

Analysis of the Reintegration of Demobilized Child Soldiers in Rwanda

Kigali, June 2003

Introduction

Between 2001 and 2003, 360 former Rwandan child soldiers were reintegrated into their communities. One of the most important lessons learned by those working with Demobilized child soldiers (DCS) is the need for follow up with the children after they have been reintegrated. To this end, UNICEF and Save the Children (UK) committed to following up with all of the reintegrated child soldiers through their Baratashye (“going home” in Kinyarwanda) project.

Baratashye is a project aimed at the follow up and support of the demobilized child soldiers after they have been reintegrated into their communities. The goal of this project is “To facilitate the successful reintegration of demobilized child soldiers, including girls, into their communities through the provision of targeted interventions for all vulnerable children in education, skills training and community capacity development.” In order to achieve this goal UNICEF and Save the Children UK began in 2002 to visit the children who had been demobilized and their communities.

The Baratashye project was envisioned as a two phase project. The first phase which is now nearly complete was to address the immediate needs of the returning DCS and other vulnerable children in their communities. The second phase is to use the lessons learned during this process to aid the children who will later be demobilized.

One of the stated objectives of the project was “to develop a greater understanding of the most effective interventions to meet the needs...of returning DCS.” It is this objective that the current report addresses. The purpose of this report is to look at the situation of the children who have been demobilized and try to determine some factors that contribute to successful versus unsuccessful reintegration into their communities of origin. This is done by statistical analyses of the data collected by the Save the Children UK social workers during their follow up interviews as well as through interviews with several of the children.

The report also provides general information about the children and their economic and psychosocial situation in order to better understand the experiences of these children and their current situation. It is hoped that the information will help to improve programs for future DCS who are reintegrated into their communities.

Rwanda

Rwanda is a small country located in central Africa. It is surrounded by the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Uganda and Burundi. It is the most densely populated country in Africa with an estimated population of 8,162,715.

In the spring of 1994 Rwanda experienced an unprecedented genocide. Though their motivations were quite different, soldiers, politicians, business men, and eventually a wide range of other civilians (including children) took part in this massacre.

By the time the RPF ended the Genocide by gaining control of the capitol in July of 1994, approximately 800,000 people had died. As it became clear that the RPF had gained control of the country over a million Hutu fled into their neighboring countries, especially into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and ended up in the 6 camps along the border.

These camps were armed and controlled by Interhamwe and ex-FAR leaders who continued to receive arms while in the refugee. These leaders created terror in the camps by convincing the refugees that they would be immediately killed if they returned to Rwanda. The Interhamwe and ex-FAR also began to collaborate with the Congolese Hutu militia known as “Les Combattants” and with the Congolese army.

Mamdani (2001) reports that the armed groups in the DRC (Congolese and Rwandan, Hutu and Tutsi) began to attract more and more youth and describes the militias as “a refuge for many a marginalized youngster and school dropout”. In addition many children were separated from their families during the various flights from and back to Rwanda and were left to fend for themselves in the Ituri Forest of the DRC. As a result many Rwandan children, alone and unable to protect themselves joined the militias to find food, shelter, and protection. These rebel forces also periodically infiltrated the areas in western Rwanda where they pilfered and abducted more children to be in their fighting groups.

In 1999 the Rwandan President, Pasteur Bizimungu signed the Lusaka Cease-fire Agreement ending the DRC war and welcoming all Rwandans back into their homeland. The Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission continues to try and convince armed Hutu militia in the DRC to leave their weapons and return to their country without consequences.

Child Soldiers¹

Demobilization and Reintegration

The principle agency concerned with the children’s demobilization and reintegration is the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC). This commission was originally formed in January of 1997 and its goal was to facilitate the demobilization and reintegration of both RPA and Ex-Far soldiers in order to “reduce the RPA to an economically sustainable size” and help all demobilized soldiers to return to civilian life. Between September of 1997 and August 2002 a total of 7,415 ex-child soldiers (from both the RPA and the Ex-FAR/Interhamwe) were demobilized and reintegrated into their communities.

In 2002, within the framework of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Program (RDRP) was approved with support from the World Bank and bilateral donors. This program also has access to supplementary funds from the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF). At this point the RDRC anticipated the reintegration of about 2,500 more child soldiers, but to date the numbers of combatants who have returned to Rwanda has remained very low.

Purpose and Scope of this Analysis

The current report is concerned with the child soldiers who were fighting in the rebel forces after the genocide. Their presence in the rebel armies was officially confirmed in May 2001 when approximately 225 were captured by the Rwandan army as they infiltrated

¹¹ The majority of the information in this section was taken from the Save the Children UK report “Demobilization and re-integration of child ex-combatants in Rwanda”

Northern Rwanda. These children were initially screened by the ICRC while prisoners of war in the military camps. In these camps the ICRC identified vulnerable people (including children) who should be transferred to solidarity camps.

Between 2001 and 2003 approximately 365 children were demobilized. Almost all of these children were fighting in a rebel group called the Rwandese Liberation Army (ALR). Children demobilized in Rwanda were sent to the Mutobo camp while children captured in the DRC were sent to the Mudende and Nkumba camps.

In the solidarity camps adults and children attend lectures reorienting them to life in Rwanda. The ideal term for children in the solidarity camps was two weeks but some children appeared to have been there more than a month. Adults were expected to stay for three months and upon their exit they received 50,000 Rwandan Francs (FRW) to help them to integrate into their former communities. Children on the other hand received no tangible compensation but were promised support in their reintegration in the form of aid by social workers to overcome the issues they faced upon their return.

Davee wears the expression of an extremely unhappy young man. Although he is in many ways better off than many of his peers he feels that he has been tricked and denied what is rightfully his. He is 19 and lives in his own home next door to his mother's house. His house is neat and clean and it also has a bit of style and imagination. He has decorated his walls with old magazine pictures and cut up religious tracts. Hanging from the ceiling are bits of paper folded into fans.

Why is this young man so unhappy? Davee was in his late teens when he found himself alone in the Ituri forest of Congo. In order to find food, shelter, and physical protection he joined the rebel forces fighting in the area. While in the army he carried arms and was treated as an equal by the adult soldiers. In many ways he considered himself a man and not a boy. Eventually he was captured by the armed forces and because he was under 18 was sent to Gitagata. While in Gitagata he had dreams of becoming a barber and opening a barbershop in his home village.

However when he returned home he found that his father had died and that he was therefore the eldest male and responsible for the welfare of the family. Because of this he had to begin farming and was unable to follow his dream or to attend school. Today he continues to farm the family land in addition to a small plot that his mother gave to him. With this plot he hopes to grow produce to sell at market and then use the earnings to buy livestock.

It is not just the loss of his dreams that makes him almost surly with us though. He is angry because the adults that he fought with have been taunting him. In Rwanda adults who are demobilized receive financial packages to help them to get on their feet. Children however receive nothing. The argument is that adults have to support families and yet Davee also has to support a family. He is bitter that because he was one year too young (17) when he was demobilized, he not only must forfeit the money, he also must suffer daily taunting by adults who tell him he is not a man because he didn't get any money. It is easy to see why he feels that he has been cheated and abused by a system that promised to help him.

After their stay at the Solidarity camps all boys were transferred to Gitagata. Gitagata is a center located about 48 kilometers south of Kigali. The center was transformed into a rehabilitation center by MINALOC and was strongly supported by UNICEF. Before entering the center many of the boys were able to visit their families. Only two girls were demobilized in this process and they were both sent straight home since it was not deemed appropriate for them to live in the same center with the boys. While in Gitagata the boys received three days of training on "the rights of children" and "the prevention of HIV-AIDS". Those who wanted to could also attend the local school and or cultivate land owned by the center. Children also had the opportunity to develop skills in brick laying and sewing. Children appointed leaders among their peers to represent their interests to the staff and those appointees also learned leadership skills.

The center included a health clinic for children's physical well being. Their psychological well being was attended to by Save the Children UK social workers who talked to them and

let them express themselves through drawing. While in the center the children were very disciplined and well behaved. There were few problems with violence and the children tended to fall back on the authority systems in the army. To this end children with higher rankings had more authority and leadership than children with lower military rankings

While the children stayed in the facility their families were located. After locating the families SC (UK) social workers went into their communities. During these visits the communities were informed about issues of children's rights and the idea that these demobilized child soldiers were victims that needed support and encouragement to overcome their experiences in the rebel forces. The families were then asked if they were willing to accept the child back into their home. If they were the child was then asked if he was willing to return to the family. Children were usually in Gitagata for at least three months in order to take advantage of the programs offered there and then were returned to their home communities.

Today Gitagata is a center for street children and the RDRC and the Ministry for Local Administration, Information, and Social Affairs (MINALOC), with technical aid from UNICEF and Save the Children UK, have begun plans to open a new center for the children who continue to be demobilized. In the mean time there are 10 boys living at the Mutobo Camp. The boys have been in the camp for anywhere from 3-9 months as they are waiting to be reintegrated.

As of the writing of this paper follow up visits have been conducted for all of the children still living in Rwanda (Some children have moved to Uganda or the DRC to be with their families). During the follow-up visits SC (UK) social workers talked to the child and their family as well as their communities when necessary. They reported the problems faced by the child (if any) and then worked with the child, the family, and the community to resolve these problems. The majority of the problems faced by the children fell into four categories. These were problems gaining access to school, health problems, problems claiming their inheritance, and problems with family conflicts.

In addition the social workers gathered information on their current living situation, their age, and their current activities. The information on their problems and the resolution of these problems has been extensively analyzed in a SC (UK) document entitled "Demobilization and re-integration of child ex-combatants in Rwanda" and thus will not be discussed in great length in this document.

The purpose of this document is to create a measure of the child's reintegration status and then to examine what factors lead to healthier reintegration. In this way the author hopes to provide insight which will influence decisions on further demobilization and reintegration processes.

Methodology

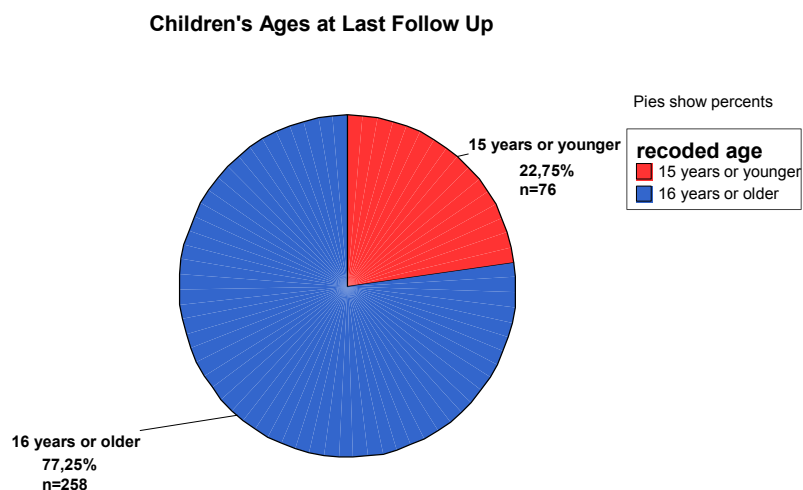
In order to create a data base on child soldiers the author used the available documentation collected by Save the Children UK social workers. The documentation was located in the SC (UK) offices in Kigali City and in Ruhengeri. The documentation included the ICRC's initial information on the child, information collected while the child lived in Gitagata, the documentation of the interviews with the child's family before reintegration, and the

documentation from all follow up visits to the child. In order to add texture and meaning to the data the author also conducted interviews with 12 of the demobilized child soldiers (DCSs) and with SC (UK) staff.

What do we know about the children?

Demographic Variables

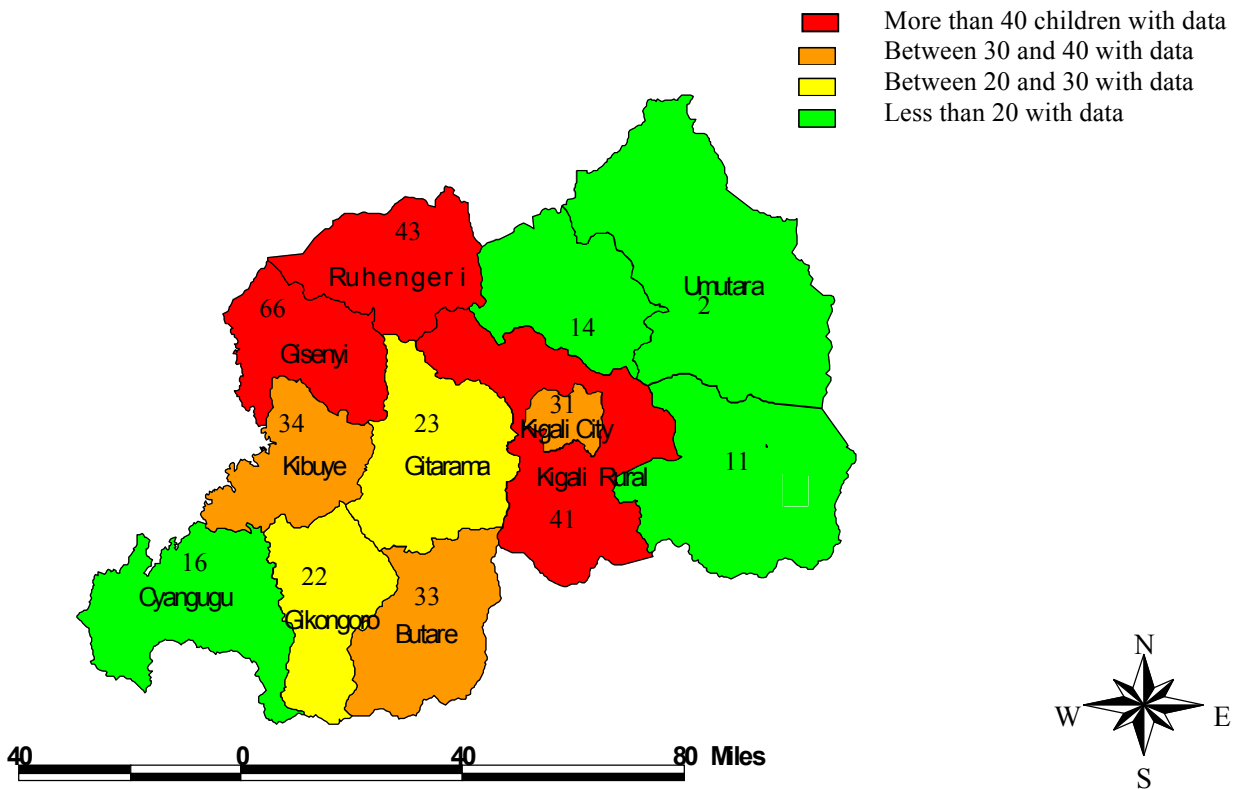
Out of the 360 children reintegrated there was follow up information available for 337. Of these, only one was female. Because she did not represent a large enough sample she was dropped from all subsequent analyses. The children's ages in this sample varied from 12 to 26. The average age was 17 and the most frequently occurring age was 18. Most of the boys were 16 years or older and there was no data for 3 of the boys (see chart below).



There was data for boys located in each of the 12 provinces and one child had moved to the Democratic Republic of Congo to be with his family. See map on following page for details of how many children in each province had data available².

All children received at least one visit and two children received four visits but information was only available for 337 of the children who received visits. The majority of the children (265 or 78.6%) received only one visit. Approximately 80% of follow-up visits after the initial visit happened for four reasons: health problems, problems accessing land, a change of address, and problems gaining entry into school. All of the others were separated into several other categories with only one child in each. These included, a child's problems with a family member, difficulty locating the child, social worker's doubts that the person with whom the child was relocated would be able to care for the child, the head of the household was not present at the first visit, and the child's residence (homeless or in child headed household) was not ideal.

² According to SC (UK) documents there were a total of 30 children in Kigali city, 51 children in Kigali Rural, 55 children in Ruhengeri, 68 children in Gisenyi, 41 children in Kibuye, 17 children in Cyangugu, 20 in Gikongoro, 31 in Butare, 22 in Gitarama, 10 in Kibungo, 14 in Byumba, and 1 in Umutara.



Most children (56%) did not relocate after their initial reintegration. About 25% of children relocated only one time and only 3% relocated twice. The number of the relocations of the remaining children is unknown. No children relocated more than twice after their reintegration. The most common reason for relocation (about 30%) was problems with the original family. Children also relocated because they were looking for work, because they were old enough to live on their own, because they found their immediate family members, because the new home provided better circumstances, because the head of the original household remarried or died, or because the child needed to protect his inheritance.

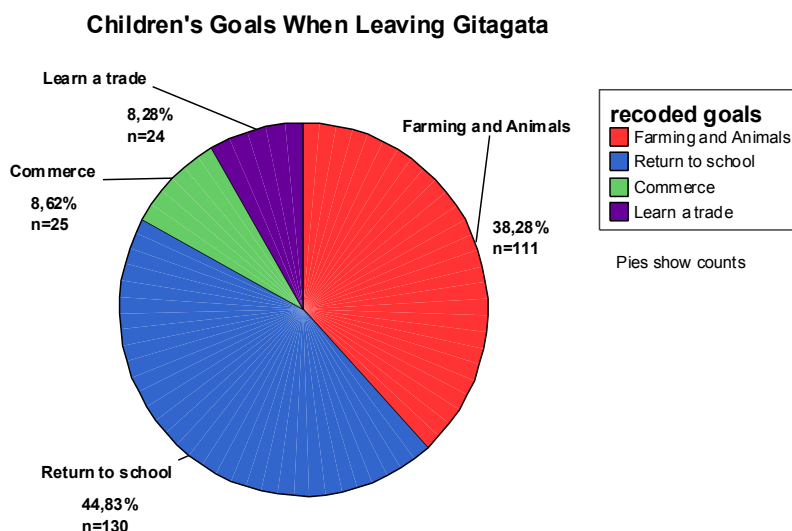
Children were separated from their families for anywhere from less than one year to 11 years. The average time children spent apart from their families was 5.5 years. Children spent anywhere from 2 to 17.5 months in the Gitagata rehabilitation center. The average time spent in the rehabilitation center was 6.4 months.

Psychosocial Variables

While the children were in Gitagata and during their follow-up visits the social workers also collected information on their psychosocial well being. These included the child's level of education, the child's goals after leaving the center, the child's health status, whether or not the child had family problems or community problems, and how the child came to be in the armed group.

The children had had anywhere from no experience with school to all the way through the first year of secondary school. The average amount of schooling was 2 years and the most frequently occurring score was 1 year in school.

As for goals, the largest percentage of children (45%) wanted to return to school after reintegration. About 38% wanted to do farming and animal husbandry upon return to their homes and the remaining children wanted to do commerce or learn a trade (mentioned were carpentry, tailoring, construction, auto mechanic, and brick builder) (See chart below).



The database also assessed how many children achieved these goals. Of the 292 children whose goals were known 145 achieved their goals, 113 did not achieve their goals, and the information was unknown for the remaining children. Thus about 56% of children for whom the information was available achieved their goals after reintegration. 32% of these children were in school at the time of their last follow up. The two most frequent reasons (a total of about 90%) for not attending school were that the child felt he was too old or that he needed to earn money instead.

The vast majority of the children were in good health at their last follow up. Of the 19 children experiencing health problems they complained of bullets embedded in their bodies, stomach problems, broken limbs, missing limbs, chest infections, eye problems, malnourishment, blindness, deafness, problems with teeth, and malaria. One of the children died after reunification.

Another issue that was mentioned as a problem was the child's access to land. Once again most children have no problem but there were 37 (11%) children who did not have land. In addition, comfortable reinsertion into the family is important for a successful reintegration. Only 22 (6.5%) of the children reported any family problems. Family problems often included disputes over land. In addition many children were living with parents or relatives who had remarried and they did not get along with the new spouses. Only one child had a recorded community problem.

Pierre is a lively and energetic 17 year old whose smile belies the horrors that he has seen. One evening he was at home when the rebel forces invaded. Although many family members were able to escape into the fields Pierre was left behind with his father. As he watched the rebels killed his father. They then separated a goat and forced him to carry the goat and follow them. He was among several children who were abducted that day. While they were on their way to the forest with the armed forces they heard helicopters approaching. As for the question of how the child came to be a member of the armed forces, there was only information available for 133 of the children. Of these, 68% were abducted against their will, 32% joined (often after the separation from a family member), and one child was brought to the armed forces by a family member who could no longer care for him.

After the Rwandan genocide Pierre (often after the separation from a family member) was with his mother in a large home. His family has a large plot of land that they farm and several heads of livestock that they care for as well. Pierre helps out with the goats when he is not in school. Currently in the third grade and doing well. Although his mother is relatively well-off she is supporting 11 children at the moment (many of them orphans) and is not sure that she will be able to send them all to primary school. So she says that it is unlikely that Pierre will be able to continue with secondary schooling.

Pierre's mother mentioned that from time to time Pierre mentions what he saw when his father was killed and while he was in the army. She says that all she knows to do is to tell him that everything is OK and that they will get by even without his father.

Current Household Information

The Social workers also collected data on the household make-up of the families in which the children were now living. Part of this information included the number of people in the child's household and where available, it was also recorded how many of these people were male and how many were female. There was only information about the gender make-up of the family for 45 of the children. However there was information on the overall number of people in the household for 245 children. Among these children the number in the household varied from 1 to 13. The average number per household was 5. There was also information for 176 of the children about how many people in their household were active. This number was divided by the total number of people in the family to assess the economic situation of the family. Anywhere from 0% to 100% of the household members were working with an average of about 60% of the members in the households contributing to the financial gains of the family.

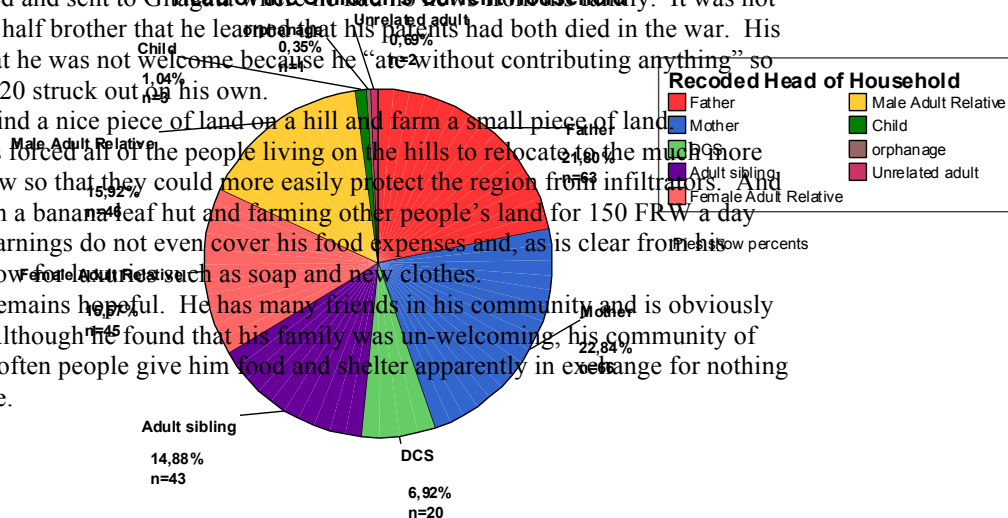
Of the 289 children for whom the information was available 23% lived in households where their mother was the head of the house, for 22% it was the father, 16% lived with an adult male relative and another 16% lived with an adult female relative, 15% lived with an adult sibling, in 7% of the homes the DCS himself was the head of the household, and the remaining children lived in child headed households or with unrelated adults. One child was placed in an orphanage by his relatives after reintegration because they were unable to care for him (See chart on following page).

Tito is a surprisingly upbeat and cheerful young man. He has one of those smiles that lights up his entire face when he talks to you and belies the pain and suffering that he has experienced in his short lifetime

Tito was separated from his parents at the age of 11 when he fled to Congo during the 1994 genocide. There he was forcefully recruited by rebel forces to carry heavy loads over long distances. Eventually he was demobilized and sent to Gitega where he lived in a refugee camp. It was not until he was reunited with his half brother that he learned that his parents had both died in the war. His older brother made it clear that he was not welcome because he “ate without contributing anything” so the boy, now a young man of 20 struck out on his own.

Initially Tito was able to find a nice piece of land on a hill and farm a small piece of land. However, the local authorities forced all of the people living on the hills to relocate to the much more densely populated valley below so that they could more easily protect the region from infiltrators. And so Tito found himself living in a banana leaf hut and farming other people’s land for 150 FRW a day (approximately \$0.30). His earnings do not even cover his food expenses and, as is clear from his ragged appearance, do not allow for luxuries such as soap and new clothes.

And yet through it all he remains hopeful. He has many friends in his community and is obviously well liked by many people. Although he found that his family was un-welcoming, his community of origin has embraced him and often people give him food and shelter apparently in exchange for nothing more than that charming smile.



For 45% of the children both parents were either dead or their whereabouts were unknown. For another 40% one parent was either dead or his or her whereabouts were unknown. Thus, only 15% knew that both of their parents were living.

Of the 250 children who had information available, 26% were supported by a male adult who was not their father, 23% were supported by their mothers, 22% were supported by their fathers, 16% were supported by a female adult who was not their mother, 10% supported themselves and the remaining children were supported by other children or by an orphanage.



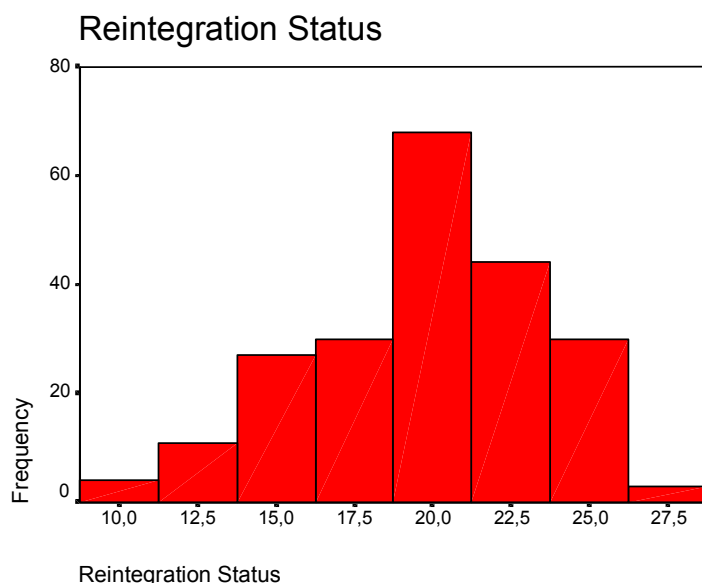
The final variable taken from the information collected by the social workers was the child’s daily activities. Of the 297 children for whom there was information available, 49% were involved in farming, 33% were in school, and the remaining children did local odd

jobs, had learned or were learning a trade, did commerce, took care of animals, worked in restaurants, fished, had bicycle taxis, ran their households, or did nothing.

Reintegration Status Variable

According to the UNICEF *Technical Notes: Special Considerations for Programming in Unstable Situations*, there are 6 ear marks of a demobilized child soldier's successful psychosocial reintegration. These include family reunification, Mobilizing and enabling the child's existing care system, schooling and vocational training, social reintegration, psychological healing and medical screening and care. Based on these levels a variable to measure the reintegration of demobilized child soldiers living all over Rwanda was created. For more information on how this variable was created see appendix A.

Overall all the maximum possible score for the reintegration variable was 28 and the lowest possible score was 1. The lowest score that any child received was a 9 and the highest score was a 27. The average score was 19.55 and the most frequently occurring score was 22. Below is the distribution of the scores for the 217 children who had reintegration status scores.



Multiple Regression

A multiple regression is a statistical test often used to understand what factors can help one to predict the outcome of a certain variable. For more information on Multiple regression see Appendix B. In this case we were interested in knowing what factors predicted healthy psychosocial reintegration. Therefore our outcome variable was "reintegration status". The five predictor variables were, the child's age at last follow up, the child's level of education when he entered Gitagata, the amount of time the child was separated from his family, the amount of time the child spent in Gitagata, and the number of people in the child's current household.

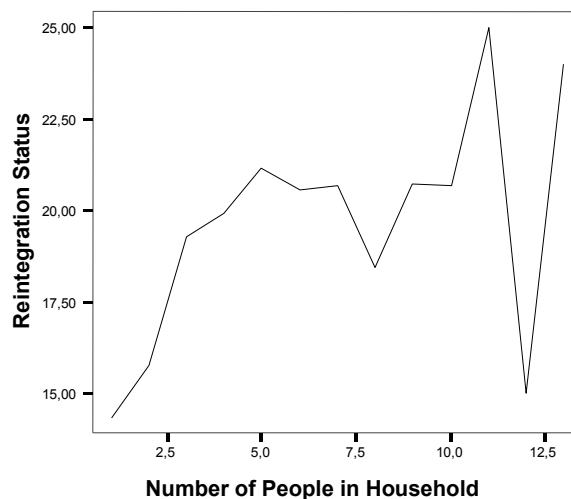
In the current multiple regression the predictor variables were able to account for approximately 40% of the variation in the reintegration status variable. Given the number of subjects and the amount of variation this was a significant amount of the variance.

Théoniste is 18 and, unlike most Rwandans, lives alone. After Gitagata he was reintegrated with his older brother. However his brother had a wife and children of his own so they needed him to contribute to the family. So he walked about 20 kilometers a day to a nearby village where he could find daily contract work. Eventually his brother's wife asked him to leave and his brother agreed to split the family land.

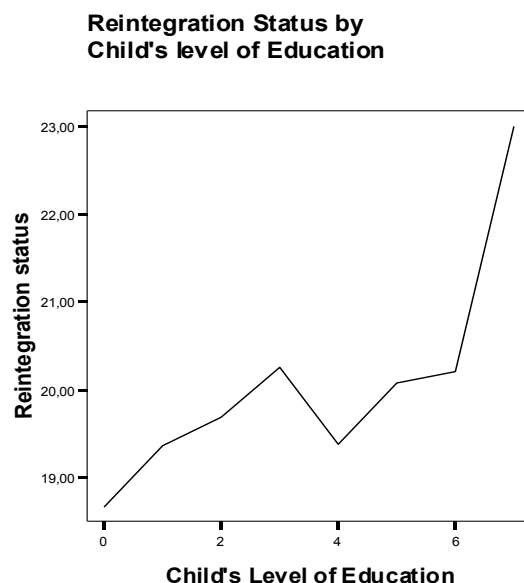
However, most of the success of the predictor variables could be attributed to two of the predictor variables. These are the number of people in the child's household, the child's level of education. Specifically, as the number of people in the child's household goes up, the child's reintegration status goes up, as his education goes up his reintegration status goes up. Although he has friends in the village they must all return to their own homes at the end of the day and he is left alone. He said that when he is ill some of his friends will cook for him but he must still sleep alone.

The strongest of these predictors was the number of people in the child's house hold. This variable alone accounted for about 35% of the differences observed in reintegration status. Although a higher number of people in the family did not directly lead to higher reintegration status, one can see in the graph below that in general as the number of people in the child's family rose the reintegration status also rose. In fact the highest reintegration scores were for children with about 11 people in their households. It is difficult given the current information to know why this relationship exists. One reason may simply be that more people in the household means more people working and earning money for the family. Or perhaps the addition of one more child to an already large household is less disruptive for the family than it is when there are only a few family members. Perhaps the larger number of people in the household also means that the child has more support and help as he negotiates his reintegration.

**Reintegration Status by
Number of People in the Household**

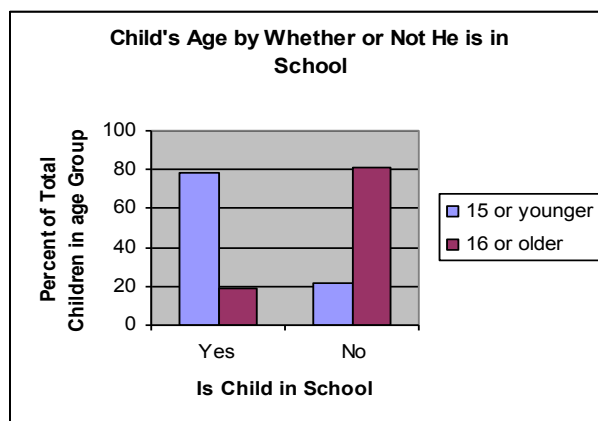


The other significant predictor variable was the child's education level. Here, as with the number of people there was an obvious if not direct relationship between the child's education level when entering Gitagata and his reintegration status. This indicates that, as development organisations have long believed, a child's education can help to buffer him against negative experiences. In this case it does so by helping him to experience fewer problems with psychosocial reintegration.



Other Analyses

In addition to the multiple regression several of the relationships between the non-continuous variables were examined. Most of these were not significant but three specifically were very interesting. One of these was the comparison of the number of children 16 and above and the number of children 15 and below that were in school at the time of the last follow-up visit. As may be expected there were many more boys below fifteen in school. In fact, as one can see in the chart on the following page, while almost 80% of boys 15 and below were in school, almost 80% of boys 16 and above were not in school. This difference was also found to be statistically significant.



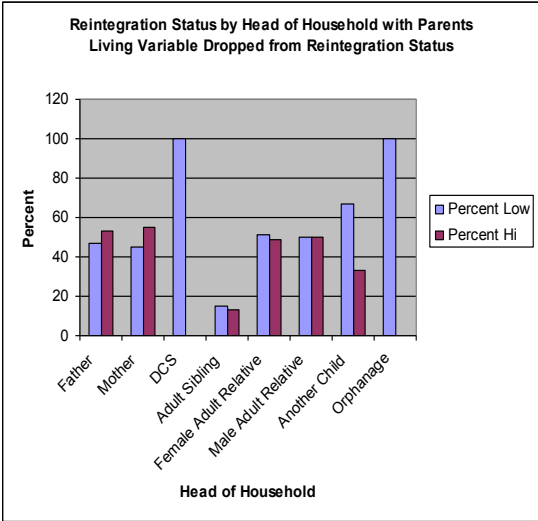
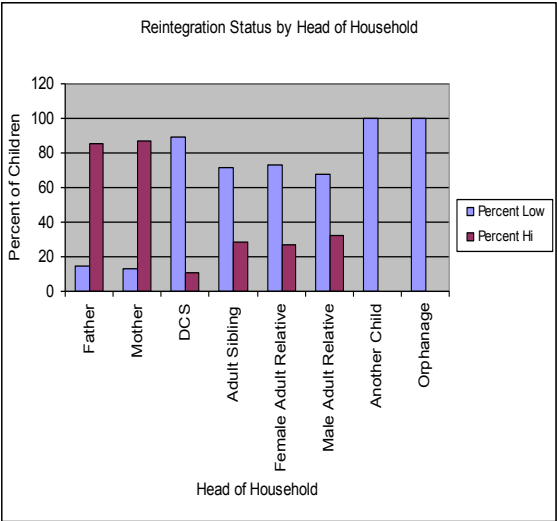
To the unknowing observer John Pierre is nothing more than a well adjusted 12 year old child. The only signs of the difficulties he has experienced are the facts that he is much smaller than many of his peers and he is only in his second year of primary school.

John Pierre was living in a refugee camp in the Democratic Republic of Congo with his family when rebel forces infiltrated the camp. Although he was only 9 years old, the rebels kidnapped him along with several of the other children in the camp. He was forced to walk all night, following the fighters while carrying a heavy load. Within a few months he was able to escape from his captives and hid alone in the bush. He then wandered alone and lost in the bush for weeks until he was captured by the Rwandan army. After intense questioning the army allowed him to be demobilized and sent him to Gitagata.

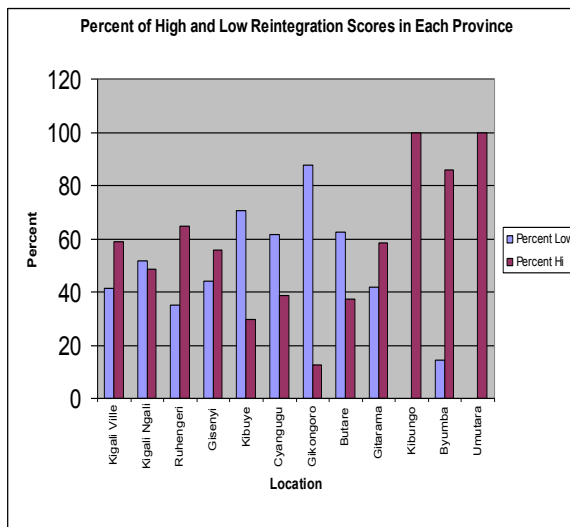
While in Gitagata John Pierre received several visits from his mother who has four children including John Pierre and supports them by selling food in the market place. She was clearly more than happy to have him return to her as soon as possible. Today John Pierre attends school with his 8 year old brother who is only a year behind him. John Pierre is an avid student with very high marks and is the head of his class. He plays well with the other children in the second year who according to his mother all look up to him and fight to sit next to him in class!

The second interesting finding was that the child’s reintegration status was also linked to the identity of their current head of household. In order to run this analysis the reintegration status variable was recoded so that all children whose scores were above the mean were given a “Hi” reintegration score and all children whose scores fell below the mean were given a “Low” reintegration score.

As is clear in the chart to the left below, children who are living with their mother or father are doing better than their peers who are not living with their parents. Although this finding was also statistically significant there was one thing that should temper one’s interpretation of the results. If one remembers the components of the reintegration status variable one will recall that the children received points if their parents were living (See Appendix A). Therefore, the analysis was rerun and the parents living variable was dropped from the reintegration status variable. Although the differences are not as drastic (see chart to right below), they were still consistent enough to be statistically significant. Thus this data indicates that children do better when they are reintegrated with their own parents.



For the third analysis relationship between reintegration status and location was examined. The chart below shows that there were four provinces that were doing particularly poorly. These were Kibuye, Cyangugu, Gikongoro, and Butare. For Cyangugu, Gikongoro, and Butare there are less than 15 children reintegrated into each of the provinces with scores on the reintegration status variable. So it may have been a result of the low numbers and the differences were thus not reliable. In Kibuye, however, 27 children had reintegration status scores. Thus the high percentage of children with low reintegration status scores is more disturbing in this case. It would be interesting to look into the communities there and to see if there is something about this province which makes it more difficult for the DCSs (demobilised child soldiers) to reintegrate into their communities.



What have we learned?

The analyses run on this database can serve in the future reintegration of DCSs. We know from this database that children in Rwanda do better when they are reintegrated into larger households, when they are reintegrated with their parents, and when they have had education.

The single greatest predictor of a child's successful reintegration was the number of people in his household. It appears that the more people in the household, the better the child's chances for successful reintegration. Future reintegration efforts should keep this in mind and where possible try to reintegrate the child into larger households. In addition further research should be done to understand why this might be the case. This is important because it can help to determine areas where the child or family may need further support. For example suppose the greater success in larger families is due to the fact that it is more disruptive to reinsert a child into a smaller family than a larger family. To this end those working with the families may want to spend more time with smaller families and provide support for them as they prepare to accept the child. However, if children are doing better in large families because they have more support, those working with the child may want to help him or her to identify other people outside the family that he or she can go to for the extra support.

Children also appear to fare better when they are reintegrated with their parents. This information should alert those working with the children that the best option is usually to reintegrate the child with his or her natural parents. However, in Rwanda in particular where in excess of 275,000 children have been orphaned (Veale, Quigley, Ndibeshye & Nyirimihigo, 2001), this is not always possible. Therefore it is also important to note that a children living with male and female adult relatives also have a 50% chance of fairing well. Perhaps future investigations can look at how what the differences are between the families where the children fare well and the families where they do not.

The data are also very clear in indicating that the former child soldiers who are supporting their families are not doing well. This may in fact be linked to one of the findings in the interviews. There were several children in the interviews who were upset that they did not receive financial support upon their return to their communities. The government's argument for giving support to adults and not children is that the adults must support their families. However, some of the children must also support their families and these children are not doing well. For this reason it may behoove those institutions involved to rethink the policy of not giving financial support to the children, especially those who are expected to support their families.

It is finally clear from the data that children who have had experience with education fare better on their return to their communities. To this end, agencies interested in supporting children should continue to strive for education in the general population. Hopefully children growing up in Rwanda today will not have to experience the horrors that their older peers experienced. However, if they do they may be buffered by whatever experiences with education they have had.

There seems also to be a problem with children reintegrated into Kibuye. Unfortunately the author is not familiar with that location and is thus wary about even hazarding a guess as to the reason the children in this region do not appear to reintegrate as successfully as children in other regions. Therefore children in that region could benefit from an in depth look at what the issues and problems are that are specific to their experiences.

Also children 16 and over are very unlikely to return to school. It is certainly understandable why a child of 16 who has never been to school is reluctant to start at such a late age. Perhaps then agencies working with the children can begin to identify alternative sources of education for these children. For example many children said that they would like to learn a trade. If trade schools are not available in the child's region then perhaps the community can help the social workers to locate a local expert with whom the child can train.

In the future the reintegration status variable and thus the analysis of children's current situation, can be further developed to better reflect the child's actual experience. For example, there could be an assessment of the child's contentment in his current surroundings. Also, it may be interesting to better understand the role (if any) the child plays in the community. These questions, as well as the ones already asked, could be added to future assessments and further develop our understanding of the reintegration process of DCSs in Rwanda.

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Appendix A

Detailed Explanation of Reintegration Status Variable

The variables measuring family problems and whether or not the child's parents were living were used to measure the family reunification. Mobilizing and enabling the child's existing care system was measured by using the number of relocations, the number of visits the child received (because a visit indicates a problem that needed to be addressed), and the economic situation variable which was the ratio of the number of active people in the household divided by the total number of people in the household. Schooling and vocational training were measured using the variable indicating whether the child's goals were realized after reintegration and the variable indicating whether or not the child was in school. Social reintegration was attained through the variables of access to land and problems with the community. Psychological healing was measured by determining whether or not the child's daily activities were age appropriate (i.e.: work after 16 and school before 16). Finally the child's health status was also attained using the child's health status variable.

According to the UNICEF *Technical Notes: Special Considerations for Programming in Unstable Situations* the various components of successful reintegration have varying degrees of importance. The most important of these is *family reunification*. A child with no family problems received a score of 3 while a child with family problems received a score of 0. A child with both parents living received a score of 6, while a child with only one parent living received a score of 3, and a child with no parents living received a score of 0. Thus the highest possible score a child could receive for family reunification was a 9 while the lowest possible score was a 0.

The next most important component of successful reintegration is *mobilizing and enabling the child's existing care system*. In this category a child who was never relocated received a score of 4, a child who was relocated once received a score of 2, and a child who was relocated two or more times received a score of 0. In addition, a child who was only visited once received a score of 6, a child who was visited twice received a score of 4, a child received three visits received a score of 2, and a child who received four or more visits received a score of 0. The economic situation variable was also multiplied by two and added to this component. However, it should be noted here that very few children had data for the economic situation variable. So in order to increase the number of children who could be used in subsequent analyses this variable was dropped. The differences between the reintegration status with and without this variable were minimal and so it was deemed unnecessary for the final analyses. Thus the highest possible score in this category without the economic situation variable was 10 and the lowest possible score was 0.

Equally important to successful reintegration as the previous component is *schooling and vocational training*. For this category a child whose goals were realized received a score of 2 and a child whose goals were not realized received a score of 0. Also, a child who was in school received a score of 2 and a child who was not in school received a score of 0. Thus the maximum score for *schooling and vocational training* was 4 and the minimum score was 0.

The remaining three components are, although important, the least important of the components of successful psychosocial reintegration. For *social reintegration*, a child who had no problems with land received a score of 1 and a child who had problems received a score of 0. The variable for community problems was dropped since every child but one had no reported problems. For *psychological healing*, the child who was in school, helped his family, worked (if he was over 16), or went to school and worked received a score of 2. A child who worked (if he was 15 or younger) or did nothing received a score of 1. Finally, for *medical screening and care* a child who had no health problems received a score of 1 and a child with health problems received a score of 0. So the total possible maximum score for these three components was 4 and the minimum total was 1.

Appendix B

Explanation of Multiple Regression

In a multiple regression one can only use variables that exist on a continuum. For instance, the child's age is a continuous variable (12-26) but his health status (good vs. bad) is not. In this database there were six continuous variables that were not part of the reintegration status variable. These are called the predictor variables because we want to know to what degree they can predict the child's reintegration status.

When a multiple regression is run it creates a formula to predict the variability in the outcome variable. For instance, we know that not all children have the same score for their reintegration status. Our goal then is to create a group of predictor variables that can account for the differences in the children's scores. The ideal is to account for one hundred percent of the differences but this rarely happens and any variance accounted for is a step in the right direction.