

Spring 2011

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The Logic of Aid: American Foreign Policy and USAID in Rwanda

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

History

May 2011

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank members of the James Madison University faculty who worked directly to make this thesis possible. The guidance, critiques, and encouragement from my thesis director, Dr. Michael Gubser, ensured that this is the best product I was capable of creating. Dr. David Owusu-Ansah and Dr. Lamont King provided useful feedback and support throughout my graduate career and thesis writing process.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their moral support, editorial assistance and needed distractions throughout the last two years.

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Abstract

Since the end of World War II, development aid has become a permanent fixture of U.S. foreign policy. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been the primary organization for implementing the American government's development policies. Because of this, USAID provides an excellent lens for viewing the historical trajectory of American development aid. USAID's experience in Rwanda demonstrates the broad policy shifts that define this historical trajectory. During the 1960s, modernization theory directed development projects. In the 1970s this shifted to a needs-based mandate, and during the 1980s market liberalization programs defined USAID's objectives. The rich relationship between USAID and Rwanda exemplifies the gap existing in development aid between ideology and practicality. Development aid's value in determining foreign policy has also been underappreciated by scholars, and the comprehensive review of USAID projects provided aims to contribute to resolving these shortcomings.

Introduction

Rwanda received tremendous international attention during the 1990s as a result of its civil war and genocide. The media, politicians, and scholars highlighted many different aspects of the genocide, including the role played by development and foreign aid in the intensification of ethnic animosities. International relations scholar Michael Barnett has lamented that “post-1995 histories of Rwanda have two defining characteristics. One, they’re written from the vantage point of the genocide. Second, they’re written with an eye to correct what are seen as misconceptions of the country’s history.”¹ By criticizing scholars for narrowing their understanding to one crucial event, Barnett has identified a major shortcoming in the growing literature on Rwanda. While analysis of the genocide is necessary, Rwanda’s history is not teleological; it does not lead only to the genocide.

By examining the history of U.S. aid to Rwanda, a discussion of Rwanda’s history can begin without the genocide looming in the foreground. By focusing on USAID’s role from 1962 through the 1980s, the shifts in foreign aid can be identified as moving from modernization practices to addressing basic human needs and ending with market reform policies. This approach reveals on the one hand the general ideological movement of U.S. foreign aid policy, but it can also be seen that Rwanda programs reflected the local realities of implementing aid and did not simply toe the Washington line. As Rwanda was remote and rather unimportant strategically, aid managers had some latitude for creative programming specific to Rwandan needs. The effects of this distance can most clearly be recognized in the

¹ Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2002), 49.

programs of the 1980s when old programming policies addressing basic human needs lingered in Rwanda after the ideological winds had changed in Washington.

This thesis focuses on United States' involvement in Rwandan development and examines what changes affected USAID's position and objectives during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Although the emergence of development assistance is quite recent, aid has already become a permanent fixture in foreign policy programs across the globe. As countries like the United States continue to fund aid projects it is important to understand their origins, influences and recipients. By analyzing past projects, scholars are able to determine if aid has been effective and make recommendations about worthwhile assistance. Finally, conclusions on the value of aid will lead to educated policy recommendations to improve assistance programs of the future. Anthropologist James Ferguson critically explains the importance of development as a central value of our time saying "wars are fought and coups are launched in its name. Entire systems of government and philosophy are evaluated according to their ability to promote it."² Beyond studying the role of aid in donor countries, the history of development assistance also illuminates changes in recipient countries. Many countries, including Rwanda, are still recently independent and recognizing the role Western nations played since colonialism is crucial in understanding how these nations function today.

Three sub-questions will be considered to help examine the role USAID played in Rwanda's development. First, what were the specific projects undertaken by USAID in Rwanda during these decades? Second, how did the goals and

² James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), xiii.

characteristics of these projects change over time? Lastly, did events in Rwanda lead to changes in USAID projects or were changes driven by developments in U.S. foreign policy? Research on Rwandan history, U.S. policy, and the USAID archives reveal major economic, political, and social events globally and within both countries that influenced USAID's evolving objectives in each decade.

During the 1960s, President Kennedy created USAID in accordance with his mission to promote development as a means of winning Cold War allies. Modernization theorists believed that lesser developed regions could be more susceptible to communism,³ providing the U.S. reason to supply aid to third world countries. Another motivation for supplying aid to the developing world was humanitarian, such as responses to natural disasters and famine. Kennedy worked to distance aid programs from U.S. diplomacy, as he saw Eisenhower's past programs as shortsighted and too narrowly focused on strategic purposes. Kennedy's work combining the acquisition of allies and focusing on humanitarian development projects, including education and health, allowed USAID to move away from development missions of the past.

At the same time, Rwanda followed the tide sweeping across Africa and declared independence from Belgium. Beginning in the late 1950s, African nations rejected their colonial ties and declared independence. The majority of African countries gained independence during the 1960s. Both the creation of USAID and

³ Works on modernization theory include: W.W Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America*, (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); and Michael Latham, *Modernization as ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

Rwandan independence set up the long-standing development relationship between the United States and Rwanda. This also set in place the trajectory of U.S. foreign aid beginning with modernization practices.

Two key events distinguished aid policy in the 1970s from that of the 1960s. In 1973 the United States Congress enacted the New Directions Mandate to refocus foreign aid on the poorest of the poor. New internal pressures within America, including lobbies originating from the civil rights movement and the end of the Vietnam War, forced Congress to rethink and refocus foreign aid. This Congressional mandate occurred the same year that a military coup made Juvenal Habyarimana Rwanda's president. Habyarimana replaced Grégoire Kayibanda, the president since Rwanda gained independence. These two changes expanded the established relationship of foreign assistance between the United States and Rwanda and shifted U.S. foreign policy objectives from modernization to a needs mandate.

Finally, during the 1980s, the U.S. witnessed a political shift to the right with the election of President Ronald Reagan and another shift in the trajectory of U.S. foreign aid from the 1970s needs mandate to a liberalization focus. With a Republican in office, the U.S. put a new emphasis on free market forces. This focus on economic reform programs, specifically market liberalization, worked to complement President Reagan's platform of increased security and targeting lesser-developed regions to boost stability and democracy. Though programs in the 1960s worked to establish basic economic policies for the newly independent nations, the projects of the 1980s reflected an understanding based on a different ideology of the

specific economic needs of individual countries. Modernization practices of the 1960s involved state direction while 1980s liberalization stressed state retraction. These new programs worked on privatization and diversification of products. Even though Reagan shifted USAID's emphasis in Rwanda to market reform, Rwanda's economy began rapidly declining and eventually collapsed. The global economic downturn along with internal problems during the 1980s led to a decline in prices for Rwanda's top commodities and severely damaged the country's economy. The tumbling market for coffee and tea, Rwanda's major exports, and disastrous weather conditions destroyed these cash crops.

Through an examination of USAID documents, it becomes clear that ideology sets the decades apart along with major economic, political, and social events that shifted USAID's development objectives in Rwanda during each of the three decades studied. The "development concept can be located in historical conjunctures and can be understood in relation to intellectual trends, shifts in global economic structures, political exigencies, and institutional dynamics."⁴ Analyzing the full range of USAID's work in Rwanda is beyond the scope of this thesis. But, the USAID documents that comprise the primary source base for this research – including interviews with USAID employees, and regular reports such as budget submissions, country development strategies, action plans, project updates and special evaluations available at USAID's online archive, the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) – do reveal the motivations and influences behind the organization's work in Rwanda. It is these influences, and not the project's results,

⁴ Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 29.

that are the primary focus of this thesis. Supporting materials include works on the United States foreign policy, Rwandan history, and the history of development aid. Along with an examination of USAID's work in Rwanda, an overview of the historiography of development aid is needed to understand the historical interpretations of aid since the 1960s.

As more countries include development aid permanently in their foreign aid policy portfolios, the history of development becomes more pertinent. The history of international development is still an emerging topic, and while political scientists and economists have long written analyses of aid, historical works are still relatively few. Scholars from different fields generally agree that aid is the

voluntary transfer of public resources from one government to another government, international organization, or non-governmental organization (including not-for-profit organizations working on specific issues, public interest organizations, churches and their associated organizations, universities, foundations, even private, for-profit business enterprises) to improve the lives and livelihoods in the country receiving the aid, among other goals.⁵

USAID has commissioned historical reviews for its own internal purposes, but the organization has attracted the attention of few other historians.

Historical literature on development aid has largely emerged only in the last two decades. One historical examination of foreign aid can be found in the 2003 special issue of *Contemporary European History* dedicated to Europe's "first development decade" during the 1960s. The issue includes historical case studies

⁵ Carol Lancaster, *Organizing U.S. Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute, the Global Economy and Development: Monograph Series on Globalization, 2005), 6.

on the aid portfolios of the United Kingdom, France, Norway, and the Netherlands. These articles expand the historiography of official aid programs and provide a complementary view to the origins of the United States' development program. According to Heide-Irene Schmidt and Helge Pharo, "historical analysis may help to uncover the continuities and discontinuities in the evolution and implementation of development strategies."⁶ This case study of USAID in Rwanda similarly focuses on continuities and discontinuities in aid type and implementation over three decades. Examining the factors and influences that created and shaped other governments' aid programs elucidate the unique and specific events that led to the formation and development of the United States' aid program. For the U.S., domestic and international factors determined the type of aid provided, distinguishing them from other donor nations.

Modernization has attracted particular historical attention. Nils Gilman's *Mandarins of the Future* examines the intellectual history of modernization theory, including W. W. Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth*. Gilman argues that while the theory focused on the plight of the third world, it also looked at the unfolding sentiments in America about the condition of modernity at home. Gilman contextualized modernization theory while examining "the image of postcoloniality that undergirded the theory," and compared works by modernization theorists that debated the definition of modernity.⁷ Gilman's works is important in identifying contributors to the creation of America's development policies. Michael Latham's

⁶ Heide-Irene Schmidt and Helge Pharo, "Introduction," *Contemporary European History* 12 (2003), 393-394.

⁷ Gilman, 4.

Modernization as Ideology argues that modernization “was also a means of understanding the process of global change and identifying ways the U.S. could accelerate, channel, and direct [development].”⁸ By examining the ideological background and effects of modernization theory, Latham’s work opens new areas for inquiry about national identity, specifically American identity, and the impact of the Cold War on foreign policies.⁹

David Ekbladh’s *The Great American Mission* describes how U.S. “perceptions motivated and then shaped actual modernization policy and activity.”¹⁰ Focusing on projects implemented in Asia, Ekbladh argues that “understanding how development was brought to bear in the international arena by the U.S.” allows for “indispensable insight into the history of a powerful international theme and provides critical perspective on how it relates to the world today.”¹¹ Ekbladh was particularly concerned with how modernization fit into the wider sense of America’s development mission. Ekbladh’s work provides useful background information and supports the argument that there were many factors that influenced U.S. development policy. And though Nick Cullather’s *The Hungry World* began as a

⁸ Latham, 2.

⁹ Other works consider development outside the U.S. policy framework. Amy Staples’ *The Birth of Development* examines the creation of the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. While not specifically focusing on the United States, this work advances the historiography of development studies useful in contextualizing U.S. foreign aid programs. Similarly, the volume *International Development and the Social Sciences* edited by historian Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, works to understand the production, transmission, and implementation of development thought within historical and political contexts.

¹⁰ David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 11.

¹¹ Ekbladh, 13.

study on food and agriculture, specifically the 1960s Green Revolution,¹² it grew into an examination of U.S. development, such as nation building, humanitarian relief, and foreign aid that also adds much to the discussion of U.S. development aid.

There is also a wide range of works by economists and political scientists on the topic of development aid. One of the leading development theorists on the history of America's aid program is Carol Lancaster, the Dean and Professor of Politics in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. She has written extensively on U.S. aid, using her background in the State Department and USAID to help explain past development policies and make recommendations for the future.¹³ According to Lancaster, "books that come out regularly about aid rarely look at U.S. aid," making her extensive list of contributions invaluable to the field of both developmental history and history of U.S. foreign aid.¹⁴

Another scholar contributing to the historiography of U.S. aid is Samuel Hale Butterfield, a development officer from 1958 to 1980, who later taught theory and practice of international development. His work, *U.S. Development Aid, an Historic First*, is an extensive look at the achievements and failures of U.S. aid in the twentieth century and serves as a continuation of *U.S. Development Assistance Policy*, a 1996 book by Vernon Ruttan, an agricultural economist who worked with USAID

¹² According to Cullather, the Green Revolution was the wave of development activity that peaked in the 1950s and 1960s.

¹³ Works on foreign aid by Carol Lancaster include *Aid to Africa: So Much to Do, So Little Done*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999; *Transforming Foreign Aid: United States Assistance in the Twenty-First Century*, Washington D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2000; *Organizing U.S. Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*, with Ann Van Dusen, Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute, 2005; *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007; *George Bush's Foreign Aid: Transformation or Chaos?* Washington D.C.: Center for Global Development, 2008; "Redesigning Foreign Aid," *Foreign Affairs* 79 (2000), 74-88.

¹⁴ Lancaster, *Transforming Foreign Aid*, vii.

and taught international development. Butterfield and Ruttan provide models for examining America's foreign aid history in specific cases, such as Rwanda.

While there are some worthwhile general studies of U.S. foreign assistance, the historical literature lacks specific cases studies. Anthropologists have therefore influenced our understanding of the local effects of development. James Ferguson's work is a prime example, as he chose to place his study in Lesotho, taking his primary focus as the development apparatus. He argues that development institutions create their own form of discourse, constructing countries "as a particular kind of object of knowledge and a structure of knowledge around that object."¹⁵ These arguments, by Ferguson and other anthropologists contribute to the study of development: its history, purpose and scholarship.

There are no works by historians on USAID's history in Rwanda, though the United States has a long relationship of providing assistance to the country. The most pertinent volume comes from Peter Uvin, a political scientist and author of *Aiding Violence*. Uvin's work is very useful in examining development aid's impact on the Rwandan genocide, but does not focus on one specific donor and relies primarily on evidence from the 1980s. A work focusing solely on USAID in Rwanda spanning all three decades from independence to the civil war is lacking. The aim of this thesis is to fill that gap and contribute to the growing body of work on both USAID history and development aid in Rwanda.

¹⁵ Ferguson, xiv.

This thesis has three main chapters. The first examines the major events in America and Rwanda in the 1960s that affected USAID objectives, especially Rwanda's declaration of independence, the creation of USAID in the United States and the establishment of development assistance between the two countries. The second chapter examines the 1970s, which began in Rwanda with a military coup that put Juvenal Habyarimana in power and witnessed the New Directions Mandate in the United States reorienting aid toward poverty alleviation and away from modernization and growth. Finally, in the 1980s, the focus of chapter three, the shifts that impacted USAID in Rwanda the decade before violence broke out are examined. These shifts include declining economic conditions in Rwanda that led to an economic collapse and the election of President Reagan in the U.S., which resulted in new market-friendly aid policies. The conclusion briefly considers Rwanda during the 1990s, especially the impact of the 1990 civil war and the end of the Cold War. It continues on to provide a more complete picture of how USAID continued to evolve in Rwanda.

These chapters support the argument that economic, social and political shifts in the United States and Rwanda affected the type of aid implemented in Rwanda from 1962 through the 1980s. Examining Rwanda's development history without highlighting the 1994 genocide contributes to the deficient body of literature without a determinist perspective leading to genocide. Because Rwanda has been used both as a symbol of Western success and failure, as model of development and a warning sign, a reinterpretation of Rwanda's history is needed to understand the importance of development aid and the impact of USAID.

Chapter 1: The Decade of Development

Rwanda, bordering the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi in Central East Africa, is slightly smaller than the state of Maryland, but its 2011 population of over 11 million makes it the most densely populated African nation. There are three main ethnic groups that comprise Rwanda but relations among the Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa have not always been clearly defined.

Anthropologist Johan Pottier explained that “for the period up to 1860, it was correct to say that historians knew next to nothing about how the terms ‘Twa,’ ‘Hutu,’ and ‘Tutsi’ were used in social discourse.”¹ The terms have been explained as alternately racial, cultural, economic, and social designations. During the reconstruction of Rwanda after the genocide, all citizens were to be referred to as “Rwandan” to help overcome the violence and discrimination of the past. While this change may help for the future, it does not help clarify the past. There have been many debates between scholars on the origins and distinctions of these groups. Revisiting these debates from pre-independent Rwanda can clarify development objectives during the 1960s.

It is widely accepted that Tutsis migrated to the region of Rwanda supposedly while fleeing drought and famine in Ethiopia in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Tutsis were pastoralist; owning cattle, a coveted resource, made them economically superior to the existing groups in Rwanda, including the agriculturalist Hutus, who had migrated to fertile Rwanda from Central Africa

¹ Johan Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 12-13. Work by historian Jan Vansina has helped clarify many misconceptions and unknowns of Rwanda before 1900.

during the wider Bantu migrations between the fifth and eleventh centuries. Both groups intruded upon the original inhabitants of the area, the Twa. This small group, comprising approximately one percent of Rwanda's population today, were generally artisans and hunters.²

While most scholars accept this timeline, it remains uncertain when the different groups entered the region. Historian Jan Vansina explained, "there never were [definitive] successive immigrations of Twa foragers, Hutu farmers, and Tutsi herders... [T]he settlement history of Rwanda is actually very ancient and quite complex."³ Regardless of origin, these three groups had integrated almost completely by the time European explorers entered the region. For centuries "they spoke the same language, believed in the same god, shared the same culture, belonged to joint clans, and lived side by side throughout the country."⁴ While these three groups had largely integrated by the mid-nineteenth century, the *Abazungu*,⁵ or white people, disrupted the equilibrium and exacerbated the preexisting tensions of these ethnic and social groups.

The *Abazungu* colonialists divided and conquered Africa during the 1880s. In Rwanda the original German colonialists – and Belgians after 1916 – comprised no more than one percent of the population, but held all the wealth and power. The colonial powers enforced indirect rule, making "social relationships in Rwanda more uniform and exploitative than ever, with a clear hierarchy from Bazungu to

² Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998), 14.

³ Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom*, (Madison: the University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 198.

⁴ Uvin, 14.

⁵ The term is Kinyarwandan. Bazungu is the Swahili term for white people.

Tutsi to Hutu to Twa.” A new hierarchy from Europeans at top to the Twa at bottom rested on an “ideology of racial superiority.”⁶

As Germany’s colonial control increased, Rwanda experienced internal conflicts. The traditional Rwandan dynasty witnessed a violent succession battle following the death of the last leader, Mwami (King) Kigeli IV Rwabugiri. The combined results of Germany’s presence and the internal political upheaval was a “political structure...often described as a dual colonialism,” where Tutsi elites worked to exploit the lower Hutu class alongside the Germans.⁷ While the Tutsis were the minority group in Rwanda, for centuries they had ruled over the Hutu. When the Tutsis migrated into Rwanda, they were established as economically superior herders. Owning cattle elevated inhabitants financially and with this supremacy, the Tutsis took control first at the community level then in the monarchy. The Tutsis maintained their prominent position in the country when the Germans arrived and after World War I when Rwanda was given to Belgium. When the colonial powers entered Rwanda they aggravated this social division. Eventually the social stratifications changed and in the 1930s, Belgium solidified the shift of socio-economic classes into different ethnicities.⁸

Belgium held colonial power in Rwanda until 1962. Following the Germans’ lead, Belgium initially accepted the established hierarchy in Rwanda and favored the ruling Tutsis. As Belgians influenced the established social divisions and instituted

⁶ Uvin, 17.

⁷ Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*, (New York: Picador, 1998), 54.

⁸ Jan Vansina’s *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda* is the most accurate and accessible history of pre-colonial Rwanda.

rigid ethnic classifications, scientific tests were administered to separate the groups and support Tutsi favoritism. These tests included measuring nose and skull sizes and counting the number of cattle owned by individuals or families. Because Tutsis supposedly had more Caucasian features and generally more cattle, they continued to be the preferred group in Rwanda.

This favoritism aggravated an already tense situation as Belgians made “this polarization the cornerstone of their colonial policy” in Rwanda.⁹ These tense situations were not originally linked to the ethnic problems created by the colonizers, but instead stemmed from the ruling class’ abuse of the struggling lower class. The Belgians made continually more invasive changes within Rwanda, starting with the removal of all undesirable local leaders. These undesirables included the few Hutu leaders and Tutsis unwilling to act as puppets of the Belgian government. From 1933 to 1934 Belgium implemented the most damaging change, the introduction of ethnic identification cards. These cards, explained journalist Philip Gourevitch, made “it virtually impossible for Hutus to become Tutsis, and permitted the Belgians to perfect the administration of an apartheid system rooted in the myth of Tutsi superiority.”¹⁰ The Catholic Church, the leading religious organization in Rwanda, supported this new system. These changes quickly solidified ethnic lines.

This situation lasted until a revolution in 1959 put Hutus in power over the minority Tutsi group. African countries began to break free from their colonial masters in the early 1950s, and within a decade almost all African nations outside of

⁹ Gourevitch, 54.

¹⁰ Gourevitch, 57.

southern Africa were independent. Rwandan independence came on the heels of the Hutu Revolution of 1959. As plans were being laid for independence, Hutus revolted and overthrew the Tutsi monarchy, replacing it with a presidential republic. Contrary to many other African independence movements, the push for Rwandan independence involved an ethnic and social revolution that intensified interethnic animosity.

The Hutu Revolution entailed several stages of violence. Outbreaks began as “localized anti-Tutsi violence and small pogroms in some provinces; hundreds were killed, and quite a few Tutsi fled the country.”¹¹ Along with widespread violence, over 100,000 Tutsis fled Rwanda to neighboring countries. Catholic priests and Belgian officials had encouraged this first stage of violence for months before it climaxed. Following World War II, Rwanda saw an influx of Belgian Flemish Priests, who as a minority in their home country, identified with the disenfranchised Hutu population. Sympathizing with the Hutus, the newly arrived priests encouraged them to fight for power.¹² In tandem with this new influence, the United Nations applied pressure on Belgium to relinquish its colonial control. These influences led to the creation of a united Hutu front calling for radical change.

In March 1957, the second stage of revolution began when Hutu intellectuals published the *Hutu Manifesto*, arguing for democracy and calling for the removal of Tutsis from power. Philip Gourevitch described the situation, “As new Hutu parties sprang up, rallying the masses to unite in their ‘Hutuness,’ the enthusiastic Belgians scheduled the elections. But before any Rwandans saw a ballot box, hundreds of

¹¹ Uvin, 19.

¹² Gourevitch, 58.

them were killed.”¹³ Starting in November 1957, violence broke out regularly between Tutsis and Hutus across the country. This violence was spurred by Catholic priests and encouraged by retreating Belgian colonialists. The Belgians supported the Hutu power grab partly in retaliation for Tutsis resistance to colonial control. The United Nations also encouraged the switch to majoritarian rule as the independence movement in Rwanda progressed.¹⁴ The colonial authorities eventually acknowledged the social revolution occurring within Rwanda, and “the break between the Belgian authorities and their long-coddled Tutsi elite [came] about only because the colonial administrators felt betrayed by their erstwhile protégés.”¹⁵ The violence continued sporadically for decades, and became one of the first concerns of USAID in independent Rwanda.

In January 1961, following the trend across Africa, “the Belgians convened a meeting of Rwanda’s new Hutu leaders, at which the monarchy was officially abolished and Rwanda was declared a republic.”¹⁶ On July 1, 1962 Rwanda became an independent nation. This seminal event started a new journey of development that included interactions and partnerships with USAID. Belgian colonial policy had employed development practices and programs, but as a newly independent nation, Rwanda was able to play a larger role in their development and promote their own development objectives. Grégoire Kayibanda was inaugurated as President and the new Hutu dictatorship “masqueraded as popular democracy, and Rwanda’s power

¹³ Gourevitch, 58.

¹⁴ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 116.

¹⁵ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1995), 50.

¹⁶ Gourevitch, 61.

struggles became an internal affair of the Hutu elite.”¹⁷ The Hutus in power reproduced abuses that had been committed against them during the Tutsi monarchy, while pretending to support their new system of democracy. Kayibanda hid behind a veil of democracy with the support from Hutu elites and the West as he continued terrorizing his opponents. Rwanda received Western support because its proximity to Zaire, which was of critical strategic importance during the Cold War. Ethnic violence increased and became “a central feature of Rwanda’s politics.”¹⁸ In cross border raids, Tutsi refugees attacked the Hutu population and government, and the Rwandan government retaliated against the Tutsis remaining in Rwanda. This situation continued and worsened in the following decades.

The early 1960s also saw the creation of USAID. As decolonization spread across Africa and the threat of communism expanded, U.S. support for foreign aid grew because it “was seen as a tool to reduce discontent generated by poverty and the consequent temptations of communism by spurring economic progress and addressing the social and political tensions created by rapid economic change.”¹⁹ After World War II, the United States government launched economic development and assistance programs, such as the Marshall Plan. When Eisenhower took office, he reduced the amount of funding available to the programs started by Truman’s administration. Eisenhower’s aid was tied to mutual security assistance, until 1957

¹⁷ Gourevitch, 61.

¹⁸ Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002), 52-53.

¹⁹ Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen, *Organizing U.S. Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C.: the Brookings Institute, the Global Economy and Development: Monograph Series on Globalization, 2005), 10.

when he reversed this policy and created several development organizations and projects.²⁰ This move solidified development aid's position in U.S. foreign policy. As a senator, Kennedy criticized Eisenhower's failure to appreciate the true importance of foreign aid. Adding to the recent advances made by Eisenhower, the election of President John F. Kennedy in 1960 made development aid a crucial aspect of U.S. foreign relations.

When Kennedy took office, he declared the 1960s a "decade of development." During his presidential campaign, Kennedy constantly emphasized that America would have to "demonstrate to the 'emerging countries' that development along liberal, capitalist lines could alleviate poverty and raise living standards at least as fast as revolutionary and Marxist alternatives."²¹ Following through on these campaign promises, Kennedy established the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1961 by merging two existing aid agencies, the Development Loan Fund and the International Cooperation Agency²² into a single entity that would be semi-autonomous within the Department of State.²³ USAID was intended to further international development and U.S. diplomacy in the newly emerging nations of Africa and Asia. While USAID was connected to diplomatic goals, it was kept semi-autonomous to separate it from Eisenhower's preference for

²⁰ Samuel Butterfield, *U.S. Development Aid: An Historic First: Achievements and Failures in the Twentieth Century*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 59. These organizations included the Development Loan Fund, Inter-American Development Bank and support the Social Progress Trust Fund through the Development Bank.

²¹ Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 28.

²² The International Cooperation Agency (ICA) was part of the Department of State responsible for technical assistance.

²³ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 71-72.

linking aid with security interests. President Kennedy wanted to distinguish development from diplomacy institutionally.

Beginning in the 1960s, USAID became responsible, in consultation with the Department of State, for

the policies, country allocations, and uses of development assistance (used to promote economic growth, education, and agricultural development, health and family planning and democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance, and child survival) and disaster relief and recovery.²⁴

Within the first few years USAID programs had expanded across the globe, and were providing assistance to the inhabitants of developing countries on four continents. By 1963, there were USAID programs in almost 30 African nations.²⁵ During the 1960s, USAID programs were founded in modernization theory, and its primary goals were to provide assistance in health, education and agriculture, bringing the standards of these domains closer to those of modern nations.

USAID began working in Rwanda during its first year of independence in 1962. Foreign aid “promised to be a useful tool in promoting democracy, especially in sub-Saharan Africa – both as an incentive for governments to implement political reforms and a source of financing for activities related to democratization.”²⁶ The United States government was concerned that newly independent countries would turn to communist regimes, especially if requests for American aid were denied. On

²⁴ Carol Lancaster, *Organizing U.S. Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute, the Global Economy and Development: Monograph Series on Globalization, 2005), 14-15.

²⁵ Carol Lancaster, *Aid to Africa: So Much to do, So Little Done*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 84.

²⁶ Lancaster, *Foreign Aid*, 47.

the surface, Rwanda was a prime candidate for USAID assistance, promoting its first democratic government as the United States helped to foster growth to consolidate strategic interests in the region. Rwanda was a tactical position between Zaire and Tanzania, seen both as a potential ally and threat during the Cold War. To help democracy take hold, USAID promoted sectors crucial to survival and education; security and infrastructure (primarily in the capital, Kigali) became the donor's first project areas. USAID's strategy in these first years was to "demonstrate interest in the economic development of the country, support adoption of a fundamental fiscal and monetary reform, and assist the Government of Rwanda in maintaining internal security."²⁷ These original economic reform initiatives in Rwanda helped the new country become established and stable without the direction of their old colonial leader. Modernization theorists of the 1960s drove these initial programs and policy objectives, assuming that with assistance "traditional" Rwanda could develop in the same manner as the West. USAID documents demonstrated the goals employed in Rwanda, specifically the importance of creating strong ties between the new country and new organization.

USAID approached education assistance from various angles. Ambassador Charles D. Withers presented the first foreign aid program to Rwanda as an independence gift: scholarship funds for Rwandans to study at universities in the United States. USAID also established regional scholarship programs for students attending local universities. Eventually USAID also provided support for American professors to teach at Rwandan universities and purchased necessary school

²⁷ Lynn Elizabeth Grosz, "A History of the USAID Program in Rwanda 1962-1985." (Kigali, Rwanda, 1986), unpublished report available at USAID DEC, 3.

equipment.²⁸ Supervised by USAID Liaison Officer at the U.S. Embassy Gene Moore, USAID support also included several short-term training courses and two undergraduate degree courses, a grant for twenty regional scholarships for students already enrolled in Rwandan university classes, and an equipment grant to the University in Butare. Another independence gift of thirty training grants for civil service fields was also administered.²⁹ From 1962 through 1968, “the United States Government provided \$20,000 for scholarships to American Universities.”³⁰ In the following decades USAID became more involved and provided more money for youth education, from primary school to high school equivalency and vocational training courses.

As Kennedy reshaped the objectives and influences of foreign assistance, the United States moved away from influencing people primarily through military means and started persuading them with ‘softer’ means. Rostow’s 1961 commencement address at Fort Bragg exemplified this new ideology by charging the graduating class to fight “not merely with weapons but ... in the minds of men in villages and hills; [fight] by the spirit and policy of those who run the local government, to intervene directly and engage themselves in the whole creative process of modernization.”³¹ These USAID education projects of the 1960s represented the needs of newly independent Rwanda and the shift from the first stage of modernization theory to the second. As explained by Rostow, in order to

²⁸ Grosz, 3.

²⁹ Grosz, 5.

³⁰ Grosz, 3.

³¹ Latham, 1-2.

advance from a traditional society to a society with the preconditions to take-off, a commitment to secular education was necessary.

Education programs worked to prevent the spread of communism, helped fill vacant administrative positions previously filled by Belgian officials, and insured a continued alliance with the United States. Controlling the production of knowledge, education was the easiest way to indoctrinate people. As an effective way of influencing political beliefs, the education projects helped ensure Rwandans would steer clear of communism. Addressing the needs of Rwanda, USAID helped to fill positions left by Belgians. The university and technical training provided Rwandans with the capabilities to fill the many high level positions available in the Rwandan government. Finally, the education projects that taught both the horrors of communism and the skills needed to run their country also instructed Rwandans to remain loyal to the United States. The emerging educated leaders of Rwanda were taught to ally themselves and their country with the U.S.

USAID's help regarding infrastructure was limited during the 1960s, and focused primarily on Kigali, Rwanda's capital. Small projects included furnishing nursing schools in Kigali with transistor radios, and other small cash grants for local commodities. In 1966, the United States increased aid levels to Rwanda and several more programs were activated. One reason for the "increased activity was an agreement between Rwanda and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) signed in April 1966."³² The agreement required the government of Rwanda to devalue the

³² Grosz, 4.

Rwandan franc in exchange for standby credit from the IMF. The increased aid from USAID provided commodity import programs, providing trucks, vehicle equipment and raw plastic as well as staples such as flour, oil and milk. These commodities were sold to and benefitted importers. This food was monetized and sold to raise funds, instead of being consumed by Rwandans. The government of Rwanda was “assured a supply of basic commodities was available without spending its foreign exchange, the funds financed projects planned by both governments, and consumers were able to buy basic items.”³³ When these projects were completed and deemed successful by USAID, the allotted support amount was increased.

Beginning in late 1966 and continuing through 1968, USAID provided funds and technical support for paving streets in Kigali and constructing a water purification plant for the capital. These basic infrastructure projects contributed to the second stage of modernization, encouraging the preconditions to take-off. Along with education, a society was thought to need to enable a degree of capital mobilization, which would be difficult for Rwanda without infrastructure assistance from USAID. Then at the end of 1968, USAID support was almost completely cut from Rwanda and the number of programs was significantly reduced as “the unpopular war in Vietnam discredited many development ideas and there was growing distrust of the state to be the primary agent to promote development.”³⁴ Before these funds were eliminated, USAID was able to help advise the government on security problems.

³³ Grosz, 4.

³⁴ David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 10.

The infrastructure programs implemented in the 1960s worked to steady a Rwanda that was lost without its colonial guide. As with many colonies, after decolonization experts, leaders, and administrators left their colonial positions and returned home to Europe. The education projects discussed earlier addressed how USAID helped train Rwandans to fill these vacant positions. The infrastructure programs worked with these courses to keep Rwanda progressing forward. The construction of roads, water plants, and furnishing nursing schools and providing commodities kept development going and allowed Rwanda to gain stability for the future.

As discussed previously, the security situation within Rwanda was tenuous with sporadic fighting between the government and rebel refugee Tutsis in Uganda, Zaire, and Burundi. In July 1963 the government of Rwanda requested equipment and construction assistance from USAID to help its internal security forces, including both military and police forces. This initial request was denied. Then in December 1963, Tutsi exiles launched a desperate attack from Burundi. Invading Bugesera, a medium-sized village in southern Rwanda, and almost reaching Kigali, the exiles were disorganized and the government was able to beat them back to the border. The Rwandan government “used the occasion to launch a massive wave of repression in which an estimated 10,000 Tutsi were slaughtered between December 1963 and January 1964.”³⁵

The rebel attack in late 1963 forced the United States to reconsider Rwanda’s request for security assistance. Unfortunately, the U.S. apparently did not consider

³⁵ Prunier, 56.

its role in the growing ethnic violence by providing security assistance. In the spring of 1964, a United States police survey team arrived and after inspection proposed appropriate and needed changes to improve Rwanda's security situation. While ignoring its role in the increasing ethnic violence in Rwanda, the U.S. also did not criticize the Rwandan government for the retaliation committed against Tutsis residing within the country. The survey team report noted that until its initial request was denied, Rwanda was pro-western. But "since their first request for military and police commodity assistance had been rejected, Rwanda had become critical and suspicious of all current efforts to assist them in the field."³⁶ Worried about losing a critically located ally, the survey team recommended the United States provide technical and commodity assistance to keep Rwanda from possible communist leanings. While Rwanda had grown distrustful, finally receiving the assistance they requested apparently mitigated their fears about U.S. security assistance.

The United States perceived there to be communist threats surrounding Rwanda, including Tanzania. Julius Nyerere, the president of Tanzania, implemented a socialist government, and fears arose that socialism would spill out from Tanzania into Rwanda and beyond. The fear of communism spreading into East and Central Africa led to a public safety project launched in 1964. Over five years USAID provided \$70,000 to the Rwandan government for both the military and police force for communication and transportation equipment, along with two advisors providing technical training for use and maintenance of the equipment.

³⁶ Grosz, 3.

There were also short-term training programs that took place in the United States to help the Rwandan government better handle the refugee and rebel situation.³⁷

USAID documents clearly demonstrate that U.S. aid strategy focused on the “adoption of fundamental fiscal and monetary reform, assist[ed] maintaining internal security, and support[ed] small, viable development projects.”³⁸ These fiscal reform policies were geared towards helping the newly independent nation become financially stable and productive on its own. While these projects were underway, monetary support from the United States Congress to USAID programs was almost completely cut, signifying concerns about money spent abroad instead of domestically. At the end of fiscal year (FY) 1968, the Public Safety/Communications Advisor and the USAID Liaison Officer left Rwanda and from 1969 to 1973, USAID activities in Rwanda were limited to PL 480 Title II and the Embassy administered Self Help Program. USAID funds for Rwanda were too low to continue support for these aid workers as their projects were slowly wrapped up or cancelled.

The PL 480 Title II program,³⁹ also known as Food for Peace, received almost three million dollars during the first seven years that USAID was active in Rwanda and focused assistance to maternal and child health and school feeding programs. The Catholic Relief Service distributed most of the food, which continued after

³⁷ Grosz, 4.

³⁸ Grosz, 5.

³⁹ PL stands for Public Law, shorten from the 1954 Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act. There are four parts to the act, Title I is managed by the United States Department of Agriculture, while Titles II, III and V are run by USAID. For more information on the PL 480 Title programs see Nick Cullather’s *The Hungry World*.

USAID funds were cut.⁴⁰ The Self Help Programs provided small amounts of funds to Rwandans with promising development ideas. Both programs were important to Rwanda, but the Food for Peace programs were crucial and, in fact, have continued into the twenty-first century.

Initially, in 1963 the U.S. Congress complained about the large amount of aid programs in Africa, arguing that money should be directed toward problems at home. While President Kennedy fielded Congress' complaints and received advice from reports recommending reductions of projects in Africa, aid programs continued. Years later, President Johnson heeded to the requests and suggestions to reduce aid programs and "by the early 1970s, there were only 10 operating in the region."⁴¹ The main reasons for the criticisms and attacks on aid programs in Africa stemmed from misunderstandings and discontent over current events. As development aid was still a new phenomenon, it was difficult for the American public and Congress to recognize the successes and challenges USAID experienced. Americans were also frustrated and disenchanted with development after the amount of funds spent on the Vietnam War, arguing that money should now be refocused on domestic issues. The U.S. government was disappointed with the number of military coups taking hold in Africa, which made them question the value of development aid and the effectiveness of their democratization programs. Additionally, "criticisms of too extensive U.S. engagements worldwide led the administration to close a number of its aid missions abroad (especially in sub-

⁴⁰ Grosz, 6.

⁴¹ Lancaster, *Aid to Africa*, 85.

Saharan Africa) during the second half of the 1960s.”⁴² All these frustrations led the U.S. Congress to reduce the amount of money available to USAID. While USAID lost most of its funding for projects in Rwanda, in 1973, U.S. foreign policy ideology shifted again as events in both countries set the stage for new funding and broader objectives.

⁴² Lancaster, *Foreign Aid*, 75.

Chapter 2: “New Directions” for Rwanda

The 1960s began with two significant events: the creation of USAID in the United States and Rwanda’s declaration of independence. While the relationship between Rwanda and the U.S. was curtailed with the dramatic cuts of 1968, the events of the 1970s recovered lost ground. As modernization theory was phased out of U.S. practice, a new basic needs mandate rose to replace it. In the early 1970s several events affected the relationship between America and Rwanda. During 1973, in Rwanda first, then in the United States, political actions changed the outlook and reception of development aid. In Rwanda, Major General Juvénal Habyarimana staged a coup, and declared himself President. Months later the U.S. Congress, along with many other development organizations, initiated new mandates to focus on the poorest of the poor in the world. The years following 1973 saw major increases in aid provided from USAID and a more receptive and progressive atmosphere in Rwanda accepting this surge of assistance. Changes in the period from the late 1960s to 1973, set the stage for new USAID programs and projects in Rwanda.

President Grégoire Kayibanda assumed power in Rwanda after independence in 1962 and realized the desire of many Hutus to be led by a Hutu government. The Kayibanda regime continued the hostilities of the Hutu Revolution and “chased or killed most former Tutsi power holders and politicians, even the most moderate ones, as well as many opposition Hutu politicians who didn’t join

Parmehutu.”¹ While Kayibanda achieved these goals most Rwandans, both Hutus and Tutsis, lived in fear of the government’s sporadic campaigns of violence. In 1972 ethnic violence broke out in Burundi and political disturbances left around 200,000 dead; hundreds of thousands more Hutus sought refuge in Rwanda. In May-June 1972, “Burundi had been ravaged by a massive massacre of Hutu carried out by the Tutsi minority in order to keep its hold on political power.”²

Burundi has an almost identical ethnic makeup as Rwanda, but when the Hutu Revolution took power from the Tutsis in Rwanda, the minority Tutsi group in Burundi held onto their rule while declaring Burundian independence. As hundreds of thousands of Burundian Hutus spilled into Rwanda in 1972, President Kayibanda tried to exploit the situation for political gain and began to attack the Rwandan Tutsi minority again. Over 40,000 Tutsis were victims of attacks encouraged by Kayibanda between March 1962 and late 1964, and this sporadic violence continued until 1972.³ President Kayibanda asked his senior army commander Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana to lead the 1972 attack on the Rwandan Tutsis.

Habyarimana recognized the new strains felt in Rwanda and the increased tensions between the Hutus and Tutsis and made his grab for power. While the overflow of refugees exacerbated existing ethnic tensions, both groups resented the continually irregular attacks that disrupted their daily lives. Habyarimana relied on support from his region in the north and from Rwandans persecuted and exhausted

¹ Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, (Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998), 23. Parmehutu was Kayibanda’s political party organized during the Hutu Revolution.

² Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1995), 60. For more information on the 1972 events in Burundi please see Rene Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnocide as theory and Practice*, Cambridge University Press: 1994.

³ Uvin, 20.

by Kayibanda's regime. On July 5, 1973 Habyarimana took power in a bloodless coup, starting the Second Republic as Hutus and Tutsis expressed widespread relief. This change did not eliminate decades of ethnic hatred, but Hutus and Tutsis did hope to lead lives uninterrupted by campaigns of violence.

Habyarimana organized a military dictatorship and offered a compromise to the Tutsis to help stabilize the country; if they stayed out of politics they could lead reasonably normal lives. Habyarimana's iron fist rule created stability and improved development prospects. However,

the main strength of Rwanda's regimes lay not in their oppression but in their capacity to legitimize themselves to internal and external forces. To achieve this ... a 'development' legitimization [was] aimed at both the international Bazungu audience and the domestic one.⁴

When Habyarimana took power, Rwanda was poorer than its neighbors. This poverty combined with Habyarimana's skill at attracting Western development agencies led to a surge of assistance. Development was Habyarimana's favorite political word, "appealing to European and American aid donors whom he milked with great skill."⁵ Western development organizations, including USAID, favored Habyarimana because he brought an end to Kayibanda's violent campaigns, and made declarations of commitment to developing Rwanda that preferred Western capitalism to communism. Conditions within Rwanda changed drastically in the following years.

Starting in 1974, the year after Habyarimana's coup d'état, the government made several significant changes regarding development. One of its acts included

⁴ Uvin, 23.

⁵ Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish To Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories From Rwanda*, (New York: Picador, 1998), 69.

the “pronouncement that attributed Rwanda’s 143 communes the role of ‘motor of development.’ From now on, the communes would be the basic unit of development.”⁶ This was a significant change because most previous development projects had been centered on the capital or other large cities, instead of rural communes. Habyarimana declared 1974 the year of agriculture and manual labor, changed the name of the single party to Mouvement Revolutionaire National pour le Developpment (MRND) and, later, renamed the parliament the National Development Council.⁷ These changes appealed to Western governments and donors.

All these transformations turned Rwanda into what German Pastor Herbert Keiner described as ‘ein Entwicklungsdiktatur,’ a development dictatorship. This ideology was similar to colonial theories of “benevolent despotism, as President Habyarimana decided to take upon his shoulders the heavy burden of the state so his subjects could devote themselves entirely to agriculture.”⁸ This ideology legitimized the government’s intrusion into all aspects of social life. Because the Rwandan government’s development ideology focused heavily on economic development, aid agencies abroad felt compelled to implement their projects through the government. This arrangement allowed the Rwandan government to funnel the majority of assistance to the groups consisting of Hutus.

While Habyarimana favored the Hutus blatantly, he did bring political stability to Rwanda and deliver assistance to failing regions, regardless of their

⁶ Uvin, 24.

⁷ Uvin, 24. MRND stands for National Revolutionary Development Movement.

⁸ Prunier, 77.

ethnic composition. Despite remaining desperately poor, Rwanda's international reputation soared,

in part because it was finally demonstrating some economic development in a region lacking any good news. One-party stability, the dampening of ethnic conflict, modest economic progress invested Rwanda with a reputation for stability and hope. Outsiders routinely touted Rwanda as a model of efficiency and referred to it as the Switzerland of Central Africa.⁹

These changes helped to reinvigorate USAID assistance to Rwanda in the 1970s.

1973 also saw a significant change in U.S. foreign policy that affected American assistance globally. The Vietnam War and the growing domestic opposition to the war had negatively affected America's perceptions of international affairs. The war increased the Congress' role in foreign economic assistance policy. In the early 1970s, the Democratic Congress "refused to pass a foreign aid authorization bill to protest the Nixon administration's policies in Vietnam."¹⁰ Continuing the Congress' stance against using development aid for the war in Vietnam, 1973's the New Directions bill was passed. During the 1960s, U.S. aid was often used to modernize societies and promote growth, but with the New Directions Mandate, foreign aid emphasized the goal of poverty alleviation.

A group of Congressmen were able to drive their legislation through the House of International Affairs and the Senate Foreign Relations committees, authorizing the New Directions Mandate. The legislation brought about "a major reform of U.S. aid that involved policy rather than organizational change: aid was

⁹ Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2002), 53.

¹⁰ Carol Lancaster, *Transforming Foreign Aid: United States Assistance in the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2000), 46.

reoriented toward providing for the basic human needs of those in poor countries.”¹¹ Basic human needs included primary health care, basic education, shelter, and agricultural assistance. These members of Congress were able to push this mandate through because it had support throughout the government and the development community. These groups believed it was time to refocus on development after “its use in the war in Indochina to prop up governments.”¹²

Other domestic and international events also influenced this change. In 1974, the Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola declared independence, escalating Cold War tensions. Domestically, the increased number of African Americans in politics led to a rise in support for African aid.¹³ These changes helped spur increased activity and levels of aid to African nations, including Rwanda. The increased levels of support focused on country allocations, emphasized poorer countries, and highlighted goals to improve education, health care and rural agricultural development.¹⁴ The New Directions Mandate, often referred to as the Basic Human Needs mandate in popular and professional discussions, was a distinct shift away from modernization practices of the previous decade.

During the 1960s, USAID focused on general resource transfers that helped stabilize the newly emerging African nations but with the New Directions Mandate USAID’s reentry into Rwanda would be drastically different. The most distinctive

¹¹ Carol Lancaster, *George Bush’s Foreign Aid: Transformation or Chaos?* (Washington D.C.: Center for Global Development, 2008), 13.

¹² Lancaster, *George Bush’s Foreign Aid*, 14.

¹³ Carol Lancaster, *Aid to Africa: So Much to Do, So Little Done*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 86.

¹⁴ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 76.

feature of the new mandate “was that it proposed to concentrate economic assistance into five functional budget categories: Food and Nutrition, Population Planning and Health, Education and Human Resource Development, Selected Development Problems, and Selected Countries and Organizations.”¹⁵ Habyarimana’s rebranding of Rwanda as a development state appealed to aid organizations and fit with the New Directions Mandated for USAID.

Habyarimana shifted the center of development in Rwanda from the major cities to the rural communes, embracing the New Directions Mandate. USAID “involv[ed] [the rural poor] directly in the development process.”¹⁶ Another major difference from the 1960s was the removal of security projects from the development sector. A 1973 Congressional Research Service summary concluded “security assistance should be administered separately from development assistance.”¹⁷ Despite previous projects assisting Rwanda with security, all assistance in the 1970s was directed at improving basic human needs. The 1970s saw rapid increases in aid, particularly during the later half, beginning with a Congressional initiative and continued by President Carter.

This focus was reinforced with the election of President Jimmy Carter in 1976. The Carter Administration “entered office committed to the objectives of the basic human needs mandate.”¹⁸ Over the course of the 1970s, the international human rights movement gained momentum and “politicians, most notably President

¹⁵ Vernon Ruttan, *United States Development Assistance Policy: The Domestic Politics of Foreign Economic Aid*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 94.

¹⁶ Ruttan, 94.

¹⁷ Ruttan, 107.

¹⁸ Ruttan, 119.

Jimmy Carter, started to invoke human rights as the guiding rationale of the foreign policy of states.”¹⁹ Expanding his support for human rights in the 1980s, President Carter added emphasis on women’s needs and advancements in U.S. foreign aid. USAID annual reports demonstrate the wide variety of projects implemented to improve basic human needs in the rural sector of Rwanda.

USAID relations with the Government of Rwanda improved with Habyarimana’s regime. Starting in 1973, “the Government of Rwanda’s development priorities were in step with USAID goals and strategies.”²⁰ Over a period of 18 months, four different USAID teams came to Rwanda to discuss projects that would significantly contribute to the country’s development plan. Starting in 1974 the Government of Rwanda presented 23 project proposals to USAID. While not all 23 were approved, eventually USAID programs increased from three in 1975 to twelve in 1980. The United States used to be a minor donor to Rwanda, but in the last half of the 1970s, “the U.S. government began to put considerable effort into developing and expanding its program in Rwanda.”²¹

The USAID Rwanda Annual Budget Submission for FY 1977, written in August 1975 outlined some of the first projects implemented under the New Directions Mandate. An initial project included Cooperative Development, improving the access of the population living in cooperatives to development inputs,

¹⁹ Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 5.

²⁰ Lynn Elizabeth Grosz, “A History of the USAID Program in Rwanda 1962-1985.” (Kigali, Rwanda, 1986), unpublished report available at USAID DEC, 6.

²¹ Grosz, 8.

such as technical training sessions. This project “provided necessary underpinnings to the Government of Rwanda program of developing local, specialized cooperatives.”²² Emphasis was placed on production cooperatives, including both agricultural and non-agricultural cooperatives. Cooperative Development aimed to organize people into groups in order to “allow other scarce resources to be utilized more effectively [to] result in a synergistic effect.”²³ The components of this project included cooperative training, providing materials and equipment, and consultants. The benefits helped the Government of Rwanda’s cooperative programs and indirectly helped thousands of small rural farmers participating in cooperatives.

The short-lived Cooperative Development project, working to reinforce the new communal reorganization of Rwanda, represented the new goals with USAID’s New Directions initiative by working directly with the rural population and improving their standard of living economically, politically and socially. By helping these communes recognize their human resource potential, identify strengths and methods of better communication and teamwork these rural communities were given possibilities to change their situation. This project did not continue for more than a year because the Rwandan government was unable to identify specific projects within cooperatives requiring further USAID assistance. But USAID was able to help guide local participants and leaders in continuing to strengthen cooperatives across the country.

Another project outlined in the Annual Budget Submission FY 1977 included the Farm Hand Tools – Blacksmiths project. The project ran from 1975 through

²² USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1977,” July 1975, 16.

²³ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1977,” 17.

1978 and attempted to support rural vocational training by helping “Rwanda[n] blacksmiths to the degree of skill necessary to manufacture and repair hand tools commonly used or essential to the farm system and provide these with the minimum necessary tool kit.”²⁴ At the time, there were inadequate numbers of blacksmiths available to provide and fix farm tools across Rwanda. This program continued another project originally started by a Swiss development organization and even used the original Swiss training site. The Swiss project was terminated due to instability in Rwanda in 1972, and USAID made a few alternations when it resumed the project in 1975. After review, the USAID Farm Tools Projected provided consultants to create course materials to produce capable blacksmiths, tuition assistance for 120 students annually for three years, basic tool kit for graduates, and equipment for the training center.²⁵

This project also helped create better economic conditions for farmers and blacksmiths. Rwanda imported approximately 100,000 hoes annually. By increasing the number of blacksmiths available within Rwanda, hoes could be produced and sold locally, and materials repaired. Farm tools were predicted to last three years with annual repairs necessary, with the calculation of 2,750,00 hand-tools existing and 900,000 needing repairs or replacement annually.²⁶ This project expanded a domestic market instead of relying on foreign imports. Rwanda had been buying hoes from Great Britain, but with continued blacksmith training this import could be eliminated, improving Rwanda’s economic possibilities.

²⁴ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1977,” 9.

²⁵ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1977,” 11.

²⁶ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1977,” 14.

The Annual Budget Submission for FY 1979, written in June 1977, provided an update and the last information available on the project. USAID continued to assist reestablishing the blacksmith-training center and provided technical assistance and equipment.²⁷ The project was terminated after the original three-year plan likely because USAID considered the number of proficient blacksmiths in Rwanda sufficient. USAID assumed the Rwandan government would continue support for vocational trainings, including the blacksmith project.

Similar to the assistance provided to communes through the Cooperative Development project, the Blacksmith training program helped provide alternative options to rural inhabitants. The majority of Rwandans were farmers and increasing farming continually added more pressure to overused plots. This problem was countered by the Blacksmith program as it increased educational options with vocational training, relieved land pressures by reducing the number of farmers, offered different economic options for the rural population and improved the overall economic condition of Rwanda by eliminating a large import and creating an emerging domestic market for farm tools creation and maintenance.

This project reflected the political changes within Rwanda and the changes in USAID objectives during the 1970s. By focusing on rural employment options and helping to reduce the number of farmers, the Blacksmith project followed the Rwandan government's command to direct foreign assistance to the rural communes. After Habyarimana took power, he dedicated more attention and assistance to developing Rwanda, emphasizing the rural sector of the country. It

²⁷ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1977," 15.

also reflected the changed political dynamic felt after Habyarimana's coup. The original Swiss project ended suddenly in 1972 with the outbreak of violence originating in Burundi. Because Habyarimana calmed the on-going ethnic hostilities, the blacksmith project was able to resume and be completed by USAID. The Rwandan government wasn't the only entity refocusing assistance on the rural sector. With the New Directions Mandate, USAID worked to create new projects specific to problems in the countryside. The blacksmith project directly affected the opportunities available to rural inhabitants, relieved pressures felt by rural farmers, and improved the overall economic condition of the country by eliminating a regular import from Europe.

A third project discussed in the Annual Budget Submission FY 1977 was the Food Storage and Marketing project. This project began in 1975 and was considered one of the most significant projects to Rwanda because "while there were a relatively wide range of crops, inadequate transportation, limited markets, low incomes, poor communication, and other factors combined to keep agricultural crops from the markets."²⁸ The main outputs for the Food Storage and Marketing project included eight warehouses, ten Rwandan trainees in the areas of food storage and marketing, an operational food marketing office, procedures for financial control and warehouse management, and a working capital fund for the food marketing office.²⁹ This project's most important goal was to build adequate storage facilities to help protect farmers' crops. Rwandans suffered from

²⁸ Grosz, 8.

²⁹ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual Budget Submission: FY 1979," June 1977, 18.

malnutrition partly because a majority of their crops were lost to insects, animals, and mold. By helping protect crops, the project's goal was to increase the amount of food for families to eat and sell in markets.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1979 provided an update on the progress of this project. Within two years of implementation, almost 4,000 tons of beans had been stored. Rwanda sent a project manager to the United States to receive training for project administration and analysis. The project was under revision, calling for an expansion of the storage capacity in specific areas and construction of more warehouses in others.³⁰ The project remained fully staffed and continued to expand due to its rapid success. Examination and expansions on this project continued into the 1980s.

In the Budget Submission FY 1980, written in May 1978, the Food Storage and Marketing project was updated again. The project's purpose was to "create an efficient food storage and marketing system for staple foods and reduce seasonal and regional price fluctuations of staple foods."³¹ USAID constructed food storage warehouses, provided technical assistance and training that led to a price stabilization program. This program's aim was to increase food production while reducing regional prices allowing producers to receive higher prices. If producers could receive higher prices they would be encouraged to produce more for the market. Since 1975, the Food Storage and Marketing program had expanded to increase warehouse capacity and trained additional staff. Most importantly, since 1975, "4,450MT of beans, Rwanda's staple crop, ha[d] been stored and 1,550MT

³⁰ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1979," 13.

³¹ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual Budget Submission: FY 1980," May 1978, 4.

sold.”³² This progress benefited the entire population of Rwanda. As the bean prices stabilized, more beans were cultivated and sold, benefiting all Rwandans economically and nutritionally. While the first stage of this project ended in December 1980, in the Annual Budget Submission FY 1982, the Food Storage and Market II project was outlined.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1982, written in June 1980, explained and detailed the extended Food Storage and Marketing II program. This extension planned to “increase the impact and effectiveness of the Rwandan government’s grain and food pulse storage and price stabilization program, and to develop a strategic storage program.”³³ USAID estimated that about forty percent of Rwanda’s agricultural production was monetized, calling for continued assistance with the Food Storage and Marketing project. The Food Storage and Marketing project worked to increase the amount of crops available to be consumed and sold. With the increasing monetization of crops, the project helped to continue that growth.

The plan extension

outlined programs to strengthen rural cooperatives to assemble and store marketable farm surpluses and to expand the interregional transport and marketing system for the transfer of surpluses to deficit areas. A more efficient market will encourage increased production.³⁴

The first stage of the project was effective in serving interregional markets, and the second phase aimed to continue to expand the market successes. Ultimately the success of this project led to expanded agricultural projects by USAID in Rwanda.

³² USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1980,” 4.

³³ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1982,” June 1980, 15.

³⁴ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1982,” 15.

While there were many more projects focusing on agricultural assistance, there were two that most specifically helped the Food Storage and Marketing project. The Cooperative Grain Storage and Local Crop Storage programs, initiated in 1978 and 1979, helped address storage and marketing needs at local levels. These programs provided “farmers the tools for increased control over timing of sales and a wider range of marketing options, thus giving them a role to play in establishing bean and sorghum prices.”³⁵ The continuation of the Food Storage and Marketing II project depended on regular examinations and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

These agricultural assistance programs differed from projects during the 1960s in a few major ways. Under the modernization mandate of the 1960s, food storage projects would have been geared toward developing modern industry for trade. In contrast, under the needs mandate of the 1970s, these projects focused on stabilizing food availability and prices for the local population. The Food Storage and Marketing projects and the supporting agricultural programs worked to increase farmers’ crops for local markets and personal consumption. Increasing the amount of crops that survived each season led to increased availability and variety for local farmers to sell and buy, improving rural economic and health conditions. Advancing farmers’ financial situations and nutrition fell under Rwanda’s new focus on rural communes and USAID’s New Directions Mandate. The amount of time and resources made available to the Food Storage and Marketing projects demonstrated another shift from the 1960s. In USAID’s first decade assisting Rwanda, there were

³⁵ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1982,” 15.

fewer funds available and projects implemented. With the New Directions Mandate there were increased levels of financial assistance and attention made available to these new projects. The needs mandate employed by USAID during the 1970s justified the shift from the modernization practices of the 1960s, emphasizing the basic human needs of Rwanda's rural inhabitants.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1979 detailed another important project, the Kibuye Agricultural School program that assisted the Government of Rwanda in meeting its agricultural needs. The Kibuye Agricultural School was a major institution that trained lower level agricultural staff.³⁶ Because Rwanda was among the six poorest countries in the world, had the highest population density in Africa, and had over ninety percent of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihood, the Kibuye Agricultural School was crucial to improving Rwanda's situation.

The purpose of this project was to "expand an institution that could provide a greater number of practically trained agricultural technicians: extension agents, school teachers and rural vocational education schools staff."³⁷ With better-trained agriculturalists and specialists, agricultural production in Rwanda could increase. Over a three-year period, USAID assisted the school in improving education by providing consultants, trainings, logistical support, and materials. The Kibuye School was unique in Rwanda and was the only school to train young men between 18 and 20 years old on advanced scientific agricultural practices.

³⁶ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1979," 19.

³⁷ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1979," 20.

The two-year program emphasized general agriculture, forestry, botany, ecology, soil science, statistics, zoology, and vegetable production. USAID assistance increased the number of graduates from 25 to 50 and provided more practical instructional courses. The courses were improved with American teachers working in Kibuye providing guidance for the Rwandan teachers.³⁸ This assistance began in FY 1979 and continued through FY 1981, assuming the government of Rwanda would carry on support after 1981. From the mid-1970s through the 1980s USAID assisted and created several agricultural projects beyond the ones outlined above. These other projects included supporting the women's agricultural school and area agricultural production.

The many agricultural development programs implemented by USAID helped Rwanda in more ways than just food production. The Kibuye Agricultural School provided increased educational options, similar to the Blacksmiths project, to the rural population. While many could not afford to attend a Rwandan university, they could benefit from the vocational training programs from USAID. The Agricultural school taught Rwandans methods to improve and increase agricultural production, which had obvious positive impacts. Malnutrition and starvation were addressed with more food available for consumption and farmers improved economically with more to sell in domestic markets. Despite improved growing techniques, without appropriate storage facilities the increase crops would be lost. The Food Storage and Marketing projects were supported by smaller scale, localized projects, including the Cooperative Grain Storage and Local Crop Storage projects. These

³⁸ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1979," 24.

agricultural projects supported the New Directions Mandate and Rwandan government development goals in a wide variety of ways, bettering the lives and health of rural Rwandans leading to potential economic and social prosperity.

The New Directions Mandate didn't solely emphasize improving rural agriculture, but rural living conditions in general. Other projects originating in the mid-1970s and continuing through the next decade worked with infrastructure, rural health, and family planning. Rwanda had no railroads and limited air transport, making roads the primary mode of transportation. The road system consisted of bituminous-surfaced roads, re-graveled roads, very old graveled roads and laterite roads. Since 1971, traffic in Rwanda had grown at an annual rate of ten percent and the number of registered vehicles in Rwanda in 1976 was almost 13,000. By improving the road system communications, rural development would subsequently progress.³⁹ One major project undertaken during the 1970s to improve Rwanda's limited transportation network was to modernize the Kibuye-Gitarama road. Formally known as the Rural Road project, this major project included technical assistance, equipment, on-the-job-training and financial support to improve the entire length of road.

The Kibuye-Gitarama Road is the main connection to the Nile Crest area, one of the poorest and most densely populated areas of Rwanda. While infrastructure was one of the primary focuses for USAID during the 1960s, this project differed from those of old modernization mandate in significant ways. The most obvious ways it varied from infrastructure projects of the past were the goals and intent

³⁹ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1980," 17.

behind the project. During the 1960s, projects were primarily in Kigali or other urban centers; these roads were in the country, connecting rural, desperately poor sections of Rwanda. The goal was no longer to help the government stabilize and expand after independence, but to reach disconnected regions of Rwanda. Beyond the objective to expand Rwanda's roadways, the Rural Road project built this road specifically to improve the connection between modernized Rwanda and this extremely poor section of the country. The intent to allow assistance to reach this region was more important than the actual construction of the road because the New Directions Mandate put more emphasis on improving standards of living than on the infrastructure projects of the past.

The Rural Road project would repair the 93 km road between Kibuye and Gitarama over three years. The population along the Zaire-Nile Crest benefited from increased communications, decreased transportation costs, and wider access to markets for both selling and buying. The Ministry of Public Works also benefited with the possibility of allocating more funds to other road repairs and the guidance of foreign technicians involved in this project.

The Annual Budget Report FY 1981, written in June 1979, provided a midway report on the Rural Roads project. The repairs to this stretch of road positively impacted the 600,000 inhabitants of the region socially and economically.⁴⁰ The Rwandan government provided supervision and skilled labor from the Public Works ministry and unskilled labor from the region. During FY 1980, tests and designs were completed, identifying problem areas, and the necessary equipment was

⁴⁰ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual Budget Submission: FY 1981," May 1979, 8.

delivered. For FY 1981, construction of the road surface, culverts and bridges began. With the rate of progress continuing uninterrupted, the Rural Road project was completed in the three-year timeline and improved living conditions to an enormously important and disconnected section of the Rwandan population.

The Rural Road project connecting Kibuye and Gitarama worked to implement USAID's New Directions Mandate and Rwandan government's goals of bringing development assistance to the rural population. This Road project allowed the poorest section of Rwanda access to development aid. By making the region more accessible not only would USAID be able to expand projects focused on these communities, but other donors could also become involved. Before addressing the basic human needs of the regions, donors needed to access the population for assessment.

Another project aimed at helping Rwandan farmers described in the Annual Budget Report FY 1981 was the Fish Culture program. The project worked to "develop the capacity of Rwandan farmers to build and maintain productive on-farm fish ponds."⁴¹ There was a high demand for fresh fish in Rwanda and the materials necessary for fish farming were readily available in rural sectors, creating a possibility to improve economic conditions and the health of rural Rwandans. The USAID Fish Culture project in Rwanda was based on the fish undertaken by colonial administrators in Zaire during the 1950s. This project required Zairians to build ponds and farm fish for several years. While the ponds were abandoned after

⁴¹ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1980," 20.

independence, the initial results benefited the farmers involved.⁴² USAID's support for Rwandan Fish Farms was consistent with the New Directions initiative to increase food production and combat malnutrition. The predicted benefits were numerous and could have affected the entire country. An estimated 1,200 fishponds would produce 36MT of fish on 600 farms in ten Rwandan prefectures with USAID's support.

An updated report on the Fish Farms showed positive growth. The project planning began in 1978 for FY 1980, but before the project even began, the Fish Culture project was extended to FY 1984 in 1979. The Rwandan government provided personnel for extension services and pond construction, workspace for technical staff and land for the ponds. This project addressed several of the New Directions initiatives: to combat health problems, expand food production and offer alternative crops for farmers to grow.

Similar to the positive benefits of the agricultural projects, the Fish Culture project demonstrated the New Directions Mandate and Rwandan government initiatives by adding economic, environmental and nutritional diversity in the rural sectors of Rwanda. The Fish Culture program offered a new option for farmers in the market, to reduce land pressure, and improve the health of the populace. Most farmers grew the same crops, creating more competition in the market. By adding fish to the array of options, economic gain was possible. This helped to alleviate the overuse of Rwanda's farmlands and gave farmers a new income source that would not deplete fields of valuable nutrients. Finally, diets were improved with needed

⁴² USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1981," 10.

supplements, including protein and iron from fish. These three areas specifically demonstrated the Rwandan government and New Directions goals of addressing family health care, agricultural assistance and environmental degradation.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1980 also described the first health services project addressing rural health care and family planning. The Rural Health/Family Planning program worked to “improve the capacity of the Rwandan Government to deliver rural health services by up-grading and creating the services at the dispensary and health center levels.”⁴³ Until this project, USAID’s only involvement in Rwanda’s health sector was through PL 480 assistance, run by the Catholic Relief Services funding nutrition centers and school feeding programs. The project directly addressed the rapid population growth occurring in Rwanda, stressing agricultural production, among many other areas. The Rural Health/Family Planning program focused “on nutrition, preventive medicine and family planning by improving the national health delivery system at the clinic and dispensary levels.”⁴⁴ USAID recognized the enormous undertakings this project would entail and continued regular updates on its progress in subsequent reports.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1981 provided the first-year update on the project. To assist the Rwandan government in making existing medical services more efficient and effective, USAID helped emphasize preventive medicine in the rural sector. At the same time, USAID focused on the rapid population growth occurring in Rwanda and promoted knowledge of child spacing techniques, establishing education family planning activities and eventually implementing a

⁴³ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1980,” 24.

⁴⁴ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1980,” 24.

national family planning program. In FY 1980, the project began training programs for health workers and construction of rural health centers.⁴⁵ The project had a termination date of FY 1984 because the Government of Rwanda demonstrated increased interest and motivation to tackle the burgeoning population problem. While this specific program didn't continue past the mid-1980s, USAID continued to be a primary donor to Rwandan efforts to cope with excessive population growth by funding educational family health programs.

The Rural Health/Family Planning project was the most direct project implementing the goals of the Rwandan government and the New Directions Mandate. The other programs described above executed many of the set goals in a variety of ways, while the health programs directly bettered the standard of living for rural Rwandans. This health project worked solely to improve the health of Rwandan families, particularly mothers and children. By offering classes on nutrition, child spacing, and preventative medicine in the rural sector, the overall health of Rwandans improved, thus positively affecting the production, education and the outlook of development. With reduced levels of stress on families, farmers could be stronger and more productive, children could participate more fully in school, and the involvement in development programs could increase.

All of the projects described worked toward implementing the New Directions goals in Rwanda by focusing on agriculture, health, and education to improve the standard of living for Rwandans. In the Annual Budget Submission FY 1982, written in June 1980, USAID outlined its long-range goals to continue helping

⁴⁵ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual...FY 1981," 14.

rural Rwandans into the 1980s. These future goals included “achievement and maintenance of normal food self-sufficiency, development of infrastructure to improve delivery of essential services and off-farm employment opportunities, establish a viable system of storage and marketing of basic crops and protection of natural resources.”⁴⁶ Because USAID was involved in the beginning stages of key sector development programs, the USAID program in Rwanda was not predicted to change dramatically for the next three to five years into the mid-1980s. But with declining economic conditions in Rwanda and changes in the political leadership of the United States, U.S. foreign assistance policy would take another turn.

⁴⁶ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual...FY 1982,” 5.

Chapter 3: Economic Instability and the Reagan Era

While 1962 and 1973 marked years where changes in both Rwanda and the U.S. transpired nearly simultaneously – the creation of USAID and Rwandan independence; the New Directions Mandate and Rwanda’s military coup – political and ideological shifts affecting aid during the 1980s in the two countries were separated by several years. Apart from this difference, all three decades and shifts did share the main characteristic that the ramifications of these signal events took years to emerge, demonstrating the long and complicated process of development work. The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 altered the direction of American foreign policy and USAID’s mission away from a needs mandate. Like most changes of administration, the new focus took time to be cultivated and implemented in Rwanda. This is evident from the new programs that emerged in Rwanda throughout the decade. Growing economic instability in the 1980s also led to an eventual collapse of the Rwandan market in 1986. After investigating the events in the United States and Rwanda, an analysis of USAID documents and project reports in Rwanda during the 1980s will show how these events influenced development policy and practice.

During the 1960s and 1970s, U.S. “aid for development ha[d] alternated between an emphasis on promoting growth – through economic reforms, infrastructure expansion, business service centers – and addressing problems of

poverty directly, for example, by expanding basic health and education.”¹ By the time Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1980, the U.S. was returning to policy reforms that focused on fiscal policy and supply-side economics rather than state interventionist policy. The return to a free market focus differed from the initial programs in the 1960s that assisted the newly founded country to stabilize after decolonization. Reagan’s “main interest was the Cold War, and he used foreign aid to directly promote U.S. security interests.”² Included with the reemergence of security issues and economic goals, USAID began to narrow and reduce the goals promoted through the New Directions Mandate.

The excitement of increased aid in the 1970s led to a variety of new projects in Rwanda and, as the 1980s progressed, USAID began to narrow on the more crucial and pressing problems, such as agricultural production and demographics. USAID not only focused in on specific areas for projects, but also worked to continue the most effective and worthwhile approaches. The narrowed scope of these projects did continue initiatives from the New Directions Mandate, but they also indirectly, and occasionally directly, affected the economic and security programs proposed by Reagan. These goals were met through

an integrated assistance program focusing on free market principles, private sector dialogues, and technical assistance projects which promote agricultural production, natural resource management, family planning, small and medium enterprises and human resource development training.³

¹ Carol Lancaster, *George Bush's Foreign Aid: Transformation or Chaos?* (Washington D.C.: Center for Global Development, 2008), 48.

² Samuel Butterfield, *U.S. Development Aid: An Historic First: Achievements and Failures in the Twentieth Century*, (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 199.

³ USAID/Rwanda, “Briefing Book,” April 1990, 1.

The benefits and end products of the continued selected New Directions projects implicitly supported the new economic goals of USAID. For example, the increased agricultural output following new farming techniques taught by USAID also led to more crops to sell and trade in USAID market projects. In the 1980s, these continuing projects did not receive headline attention, but were consistently discussed in USAID documents, as shown later in the chapter.

While U.S. foreign aid ideology shifted towards liberalism in the 1980s, the continuation of basic human needs projects in Rwanda also demonstrated the realities of aid on the ground. Rwanda is a prime example of the duality of foreign aid, an example that demonstrated both the ideology and actuality of development. In each decade studied, the broad themes of U.S. foreign aid can be seen, from modernization in the 1960s to the needs mandate of the 1970s. Despite the shift towards free market policies in the 1980s, projects working to improve basic human needs show the reality of aid in recipient countries. Because Rwanda was small and strategically unimportant, aid workers on the ground used their discretion to continue projects necessary to Rwandan development, regardless of the directions given in Washington.

The new Republican platform set the tone for Reagan's approach to U.S. foreign assistance. While many projects from the past continued into the 1980s, programs with similar goals continued to be created, including agricultural support and family planning initiatives. In the last years of the Carter Administration and continuing during both of Reagan's terms, assistance policy "moved away from basic human needs and toward more security domination and the move away from

security toward a policy of greater economic cooperation.”⁴ Essentially, the Reagan administration’s “foreign assistance objectives in Africa [included] fostering economic development through financing projects or balance-of-payments support conditioned on policy reforms, and providing humanitarian relief.”⁵ These objectives were fiscal, supply-side concerns associated with market reforms and were paired with improving the private sector and business opportunities in both Africa and Rwanda.

The policy shift represented both the changing needs in recipient countries and long-term U.S. goals. The strengthening of Cold War rhetoric added to increased security concerns and economic objectives combining Rwandan needs and U.S. concerns. As Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense for Kennedy and Johnson described, “security is development. Without development there can be no security. A developing nation that does not in fact develop simply cannot remain secure.”⁶ Preventing the spread of communism to the developing world was a continued and increased security interest for Reagan. While this was primarily a U.S. concern, American policy makers justified it as defending democracy and capitalism for Rwanda. Development aid in the 1980s “shifted back to supporting growth and emphasized funding of essential economic reforms” to help private investment rise and lead to faster growth, “as opposed to poverty alleviation during the 1970s.”⁷

⁴ Butterfield, 145.

⁵ Butterfield, 127.

⁶ David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 201.

⁷ Carol Lancaster, *Transforming Foreign Aid: United States Assistance in the Twenty-First Century*, (Washington D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2000), 19.

The shift in the United States toward economic conditionality began because of the growing international debt crisis. In the late 1970s, the Rwandan economy improved because tea, coffee, and cocoa prices tripled between 1975 and 1977. Drought in India and frosts in Brazil benefitted African exporters including Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda.⁸ By the early 1980s, however, growth was slowing as Asian and American crops recovered and “export revenues declined, import costs rose, and budgets increased, and governments found themselves seriously strapped for cash.”⁹ Facing severe economic crises, many African governments, including the Rwandan government, sought increased aid and debt relief. The general pattern was also that poor countries, such as Rwanda, took out loans to continue investing in basic needs projects, which led to further indebtedness. Following Habyarimana’s 1970s campaign to increase Rwandan development, the government was forced to borrow more money to continue their own projects, fund new offices, and create new departments. These pleas were met with the latest shift in U.S. foreign policy directed specifically at economic concerns.

While recognizing the important shift toward market liberalism in American foreign policy objectives, an examination of the situation leading to the economic downfalls of the 1980s in Rwanda is also necessary. During the 1970s, Rwanda had a smaller, more reasonable reliance on aid, but by the 1980s this dependence had grown enormously. The economic collapse resulting from many crop and market failures in Rwanda led to a decade of uncertainty and hardships. As export monies

⁸ Carol Lancaster, *Aid to Africa: So Much to do, So Little Done*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 24.

⁹ Lancaster, *Aid to Africa*, 26.

dried up, Rwanda began borrowing heavily. The Rwandan government had started multiple development projects during the 1970s following President Habyarimana's declaration to improve living conditions across the country. With many large new programs beginning in the early 1980s, the government was forced to borrow money to continue domestic development, specifically in the rural sectors of Rwanda.

There were consistent increases in food production in Rwanda from the 1960s through the early 1980s, but by 1985 production began to stagnate. Although growth remained at a reasonable rate, "between the mid-1970s and the 1980s the combination of a drought and a decrease in international demand left Rwanda with a heavy debt burden."¹⁰ The price of coffee, Rwanda's main export crop, had fallen since 1977, "then rose again after 1980 before finally collapsing in 1986."¹¹ This inconsistency was the primary cause of Rwanda's economic collapse, despite increased USAID economic projects in the country. The economic crises were first agricultural before becoming financial.

There were more factors affecting Rwanda's financial problems than simply plummeting coffee prices. While coffee was Rwanda's chief export, the country also suffered from failing tea and foodstuffs prices, along with troubles in the tin and aluminum mining sectors. By 1985, tea exports lost up to forty percent of their value, which compounded the declining prices of coffee. The decrease in food

¹⁰ Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2002), 53.

¹¹ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1995), 84.

production appeared even more drastic than the situation with tea and coffee in global markets. Peter Uvin aptly describes the declining production,

Maize production fell from 110,00 tons in 1983 to 90,000 by 1986 and subsequently stagnated [at the] 90,000 to 100,000 [ton] range. Similarly, sorghum production, which was at 213,000 tons in 1982, slid erratically downward to approximately 140,00 tons in 1988 and 1989. Over the period 1984 to 1991, kilocalories produced by Rwandan farmers dropped from 2,055 per person per day to 1,509.¹²

These changes decreased from an already low level of production to an intolerably minimal amount. As most Rwandans were farmers, their personal incomes were affected by the decrease in agricultural production. The slump also affected Rwandans who were not farmers but faced inflation, poor market prices for other trade items, and increased unemployment. This conjunction contributed to an agricultural emergency.

The agricultural and economic collapse that affected Rwanda was as much tied to natural forces as it was to market declines. A 1984 drought was followed by excessive rain in 1987 and plant disease in 1988. Paired with these natural changes, increased land pressure, soil erosion and poverty compounded the situation.¹³ Increasing population rates in Rwanda, already the most densely populated country in Africa, did not help. But the agricultural calamities listed don't provide the full explanation for Rwanda's economic problems, as the "collapse of the mining sector, together with the fall in coffee prices, brought about a new, more severe crisis."¹⁴

¹² Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, (Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998), 54.

¹³ Uvin, 57.

¹⁴ Uvin, 57.

Following the collapse of coffee prices, world tin prices fell and led to the closing of Rwanda's mines. The companies in charge of Rwanda's other mineral exports, including cassiterite and bauxite,¹⁵ closed their production and further deprived Rwandans of revenue. The collapse of these crops and markets led to tens of thousands of unemployed young men without future job prospects. It was this situation that USAID attempted to combat. While Rwanda ultimately suffered an economic meltdown, the efforts of USAID may have alleviated some suffering. The collapse demonstrated how desperately Rwanda needed help from organizations like USAID.

Along with demonstrating what crucial social development programs continued from the 1970s into the 1980s, USAID documents also show the shifting goals toward market initiatives of the 1980s. As outlined by the USAID report on the history of its involvement in Rwanda, during 1980 the overall mission development goals were to "increase per capita food production and effect a general improvement in the health status of the Rwandan family, while bringing the demographic problem in balance with development potential."¹⁶ USAID could more easily roll over projects started in the 1970s, but projects focusing specifically on the evolving economic downturn took longer to be created and implemented. Along with the ease of continuing basic needs programs, USAID workers in Rwanda recognized the need to maintain projects from the 1970s despite the changed

¹⁵ Cassiterite is a reddish, brownish or yellowing mineral containing tin dioxide. It is the main ore of tin. Bauxite is a clayey rock that is the chief commercial ore of aluminum.

¹⁶ Lynn Elizabeth Grosz, "A History of the USAID Program in Rwanda 1962-1985." (Kigali, Rwanda, 1986), unpublished report available at USAID DEC, 17.

ideology in Washington. Multiple projects demonstrated how USAID continued to tackle the areas of increased interest from the 1970s.

Beginning with projects to improve family health, USAID teamed with organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to address diseases afflicting children worldwide. Rwanda was one of the first countries to be included in the program Combatting (sic) Communicable Childhood Diseases (CCCD) that began in 1979 to fight several basic illnesses faced by children. By the first months of 1980, the Centers for Disease Control in coordination with USAID began the Expanded Program for Immunizations. This program, with support and funding from CCCD, worked to "immunize children under five against measles, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, tuberculosis and polio."¹⁷ Providing crucial services and materials, USAID was an integral part of this program's success. The vaccines were administered through local dispensaries but needed to remain cold until injection. USAID provided the cold chain materials that kept the medicine refrigerated from the manufacturer until they were locally dispensed.¹⁸

In May 1988, an external evaluation team produced the "Rwanda CCCD End of Project Evaluation." This extensive document outlined the key goals, projects implemented, and their success and failure rates for the eight years the project ran. This project was intended

to strengthen institutional support for these interventions by developing an effective, simplified health information system, strengthen established training and health information efforts, reinforce systems of supervision,

¹⁷ Grosz, 18.

¹⁸ Grosz, 18.

support operations research and other studies, and encourage the development of self-financing mechanisms.¹⁹

These goals were clearly seen throughout many of the programs implemented, most specifically in the Expanded Program for Immunization in Rwanda.

The report explains the end results for the Expanded Program for Immunizations, with the success rates for each disease targeted. The tuberculosis vaccine provided increased coverage from 49 percent in 1983 to 90 percent in 1987; the diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus vaccine coverage increased from 36 percent to 79 percent; trivalent oral polio vaccine went from 25 percent to almost 80 percent; and measles prevention went from 53 percent coverage to 75.²⁰ These increases in the number of immunizations given, though they unfortunately did not eliminate the diseases entirely, did have a major impact on development in Rwanda. By significantly reducing the number of people susceptible to these ailments, Rwanda and other health organizations were able to focus on other more persistent afflictions, such as malaria and newly emerging diseases like HIV/AIDS.²¹

The results above were presented in USAID documents and may contain a certain amount of bias, but the CCCD program operated around the globe and had significant success outside of Rwanda as well. According to the World Health Organization, by 1988 “polio cases worldwide decreased by over 99 percent and only four countries retain polio,” not including Rwanda.²² While this is one disease,

¹⁹ Thomas Bossert, “Rwanda CCCD End of Project Evaluation,” May 1988, 7.

²⁰ Bossert, “Rwanda CCCD,” 9.

²¹ Bossert, “Rwanda CCCD,” 9.

²² Sam Okiror, “World Health Organization, Africa: Polio eradication,” <http://www.afro.who.int/en/rwanda/rwanda-publications/bulletins/1932-polio-eradication.html> (accessed March 10, 2011).

it supports the fact that rates of diseases were declining with health campaigns, including the Expanded Program for Immunizations in Rwanda. Related to health concerns, USAID also continued to work on demographic problems in Rwanda. While it may appear paradoxical to reduce disease rates in the most densely populated country in Africa, ultimately the end result of both health programs and demographic projects were complimentary. In the short run, diminished infection rates did increase pressure on scarce resources, however, improving the health of Rwandans eventually led to lower birth rates, positively affecting demographics. By implementing health and demographic programs at the same time, retention of population growth improved.

Population growth rates became a major concern for the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, but were not acknowledged by developing regions until the 1980s. In 1981, USAID began a major long-term bilateral project with the Government of Rwanda to establish a National Office of Population. The decree was approved in September 1980, after years of Rwandan denial of a growing population issue, and the National Population Office was created in the following year. The project helped create methods to collect population data and subsequently analyze and evaluate the research. The Office began “carrying out studies of the problems affecting the growth of the population, evaluat[ing] the importance of these problems and propos[ing] solutions.”²³ The data collected by the new office helped Rwanda develop methods to curtail growth rates with guidance and support from USAID. USAID brought demographics issues to the

²³ USAID/Rwanda, “Country Development Strategy Statement: FY 1983,” January 1981, 40.

government's attention, provided evidence, supported Rwanda's own Population Office, and eventually made Rwanda capable of addressing and solving their own demographic problems.

Practices to curb population growth and improve maternal and child health care continued in several projects through to the start of the 1990s. Plans established during the final years of the 1980s lay out the Family Planning II project. The main goal of this project was to reduce fertility rates, but also worked to improve the health and survival rates of children and thereby encourage parents to have fewer children. By teaching preventative healthcare and encouraging Rwandans to have more wanted and planned pregnancies, this project fell in line with Reagan's enforcement of the Mexico City policy. While the Mexico City policy required all organizations (state and non-governmental) that received federal funding to refrain from performing or promoting abortion services, the Family Planning II project worked to reduce fertility rates by preventing unwanted pregnancies, not aborting them. Working from and expanding on evidence and materials provided in previous maternal and child health care programs and demographic projects, the Family Planning II program's base "for policy making was improved because of better quality, timeliness and utilization of family planning statistics."²⁴ The variety in these approaches allowed USAID to teach better health practices and support Rwanda in establishing their own strategy for tackling population pressures.

²⁴ USAID/Rwanda, "Action Plan: FY 1990-1991," May 1989, 7.

Development of agricultural production complimented demographic concerns and the aim to improve Rwandans health. In March 1979, the possibility of administering a survey and analysis of agriculture in Rwanda was first proposed, and resulted in the USAID Agricultural Education Project. The Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture assisted USAID with investigating the yearly food data and production rates. In July 1979, a team of U.S. consultants worked with the Ministry in Rwanda to prepare an 'Outline of a Possible Collaborative Survey and Analysis of Agriculture in Rwanda.' Based on the suggestions from the research team, a series of small projects were designed to help improve and increase production, training, and data collection.²⁵ There were many other projects based in agricultural production that coincided with the early 1980s.

In June 1981, the Budget Submission Report for FY 1983 outlined another agricultural project set to start by the end of 1983. The purpose of this project transferred "the results of relevant agricultural research to the farm level in selected regions, and test[ed] the feasibility of valley land agricultural production."²⁶ During the 1970s, food production in Rwanda had stagnated due to increased population pressures. With the assistance of the Rwandan government, which provided personnel and operational support, small farmers were the focus for direct benefits with new agricultural technologies. The aim was for Rwandan families to have more food available and improve the health of the population (including fertility rates) by improving small farm production.

²⁵ Grosz, 19-20.

²⁶ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual Budget Submission: FY 1983," June 1981, 7-8.

Other projects worked to improve the amount of food available to Rwandan farmers and increase their daily food intake. These projects began in the 1970s and continued into the 1980s. The Food Storage and Marketing program, discussed in depth in chapter two, had a large impact on farm production. Stemming from the Food Storage and Marketing program, the Local Crop Storage Program also supported the efforts to protect crops and help small farmers protect their produce from rodents and rot. Lastly, the Fish Culture Program worked to reduce the amount of farmers plowing overused land, and provided needed nutritional benefits of protein and other vitamins into the diets of Rwandans. With the health programs discussed above, USAID agricultural programs helped address health issues and the growing population problems in Rwanda.

The family health and agricultural programs discussed above indirectly demonstrate the new development goals of the 1980s. Supporting the government of Rwanda's third five-year development plan with the new initiatives from the Reagan administration, these health-related projects aimed to improve both the social and economic conditions of Rwanda. The four projects that addressed immunizations, population control, and family health practices continued into the 1980s and represented Reagan's initiatives. Rwanda's economic conditions would have no chance of survival if the population growth rate was not addressed. Immunizing more children, promoting healthier rearing practices and teaching improved agricultural methods led to better economic possibilities. Accompanying the basic needs programs that indirectly contributed to the new economic goals of the 1980s were programs that directly affected the market reform policies. The

Maternal Child Health/Family Planning II Project, for example, provided “funds for private sector family planning delivery services.”²⁷ By continuing basic needs programs through private sector organizations, the goals of the 1970s also directly supported the new initiatives of the 1980s.

The initiatives behind these projects demonstrate the changed USAID directives of the 1980s from the 1970s. With the New Directions Mandate in the 1970s, these health practices were have been geared toward improving the living conditions in Rwanda. While the projects in the 1980s still achieved the same outcome, improving the basic needs of the rural poor, the motivation behind these projects differed. In the 1980s, USAID worked to achieve economic reforms; and without addressing the problems of a sickly populace and uncontrollable population growth, the economic conditions in Rwanda would not have been able to improve.

Although agriculture continued to be important, USAID’s main focus in Rwanda during the 1980s turned to market reforms. While the projects discussed above did not directly affect the economic conditions in Rwanda, they had a large indirect impact. The capability of Rwandans to increase agricultural outputs and improve economic possibilities was encouraged by controlling the population growth rates and improving rural health. The principal causes of poverty and constraints to development of any kind include “population pressures, low level agricultural production, and limited trained manpower.”²⁸ USAID began more directly addressing the material improvements of Rwandans’ lives and worked to increase economic activity throughout the 1980s.

²⁷ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1991,” May 1989, 20.

²⁸ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1984,” June 1982, 2.

In 1983, USAID readjusted its main development goals in accordance with changes in the situation within Rwanda. The year before, in 1982 Rwanda released its third five year plan for development, working to “satisfy the food needs of the population; promote better use of the country’s human resources; improve the living conditions of the population; and improve Rwanda’s position vis à vis the exterior.”²⁹ The new USAID strategies expanded upon and worked with the latest Rwandan development plan for 1982-1986. By 1985, USAID’s strategies were fine-tuned to address four primary U.S. concerns: “policy reforms that decentralize administrative structures, rely on free market forces and limited population growth rates; private enterprise development; technology transfer and research; and institutional development.”³⁰ By combining the new USAID goals and Rwandan initiatives, projects working to improve the daily lives of Rwandans continued while newly developed economic programs were implemented.

USAID enacted several economic policy programs throughout the 1980s, but there was one primary project that began in 1985. USAID and Rwanda signed the Policy Reform Initiatives in Manufacturing and Employment (PRIME) agreement to “support Rwandan efforts to make necessary structural adjustments and policy changes in order to stimulate production and employment in the manufacturing sector.”³¹ Essentially, PRIME was a policy reform project that sought to change Rwanda’s policy in favor of private sector development. This project combined the new economic initiatives of USAID and continued the social developments outlined

²⁹ Grosz, 23.

³⁰ Grosz, 23.

³¹ Grosz, 38.

by the Rwandan government. Because of a small economic crisis in Rwanda during 1983 to 1984, PRIME worked to help the country recover and make improvements for the future.³²

The project consisted of different parts, including financial support for technical assistance and administering specific studies. These studies included looking at industrial incentives and analyses of household budgets. Other objectives included improving agricultural technologies and services to maternal and child health, including family planning, and encouraging economic growth and on-farm employment opportunities. All these objectives shaped “incentives for agricultural producers, ... the demographic problem, and ... the role of the private sector in the economy.”³³ USAID and the Rwandan government continued to work together through the PRIME project to improve overall economic conditions for the country.

An update on PRIME’s progress was provided in the “Action Plan for FY 1990-1991,” written in May 1989. The private sector was used to increase rural per capita incomes, and had been making real progress. Through the objective to increase general rural employment, USAID and the Rwandan government made several policy changes allowing for conditions more favorable for the private sector. One example included a “redirection from privatization of state-owned enterprises to emphasizing small and medium enterprises.”³⁴ With yearly checks, PRIME remained on target, and made small adjustments along the way that continued into the 1990s.

³² USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1988,” May 1986, iii.

³³ Grosz, 39.

³⁴ USAID/Rwanda, “Acton Plan: FY 1990-1991,” 3.

PRIME was a perfect example of a market reform project that also considered how social development concerns could affect their economic goals. Many of the other programs employed during the 1980s did not take as many issues into account; negative market predictions for the future that influenced other economic programs more heavily. For example, in January 1981 when the “Country Development Strategy Statement for FY 1983” was being written, USAID workers were worried for Rwanda’s economic future. Rwanda’s economy was almost completely dependent on the agricultural sector that provided almost ninety percent of the population with its livelihood. Agriculture’s “share of the gross domestic product (GDP) had fallen from 76 percent in 1964 to 49 percent in 1976 and was expected to fall further to 40 percent in 1980.”³⁵ This made prospects for 1980 unfavorable.

Predictions for the other areas of production in Rwanda were also pessimistic. The growth predicted in GDP was not expected to cover the population growth rate for the proceeding years as well as decline in agricultural production resulting from poor weather conditions. The development of the agriculture sector “has received paramount consideration in the economic development strategy, with the government’s overriding objectives being to attain relative self-sufficiency in foodstuffs.”³⁶ USAID recognized falling tea and coffee prices as a potential for economic disaster. Coffee production in 1980 was projected to fall 21 percent to 21,400 tons from the previous year. Other crops had also been falling, including

³⁵ USAID/Rwanda, “Development Strategy: FY 1983,” 1.

³⁶ USAID/Rwanda, “Development Strategy: FY 1983,” 1.

pyrethrum and cinchona (quinine).³⁷ The debt-service ratio³⁸ was also increasing in 1980, from 1.3 percent in 1970 to 3.8 percent in 1980 and a forecast of 4.0 percent in 1981.³⁹ Rwanda had borrowed money to fund its development projects and keep the country running as the GDP fell. All of these factors were creating a worsening picture for Rwanda.

USAID created new financial aid programs to address issues with the worsening economic realities in Rwanda. In May 1986, the “Annual Budget Submission for FY 1988” listed the revised objectives for Rwanda. Building off increasing per capita food production and improving Rwandan families health statuses, USAID added “increasing employment and income especially of the rural population through the promotion of private enterprise and increase agricultural production by raising the productivity and profitability of farming,”⁴⁰ to the list of goals. USAID created dozens of projects in Rwanda by the mid-1980s and the organization learned that by dedicating more time to researching and understanding the situation in Rwanda, projects were more likely to succeed by USAID terms. Since the United States was “viewed as one of the leaders in promoting institutional reforms needed to implement economic policy change,” the projects aimed to help Rwanda recover had to be well planned.⁴¹

³⁷ USAID/Rwanda, “Development Strategy: FY 1983,” 3.

³⁸ In economics and government finance, debt service ratio refers to the ratio of debt service payments (principal plus interest) of a country to their export earnings. A country’s finances are healthier when the ratio is lower.

³⁹ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual ... FY 1984,” 3.

⁴⁰ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual ... FY 1988,” iii.

⁴¹ USAID/Rwanda, “Country Development Strategy Statement: FY 1989,” March 1987, 35.

Beginning in the late 1980s, USAID began two programs focused on enterprise development, one private and the other rural, both quintessential interests of market reform – promoting entrepreneurship, private enterprise, and policy reforms favorable to markets. The Private Enterprise Development project had two targets. The first target was to provide reinforced management, financial and marketing skills to small and medium enterprises. This entailed hiring trained employees in the private sector and offering twenty seminars for on-the-job training. The second target was to identify appropriate technologies for the rural area. While ‘appropriate technologies’ was a 1970s basic needs buzzword, the idea behind finding technology best suited for developing regions continued with new development trends. An example provided of appropriate technology included installing sunflower mills in different cooperatives. The Rural Enterprise Development program identified new opportunities for rural investments. This project increased the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGO) in private enterprise development and offered courses in accounting and feasibility studies to help make rural employees more desirable.⁴² NGOs were promoted during both the 1970s and 1980s, but for different reasons. The basic needs mandate of the 1970s saw NGOs as more local, closer to the poor, and smaller; but the 1980s reformers viewed them as non-state, private organizations.

Outlined in 1989, USAID began a Local Currency program that worked to increase private sector economic growth in the rural provinces of Rwanda. Support

⁴² USAID/Rwanda, “Acton Plan: FY 1990-1991,” 17.

from this project provided over 850,000 U.S. dollars⁴³ for rural infrastructure. Rural infrastructure included centers for artisans, small producers and cooperative members. Almost 700,000 dollars were given to support rural artisans and youth groups. This support came in the form of training on management principles, entrepreneurship, and cooperative development. 440,000 dollars were given for Rwandans working in small industries to receive training and study tours. Finally, almost 100,000 dollars were provided to finance training activities for women, with another 65,000 for credit available to participating women.⁴⁴

For FY 1990, the Rwandan government redirected emphasis from privatization to support for small and medium enterprises. This redirection supported USAID strategies to increase productive off-farm employment opportunities. The USAID strategy continued to support “the private sector through providing support directly to the government of Rwanda through [their] private sector projects or by financing studies through PRIME.”⁴⁵ USAID’s private sector strategy was designed to complement Rwanda’s privatization plans, so as to increase the possibilities for success.

Rwanda initially launched their privatization efforts in the mid-1980s, but little progress had been made by October 1986 when the government developed a draft privatization strategy. Privatization had been focused toward “improving parastatal efficiency,” but following the economic crises attention was focused on immediate budget and balance of payment problems. With the government of

⁴³ All subsequent discussions of funds will be in U.S. dollars.

⁴⁴ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual ... FY 1991,” 15-16.

⁴⁵ USAID/Rwanda, “Annual ... FY 1991,” 20.

Rwanda's attention diverted, USAID worked to begin privatizing small sectors including nurseries, bakeries and fisheries. Fortunately, progress was made under PRIME, "where the government of Rwanda show[ed] stronger interests in promoting the private sector in key areas such as tourism, transport, education and trade." Following USAID's lead, Rwanda planned to improve the "business investment climate by easing restrictions and administrative procedures for new firms."⁴⁶

One final economic project designed in the late 1980s included another Rural Enterprise Development Project (while this project had the same name as a previous project, it was a distinct program). Five million dollars were designated for dispersal by FY 1992 to help create productive rural employment. According to the report, "the Cooperative Training and the Private Enterprise projects ha[d] shown that small and medium enterprises, when given assistance, training and credit, can increase productivity and member's per capita income and stimulate rural investment."⁴⁷ The Rural Enterprise Development project built on the success of these two past projects with technical assistance and training for both rural men and women.

The economic development projects described represent the direct methods USAID employed in the 1980s. While the social projects continued from the 1970s indirectly helped economic conditions, the programs of the 1980s actively worked to help private, public, and rural development. It took years for the Rwandan

⁴⁶ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual ... FY 1990," 26.

⁴⁷ USAID/Rwanda, "Annual ... FY 1991," 47.

economy to collapse, and years for USAID to create more appropriate programs to address these failing conditions. But with the new directions from Reagan, the economic mindset was ready in USAID to help Rwanda recover.

While USAID continued the most important basic needs programs in Rwanda from the 1970s, these projects also contributed to the new focus on market reform. USAID's increased focus on Rwandan economic growth during the 1980s began with the election of President Reagan providing the American stimulus and inconsistent commodity prices on Rwanda's exports, thus providing the Rwandan stimulus. With a refocus on economic and market issues from USAID and a new crucial need for financial assistance in Rwanda, these two shifts worked in tandem to address the problems of the 1980s.

Conclusion

In 1990, after the country's economic collapse, the Rwandan government signed a structural adjustment program (SAP) with the World Bank to address the country's continued financial decline. Initially Rwanda resisted signing the SAP because of the stipulations attached to the agreement, but with years of pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to adjust its economic position finally, the Rwandan government agreed in 1990. These provisions included many fundamental structural changes to the Rwandan government. Rwanda received \$90 million in SAP loans to promote fiscal and monetary discipline. The goals of the SAP included boosting coffee exports, reducing imports, and devaluing the Rwandese franc.¹ While the IMF and World Bank began handling Rwanda's economic recovery, the United States refocused USAID projects to reflect the latest shifts.

Three major events in the early 1990s dramatically affected USAID's policies in Rwanda. First, a stipulation that accompanied the structural adjustment program required that Rwanda would become a multiparty democracy in 1990. Second, almost immediately following this change, the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), comprised of Tutsi refugees from Uganda, invaded Rwanda on October 1, 1990. This marked the beginning of a four-year civil war, eventually leading to genocide. Third, the end of the Cold War in 1991 significantly transformed U.S. foreign policy. These shifts guided USAID projects to expand democracy in Rwanda.

¹ Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, (Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998), 58.

The Annual Budget Submission FY 1993, written June 1991, explained the changing situation in Rwanda and the new USAID goals for democratization. The USAID team “decided that the time [was] right for increased U.S. activities in support of the democratization process.”² The objectives for these new projects included support for improved governance and strengthening local administrative structures. While there are other examples, the following project shows a general approach of USAID’s support for Rwanda’s transition.

The Democratic Initiatives and Governance Project Identification Document Outline from April 1992 describes the progressing democratization of Rwanda with USAID’s assistance. The new Democratic Initiatives and Governance project worked to “produce a new social contract in Rwanda through which all the Rwandan people share equitably in the processes of democratic self-governance, peacefully enjoy basic freedom and justice.”³ This project reflected a new type of USAID programs designed to promote Rwandan democratization before the 1994 genocide.

USAID’s objectives in Rwanda during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s were impacted by clear, discernable political, social, and economic changes. These changes represent the evolving development ideology of U.S. foreign policy from modernization theory, to a needs mandate, and later, market liberalization. During 1962, President Kennedy created USAID and Rwanda formally declared independence. 1973 saw the adoption of the New Directions Mandate months after

² USAID/Rwanda, “Annual Budget Submission: FY 1993,” June 1991, 52.

³ Harlan Hobgood and Thomas Kelly, “Democratic Initiatives and Governance Project Identification Document Outline (USAID/Rwanda Project No. 696-0130),” April 1992, 4-5.

Juvenal Habyarimana led a military coup in Rwanda and took power. During the 1980s, President Reagan placed a new emphasis on the free market and security interests that coincided with financial crises in Rwanda. Shifts continued into the 1990s.

To understand why these shifts occurred, one must examine trends and events in Rwanda and the United States between the 1960s and the 1990s. Glenn Slocum, a former USAID employee, summarized the changing interests of U.S. foreign aid policies:

The sixties were the time of industrial development, with the rush for technical assistance development projects. The '70s, we were called to help the developing world to meet basic human needs. The eighties brought a recognition that we had to pay more attention to the private sector as the engine of development in most countries. This coincided with a conservative Republican administration.⁴

Slocum's outline demonstrates the reactionary quality of development assistance in the past, explaining that many of the policies enacted addressed consequences of earlier programs. Continually correcting unforeseen problems associated with past policies leads to an appearance of ineffectiveness. Because donor countries fixated on problems created by their policies instead of the inherent problems within recipient countries, aid's effectiveness was limited. By studying the history of development assistance, policymakers can learn from some of these successes and failures.

Despite the appearance of inefficient programs, foreign assistance has made some positive impacts on development. As Hariadene Johnson, a former USAID

⁴ Ambassador Glenn Slocum, oral history interview, Georgetown University Library, 18 November 1998, 121.

employee explained, USAID programs “really worked in Rwanda and had in many ways an impact upon the country; a promising future.”⁵ While this perspective is useful, it only provides one side of the story. Historical analysis is needed from both the American and Rwandan perspectives to fully assess the successes and failures of development aid.

Equally important to a more complete study of development aid in Rwanda is scholarship independent of the 1994 genocide. Academics that approach Rwandan history from a linear perspective culminating in the genocide fundamentally simplify the country’s diverse past. Scholars taking this approach, including Jan Vansina, Mahmood Mamdani, and Peter Uvin, present a deterministic view of Rwandan history. The purpose of these academic works is to trace the origins of the genocide not understand the full breadth of Rwanda’s past. As a result, they often miss broader implications of their topics. African historian Jan Vansina wrote his book *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda* in an effort to correct terms of tribal violence touted by the media. While his work looks at ancient Rwandan history ending in 1900, his intention centers on better understanding the genocide. Anthropologist Mahmood Mamdani’s *When Victims Become Killers* explains how the effects of colonialism contributed to the growing ethnic violence that led to the genocide. And political scientist Peter Uvin’s *Aiding Violence* traces how international development aid was a factor in the increasing structural violence within Rwanda, eventually contributing to the genocide. While understanding the roles that these topics played in the genocide’s formation is crucial and the analysis of the Rwandan genocide is

⁵ Ambassador Hariadene Johnson, oral history interview, Georgetown University Library, 8 September 1998, 165.

important, the sole focus on violence simplifies the complexity of Rwanda's history. This thesis contributes to the formation of a broader understanding of Rwandan history.

Though a small, seemingly insignificant country, Rwanda's history is important in many rights. New scholarship adding to the incomplete literature on the history of Rwanda, independent of the genocide, works to reinterpret its image. Rwanda needs to reclaim its image as a diverse country since the West has used it as an example, symbol, and warning of the opposite. Initially the "poster child" of development, Rwanda was touted as the "Switzerland of Africa" by donor nations, but in the wake of the genocide Rwanda was used as an example of the barbaric nature of Africans. Other countries are warned to avoid becoming "the next Rwanda." This stereotype is perpetuated in the coverage of African conflicts today. Australian Journalist Dan McDougall's article "Echoes of Rwanda in Ivory Coast Killing Fields," draws connections between the Rwandan genocide and the violence occurring in the Ivory Coast.⁶ New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, reporting on the Libyan civil war commented that "if the Libya operation is successful, it may help the emerging doctrine of the 'responsibility to protect' – a landmark notion in international law... that might help avert the next Rwanda."⁷ This thesis works to disrupt this simplifying discourse by reinterpreting Rwandan history independent of the genocide.

⁶ Dan McCougall, "Echoes of Rwanda in Ivory Coast Killing Fields," *The Australian Sunday Times*, April 11, 2011.

⁷ Nicholas Kristof, "Learning from Pervious Mistakes," *North Adams Transcript (MA)*, April 4, 2011.

As demonstrated, U.S. foreign policy changed during each decade between 1962 and the 1990s, reflecting political, economic, and social shifts within Rwanda and America. USAID/Rwanda programs illustrate the United States' changing development ideology, but also the dissonant realities of implementing aid 'on the ground.' While development philosophy shifted in the U.S., USAID continued to implement programs necessary for Rwandan development. These shifts can be identified and examined through USAID project reports that reveal the reasons behind new goals and programs. The historical study of development aid is needed to help contextualize past programs, but also make foreign policy aid more effective for the future. With too many generalities, development policies become less efficient. By creating more specific programs with tailored policies to each recipient country, development aid can become more effective.

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