need for a level of learning that was aligned to basic skills taught in primary grades was evident and thus pursued.

At the secondary level, the need was not as clear. Secondary education was not relevant to the perceived cultural or economic needs of the nation. That began to change in recent decades as global development called for a more universally educated population to have more than just basic skills. As in many developing nations, Rwanda recognized that a citizenry of educated people would provide the human capital to develop economically and move the development dial away from dire poverty.

Rwanda's 9YBE policy that was announced in 2008 was a swift, bold step that required children to stay in school through all six years of primary and the first three years of secondary school. Though not unheard of in Sub-Saharan Africa, this policy was implemented in an ambitious and bold manner that is viewed as quite Rwandan.

Challenges to implementation were and remain many. Facilities, curriculum, materials, teachers and other resources were scarce prior to the change to 9YBE. Those shortages were compounded by the change.

In February of this current year (2012), the government announced its 12YBE policy. This next-step change takes place only three years after the shift was made to nine years of required schooling for all. Again, Rwandan education planning has not been short on vision in the years following the genocide. This 12YBE policy is further proof of a belief that real change in development for the nation must go through the classrooms of Rwanda's schools.

The increased requirements for universal schooling surpass the MDG aims and the EFA goals that focus on primary level instruction. Much of the developing world is struggling to achieve the levels of success that Rwanda has achieved at the primary level. Rwanda has moved on, and is pursuing higher levels of education for all.

The genocide had a dramatic impact on enrollment developments. Significant numbers of teachers and students were killed or fled as refugees. Evidence of a massive decline in primary enrollment figures is proof of that brutal impact.

Many children were orphaned in the killing as well. Enrolling those children, which proved to be challenging, was something that was also unique. Keeping those children enrolled would prove to be at least as difficult. Orphans were less likely to complete primary grades and move into secondary education for a variety of reasons related to the trauma.

That loss of and damage to facilities, equipment and materials was astounding. The challenge that resulted made enrolling students difficult, as educators, local communities and outside aid agencies scrambled to rebuild the physical resources needed for schools to function. Creating schools, in the physical sense, and providing the resources within them to educate students was a massive challenge in the wake of the genocide.

A chief challenge that followed the genocide is that shortage of teachers that resulted. Average class sizes of students rose dramatically to levels significantly higher than in neighboring nations. Students returned to classrooms following the genocide at a faster rate than teachers. Currently, the teacher shortage in Rwanda is still a chief concern. The hole that was dug in the supply of qualified teachers has not been overcome in the years since 1994.

The rapid return of enrollment to pre-genocide levels was in part the result of efforts made by local officials and educators to ensure that schools were once again safe places for children. The efforts to find children, and convince families to send them to school when so many other needs competed for the time of those children, have been documented here. These grass roots efforts made by education officials to travel to villages and encourage enrollment were commendable.

Also contributing to the swift rebound of enrollment numbers was the recognition by decision makers of the importance of educating citizens in order to recover from such a disaster. This recognition was accompanied by policy making and communication that made it clear to Rwandans that education was a necessary road to take on the journey of recovery and reconstruction. The long-term results of increased enrollment due to decisions, policies and planning during the reconstruction period are still reaping benefits.

Immediate efforts to encourage students to return to schools, and thoughtful policy making and planning, have combined to yield successes in enrollment developments in the years since the genocide. The ability to recover and educate children in the wake of the horror is truly an accomplishment that Rwanda can share with others who experience disasters.

Enrollment Developments: Recommendations

There are two recommendations made here that both recognize the success Rwanda has experienced in broadening access to education and increasing enrollment levels. These recommendations are aimed at challenges that have resulted from those increased enrollment rates.

First, working to increase the number of qualified teachers is crucial. The work to fill classrooms with students has been noted, and was remarkable following the genocide and remains an accomplishment of note today. However, having more students in classrooms presents a need for more qualified teachers. Already, schools are forced to deal with this teacher shortage by double-shifting in schools and recruiting grade 12 graduates to teach primary grades without any further education, and no formal teacher training. As the 12YBE policy is implemented in the years to come, further shortages in qualified teachers will be surfacing.

Issues of teacher pay and teacher efficacy related to Rwandan culture must be addressed. The profession must be elevated in the Rwandan culture. Increasing pay to make teaching more attractive to those seeking skilled work is necessary. This will be foundational in efforts to encourage students who otherwise might shy away from a career in teaching to become educators. As more bright young people pursue teaching, and salaries increase in order to encourage that trend, it is likely that Rwandans will grow in their respect for teachers. Elevating teaching in a cultural sense begins with the practical step of compensating teachers at levels high enough to encourage bright young people to pursue teaching and continue on with careers as teachers.

Secondly, it will be critical for planners to develop tertiary education opportunities, and workforce employment opportunities for the increasing numbers of secondary completers that will result from the 12YBE policy. Implementing the 12YBE only three years after the 9YBE policy had been in place was partially in response to the increased number of students who completed nine years of schooling. Simply put, if Rwanda succeeds in significantly increasing the numbers of students who complete all twelve years

of schooling in their primary and secondary system, there is a need for a next step for those completing students.

To do this, planners need to expand the seats available in tertiary education institutions. I spoke with a number of students in multiple secondary schools during a recent visit to Rwanda who were lamenting that fact that they would soon be done with S6 (grade 12), and were not going to be able to move on into university or tertiary education of any kind. This problem will worsen as more students complete grade twelve in the coming decade. The time is now for planners to be thoughtful and aggressive in providing more tertiary opportunities for students.

Creating more university graduates will only be helpful if those students have workforce opportunities that utilize tertiary education skills and training. Failing to create jobs that demand a tertiary education will only kick the can down the road that was temporarily solved by creating more university seats. Education and training must ultimately prove to be relevant and demanded in a workforce for there to be value and connection towards larger development aims. To educate a citizenry is an important step. To provide meaningful work and opportunities to make a living is equally as important. Rwanda cannot afford to be in a position ten years from now where it has a high rate of highly unemployed people due to an inability to develop its economy to provide workforce opportunities. This challenge is not reserved for developing nations alone. Education may be an important component of development, but is not sufficient evidence of that development by itself.

Closing Note

Tracing the course of the three initiatives in the framework of this study provide much evidence of success for Rwandan decision makers to celebrate. The challenges that are exposed, and that remain, are significant. Recommendations provided here do not include simple answers to the complex nature of those challenges. However, Rwandans have reason to believe that they can continue to reform education in meaningful ways. They have history that provides evidence to that point to draw upon.

The horror that was the Rwandan genocide of 1994 is a tragic episode of human frailty. The impact the slaughter had on the education systems was immense, and continues on in some regards today. Education reform efforts cannot be analyzed without recognition of the impacts of that event on schools.

Perhaps more profound is the story that is told of Rwandan reconstruction of education systems in the years that have followed the genocide. Contained in that story of rebuilding and renewal is a vision for the future that is ambitious and purposeful. Successes are mounting. Challenges are ahead. Rwanda's educational decision makers are not satisfied with survival. They desire reform.

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