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# INSULATING THE BORDERLANDS: POLICING AND STATE REACH IN RWANDA

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## Abstract

In Rwanda, the high visibility of uniformed state officials at strategic sites creates a misleading impression of how public order is maintained. In fact, crime prevention in the country's major cities relies to a significant degree on non-state, often ostensibly voluntary, participation and takes place in the margins of centralized state authority. The Rwanda National Police (RNP) has prioritized crime prevention over investigation, and by partitioning the country into small self-policing neighbourhood communities, has created an environment resistant to micro-level violence. The degree to which the Rwandan government has been able to coordinate the participation of civilian community members in the maintenance of public order is a powerful manifestation of its state reach.

The extent of Rwandan state reach is most striking in Gisenyi, the country's largest border town, where the government has mobilised local communities to share information and effectively control levels of street crime despite what appear to be significant difficulties resulting from the town's geographical position. Crime prevention in Gisenyi takes place in the context of widespread criminality immediately across the border in Goma, the capital of the DRC's North Kivu Province. The asymmetry in the prevalence of crime is sustained despite the border itself being relatively frictionless, allowing both goods and people to cross with ease. I argue that these issues are not unrelated, and that the dialectical relationship between Goma and Gisenyi bolsters mechanisms that contribute to the prevention of street crime on the Rwandan side of the border.

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## Acronyms

ACP	Assistant Commissioner of Police
CID	Criminal Investigations Department
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
CP	Commissioner of Police
DCLO	District Community Liaison Officer
DPU	District Police Unit
EAC	East African Community
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
FAR	<i>Forces Armées Rwandaises</i>
FDLR	<i>Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda</i>
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IGP	Inspector General of Police
INTERPOL	International Police
JOC	Joint Operations Centre
MINADEF	Ministry of Defence
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
NISS	National Intelligence and Security Services
RDF	Rwanda Defence Forces
RNP	Rwanda National Police
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RWF	Rwandan Franc

## Glossary of Key Kinyarwanda Terms

*Abajura*, sing. *Umujura* – Thieves

*Abanyerondo*, sing. *Umunyerondo* – Night patrolmen

*Abategets*, sing. *Umutegets* – Absolute rulers

*Abatware*, sing. *Umutware* – Leaders

*Amarondo*, sing. *Irondo* – Night patrols

*Ibyaha* - Crime

*Ibyitso* – Insurgents (lit. accomplices)

*Imbanzabigwi* – Community police

*Imihigo* – Government performance contracts

*Indandaciro* – Encouraged, positive behaviours

*Ingabo* – The military

*Inyangamugayo* – A person of upstanding moral character

*Kirazira* – Discouraged, negative behaviours

*Maneco* – Government informants

*Umuco Nyarwanda* – Rwandan cultural code

*Umudugudu*, pl. *Imidugudu* – Neighbourhood administrative unit, lit. village

*Umuganda* – Monthly community service

*Umutekano* – Security

# CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 An Unlikely Safety

This PhD thesis offers an account of the mechanisms of crime prevention in Rwandan cities. Analysis centres around the Rwanda National Police (RNP), its recent history and everyday operations. This is extended to include the various groups involved in securing individual neighbourhoods, how these groups interact, and how individuals within them perceive their own duties.

Policing in Rwanda breaks the pattern that is emerging from other African cases such as Nigeria (Owen 2014), Somalia (Hills 2013), Kenya (Ruteere & Pommerole, 2003) and South Africa (Steinberg, 2011). The Rwanda National Police (RNP) does not tolerate personal profiteering by its junior officers. It performs effective, country-wide operations on a limited budget. Although the Rwandan police are ultimately subservient to presidential edicts, their day-to-day operations are not limited to protecting the regime. The RNP regularly demonstrates its autonomy, with officers enforcing the law over other branches of the state, including, at times, senior elements in the military. Within Rwanda's internal security network, the state police effectively oversee non-state policing partners.

This discussion of policing is intended for a wider audience than scholars of Rwanda. Through an ethnographic analysis of local policing in small Rwandan communities (based on twenty months of fieldwork), it contributes to a growing body of empirical material supporting the as yet embryonic theories about police in Africa. The materials in chapters four and five speak in particular to current debates about the state-society interface, about violence and public order, and about the role of non-state groups who engage in the practice of policing.

Gisenyi (now Rubavu<sup>1</sup>), Rwanda's largest border town, is used as a test site in which to investigate strong central government capacity in the territorial margins of the state, areas more often associated with limited statehood. Chapter Six explores the borderland processes that shape not only crime itself, but also the strategies of the local communities and state police who deal with it. Goma (DRC) and Gisenyi (Rwanda) are presented as an example of paired border towns that exhibit striking urban asymmetries in law enforcement.

Due to the sensitivities involved when researching contemporary Rwandan politics, it is worth being explicit about what this thesis is not. I am not attempting any kind of normative assessment of how well the Rwanda National Police operates as an institution, or else more broadly of how well the Rwandan Patriotic Front governs as a political party. Based on the country's remarkably low crime rates, I take for granted that policing in the country is effective (see UNODC, 2016; Gallup, 2016). My concern is rather with *how* policing in Rwanda takes place: who is involved, how they interact at a person-to-person level, and what the implications are in terms of state reach.

## 1.2 Research Questions and Argument

This research was guided by a number of unanswered questions:

(1) What makes Rwandan neighbourhoods resistant to criminal activity? How can a landlocked, post-genocide, rapidly urbanising territory – one that borders areas of intractable insecurity and presents the highest rates of economic inequality in its region – be ranked the safest in Africa (Gallop, 2015)?

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<sup>1</sup> The names of many Rwandan towns have recently been changed. Gisenyi is now officially called Rubavu, a name it shares with the district at large. Despite this, the urban centre closest to the border belongs to a smaller administrative sector that has kept the name Gisenyi, and residents still refer to the town as such. For clarity, I take Gisenyi to refer to the urban districts of the border town and Rubavu for wider borderland district.

(2) How do its mechanisms of crime prevention vary with distance from the state capital (Kigali), and with proximity to the international border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)?

In addressing these questions, I argue that there is a uniquely Rwandan mode of policing and public order. The country's violent recent history, its pre-colonial past, its small geographical size and high population density, cultural characteristics built into the *umuco nyarwanda* (the Rwandan cultural code), and the idiosyncrasies of its current leadership all give rise to a context that defies straightforward comparison or generalisation.

The first part of this thesis (Chapter Three, Four and Five) examines the institutional margins of the Rwandan state with respect to groups that engage in the prevention of street crime. I argue that the process involves less direct state intervention than has been implied elsewhere, particularly in critical accounts of Rwanda as a 'police state' guided by the principal logic of ethnic subjugation (Reyntjens, 2013; Thomson, 2013; Nyamwasa et al., 2010). Whereas commercial districts, city centres and major crossroads in Rwanda are guarded by visible, uniformed and well-armed state personnel, this gives a misleading impression of everyday life in small Rwandan communities, where the sight of a uniformed soldier or police officer is a rarity, and where a diverse range of actors cooperate in the pursuit of communal security.

Crime prevention in Rwanda is state co-ordinated without always being state enacted. Since 2000, the Rwandan government has adopted a range of community policing initiatives that have been gradually extended across its territory. These initiatives have been built into local administrative structures which bridge the country's state and non-state divide. At the root of this system is an administrative unit – the *umudugudu* – which is, for the majority of unlawful incidents, self-policing. Rwanda's administrative structure has been adapted to pass information from the level of individual households to the top of its security pyramid, the Joint Operations Centre in Kigali. An enormous body of intelligence is filtered along the way, looking

for anything that appears as an existential threat to the governing elite, or indicates a trend towards escalating violence.

The system is extremely intolerant of anonymity, and a great deal of energy is dedicated to neighbourhood monitoring at the *umudugudu* level. This requires a high degree of local, non-state participation, often through unpaid volunteering. I argue that the battle for crime prevention in Rwanda is fought in large part at the level of incentivising communities to actively share information. Civilians have numerous opportunities and incentives to cooperate with the security apparatus. This sort of participation is widespread and the motivations behind it are diverse.

Chapter Six turns to the issue of state reach in the country's borderlands. It asks how crime prevention is shaped by the border town context, and how the DRC-Rwanda border insulates Rwandan territory from the high levels of crime in the DRC. I argue that, in general, the Rwandan policing system shows a remarkable consistency as it extends out of the capital city into the country's borderlands. Nevertheless, the presence of the international border does have important impacts on the kinds of community participation in crime prevention that are outlined in Chapters Four and Five, in part by altering the incentives for borderland residents to coordinate with state security.

Academic literature on African border towns tends to depict them somewhat bleakly as unruly urban spaces, subject to limited statehood and high rates of crime. Chapter Six presents a number of explanations for why the opposite is true of Gisenyi. It argues that the location of a disorderly urban space immediately in contact with the other side of the border may in fact serve to make Gisenyi more secure: that the border town community organises itself in a unique way to share information and combat criminal behaviour on the Rwandan side.

### 1.3 Theoretical Framework

To locate these arguments in current debates, I draw on three intersecting academic literatures: (1) on state authority and state reach, (2) on models of policing, and (3) on the political governance of borderland regions in Africa.

The dominant thread linking this material concerns boundaries. African states have traditionally been understood as disconnected from large portions of the societies they govern. Modern theory depicts them as the product of elite bargaining, in which the majority agrarian and impoverished urban populations are too often underrepresented, held in contempt, or actively abused by central authorities (see Cheeseman, 2015; Khan, 2005).

At the *social* boundaries of the state we find the national police, ‘holding the line’ between state and society by enforcing the policies laid down by central authorities. This is no easy task, as police find themselves torn between the often contradictory roles of protecting governing regimes and ensuring public safety (see Potholm, 1969). Frequently under-resourced, they are rarely the sole actors working to maintain public order, and must interact across the public–private boundary with groups and individuals who perform similar functions without representing central government.

These relationships become more complicated at the *territorial* boundaries of the state, where frontier and borderland logics shape a political arena that operates differently from that of the metropole. In border cities, the contest between state and non-state actors is often more acrimonious, producing economic subversion, violent disorder and modes of hybrid governance that tend to side-line local government officials. The following subsections provide a brief overview of the core theoretical material that has framed this research.

## State and State Reach

The state has been variously defined (1) by the groups that comprise governing institutions, (2) by their practices and their legislative rule-making authority, or, somewhat differently, (3) as a non-physical arena in which political contests are enacted (Mann, 1984; Abrams, 1988; Migdal, 2004). This section examines a number of alternative understandings of the state in pursuit of conceptual clarity.

Discussions of the state tend to open with Weber's well-established definition, which identifies the state as a category of political organisation defined by its purpose – the goal of successfully monopolising legitimate violence within a territorial boundary. Weber's argument speaks to an ideal-type, in which the state as a political organisation is elevated above the rest of society by the means of physical domination:

*A ruling organisation is one whose existence and order is continually safeguarded within a territorial area by the threat and application of physical force on the part of administrative staff. [A ruling organisation] ...will be called a state in so far as its administrative staff upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order.*

Weber (1922/2013:54)

Weber's critics have emphasised shortcomings in: (1) the implied unity of governing political organisations (Abrams, 1988; Mann, 1984), (2) the clear-cut separation of those organisations from the populations that they govern (Lund, 2006a; Migdal, 2004; Lemarchand, 1992) and (3) the practical challenges of imposing anything resembling a genuine monopoly over the use of force, which over-emphasises militarism as a core state function (Mann, 1984; Jackson & Rosberg, 1982). Perhaps more than elsewhere, these criticisms have found empirical support across post-colonial Africa, where governing political bodies have faced unique challenges, and where the European state model has been forcibly imposed under social,

geographical and historical conditions quite unlike those in which it emerged (Herbst, 2000; Lemarchand, 1992, Englebert, 2009).

The Weberian definition obscures a number of state functions that, although they may not in themselves constitute a definitional basis of the state, have become intimately tied to our modern understanding of the concept. Broadly speaking, these can be identified as centralised goal-setting and the implementation of policy, the enforcement of law, the legitimation of order and the redistribution of resources (Abrams, 1988:11). Factoring in these functions, Lund offers a practical definition of statehood as “the quality of an institution being able to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on members of society” (Lund, 2006a:676).

As a political institution, the state can be separated into (1) an idea and (2) a set of practices. The idea of the state, according to Migdal (2004) is that of a dominant, centralised and autonomous entity that controls rule-making throughout a territory. It represents a unified political body, governing populations either directly through its own agencies, or else by legitimising other groups in society to make and enforce rules. The idea of the state is historically transient, and has been, in Abrams’ terms, “projected, purveyed and variously believed in different societies at different times” (1988:58).

This vision of the state is distinct from one that captures the routine performances of state actors, their internal conflicts and allegiances. The state, according to Marenin (1982:379), is an abstraction, one that ‘takes on life’ only when the actions of its individual representatives are described. Abrams terms this the ‘state system’, which he defines as a “palpable nexus of practice and institutional structure centred in government and more or less extensive, unified and dominant in any given society” (Abrams, 1988:58). He argues that the idea of the state is a convenient fiction, a ‘smokescreen’ that masks the messier reality of how state agents operate. These practices may reinforce the idea of the state under certain conditions, while weakening it in others. At times they can do both simultaneously – state agents that

subvert central authorities may make the state real for the populations that they interact with, but they ultimately undermine the image of central unity.

Describing states according to their practices tends to reveal a great deal of disunity, and has resulted in the notion of the state as a space rather than as an entity. Migdal (2001:15) writes: “the state is a field of power, marked by the use and threat of violence”. According to Mann (1984), the centralised organisation of political power creates an arena for political contest that, by nature of its centralisation, tends to be dominant – the highest tournament in the land when it comes to political authority and rule-making. Success in this sphere is often reflected in the international recognition of state-ness – membership in the international club of states that is conferred on political entities that claim dominance within a territory (see Englebert, 2009).

Mann argues that even where the state is regarded as a space, the centralisation of political authority that it prompts produces a form of autonomy (Mann, 1984:188). This autonomy can take two forms: (1) despotic power, which lacks routine, institutionalisation or negotiation with civil society groups, but reflects instead the raw power of a central elite over civil society, often through the threat of violent domination; and (2) infrastructural power, by which the state is able to penetrate into and centrally coordinate the activities of civil society (Ibid. 212).

Behind this discussion lies the question of how far – if at all – the state can be separated from other social formations within its territory. Lemarchand argues forcibly that it cannot, attacking approaches that attempt “to treat the state-society boundary as a given rather than a problematic” (1992:177). He observes that nowhere in Africa has there ever existed a clear line of demarcation at the boundary of the state (Ibid.). Mitchell (1991) argues similarly that the boundaries of the state are ‘internally drawn’. Even a cursory examination of political institutions, he argues, demonstrates the significant grey area of contact between government authorities

and civil society groups that share in the production of public authority, what Lund (2006a:673) has termed 'twilight institutions'.

Overall, if the notion of the state is to be deployed at all meaningfully, it is necessary to accept unclear boundaries (Mitchell, 1991; 2006). The degree of statehood possessed by individual actors becomes increasingly ambiguous with each degree of separation from a nation's governing executive body (Englebert, 2009). State-hood would appear to exist on a sliding scale. The further from the centre – not only moving down the institutional hierarchy but also moving away from state capitals – the more fiercely it becomes contested (see Asad, 2004). Rather than a clear public-private divide, the institutional boundaries of any state are almost always spread across a margin. 'State reach', in this sense, can be best regarded as the ability of central authorities to co-opt non-state groups, without losing the ability to define their own outer limits (Hansen & Stepputat, 2001).

### Police and Policing

Police inhabit the interface between state and society, an institutional borderland in which they are tasked with reinforcing the state's claims to authority (Marenin, 1982; Giustozzi, 2011). Francis defines the police as "state officials or persons recruited and trained by the state and empowered by the state to enforce the law, protect life and property and prevent or reduce civil disorder" (Francis, 2012:3). Frankel (1980:482) reduces this to the "collection of government agencies ... responsible for enforcing the formal rules of the system".

In terms of police functions, Potholm draws a practical distinction between (1) regulatory activities: "the licensing of commercial enterprises, supervision of trade, management of prisons, protection of the currency, enforcement of exchange controls as well as immigration and passport inspection, border patrol and refugee settlement" and (2) paramilitary activities: "intelligence gathering, riot control, containment and eradication of local insurgency – even the detection and eradication

of exile groups bent on destruction in the region” (Potholm, 1969:144). There are three recurrent themes in the academic literature on policing (1) who polices in practice, (2) in whose interests do they police, and (3) how do they go about it.

The social *function* of policing involves organised practices that maintain communal order: deterrence, the application of rules, the investigation of breaches, the confrontation of offenders and their subsequent punishment (Potholm, 1969). These are almost never monopolised by the social *institution* of the state police (Reiner, 2010). Instead, a variety of different actors engage in policing, each with its unique practices, organisational cultures, capacity to use force and sources of authority (Marenin 2005:41). When it comes to social order, populations are confronted with a range of providers, and have a degree of power in legitimising and de-legitimising different actors, a phenomenon that Bruce Baker terms ‘multi-choice’ policing (Baker 2008:2). He identifies a ‘bewildering variety’ of non-state policing groups “authorised by an array of groups besides governments” (Baker, 2004:167). When combined, these produce “a kaleidoscope of overlapping policing agencies that are formal and informal, legal and illegal, effective and inept, fair and partisan, restrained and brutal” (Baker, 2008:5).

This approach runs the risk of loosening the definition of policing to the point where it becomes all encompassing, “covering everything pertaining to socialisation, coercion and censure” (Alemika, 2009:499). Alemika proposes a restriction of the term to refer solely to activities “pertaining to target hardening [...] the visibility of policing actors and operations, surveillance, patrols, investigations, detection and apprehension of suspects” (Ibid.). He calls for a more rigorous typology of policing groups, and sets up a practical distinction between ‘customary’ policing, often built on kinship and family ties, and ‘territorial’ policing, which refers to civilian patrols and neighbourhood watch organisations.

Groups that engage in territorial policing alongside state institutions include civil/local defence forces, private security firms, civil militias, vigilantes and religious

police, with each institution serving only a fraction of the population as a whole (Francis, 2012:18, Clapham, 1982). Crudely dividing them into public and private police is not especially helpful in understanding their respective roles in bringing about security. Instead, the relationship between different coercive agencies, the state and the population is continually negotiated through every day practices. The nature and scope of these negotiations has come to define how policing is exercised across much of the African continent (Pratten, 2006).

Policing 'for whom' most often arises as a normative question in the field of security sector reform. Analysis typically concerns how best to incentivise police forces to better serve the public interest (Marenin, 2005). National police departments are assessed on a spectrum ranging from self-interest and regime protection at one end, to the protection of the population at large at the other (Bayley, 1971). As such, police practices have come to be read as a 'litmus test' for the degree of democratisation or authoritarianism of governing bodies (Francis, 2012:3). Although practical to a degree, this assumes that the interests of the political elite and the interests of police necessarily align, something that is rarely the case (see Hills, 2012). Similarly, these models risk simplifying the relationship between general crime control and the narrow protection of the elite, which need not be exclusive, especially when maintaining public order is regarded by governments as a source of popular legitimacy.

In terms of their practices, African police departments have typically been reactive, responding selectively and in force to incidents after an initial breach has occurred. Reactive policing, as Alemika argues, "relies heavily on the willingness of victims to report their victimisation to the police" (Alemika, 2009:484). No police force can function properly without being visible to the population at large. Steinberg refers to this simply as the 'numbers game', which he considers critical in determining both where police authority extends and when it extends there (see Steinberg, 2008). In transitional and post-conflict societies, there is often very little incentive for individual officers to risk venturing into volatile districts hostile to their presence

(Francis, 2012:8). Where police lack the numbers, equipment and incentives to engage effectively in hostile areas, swathes of territory come to lack any state police enforcement whatsoever. In rural areas and townships after dark it is often “not just that state police are ineffective, predatory and potentially violent; they are absent” (Baker, 2004:165).

A number of police departments have tried to combat these shortfalls with models of policing that privilege a generalised maintenance of public order above narrow law enforcement. Such models often rest on the perceived reciprocal relationship between environment and crime, known commonly as the ‘broken windows’ thesis (from Wilson & Kelling, 1982). In response to environmental stimuli suggestive of crime, residents modify their behaviour, avoid one another, which fragments the community and weakens its mechanisms for internal monitoring, or, if they have the resources to do so, abandon the neighbourhood altogether. Positive environmental stimuli have the opposite effect, encouraging greater communal interaction, raising the community’s intolerance of disorder and discouraging criminal behaviour (Xu et al. 2005; Kelling & Coles, 1997; Sampson et al., 2004).

One reaction to the broken windows thesis has been for policy makers to privilege policing systems that emphasize local participation in the maintenance of public order, and to use these systems to enforce a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to minor public order misdemeanours. Both ‘zero-tolerance’ and ‘community-led’ policing have cycled in and out of fashion in western police departments (Bullock 2013). While zero-tolerance is a straightforward principle - involving heavy penalties for offences that threaten the environmental aesthetic and internal cohesion of particular neighbourhoods – community policing is more difficult to pin down, and there is no single model. Skogan and Hartnett (1997) suggest that it has four central pillars: (1) the decentralisation of authority and patrol strategies; (2) a commitment to problem-orientated policing; (3) permitting public participation in setting policing priorities; and (4) empowering communities through the financial sponsorship of crime prevention programmes. In practice, the community policing model generally

involves policing 'forums', managed by local notables who coordinate community patrols with formal police activities.

Encouraging local participation in crime prevention tends to increase the perceived legitimacy of police departments through collaboration, improved information sharing and access to better local knowledge of the communities being policed. This concept has proven attractive to international donors funding African police departments, since active community participation is thought to lessen state capacity shortfalls, grant increased legitimacy to policing activities and demilitarise African police forces. As Brogden (2004:636) writes: "an official tide, backed by international human rights discourse, [...] has adopted community orientated policing as an instant legal response to a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic conflicts".

For many policymakers, community policing represents an ideal form of interaction between the state and non-state groups. In practice, these relationships are rarely so straightforward. Benefits come at a cost, particularly where local community police lack oversight and abuse their positions for personal gain. In the worst cases, community police begin to look act as vigilantes, operating as a law unto themselves (Abrahams, 1998). Conservative police departments have viewed the practice with some suspicion, considering it 'soft' when compared to more traditional police methods, or else viewing it as the product of political and budgeting compromises (Klockars, 1985). Alemika (2009:493) lists the advantages and disadvantages of informal policing groups, with local knowledge, citizen activism and their compliment to stretched national police forces on the one hand, versus the non-representation of diverse groups, a lack of accountability, the tendency to take the law into their own hands and the tendency to antagonise formal state policing agencies on the other.

Exporting the idea of community policing to developing countries has proven particularly challenging, often "running into serious difficulties [...] hindered by low levels of professionalism of police agencies, public disrespect for law enforcement, lack of community organisation and other contextual factors" (Davis et. al, 2003:285).

A recent extended cross-case analysis by Davis, Henderson and Merrick (Ibid.) showed significant differences states' capacities to implement community policing and similar differences in how the policy was regarded, both by officials and by the populations at large.

## Police and the Security Sector in Africa

Recent discussions of policing in Africa have generally taken place in the context of security sector reform (Duffield, 2001; Keen, 2008).<sup>2</sup> Owing to the traditional power of state armed forces and the history of military coups across post-independence Africa, it is the military that has received most academic attention regarding the interplay between security and development. The police, meanwhile, are most often encouraged to disarm and decouple from the military, but subjected to little further analysis. There is, as Marenin (2005:29) writes, a paradox here, since for the bulk of the civilian population the police are generally the most visible branch of state security enforcement, with the military "standing in the background". Positioned at the nexus between security and development, the police are equally capable of promoting peace and stability or of driving insecurity and violence, but remain, as Baker (2004:165) reflects, "widely perceived as indifferent, inept, inefficient and corrupt" across African examples.

Explanations for the failure of many African police forces to serve the public good tend to trace the history of these institutions back to their colonial legacies. Post-independence governments across Africa inherited a policing infrastructure that catered primarily to the protection of elite interests. They have since served a great many repressive post-independence regimes (see Reno, 1999). This situation was

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<sup>2</sup> Marenin (2005:22) provides a minimalist definition of the security sector as "agencies of coercion controlled by the state who are charged with the physical protection of civic society and the state [...] as well as other agencies whose work is essential to sustain the effectiveness and accountability of the agencies of control". As such, the police operate within a much larger network of institutions in the field of state security.

exacerbated by the international turn towards neo-liberal economic models in the 1980s, which saw public spending on policing cut dramatically across the developing world (Marenin, 2005). Many African police forces were in effect privatised, broken up into smaller (sometimes rival) organisations and employed directly by individuals in positions of power (Francis, 2012:13-16).

This is not to say that African police institutions are stuck rigidly in an authoritarian mode. Rather, twentieth century history highlights the flexibility and tenacity of police in Africa (Hills, 2000:5). International norms prescribe that any sovereign state authority will possess formal policing institutions, regardless of their actual practices (*ibid.*, 12). These institutions constantly shift their form to suit changes in the political environment, and almost no matter whether they have the capacity to enforce public order, police institutions persist.

Overall, policing in Africa, despite its importance in debates surrounding good governance, liberalisation and democratisation, has been consistently under-researched. Published works in English on policing in Francophone Africa and ex-Belgian colonies in particular are, as Alice Hills observes, “almost non-existent” (Hills, 2000:4). What studies do exist often stem from the grey literature of government organisations and international development agencies bent on ‘improving’ police practice on the continent. Despite the notable progress of a handful of dedicated researchers, the academic neglect of African policing has left a significant gap in how African states are understood (see Baker, 2010; Steinberg, 2008; Hills, 2000; Marenin, 2005; Owen, 2014).

### African Borderlands

The term borderland refers to the territorial margins of individual nation states: spaces in contact with international boundaries. In any borderland, this border-contact is a defining feature of local economic and political practices (see Korf & Raeymaekers, 2013). The study of borderlands, unlike that of borders, focuses first

and foremost on the communities located near states' territorial limits, rather than on the international relations of nation state governments (Coplan, 2012).

It is worth distinguishing borderlands from frontiers, a somewhat different concept that can be detached altogether from the presence of an international boundary. Frontiers are tied instead to a teleological language of state expansion and modernization. Korf and Raeymaekers (2013:6) note that frontier is a term most often deployed by political centres to describe spaces where, "territorial and institutional penetration of the modern state has not (yet) been completed". According to Kopytoff (1987), borderlands represent one particular 'sub-geography' of a state's frontier, manifesting frontier logics such as limited state capacity and the economic subversion of central authorities by local trading networks.

Recent analysis of territorial state boundaries has been shaped above all by their paradoxical capacity to both divide and unite (Kopytoff, 1987; Asiwaju & Adeniyi, 1989; Nugent & Asiwaju, 1996). Cultural and institutional differences develop over time and combine with regulatory discrepancies in a manner that produces significant cross-border imbalances. For the most part, the greater these imbalances (be they social, economic or geographic), the greater the opportunities they provide. Cross-border discrepancies have been likened to potential difference in a battery, inducing both people and goods to flow back and forth (Jackson, 2006). The result is that neighbouring populations living in proximity to an international divide are often brought closer together by their privileged access to the 'best of both worlds' (Anderson & O'Dowd, 1999; Feyissa & Hoehne, 2010).

In as much as the border is a site of opportunity, it is also a source of power (see Zartman, 2010; Das & Poole, 2004).<sup>3</sup> The existence of a border gives rise to a variety of roles: border guard, customs agent, smuggler, cross-border trader and so on.

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<sup>3</sup> In this context, power is understood in the "civilisational" as well as the coercive, political and economic sense (Zartman, 2010:3). It is external to actors and emerges from their interrelation.

Between these roles, unique relationships are established that organise local power structures and produce networks and hierarchies in the surrounding area. This idea challenges an international relations model in which the ideal-type border forms a clean break between two political 'like units' (Waltz, 1979:96). A state's controlling influence very rarely extends evenly to these territorial limits (Hansen & Stepputat, 2001; Bierschenk & Sardan, 1997). Instead, modes of hybrid governance divorced from state control flourish around borders, and frequently emerge in competition with powers at the centre (Raeymaekers, 2010; see also Tilly, 1985:169-171). In extreme cases, the state in the borderland comes to act as just one political institution among many, and can be harnessed, or 'colonised', to serve the interests of non-state actors (Das & Poole, 2004). The extension of central control to these regions incurs extremely high costs for state authorities, and is often not a high priority for governments content to consolidate their authority over economic urban centres and capital cities (Herbst, 2000).

In this manner, borderlands give rise to a 'polyform scenario' of local governance that, as Roitman (1990:695) argues, "articulates itself via the intersection of various agents". Although state and non-state competition for political authority is by no means specific to borderlands, the empowering opportunities provided by these regions often exaggerate the contest. In order to interpret broader power structures, it becomes necessary to examine in detail the specific points of contact between the different political spheres (Ibid.).

The empowerment of non-state brokers in African borderlands carries significant implications for the nature of state sovereignty. Central authorities often see diminishing capacity the further they are extended into territorial margins (see Herbst, 2000; Rosenau & Czempiel, 1992; Albert & Brock, 1998). With state incapacity, sovereignty proliferates, undergoing a form of 'commodification' (see Englebert, 2009; Vlassenroot, 2008). In some cases it is reduced to a crude adhesive, holding together otherwise unwieldy institutions simply by permitting more individuals to share in the benefits of a sovereign role (Englebert, 2009:99). This produces a

multiplicity of institutions that exercise public authority. In various forms, branches of public institutions interact with government-recognised 'traditional institutions' and other hierarchies of authority emerging from the border, making them, to varying degrees, state-sanctioned (Lund 2006a:685).

Public authority emerges from this melting pot of political actors only as “the amalgamated result of the exercise of power by a variety of [...] [institutions] conjugated with the *idea* of the state” (Lund, 2006a:686, author’s emphasis). As argued above in the discussion of state reach, it is the responsibility of the sovereign authority to define the political margins these groups inhabit, and countless examples show how destabilising the failure to do so can prove (Zeller, 2009:140, see also Asad, 2004). Across Africa, the nature of political contest in borderland regions can easily turn them into the epicentres of conflict. Empowered by the economic opportunities of the border and emboldened by state incapacity, militant groups find themselves well accommodated in the borderland context (Jackson, 2006).

A number of recent studies have shown borders not so much as obstacles but as economic resources exploited by borderland residents (Feyissa and Hoehne 2010). This is particularly relevant in border towns, which tend to lie on the intersections of well-trodden international trading routes and state boundaries. Frequently, what emerges in these sites is a class of transnational, informal traders (see Raeymaekers, 2010: 581). Power and violence in borderlands tend to be intimately tied to patterns of trade and networks of traders.

Smugglers thrive in border towns, circumventing or renegotiating economic regulations imposed by centralised authorities. Economic activities that openly subvert the state can simultaneously uphold it through the implicit recognition of its functions and a constant interaction with its agents (see also Coplan 2012, Chalfin 2001, Rothschild and Chazan 1988). It is quite often the case that individual state representatives find themselves performing seemingly contradictory roles in border towns. As Mathys and Büscher (2010:67) observe, “state officials guard the border,

but they also maintain informal trade and fraud". In the borderland context, this process allows state authorities to remain relevant despite limited capacity and powerful rivals.

To sum up, borderlands represent zones that facilitate interactions between trading networks (both local and trans-national), between neighbouring states, and between state and non-state modes of governance. Among their most defining features is their dynamism, as these relationships are shaped and reshaped by the constant interaction between inhabitants (see Newman & Paasi, 1998). Various social actors in borderlands come to 'imagine and instantiate' state sovereignty in ways that do not always align with the unitary, territorial logic of the central state (Chalfin, 2001:202). Others make direct use of the legal command that sovereignty confers to accumulate wealth and resources (Englebert, 2009:80). Analysis of power-relations in these regions must account for both the plurality of different political spheres and the blurred distinction between formal and informal economic activities.

#### 1.4 Summary

This research finds its theoretical foothold in the interplay among three self-contained bodies of academic literature: on state authority, policing practices and the political and economic idiosyncrasies of borderland regions. Although closely interrelated, these topics tend to be discussed separately by different pools of scholars.

The political concept of the state is subject to a range of contradictory definitions. One disruptive challenge to models that depict the state as a unitary and autonomous entity is to ask where its boundaries lie – how far it extends into society and how uniformly it spans its delineated territory (Mann, 1984; Migdal, 2001). In doing so, it quickly becomes apparent that the state's boundaries are in fact margins – spaces in which in the state-ness of particular actors and institutions is indistinct (Lund, 2006a).

Within these institutional margins, the 'idea' of the state as a centralised rule-making authority begins to break down. Instead, the state takes the form of practices enacted by a range of actors competing for political authority (Mann, 1984). Returning to Weber's foundational definition, it remains the practice and legitimisation of violence, above all else, that defines the state's representatives in these spaces. According to international norms, this form of rule-enforcement by threat of violence is the principal responsibility of the national police, an institution that every nation state in the modern era employs. But the police are never the only actors involved. They compete with a range of other government institutions as one part of a security network that can be mapped onto any given territory.

Whole paradigms of police practice have centred on distributing the traditional duties of police departments to regular citizens, a policy known as community or community-led policing. This has been particularly popular in post-independence African states, where police departments have been plagued by underfunding and inadequate training, and have preyed on the populations they are intended to protect. The relationship between official, unformed state police and non-state actors engaged in policing sits at the heart of 'state reach' – the ability to define who, at the local level, is practicing violence legitimately.

State reach also has a geographical dimension. Territories in contact with international borders tend to manifest very different political configurations from areas in the national metropole, due in part to the high costs incurred to states extending their power into their territorial margins (Herbst, 2000). One of the core themes of contemporary borderlands studies has been to show how international borders generate, in surrounding territories, modes of political authority that fiercely contest centralised control. This prompts one of the central questions that has guided this thesis: what effect, if any, does proximity to a border have on state reach, and in particular on the relationship between state and non-state policing practices in small borderland communities?

## 1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis progresses through seven chapters:

Chapter Two focuses on research methods. Research conducted between 2013 and 2015 involved ethnographic fieldwork and a series of structured interviews. This chapter outlines the key methodological considerations and the challenges that arose during that period.

Chapter Three provides an overview of literature on Rwandan politics. It identifies the core contemporary academic debates, particularly surrounding the RPF's mode of governance. This material is used to emphasise important gaps in the state of the field. I show how a range of claims have been made about Rwandan government practices that are based on the stated intentions of the elites, but lack a more fine-grained analysis of how the officials charged with enacting state policy carry out their duties, particularly in the security sector.

The second part of this chapter turns to the institution of the Rwanda National Police (RNP) as an entry point for understanding crime prevention in Rwanda. It offers a brief history of policing in Rwanda, tracing changes and continuities from the pre-colonial era to the present day. The current organisation of the institution is then laid out through official documents, legal material from the Rwandan parliament, and interview material from serving police officers.

Chapter Four looks behind the RNP to establish the network of state and non-state groups involved in the everyday practices of crime prevention. Despite the internal cohesiveness of the RNP, the country is not policed exclusively by uniformed state representatives. This chapter makes use of empirical material gathered in the field to map out the activities and interactions between house guards, *abanyerondo* night patrolmen, police community liaison officers, elected heads of neighbourhoods, judicial police officers and district security. It also provides thick description of four selected criminal incidents that occurred during my time in the field.

Chapter Five builds on these empirical materials to argue that the prevention of urban street crime in Rwanda is achieved locally. This runs counter to persistent claims that law enforcement in the country is a ruthless affair, enacted by militarised state officials and guided by the logic of ethnic subjugation. I identify a range of factors that give rise to an extremely high degree of internal monitoring at the lowest administrative tier of Rwandan society, the village or *umudugudu*. I stress the importance of (1) the state security apparatus and its capacity for passing information up to government authorities at different tiers of the state hierarchy, (2) the organisation of small communities and the local, non-state community policing actors who operate in them, and (3) the intolerance of both state and non-state actors to social disharmony, which stems in large part from the country's history of violence.

Despite the visibility of uniformed state officials at strategic sites across Rwanda, I argue that the prevention of street crime is achieved locally in small neighbourhood communities. It takes place in what Ray Abrahams (1987:179) has termed the "shadows, rather than the bright lights of legitimacy and consensus", and involves a network of individuals who operate in the institutional margins of centralised state authority. The RNP have made criminal investigation secondary to the construction of a general environment, partitioned into and self-contained within small communities, that is resistant to crime. The degree to which the Rwandan government has coordinated these communities in the prevention of micro-level violence is a powerful manifestation of state reach in the country. It relies on a significant degree of non-state, often ostensibly voluntary, participation.

Chapter Six focuses in on Rwanda's western borderlands to investigate policing practices in the geographical margins of the state. I argue that Rwandan state reach is at its most striking in Gisenyi, the country's largest border town, where the government has mobilised local communities to share information and effectively control levels of street crime despite what appear to be significant difficulties arising from the town's geographical position. Crime prevention in Gisenyi takes place in the context of widespread criminality immediately across the border in Goma, the capital

of the DRC's North Kivu Province. The asymmetry in the prevalence of crime is sustained despite the border itself being relatively frictionless, allowing both goods and people to cross with ease. I argue that these issues are not unrelated, and that the dialectical relationship between Goma and Gisenyi bolsters mechanisms that contribute to the prevention of street crime on the Rwandan side of the border.

Chapter Seven revisits the thesis' core arguments and points to areas that warrant future research. It returns to theoretical material on state reach, policing in Africa, and borderland politics to show what the Rwandan case contributes to these discussions. It also situates my findings within the growing literature specific to Rwandan political processes. Finally, the conclusion considers the durability of policing arrangements in Rwanda, and suggests what is most likely to change in the coming years.

## CHAPTER TWO – METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Encountering Security

This research aimed to observe the mechanisms of policing in Rwanda in as sharp a focus as possible, particularly in the country's border towns where crime rates are unexpectedly low. This would be done, where possible: (1) through extended encounters, (2) in the local language, (3) with individuals responsible for policing.<sup>4</sup>

I adopted the working assumption that understanding a social phenomenon, in this case public order and crime prevention, almost always benefits from first-hand observation. The longer researchers stay in contact with their subject matter (where possible in the local language), the 'closer' they get to it, the better they understand it. This holds true in spite of the possible tainting effect of the researcher's presence (see Geertz 1988) and even though there are increasingly sophisticated tools for short-term qualitative research (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:24-25). Certainly there is a threshold after which returns diminish, but often it is not before several waves of assumptions have crested and subsided. Over the course of my fieldwork, although various methods and avenues of access were trialled and abandoned, these principles remained for the most part unchanged. My approach was influenced by the work of Das and Poole (2004) on the unique perspective that ethnographic tools can offer on practices that make and undo the state at its territorial and conceptual margins.

Two separate disciplines shaped the direction of my research. While the subject matter concerns physical coercion, hierarchies of authority, and the boundaries of the state – very much the stuff of politics – the epistemology and certain of the ethnographic tools adopted are borrowed from anthropology. Although I recognise that situating my research between these two fields may displease purists in both

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<sup>4</sup> From early fieldwork proposals, 2011 and 2012.

camps, in practice I found that taking an interdisciplinary approach was better suited to fieldwork in Rwanda, where researchers need to be especially flexible and open to compromise. This section reviews the major practical and ethical considerations that guided my research, describes the participants and methods drawn upon, and justifies the sites selected.

In late 2011, I proposed that between six and eight months of fieldwork would provide sufficient data on which to build an analysis. Looking back, this was naïve. I spent closer to two years in Rwanda and DRC, from July 2013 to April 2015, and have returned to the region on several occasions since. This extension was due in part to the academic mission-creep common to PhD fieldwork in any context. Answers tend to spawn questions and it is not always clear when enough is enough. My progress was also impeded in ways that reveal some of the unique difficulties faced by researchers working in Rwanda. These are discussed in more detail below.

### Access

Government approval for this research was organised through the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and required my official affiliation to both the Rwanda National Police (RNP) and the National University of Rwanda (NUR). The process involved a formidable amount of rubberstamping and paperwork, a range of references and not a small amount of patience. From start to finish, it took just under seven months. My few observations on the process are as follows:

(1) The issue of research access in Rwanda has sparked heated debate in recent years. It is one of a number of peripheral skirmishes in an academic community divided on the merits and demerits of the Rwandan government (see Times Higher Education 2014a; 2014b). I see little value in revisiting these arguments here. Research access is personal, and I make no claim that my experiences are typical of other researchers

working in the country, except to say that the process is both political<sup>5</sup> and increasingly difficult.

(2) Many of the procedures for gaining research permissions in Rwanda are new, and the bureaucrats responsible are still becoming accustomed to recent regulations (for the guidelines currently being implemented, see Ministerial Instructions No. 18, 30/06/2010, Republic of Rwanda, 2010c). In the case of my application, the result was a number of 'Catch 22' situations, in which, for example, two necessary documents each required that the other be signed and delivered first. Although this was frustrating, I was not under the impression that these incidents were deliberately aimed at stalling applications, a common view among other prospective researchers.<sup>6</sup> The particular type of access I was applying for was novel, and I sensed a slight confusion about what the appropriate procedure might be.

(3) A rigid rational-legal bureaucracy reigns over the middle and lower ranking officials I encountered in MINEDUC and the RNP. It was striking how binding the small print of official documents could be, even when this meant frustration and extra work for all involved. In particular, I was impressed by the degree to which junior bureaucrats in relatively low-status government departments were able to hold their ground when pressured by much more senior officials from different ministerial hierarchies. So long as the paperwork was on their side, they did not yield to higher authority. This contrasts strongly with what happens in other countries in the region, where bureaucratic matters tend to be negotiable and are often subject to the whims of the upper echelons (see also Straus & Waldorf, 2011). During the application period, I gained useful insights into the relative authority of different positions within

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<sup>5</sup> In the sense that it is shaped by much more than the technical guidelines provided by MINEDUC (Republic of Rwanda, 2010c). Personalities (the jostling among senior government officials), reputations (national, institutional and personal; on the part of the researcher and of assistants and referees) and events (in this case anything from the publication of critical texts on similar subjects, to the outbreak of civil conflict in areas designated for fieldwork) all play a significant role.

<sup>6</sup> Informal conversations, Rwanda Research Roundtable R3, Kigali, 6 March 2014.

the RNP, its mechanisms of internal monitoring, and its intense stigmatisation of corruption.

(4) Researchers working as recently as three years earlier described a significantly more relaxed environment in which many of them had abstained from gaining any official clearance whatsoever.<sup>7</sup> This would not have been possible during the period that I was in Rwanda, especially not for research into sensitive subjects such as internal security. Tightening regulations might indicate a narrowing of the space for foreign research in Rwanda. A number of recent controversies have frayed the relationship between the government and international observers and have resulted in a bunker mentality in some quarters of the RPF when it comes to dealing with outsiders.<sup>8</sup> Criticism of Rwandan policy in academic journals and blogs has caused embarrassment and indignation among members of the Rwandan elite, who are particularly sensitive to the manner in which negative reports shape donor opinion (see Hayman, 2009). The government has little incentive to welcome researchers when it suspects this will happen.

(5) New procedures can also be seen to constitute a genuine effort on the part of the Rwandan government to bring research regulations in line with western standards. An outsider undertaking comparable research in the UK would be subject to a range of stringent conditions. They would be unlikely to receive anything like the degree of attention from senior officials that is commonly given to international researchers in Rwanda. In ministerial offices in Kigali, I sensed a general fatigue with researchers who fail to adhere to the stated boundaries of their work or else conduct research illegally on tourist visas. There was a marked reluctance on the part of middle ranking bureaucrats to take responsibility for these individuals. Gatekeepers described a long

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<sup>7</sup> Informal conversations, Rwanda Research Roundtable R3, Kigali, 6 March 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Discussed in further detail below on research constraints and limitations.

history of dealing with researchers who felt “entitled to their access [...] with their minds already made up about what they will find”.<sup>9</sup>

During the early stages of my fieldwork, Article 20 of the Ministerial Instructions No.003/12 (Republic of Rwanda, 2012) on Police Conduct was read to me. This states that revealing police professional secrets is a breach of the police code of conduct, a serious offence. It is worth pointing out here that there is nothing new, peculiarly Rwandan, or particularly unusual about a police force that is resistant to external observation (see Skolnick, 2002), and my research supports the observation of Reiner and Newburn (2000), that access is the greatest challenge in conducting research on state police in almost any country. As Abrams (1988:62) writes:

*Any attempt to examine politically institutionalised power at close quarters is, in short, liable to bring to light the fact that an integral element of such power is the quite straightforward ability to withhold information, deny observation and dictate the terms of knowledge.*

Abrams (1988:62)

With this in mind, I assembled a range of references before approaching the RNP.<sup>10</sup> In preliminary discussions, I emphasized that my investigations were first and foremost into the technical mechanisms of crime prevention, and not into the controversial politics of the current Rwandan government. The word politics almost always prompted a negative reaction and, like many Rwandans, I came to avoid it.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, I took pains to emphasise that I had no presuppositions about my findings,

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<sup>9</sup> Interview, Ministry of Education, Kigali, 14 October 2013.

<sup>10</sup> With hindsight I suspect that a number of these, what I thought of at the time as character references, were actually counter-productive, particularly as it became clear how little authority is carried over between parallel government institutions.

<sup>11</sup> I am hesitant to draw strong conclusions from this about the nature of political space in Rwanda, as others have (see Beswick, 2010). My experience was that discussing the ‘big politics’ of senior government officials (*siasa wa simba*, lit. politics of the lions) was considered an inappropriate topic, more uncomfortable than overtly dangerous.

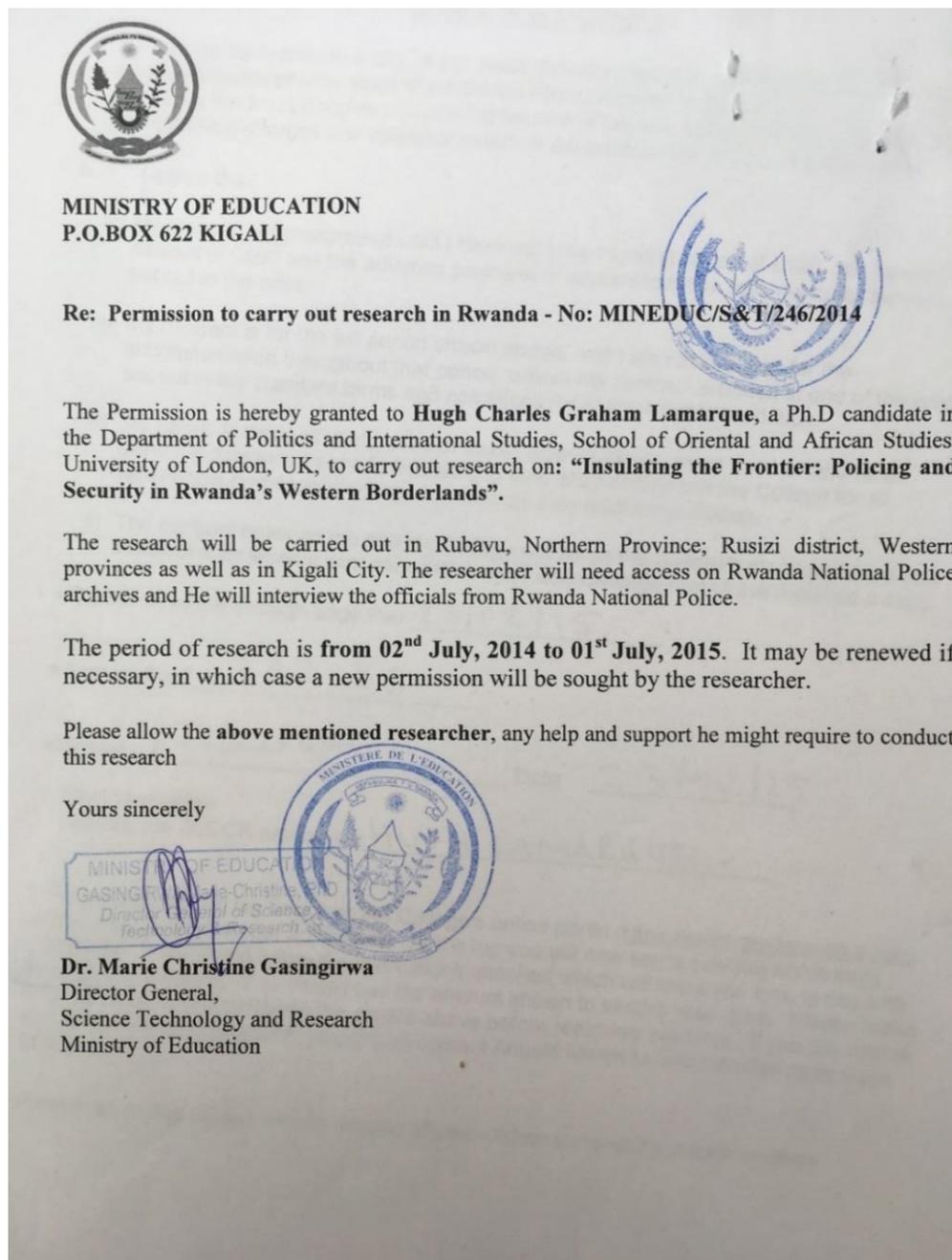
something that was echoed favourably back to me. One official remarked on his past experience of foreign researchers:

*Making all the right noises [about the positive benefits of their research in Rwanda] ... we would help them, give them everything they needed. Then they are going back to Europe to write all these negative reports ... And not on what they said they were working on! And often when we just don't agree with what they find at all, and when they don't even come to discuss their findings with us ... They bite the hand that feeds them.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 29 January 2014.

Researcher bias is always a risk, particularly when studying state bodies with the authority to practice violence. It is extremely difficult to approach them without, as Bayley (1971:110) argues “having, or being required to have, a point of view about their use”. In light of this, I framed my research as a series of unanswered questions about which I had no presuppositions, and submitted to MINEDUC an unedited version of an extended PhD research report that I had produced for SOAS in 2012. This later worked to my benefit. Having not censored my application, I feel no particular pressure to censor my findings. I was aware throughout the application process that my research permission could quite legitimately be denied. It was an anxious period, and gave rise to a range of alternative ‘Plan B’ proposals.

Figure 1. Research Permission Letters



RWANDA NATIONAL POLICE

Kigali, on...13.../...05.../2014



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
B.P. 6304 KIGALI  
[www.police.gov.rw](http://www.police.gov.rw)

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to confirm that **Mr. Hugh Lamarque** from the University of London, SOAS, has contacted Rwanda National Police (RNP) in connection to his proposed PhD research.

Mr. Lamarque's proposed research is on the Rwanda National Police, its history and its community policing in Rwanda. He has provided all of the necessary documents to RNP to facilitate his research. Mr. Lamarque is already affiliated with the University of Rwanda and has been recommended by [REDACTED]

Rwanda National Police will provide him with necessary, helpful and relevant information towards the success of his study.

Sincerely,

  
  
**Emmanuel K. GASANA**  
CG  
Inspector General of Police

I received approval letters (above) and a resident-research visa in May 2014. I was subsequently surprised by how little I was required to renegotiate my position.<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>12</sup> Gellner and Hirsch (2001:4) observe that access is not “negotiated once and then forgotten about”. Oddly, this was precisely my experience as far as senior officials were concerned. High ranking police in Rwanda are extremely busy in their formal duties. Dealing with the applications of foreign researchers was one of their responsibilities, passed up the chain from the middle-ranks. Once sanctioned, dealing with the researchers themselves became a much lower priority.

same process that had earlier proved a roadblock – the reluctance of low to middle-ranking officials to take responsibility for sanctioning foreign research – now began to work in my favour. Officials I interviewed tended to double-check my clearance by phone and make photocopies of my documents for their own insurance.<sup>13</sup> Once this was done, they became for the most part extremely accommodating, providing introductions and feedback, as well as more practical assistance with things like transport and office space.

I was fortunate in the timing of my visit, which coincided with a public relations drive by the RNP.<sup>14</sup> I was put under the direct supervision of the RNP, rather than an academic supervisor at the NUR (as is more common for researchers), and was in regular contact with a ‘focal point’ officer in the Police Department of Public Relations (DPR). This officer handled my queries and connected me with police posts outside of the RNP Headquarters in Kacyiru, Kigali.

Although aware that this relationship with the police headquarters could make me subject to manipulation, at no point did I feel particularly compromised by the assistance I was provided. I supplied the lists of prospective interviewees and sites of research, rather than having these selected for me, and I was permitted to conduct my own local research in parallel with research coordinated with the RNP. In early discussions at the headquarters, I was encouraged to ‘go deep’, to investigate the sub-state practices of community policing.<sup>15</sup> This gave rise to two separate branches

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<sup>13</sup> In discussions with people who were not state officials, I would generally only show my research permissions if asked, or else if I judged that they would be more likely to prompt open discussion, rather than stifle it or reduce it to the official government narrative. I cannot claim there was any particular science to these judgement calls, except to say that when they were misplaced it was clear almost immediately and this allowed me to learn from past mistakes.

<sup>14</sup> In line with the established convention that field research should give back to the communities from which information is gathered, a report will be produced in parallel to this thesis that condenses my findings to something of more practical value to the RNP.

<sup>15</sup> Perhaps just as an effort to get me out of the police headquarters. The officers were, as already noted, very busy. Either way, my research benefitted enormously from this arrangement. I had presumed on arrival that community policing practices would be one area that would prove especially difficult to access, since central authorities would have more difficulty controlling the narratives that I encountered. In practice they seemed unperturbed by this.

of field research: formal interviews with government officials at the RNP headquarters and sector police posts, and informal interactions at the community level with community policing committee members and *abanyerondo* night patrolmen.

### Site Selection

My selection of Gisenyi as the core site of research was driven largely by curiosity. Before this project I had lived in the north-western border town for several months while researching the informal petrol trade across the Rwanda-DRC border. Having crossed into Goma each day, I was struck by the stark contrast between the two urban spaces, particularly with respect to physical security. There was no obvious explanation for the relative physical safety of the Rwandan border town in the face of the high crime rates in adjacent Goma.

My initial proposal involved comparing these two border towns, Goma and Gisenyi on the north shore of Lake Kivu, with Bukavu and Kamembe on the south. Among other things, I was curious about whether cross-border asymmetries would be affected by geographical differences between the two pairs of towns. Whereas Goma and Gisenyi are contiguous across the border, Bukavu and Kamembe are separated by the Rusizi river. Making this comparison proved overly ambitious. For practical reasons, my time in the field was divided unevenly, with most of it spent in Goma and Gisenyi. The few weeks I spent in Bukavu and Kamembe produced supplementary data but not the means for a like-for-like comparison.

Instead, I was able to make a more revealing comparison between the border towns and the capital city, Kigali. From the outset, I was concerned that confining fieldwork to the borderland would not allow me to distinguish policing practices specific to that

context from those common throughout the country.<sup>16</sup> A control was needed elsewhere, and the capital city seemed the obvious choice to provide a contrast between centre and periphery. This was also a practical compromise, as delays in obtaining official research permissions confined me to Kigali for much longer than I originally intended.

Borderland scholars advocate giving equal attention to both sides of a border during field research; a push-back against ‘methodological nationalism’ in which researchers privilege ‘their’ side (see Korf and Raeymaekers, 2013; Goodhand, 2013). Intuitively, a two-sided approach to borderland studies is preferable, especially where border regions demonstrate complex interdependence across a national boundary. Nevertheless, working on both sides of the border gives rise to additional challenges during fieldwork. First, adopting this approach means that capturing local and state perspectives requires a form of ‘double-vision’ in order to take account of actors in both national territories.<sup>17</sup> Second, two-sided research doubles the requirement for official permissions, something that is especially problematic where there are pronounced hostilities between the neighbouring states. Associating with officials on one side may prohibit research on the other. Third, government statistics and other sources of data are unlikely to be compiled in the same ways on both sides of a border, making accurate comparisons difficult. Finally, where different languages are spoken across a border, extra strain is put on researchers, especially those who emphasise participant observation. Researchers in Goma and Gisenyi must overcome all of these challenges, often within a limited period.

There were also positive reasons to privilege my research on the Rwandan side of the border. First, a significant body of academic work already exists on urban processes in Goma (Büscher, 2012; 2016; Büscher & Vlassenroot, 2010; Vlassenroot &

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<sup>16</sup> This was also the subject of feedback received at both a qualitative methods course at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO), and a Winter School run by the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE) in St. Louis, Senegal, in April and January 2013 respectively.

<sup>17</sup> Willem van Schendel, comments made at SOAS Workshop on Borderland Research, 12 January 2016.

Raeymaekers; 2004), while much less has been written about Gisenyi (Doevenspeck, 2011; Brenton et al. 2011). A further body of literature accounts for unruliness and violence in border towns generally (Korf & Raeymaekers, 2013), and explains how state authorities “promote their agendas, and how their advances are received, appropriated, and very often thwarted” (Nugent, 2012:557) within them. Goma exemplifies many of the processes previously investigated, whereas Gisenyi stands out as an exceptional case, exhibiting levels of state capacity and security that were not well explained by established theory. For all these reasons, it struck me that there was more to be uncovered on the Rwandan side of the border. Although I crossed repeatedly into Goma for interviews and to better understand the daily routines of Rwandan traders, most systematic research for this thesis was conducted in neighbourhoods of Gisenyi.

Throughout this thesis, Gisenyi is referred to as occupying the ‘periphery’ in contrast with Kigali at the country’s ‘centre’. It is worth being clear about what is meant here. Gisenyi is not typical of Rwandan towns outside of the state capital. As such, it was not selected to indicate centre-periphery relations in Rwandan more generally, and both its strategic significance and its geographical idiosyncrasies would undermine attempts to do so. Instead, research in Gisenyi allows for policing mechanisms in the capital to be contrasted with those in a town that, on paper at least, raises some of the most significant challenges for public order maintenance. Gisenyi is the largest border town in Rwanda. Outside of the Southern Province it is among the towns set farthest from the state’s political centre. Its residents engage in constant economic exchange with those of an unruly metropolis at the heart of an unstable foreign province - one that is overtly hostile to the current Rwandan government. Finally, the city was at the epicentre of the Genocide in 1994 and the North-western Insurgency in 1997. If urban policing does take different forms across Rwanda, I reasoned that of all the peripheral towns Gisenyi was the most promising site to look for contrasts with the centre.

## Participants and Methods

As far as possible, I adopted a perspective from inside the local police post, looking out, something I considered to be lacking in prior academic discussions of Rwanda.<sup>18</sup> In recent embedded work on rural Rwandan communities, Ingelaere (2010:41) calls for researchers in the country to “physically and mentally move away from the centre of society to adopt a bottom up perspective that captures the voices of ordinary people”. My intention was to attempt a middle ground, neither focusing exclusively on political elites, nor adopting what Abrams disapprovingly calls the “eyes down, palms up” approach, where researchers find themselves “studiously averting their eyes from the state and attending instead to its subjects” (Abrams, 1988:65).

I interviewed senior officials from the RNP and the Rwandan Defence Force (RDF), alongside international police trainers, members of the Rwanda national reserve (*inkeragutabara*), police community liaison officers, cell administrators, members of the District Administrative Security Support Organ (DASSO) and officers from the lower ranks of the police. These interviews were conducted both inside and outside the police posts of Gisenyi and Rusizi Districts at the DRC border and Kigali’s three districts: Gasabo, Nyauregenge and Kicukuru.

A second branch of research involved informal interviews at the interface between state and non-state policing in Rwanda. These explored the interactions among local residents, *amarondo* night patrols and community policing committees (CPCs) at the village level. I supplemented interview data with a combination of secondary academic literature, observation, local news reports, maps, government documents and historical materials from Rwanda’s national archives. I pursued what Gellner and

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<sup>18</sup> Capturing the police perspective is something stressed by Olly Owen (2014) in a recent doctoral study of the Nigerian National Police. Owen’s work has been extremely influential in my own research design. In Rwanda, Salas (2002) and Baker (2006) are among the only academic voices to engage directly with the RNP, but their studies are now over a decade old, and both have kept to a somewhat limiting macro-level, top down view of the institution and of crime prevention.

Hirsch (2001:7) term ‘methodological holism’, the notion that any observation *could be* relevant to the research topic, without falling into ‘descriptive holism’, the assumption that these observations must be interrelated. Throughout the writing process, I have found myself drawing on my observation notebooks at least as much as on transcribed interview material.

Clearly the credibility of a study such as this depends on the scale of the research conducted. I should stress that raw numbers of interviews do nothing to indicate interview quality, which varied enormously within my data set. I conducted 74 formal interviews. These were pre-planned meetings in which I drew from a set of formal questions. I took detailed notes from a further 184 unstructured discussions. This is considerably fewer than the quantities of data recently produced by other researchers of Rwanda, some of which has involved hundreds or thousands of life-history accounts (see Ingelaere, 2010; Clark 2014). Nevertheless, when combined with twenty months of observation and informal encounters, and accounting for the peculiar challenges that come with researching on themes of security, I consider the number sufficient to support the cases presented in subsequent chapters.

Formal interviews with officials were conducted predominantly in English with the aid of a research assistant who helped reduce misunderstandings and clarified points in post-interview analysis. Most informal interviews took place in Congolese Swahili, which is spoken widely throughout Rwanda’s western borderlands and is commonly understood in Kigali.

Over its twenty-month course, field research went through a number of phases. I took advantage of the initial seven-month delay while awaiting official permissions to study Swahili intensively – living for a time with a Congolese family and taking daily private tuition. Choosing to work in Swahili, rather than the indigenous Kinyarwanda, was a difficult decision that requires some justification. Most simply, I already had some proficiency in Swahili, which is a more straightforward and less idiomatic language than Kinyarwanda. I considered it likely that Swahili would offer a greater

return on the time invested, while I could make use of translators to help with the more difficult indigenous language. Finally, Swahili is spoken ubiquitously in Rwanda's western borderlands, and is of practical use on both sides of the Rwanda-DRC border.

Until official permission was granted, I was prohibited from conducting any formal investigations.<sup>19</sup> Informal inquiries and conversations during this period were, however, revealing. They provided invaluable material that I deployed in interviews later on in the research process. Over the course of these early months, I met with a range of international staff and conducted preliminary enquiries through them. I asked around for accounts of street crime and began an 'incident' notebook that was later expanded by speaking with Rwandan citizens and police. The recentness, severity and frequency of the crimes described proved a useful litmus test both for the security of particular neighbourhoods and for how aware residents were of criminal activities.

I asked also whether people might contact me in the event or immediate aftermath of crimes, so that I could witness first hand the way in which they were handled. This approach resulted in a range of experiences recounted in the empirical chapters of this thesis. I attended for the most part the sites of break-ins and opportunistic theft. Arriving sometimes shortly after the event, I found it revealing to see the way that communities responded to these incidents. This provided an avenue into informal discussions with house guards and *amarondo* patrolmen, with whom I was able to establish some rapport early on.

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<sup>19</sup> The Ministry of Internal Security granted me a temporary residence visa pending the resolution of my application for research clearance through MINEDUC. Although the particular terms of this visa were somewhat ambiguous, anything resembling formal data collection was expressly forbidden. Several foreign researchers have had their visas revoked for breaching this regulation in recent years.

I began formal research in May 2014 with interviews at the RNP headquarters in Kacyiru and the Metropolitan police headquarters in Muhima, Kigali. These interviews with senior officers were guided by a selection of open-ended questions:

1. Who is responsible for constructing, delivering and authorising policing in Rwanda?

*(i) How is the National Police structured internally and organised across its territory?*

*(ii) How is police training organised and what styles of training are used?*

*(iii) What measures are in place to ensure quality of service?<sup>20</sup>*

2. What is the role of community and non-state policing in Rwanda?

*(i) How are communities organised to perform local policing?*

*(ii) How many non-state (private/community) providers of policing are there, what do they do and whom do they serve?*

*(iii) How are community policing initiatives adapted to different settings?*

3. Are the nature and scope of state policing changing in Rwanda?

*(i) What has changed and what has remained the same in Rwandan policing?*

*(ii) What are the future goals of the RNP?*

4. How can Rwanda's exceptionally low rates of crime be best explained?

*(i) How is crime reported?*

*(ii) Are there areas of crime or regions that are particularly problematic?*

These preliminary interviews served several purposes. I used the responses of senior officials to build up a picture of the structure and operations of the RNP, and to

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<sup>20</sup> These preliminary questions draw on the recommendations of Bruce Baker in researching police forces (Baker, 2010).

determine the institution's internal narrative on its role in Rwandan society. I adopted a funnelling approach, beginning with the general, open-ended lines of enquiry (above) and following up with increasingly specific questions as a way of safeguarding against information being omitted on the basis of being too obvious. These discussions also served to reassure ranking officials that my research emphasised the procedural side of the RNP and not its politics.

Subsequently, through the Police Department of Public Relations, I was able to interview the District Police Commanders (DPCs) and District Community Liaison Officers (DCLOs) from Kicukiro, Nyarugenge and Gasabo, Kigali's three administrative districts. From here, I organised more local interviews at the cell level, starting in Nibuye cell in Kicukiro district and speaking with DASSO representatives, Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and cell-level administrators. The approach was top-down in the sense that almost all new contacts were introduced to me by their senior officers in the police. This guaranteed that conversations took place, but in some cases officers may have told me what they assumed their superiors wanted me to hear. There is only so much that can be done to safeguard against data being tainted in this way. This problem is discussed in greater detail below.

At sector police posts, I spoke with judicial officers at a range of different ranks (from constable to assistant superintendent). Questions varied, but the overall purpose was to discover the specifics of their daily routines, as well as to find out their perspectives on the causes of and solutions to crime at the neighbourhood level. I also asked for accounts of the most recent and the most notable criminal incidents that officers had encountered in their duties.

Simultaneously, I began to organise less formal interactions with CPC members, house guards, heads of *imidugudu* and *abanyerondo* night patrol men in Nyarugenge district, Kigali. These discussions took place in Swahili. They formed a separate branch of my research, distinct from formal interviews, and allowed for the double-checking of information. Some of the most productive encounters took place while

accompanying night patrolmen in their work. This less formal side of my research focused on three main categories of sites: residential *imidugudu* (14), bus-stations (4) (with their market stalls and small shops) and university campuses (3). Dividing research sites in this manner allowed for easier comparison of policing in different districts, especially once I extended my research to the border towns of Kamembe and Gisenyi.

## 2.2 Constraints and Limitations

### Researcher Position and Official Narratives in Rwanda

My presence quite often gave rise to visible consternation on the part of interviewees (particularly in formal encounters). On the one hand, I carried permissions from the RNP headquarters in Kigali, one of the top links in Rwanda's state security sector. On the other, I was an outsider asking questions about internal security, something that elicits a closed response from police forces in almost any context (see Skolnik, 2002; Reiner & Newburn, 2000), but perhaps especially in Rwanda where the suspicion of outsiders is entrenched in the culture (see Gourevitch, 2009; Purdeková 2011).<sup>21</sup>

This tension was felt most strongly at the beginning of formal interviews, often during the somewhat performative readings of my references.<sup>22</sup> I was aware that an interviewee's evasiveness or openness (in essence the value of the encounter) hangs on first impressions, tone and the adherence or breach of the interviewee's initial expectations of the foreign researcher. I doubt that dealing with these situations can be taught, and it is difficult to isolate and describe formal strategies. The quality of data I obtained through these interactions undoubtedly improved with time and

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<sup>21</sup> Foreign accounts that describe a culture as being open or closed (suspicious or welcoming) should be treated with scepticism. Nevertheless, certain factors suggest that foreigners face a heightened difficulty when attempting to integrate into Rwandan society. In the event of the early termination of their twenty-seven-month service, the accounts of American Peace Corps volunteers (a programme that encourages societal integration into rural communities), are revealing in this regard. In 2012, Rwanda had the highest early termination rate of all Peace Corps placements internationally (across sixty-three countries), despite the relative comforts of the Rwandan context compared to elsewhere that the organisation operates. Volunteers' accounts point to the lingering trauma of genocide survivors and the complexity of the Kinyarwanda language as barriers to their societal integration, to the point that it made their stay unproductive or unmanageable. ([http://files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/policies/Peace\\_Corps\\_FY\\_2012\\_Early\\_Termination\\_Report\\_CONGRESS.pdf](http://files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/policies/Peace_Corps_FY_2012_Early_Termination_Report_CONGRESS.pdf), accessed 12 February 2016).

<sup>22</sup> On most occasions I doubt that much more than the organisational insignia and signatures were taken in, especially when interviewees spoke no English – but the process could last several long minutes. Only later did I learn that stalling when examining documents is a deliberate police strategy, intended to gauge the reactions of suspicious persons and assert the status of the officer doing the examining (Informal Discussion, RNP Assistant Superintendent, Kigali, 10 December 2014).

practice. Effective mannerisms, turns of phrase and the use of deference and authority are all context specific and to a large degree learnt through experience.

The pervasiveness of official government narratives in Rwanda was a more persistent challenge. Distinguishing whether someone is providing genuine personal responses or toeing the government line is at times impossible, especially on themes as sensitive as street crime and personal security. As Ingelaere (2010a:53) observes “the Rwandan system of communication was (and is) esoteric: statements reveal and conceal at the same time”. My own encounters supported this, and a relatively high proportion of interview data was of limited value. Often what I was told conformed too closely to official narratives to be taken at face value. In contrast, individuals giving voice to strong counter-narratives sounded more genuine, but what they say was generally unverifiable and might have concealed a hidden agenda. Nonetheless, it is possible to garner credible accounts of policing in Rwanda. Given sufficient time and allowing for some careful filtering, the role of the researcher is to be as responsible as possible in identifying them. This is not an exact science, and the challenges serve as further justification for balancing a broad range of interviews with less formal interactions and an extended period of observation.

Due to the nature of certain topics covered, a significant proportion of respondents declined to be named or recorded. The shifting political landscape has made me hesitant to publish names even where consent to do so was acquired two years ago. I recognise how credibility can suffer from a heavy reliance on anonymous interview material. Nevertheless, since the bulk of informants were those who engaged directly in the everyday maintenance of public order and not high-profile spokespersons, I am not sure what their names would contribute other than a small degree of unwanted exposure. Any contested or seemingly anecdotal evidence was triangulated to the best of my ability, or else discarded.

On occasion, research participants were explicit about their own ethnicity, that of other members of the community or that of state representatives. Discussions with friends and with research assistants occasionally turned to the issue of ethnicity, offering a number of revealing insights into the subject. However, due to the sensitivities associated with Hutu and Tutsi labels in Rwanda and the restrictions associated with my research clearance, I was disinclined to attempt a systematic analysis into these dynamics.

## Events

Throughout my fieldwork I was conscious of the fragile relationship between the Rwandan government, which had provided my research clearance, and the international donor community that, to many Rwandans, my presence represented. On occasion, field research was threatened by events beyond my control, particularly where this relationship became strained.

Perhaps the most significant setback stemmed from the 2012-2013 M23 crisis in DRC, which came close to derailing the project entirely. The 2012 Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo (UN, 2012) accused the Rwandan government of complicity in the rebel violence, seriously exacerbating tensions with international donors. I distanced my research as much as possible from any mention of the conflict, partly due to the sensitivity of the issue, partly because the crisis centred on one of my core research sites (Goma/Gisenyi) and the allegations against the Rwandan state involved the cross-border flows of arms and military personnel, subjects that appeared superficially close to my research topic on crime and violence in the borderland.

The rebellion raised security concerns throughout Rwanda's western borderlands, complicating research ethics and creating practical difficulties, not least heightened insurance costs. Not long after my arrival, mortar fire crossed the border at the *petite*

*barrière*<sup>23</sup> in Gisenyi, leading the Rwandan government to temporarily evict international staff from the border town and to station troops there. The defeat of M23 in November 2013 went some way towards stabilising the security situation, although the site has remained politically sensitive since.

In July 2013, Transparency Rwanda employee Gustave Makonene was killed in Gisenyi while investigating police corruption, and two RNP officers were later convicted of his murder. At the time, the incident provoked a hostile reaction from the donor community in Kigali and a lengthy critical report from Human Rights Watch that insinuated there had been a government conspiracy (HRW, 2014c). Rwandan officials, in turn, were frustrated by what they considered to be external interference in their own investigations, pointing to their established track record on combatting corruption.<sup>24</sup> The case shone an international spotlight on the border town that gave rise to further critical accounts regarding disappearances in April 2014 (HRW, 2014b). Although I was able to distance my fieldwork from these kinds of investigations, there can be no doubt that they set back my research, especially in terms of gaining trust with the RNP.

Even away from the border town, my research was punctuated by warmer and cooler periods in the relationship between the government of Rwanda and international observers. Notable controversies during my stay included allegations surrounding the assassination of former Rwandan intelligence chief Patrick Karegeya<sup>25</sup> in January 2014, a series of high-profile political arrests<sup>26</sup> in Kigali in August 2014, allegations

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<sup>23</sup> The main pedestrian crossing between Goma and Gisenyi.

<sup>24</sup> Interview, Senior Police Officer, Kigali, 22 February 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Reuters (2014), 'Exiled Rwandan ex-spy boss murdered in South Africa', <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-rwanda-safrica-murder-idUKBREA010E120140102>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>26</sup> The East African (2014), 'Former RDF boss Rusagara arrested over link to exiled opposition', <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/Rwanda/News/Former-RDF-boss-Rusagara-arrested-over-link-to-exiled-opposition/-/1433218/2425662/-/abendaz/-/index.html>, accessed 15 February 2016.

surrounding the discovery of executed bodies in Lake Rweru<sup>27</sup> in August 2014, the police killing of President Kagame's former physician Dr Emmanuel Gasakure<sup>28</sup> in February 2015, the arrest and subsequent release of Rwandan intelligence chief Lt General Karezi Kareke<sup>29</sup> in London in June 2015, allegations surrounding Rwandan military support for Burundian Tutsi refugees in Mahama Refugee Camp<sup>30</sup> in December 2015 and preparations for a constitutional amendment<sup>31</sup> to allow for the extension of President Kagame's term in office, a source of lingering tension throughout my fieldwork which came to a head with a popular consultation on the matter in December 2015. The Rwandan political environment is extremely dynamic, and researchers conducting prolonged periods of fieldwork must be prepared to weather the diplomatic storms caused by events such as these.

The broadcast of the controversial BBC documentary 'Rwanda: The Untold Story' (BBC, 2014) was one example from a range of publications and media releases that noticeably impacted my relationships with research subjects. The negative reaction was not confined to elite circles. In one rural *umudugudu* on the outskirts of Kigali, a local *umunurondo* patrolman (who spoke no English and had no way of accessing the documentary) asked me with a great deal of suspicion whether I was "with the BBC".<sup>32</sup> In the weeks after the original broadcast I made a habit of breaking the ice in conversations by stating that I was not.

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<sup>27</sup> Reuters (2014), 'Burundi says 40 corpses found in Lake Rweru are Rwandans', <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-burundi-bodies-rwanda-idUSKCN0I31XB20141014>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>28</sup> The East African (2015), 'Rwanda probing shooting of former president's doctor by policemen', <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Rwanda-probing-shooting-of-former-president-s-doctor/-/2558/2636848/-/item/0/-/b6l8cv/-/index.html>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>29</sup> Reuters (2015), 'Rwanda calls arrest by UK of spy chief an outrage', <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-rwanda-britain-arrest-idUKKBNOP22D320150623>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Reuters (2016), 'Burundi rebels say trained by Rwandan military', <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-burundi-rwanda-un-exclusive-idUKKCN0VD04>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Reuters (2015), 'Rwandans vote on constitution changes to let Kagame extend rule', <http://uk.reuters.com/news/picture/rwandans-vote-on-constitution-changes-to?articleId=UKKBN0U10KE20151218>, accessed 15 February 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Informal Discussion, Elderly Patrolman, Kigali, 30 November 2014.

## 2.3 Ethical Considerations

All interviews were conducted with transparency, with informed consent and with appropriate steps being taken to avoid putting participants at risk. A large body of work on political processes in Africa (including Rwanda) have successfully adhered to a similar methodological schema, many of them offering practical advice (see Vaughan et al., 2013; Doevenspeck 2011). Broadly speaking, this project did not raise ethical concerns beyond those of established qualitative research practice. Nevertheless, certain peculiarities of the Rwandan case are worth outlining in more detail.

Much has been written criticising the Rwandan government's monitoring of foreign researchers (see Purdeková, 2011; Begley 2013; Leegwater, 2015:55; Sommers, 2012:22). I cannot speak directly to these experiences other than to contribute my own. I was not intimidated, nor to my knowledge followed or monitored in my private life, by agents of the Rwandan state.<sup>33</sup> There can be no way of knowing what went on behind the scenes, but only on very rare occasions was I given the impression that interviewees had been briefed in advance of my arrival (twice, officers brought with them pre-prepared notes on community policing), and only once, during the early phases of research, did a research assistant comment that he suspected an interview had been monitored by other elements of the security apparatus (*maneco*, or spies, discussed in more detail in Chapter Five).<sup>34</sup>

Mechanisms of surveillance feature in the empirical content of this thesis, and I will reserve their description for subsequent chapters. Strictly with respect to methods,

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<sup>33</sup> Other than being subjected to the kinds of intra-community monitoring discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

<sup>34</sup> At one sector police post in Kigali, a man in plain clothes had stood in the doorway of the office in which I was holding interviews. Sector police had showed deference to him, and my research assistant later commented "If you thought that we are three [in the interview], be sure that we were four". The incident was not repeated, although I would often ask the opinion of research assistants as to whether we were being observed.

it has never been clear to me how to distinguish, with assurance, organised political monitoring in contexts such as Rwanda from a general curiosity about *wazungu* (white foreigners) acting strangely, especially when examples of surveillance come down to cases of “heads snapping sideways at adjacent restaurant tables” (Sommers, 2012:51).<sup>35</sup> If information about my research was secretly passed on to government authorities I was never made aware of the fact, nor was I subject to any repercussions that could be traced to it.

Reading the accounts of other researchers, I was conscious that interviewees and research assistants I worked with could be endangered by my actions (see Begley, 2010; Leegwater, 2015; Sundaram, 2016). I made sure to consult research assistants regarding what they felt comfortable with, and was able to speak candidly with them. Among friends in the community, I enquired whether officials had followed up on my interviews or interrogated interviewees. I was told they had not.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless I took what I considered to be appropriate precautions. In written records, I anonymised my interviewees and coded my data where I considered that it might compromise the informant, while at the same time being upfront with the authorities as to what and where I was researching.

## 2.4 Summary

What follows offers a close-up image of public order in Rwandan cities during my stay there. Information was gathered with care, but is nonetheless limited in its scope. Accounts of local security may be biased by the prejudices of particular respondents, and are subject to constant re-evaluation due to the dynamism of the regulatory environment. Despite these limitations, however, the interactions and negotiations

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<sup>35</sup> Sommers is in fact making a similar point about the effects on a researcher of working in an environment where rumours of surveillance are so commonly circulated.

<sup>36</sup> Again, there can be no way of knowing for sure. Nevertheless, I suspect that if state representatives were pursuing and questioning my contacts, the broader community would have known and I would at some point have been made aware, particularly in Gisenyi and in cells of Kigali where I was relatively well-integrated into the social life of the *umudugudu*.

identified in local narratives do engage directly with ongoing debates regarding public order in Rwanda. They speak in particular to themes of state reach, physical coercion and personal security.

My approach brings with it certain notable benefits. Perhaps most substantially, it allowed for a spectrum of opinions from both state and non-state actors regarding police practice in Rwanda. This was my goal from the beginning, since as a student of Rwandan politics it has been frustrating to consistently encounter research that privileged either elite accounts in Kigali or else marginal, anonymous and highly critical voices. My intention was to fill the gap between them, and much of the interview data deployed in subsequent chapters is deliberately selected as that which I could triangulate between the statements of police officers and the accounts of residents in communities that they police.

## CHAPTER THREE – RWANDAN POLICING IN ITS POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### 3.1 Introduction

It has become clichéd to point out Rwanda's contradictions. That a country whose recent history has been blighted by one of humanity's worst incidents of mass killing exhibits some of the lowest incidence of violent crime and strongest rates of economic growth internationally. That while effective institutions are being built from the ground up, their durability is threatened by a top-heavy executive, headed by the controversial figure of President Paul Kagame. That the same government rolling out effective and original policies for combatting petty corruption, enforcing environmental protection, and providing universal health insurance is also repressing certain basic liberties of its citizens. And that many of those citizens appear simultaneously proud and deeply frightened of it.<sup>37</sup>

These contradictions have polarised opinions about Rwandan politics. Critics of the government find confirmation in the President's efforts to prolong his term in office beyond constitutional limits, in unfavourable annual reports from international agencies such as Human Rights Watch (HRW), and in the political intrigue surrounding high profile arrests in the country's elite circles (see Lemarchand, 2009; Reyntjens, 2004; HRW, 2013; 2014a; 2014b; 2014c; Amnesty International, 2015). They accuse the governing political party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), of creating an unstable social and political environment; a pressure cooker of everyday injustice that will eventually explode into renewed conflict (Reyntjens, 2013; Thomson, 2013). Behind these criticisms lie allegations about the RPF's military conduct during the

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<sup>37</sup> These themes are discussed in more detail at the beginning of Chapter Three, on Rwanda's political context.

Rwandan Genocide in 1994 and the two Congo Wars that followed it (Lemarchand, 2009; Stearns 2011; Prunier, 2008).

Those who view the government more favourably cite impressive quantitative indicators of economic growth, progressive achievements in developmental policies and women's rights, and more general features such as cleanliness and public order (World Bank, 2014; World Economic Forum, 2014). Often they make reference to the high level of public order in the country, and how Rwanda stands out in a region associated with uncontrolled urban street crime.<sup>38</sup> The government is on track to meet many of the ambitious targets laid down in its national development agenda, 'Vision 2020', and its second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, 'EDPRS 2', a remarkable achievement against substantial odds (Republic of Rwanda, 2000; 2013).

Speculations and misconceptions are rife in both camps, and it seems likely that only in the light of future developments will we be able to fully assess the RPF's approach to governance. In the short term, there is an urgent need for more evidence-based analysis of the day-to-day functioning of the Rwandan state. The country is undergoing extremely rapid social and demographic change. Without sustained research, discussions of its political arrangements risk descending into an exchange of biases that fail to align with the complex realities on the ground.

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<sup>38</sup> The 'two faces' of Rwanda have been a staple of op-ed reports in western news outlets. For recent examples see: The Economist (2016) 'A Hilly Dilemma: Should Paul Kagame be backed providing stability and prosperity or condemned', <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21694551-should-paul-kagame-be-backed-providing-stability-and-prosperity-or-condemned>, accessed 10 April, 2016. The New York Times (2014) 'Rwanda's unfinished miracle', <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/31/opinion/murithi-mutiga-rwandas-unfinished-miracle>, accessed 10 April 2016. The Washington Post (2016) 'Is Rwanda's authoritarian state sustainable?', <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/06/03/is-rwandas-authoritarian-state-sustainable/>, accessed 15 July, 2016.

This chapter focuses on the divisive issue of state reach in Rwanda, and on how the governing elite in Kigali interacts with the broad base of the population. It is intended to highlight an anomaly: while many of the central themes in discussions of Rwandan governance – political space, popular agency, government legitimacy, ethnic subjugation and the centralisation of political power – all turn on the theme of authoritarianism, there is a lack of systematic research into mechanisms of physical coercion.

Strangely, academic researchers have not shown much interest in the how the country is policed. This may be partly due to the way Rwandan agencies of internal security have resisted being observed (see Chapter Two). The government is torn between the pressure to safeguard international budgetary support by demonstrating good governance, and to preside over a population with historical divisions that pose an existential threat to the governing elite. As a result, it has been particularly intolerant of public criticism on issues relating to security. In spite of this, empirical and conjectural data on Rwandan policing are readily available. At times raw and unintegrated, this material nevertheless provides the basis for a more systematic treatment than has been attempted to date.<sup>39</sup>

This chapter progresses through three main sections. The first provides a brief overview of academic debates on Rwandan politics and introduces elements of the political context that are essential to the analysis in subsequent chapters. The second section turns specifically to policing, and traces changes and continuities in the historical development of both Rwanda's national police forces, and of non-state policing groups in the country. This information provides a context for the empirical materials in Chapters Four and Five. It also offers historical support for the argument that the bulk of crime prevention in Rwanda occurs in small communities, and that these communities are organised and policed differently in the country's north-western borderlands. The final section analyses crime statistics from the period

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<sup>39</sup> Frankel (1980) makes a similar case in observing the absence of systematic research into the South African police while political debates raged about the practices of apartheid.

immediately before this research was conducted. These show the prevalence of crime to be both extremely low throughout the country, and relatively consistent among districts outside of Kigali, including the country's borderlands.

The following sections are complemented by materials in Appendix 1, which provides institutional details about the RNP, its structure, responsibilities under Rwandan law and a breakdown of officer numbers by rank.

### Historical Timeline of the Rwandan State

The timeline below lists key events in the historical development of the Rwandan state. They have been selected to give some chronology to specific events discussed throughout the course of this thesis.<sup>40</sup>

**1600 The Nyiginya Kingdom** This period marks the beginning of the Nyiginya dynasty of Tutsi kings in Rwanda.<sup>41</sup>

The Rwandan kingdom is consolidated under King Kigeri Ndori and mandatory military service is enforced.

**1800** The Rwandan Kingdom expands under King Kigeri Rwabugiri, making use of its efficient military hierarchy built around *Itorero*, the military regiment.

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<sup>40</sup> Not to offer a comprehensive history of the country. The scale of violence perpetrated across the Great Lakes Region at the end of the twentieth century continues to evoke personal grievances among commentators. The result is that almost every line of Rwanda's history has been contested. While it is worth being sensitive to divided opinions, some historical context needs to be established in order to discuss how the country is policed. Information in this section is drawn from what are widely regarded as the more mainstream academic accounts: Prunier (1995), Lemarchand (2009), Gourevitch (1996), Mamdani (2001), and for material from the colonial and pre-colonial periods, Chrétien (2000), Vansina (2005) Newbury (1995) and Rusagara (2009).

<sup>41</sup> Oral accounts suggest that the period of centralised political authority in the Rwandan region may date back even further, as far as the fourteenth century.

<b>1884/5 Colonisation</b>	Rwandan territory is made a German protectorate and is later designated part of German East Africa.
<b>1916</b>	Belgian forces drive German administrators out of Ruanda-Urundi (now Rwanda and Burundi) during the First World War. Belgian officials take over the colonial administration, deploying the <i>Force Publique</i> as its primary enforcement arm.
<b>1923</b>	Official Belgian colonial rule is instituted by League of Nations mandate. This period sees the formal entrenchment of pre-existing Hutu, Tutsi and Twa ethnic identities through the issuing of state identity cards.
<b>1946</b>	Rwanda-Urundi becomes a UN trustee state under Belgian administration.
<b>1957</b>	PARMEHUTU, an opposition political party representing the country's Hutu majority, is established by Grégoire Kayibanda.
<b>1959</b>	A Hutu rebellion forces up to 150,000 Tutsi to flee the county, creating a large Rwandan diaspora in neighbouring states, particularly Uganda.
<b>1961</b>	The Rwandan monarchy is abolished.
<b>1962 The First Republic</b>	Rwanda and Burundi become independent.

- 1963** Tutsi refugees from Burundi (the “*Inyenzi*”) launch guerrilla attacks against Rwanda, sparking a violent anti-Tutsi backlash that kills up to 20,000.
- 1972** The Tutsi-led government of Burundi is complicit in the massacre of an estimated 100,000 Burundian Hutu.
- 1973 The Second Republic** Rwandan President Gregoire Kayibanda is overthrown by the Army Chief of Staff Juvenal Habyarimana. Tutsi are purged from senior government positions and universities in Rwanda, creating a second diaspora, with many Tutsi resettling in Europe.
- 1986** President Milton Obote is overthrown in Uganda and replaced by Yoweri Museveni with the help of the Rwandan Tutsi diaspora in the country.
- 1990** Rwandan Tutsi break from the Ugandan Defence Forces and form the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF launches an invasion of Rwanda. Paul Kagame takes over the RPF leadership following the death of his predecessor, Fred Rwigwema.
- 1991** The RPF reaches the outskirts of Kigali, but is unable to capture the city. Peace negotiations are launched in Arusha between the government of Rwanda and the RPF.
- 1993** The newly elected Hutu President Ndadye of Burundi is assassinated, sparking civil war in that country.

The Burundian Tutsi population is targeted in a series of mass killings that provoke a violent backlash from the Tutsi military against the Hutu population. Estimated death tolls range into the hundreds of thousands.

### **1994 – Genocide against the Tutsi<sup>42</sup>**

Rwandan President Habyarimana and Burundian President Ntaryamira are assassinated on returning from signing the Arusha Accords.

The genocide begins on 6 April and lasts for three months from April to August.

The Hutu youth militia *Interahamwe* and the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR) kill over 800,000 people, beginning in Kigali and spreading across the whole of Rwanda. They target in particular ethnic Tutsi, although many Hutu and Twa are killed in the massacres.

The RPF and the FAR return to the conflict, and after three months of fighting the RPF successfully captures Kigali on 4 July.

French forces declare a demilitarised zone across the South of Rwanda which lasts from 22 June to 22 August. Over two million predominantly ethnic Hutu flee Rwanda fearing reprisal attacks by the RPF, many across the Zairian border.

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<sup>42</sup> The official name given to the 100 days of massacres across Rwanda that principally targeted ethnic Tutsi populations from April to August 1994 by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), henceforth 'the Rwandan genocide' or 'the 1994 genocide'.

The RPF establishes a new government, with Pasteur Bizimungu (a Hutu politician from Gisenyi) as President and Paul Kagame as Vice-President.

**1995**

Eastern Zaire is increasingly destabilised by large Rwandan refugee populations.

Rwandan Ex-FAR officers leading *Interahamwe* militiamen begin to launch attacks back into Rwandan territory from militarised camps around Bukavu and Goma.

**1996**

Congolese rebel militias backed by Rwandan forces attack Goma and break up its three refugee camps Mugunga, Kibumba, and Katale.

Over one million Rwandan refugees, predominantly Hutu, return to Rwanda.

### **1997 – The North-Western Insurgency and The First Congo War**

After months of infiltration and periodic attacks, Ex-FAR officers and remnants of the *Interahamwe* militia launch an insurgency in the North-West of Rwanda.

RPF counter-insurgency is effective, and the rebels are quickly suppressed and forced back into Zaire.

Government policies of villagisation and the promotion of local self-defence groups are first trialled in Gisenyi prefecture as part of the counter-insurgency efforts.

Rwandan troops support the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la liberation du Congo-Zaire* (AFDL) militia in Zaire and topple President Mobutu's government. This sparks the First Congo War.

Zaire is renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the AFDL leader Laurent Kabila is made President.

### **1998 – The Second Congo War**

Hostilities develop between Congolese President Kabila and the RPF concerning the lingering security threats posed to Rwanda by elements of the previous Habyarimana regime at large in DRC's Kivu Provinces. Rwanda begins openly sponsoring the anti-government *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) rebels in DRC, who take control of the city of Goma. This triggers the Second Congo War, 1998-2002.

### **2000 – The Kagame Administration**

President Bizimungu resigns and is replaced by the Vice-President and ex-RPF military commander Paul Kagame.

Remnants of the FAR and the *Interahamwe* consolidate into the *Forces Démocratique de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR).

The Rwanda National Police (RNP) is established.

**2001** Congolese President Laurent Kabila is assassinated and replaced in office by his son, Joseph Kabila.

**2002** A peace deal is signed between Presidents Kabila and Kagame, temporarily stabilising relations between the DRC and Rwanda.

- 2003** Kagame is elected President and the RPF party wins a landslide majority (40 of 53) in the country's first multiparty parliamentary elections.
- 2005** The Gacaca process begins. Between 2005 and 2012 local courts mediate on almost two million genocide cases.
- 2006** Cycles of violence persist in the border region between Rwanda and the DRC.
- 2008** The FDLR clashes with remnants of the RCD under the new name *Congrès National pour la Défense du People* (CNDP).  
The RPF coalition wins a second landslide majority (42 of 53 seats) in multi-party parliamentary elections.
- 2009** The Rwandan government is accused of supporting the CNDP as a military proxy to fight the FDLR.  
A peace deal is reached in early 2009 and the CNDP leader Laurent Nkunda is arrested in Rwanda.
- 2010** President Kagame wins a second term in office.
- 2012** The Gacaca process of genocide tribunals ends.  
Remnants of the CNDP form a new militia, M23, and the Rwandan government is accused of providing it with financial and military support.  
M23 achieves early military success against the Congolese army, temporarily capturing the city of Goma.

**2013**

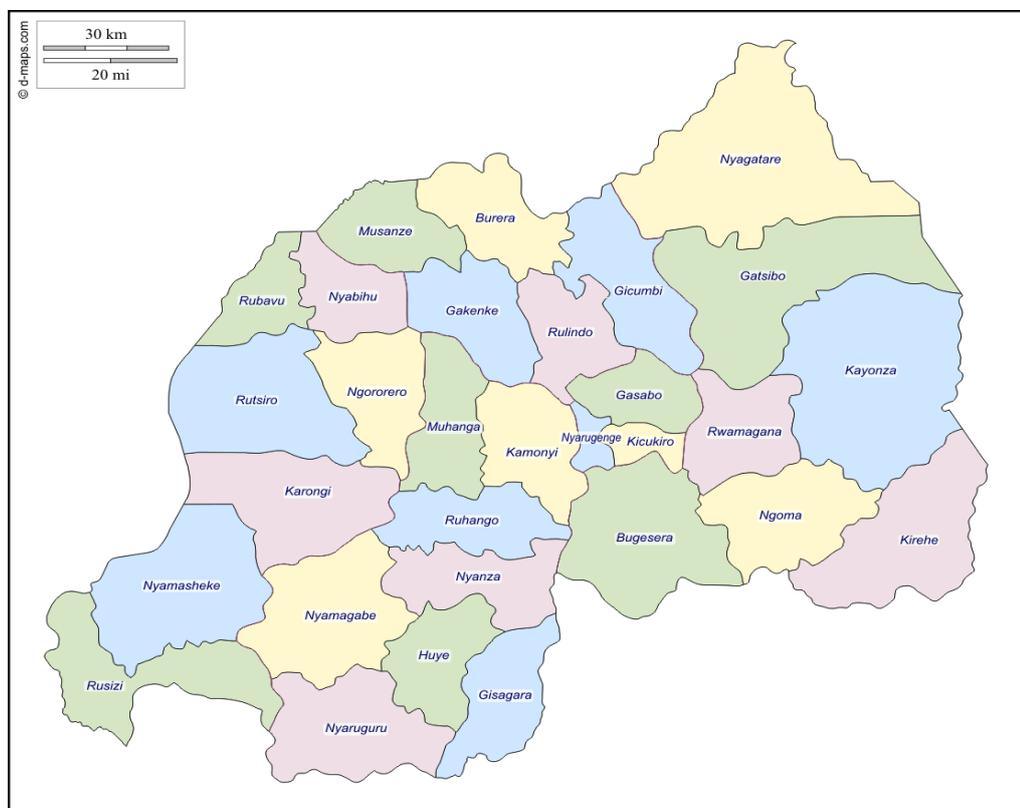
International sanctions are imposed on the RPF for its alleged role in supporting Congolese rebels.

The RPF coalition wins a third landslide majority (41 of 53 seats) in multi-party parliamentary elections.

The rebel group M23 is defeated militarily in late 2013.

## Rwanda Districts Map

Map 1. Rwanda Districts Map



Source: D-Maps (2016)

## A Contested Field of Study

The manner of Rwanda's transition from destitution in 1994 to a poster child of African development twenty years later has been fiercely contested. RPF policies on land redistribution, internal and external security, transitional justice, rural poverty, inter-ethnic reconciliation, and media control have all been flashpoints in debates about the intentions and alleged abuses of the country's political elite (Booth & Golooba-Mutebi, 2012; Clark, 2010; Ingelaere, 2010a; Reyntjens, 2013). Allegations of atrocities committed during the 1996-2003 Congo Wars continue to be levelled against the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF), making for a tense context in which to discuss the RPF's political governance.<sup>43</sup> These tensions are intensified by the fact that much recent analysis of Rwanda as a country has become inseparable from judgements about the personal character of its sitting president, who has divided the opinion of external observers in academic and diplomatic circles.<sup>44</sup> Outside Rwanda, a significant proportion of the discussion boils down to narratives that are broadly for or against the figure of Paul Kagame.

The polarisation of opinion and the fixation on the president have given rise to significant thematic gaps in our understanding of the Rwandan state. In particular, scant research has been conducted into the practical mechanisms through which the RPF governs a country that exhibits many features normally associated with instability and popular dissent.<sup>45</sup> The sections below identify some of the more prominent academic contributions to debates about the country's governance. They focus in particular on how the policies established by the Rwandan elite are enacted at the local level. These discussions provide a broader political context to the analysis

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<sup>43</sup> For a detailed summary of the cycles of Rwandan intervention in DRC, see African Arguments (2012) 'Rwanda in Congo, sixteen years of intervention', <http://africanarguments.org/2012/07/09/rwanda-in-congo-sixteen-years-of-intervention-by-william-macpherson/>, accessed 15 January 2016.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, New York Times (2013) 'The global elite's favorite strongman', <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/08/magazine/paul-kagame-rwanda.html>, accessed 16 July 2016; Foreign Affairs (2014) 'Rebooting Rwanda', <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/interviews/2014-04-01/rebooting-rwanda>, accessed 12 June 2016.

<sup>45</sup> These include land shortages, violent instability in neighbouring states, ethnic divisions, minority rule, a history of repressive colonial governance and the legacy of mass intra-communal violence.

of policing in subsequent chapters. They also reveal how far academic debates on Rwandan governance have progressed with almost no explicit mention of the country's policing apparatus.

#### National Statistics

Statistical data on Rwanda's economy and demography set it apart from other African states. The country represents the fourth smallest and the single most densely populated territory on the continent. Although it is ranked the world's eighteenth poorest country according to GDP per capita, its GDP growth rate has held consistently in the top twenty internationally since 2000 (World Bank, 2014). Per capita flows of international aid to the country are extremely high. Table 1 provides demographic and economic details for the period of research.

Table 1. Rwanda Country Information, 2014.

Demographic and Economic Details <sup>46</sup>	
Population	11,241,500
Landmass	26,340 km <sup>2</sup>
Population density	459.7 per km <sup>2</sup>
Population growth	2.35 per cent per year
Population rural	8,183,900 (72.8 per cent)
Population urban	3,157,600 (27.2 per cent)
Population Kigali (capital)	1,257,000
GDP	\$7.8902 billion USD
GDP growth	6.96 per cent
GDP/capita	\$695.69 USD
Poverty gap at national poverty line <sup>47</sup> (World Bank, 2010)	14.8 per cent
Aid flows	1.034 billion USD per year
Life expectancy	63.97 years
Labor force	5.6591 million (53.95 per cent)
Armed forces personnel	35,000 (ratio 1:321)
Police personnel (RNP, 2013)	10,562 (ratio 1:1064)

<sup>46</sup> From the World Bank (2014) databases, unless stated otherwise.

<sup>47</sup> The poverty gap index shows average depth of poverty below the national poverty line.

### 3.2 Politics in Rwanda – Between Elite Policy and Local Agency

It is difficult to imagine a grimmer starting point for a fledgling government than that which faced the RPF in late 1994 (see Lemarchand, 1995; Gourevitch, 1996). Roughly ten per cent of the country's population had been killed between April and August. Another twenty per cent had fled, seeking protection in the overcrowded refugee camps of neighbouring countries (Uvin, 2001). Communication and transport infrastructure across Rwanda were heavily damaged, and the seasonal food crop that should have been harvested during the April rains was mostly unsalvageable, sparking a risk of famine. In Kigali, the government ministries and financial institutions that survived the siege of the city had been looted of everything down to their lightbulbs and copper wiring (Gourevitch, 1996).

Having occupied Rwanda, the RPF set up local cadres as a means of re-establishing political control. The process was not without violence, as pockets of resistance emerged in the north-west region, which had been the stronghold of the departing Habyarimana government.<sup>48</sup> The rebels-turned-government made a heavy use of force in asserting their control. Suspected anti-RPF forces, as well as Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA)<sup>49</sup> troops caught enacting revenge killings against the Hutu population were publicly executed (Binet, 2004). A high degree of centralised control was quickly established, and has been maintained by the RPF since.

Whereas the discussions of other African states tend to focus on their weakness (see Zartman, 1995; Allen, 1995; Cheeseman, 2015), the strength of the Rwandan government raises a different set of questions. Writing on state reach in Rwanda,

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<sup>48</sup> The southern prefecture around Butare also saw a degree of anti-government resistance, after French forces handed over control of zones that they had declared demilitarised during their peacekeeping intervention in August 1994. This prompted government backlashes, most notoriously at the Kibeho camp for internally displaced persons, south-west of Butare. Elements in the camp resisted the RPF takeover, resulting in a massacre by government forces in January 1995 (Binet, 2004). Unrest in the south has not been as persistent as in the northern borderland regions of the country, however.

<sup>49</sup> The Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) was separated from the political branch of the RPF following the capture of Kigali. It was renamed the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF) in 2002.

Purdeková asks: “What are the different apparatuses through which the central power reaches people [in Rwanda] and how thick are they?” (2011:476). Responding to the same issue, scholars critical of the current government have suggested that the RPF’s approach remains crudely repressive and militaristic. Reyntjens, for example, writes:

*Political and social spaces were closed off, and political competition was non-existent or manipulated; massacres, disappearances and intimidation forced Rwandans into submission or silence, and those bold enough to express dissident opinions were very rare.*

Reyntjens (2013:121)

Similar analysis can be found in the work of Rafti (2008), who speaks of a destabilising ‘armed peace’ in Rwanda, and Thomson (2011; 2013), who suggests that a high degree of popular unrest simmers beneath the appearance of widespread support for the government, and that many communities consider the RPF’s programmes of national unity to be unjust. Both Thomson (2013) and Reyntjens (2013) argue that Rwanda’s current political arrangements constitute a form of structural violence (from Galtung, 1969), a system that represses the peasant Hutu population and “will eventually lead to political instability and new conflict” (Reyntjens, 2013:13).

Few observers would dispute that democratic political governance in Rwanda is subordinate to security issues (see Hayman, 2009). Nevertheless, more recent commentators have moderated the tone of critique. Rather than highlighting the repressive side of the regime, they have focused attention on the more technical side of governance, in particular the degree to which the RPF has consolidated itself as a political institution despite its internal divisions. Key issues they raise concern (1) the contrast between the centralisation of political control in Kigali and the decentralised state administrative apparatus (Straus & Waldorf, 2011; Chemouni, 2014; Ansoms, 2009) (2) the RPF’s tight control over political space, and over the construction and discussion of political and ethnic identities (Beswick, 2010; Hintjens, 2008) and (3)

the RPF's ability to draw in large flows of official development assistance that are attached to relatively few political conditions (Curtis, 2015; Hayman, 2008).

### State Administrative Hierarchy

The RPF (in coalition with several smaller parties) controls a dominating majority of close to eighty per cent of seats in the Rwandan House of Deputies. It has won by a similar margin in three consecutive elections (2003, 2008 and 2013), and has projected its power through a tiered system of local government. The territory has been subdivided as follows:

Table 2. Administrative Decentralisation in Rwanda, 2006.

Administrative Unit <sup>50</sup>	Kinyarwanda	Number in Rwanda
Province	<i>intara</i> , pl. <i>intara</i>	5
District	<i>akarere</i> , pl. <i>uturere</i>	30
Sector	<i>umurenge</i> , pl. <i>imirenge</i>	416
Cell	<i>akagari</i> , pl. <i>utagari</i>	2,150
Village	<i>umudugudu</i> , pl. <i>imidugudu</i>	14,953

Source: Ministry of Local Government (MINILOC).

The village (*umudugudu*, pl. *imidugudu*) is not specific to rural areas, but refers to clusters of fifty to one hundred and fifty households across the country, including within urban centres. To avoid confusion with rural villages, I use either the Kinyarwanda term, or 'neighbourhoods' from here on.

Rwanda's decentralised administrative structure provides an efficient political apparatus for implementing central government policy. This structure extends down to clusters of between fifty and one hundred and fifty households. Although not an official branch of local government, these clusters elect representatives who are put

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<sup>50</sup> This structure has remained consistent since the decentralisation policy of 2006, although the particular numbers at each tier have been adjusted slightly since. The numbers here are taken from the period 2013-2014.

in contact with higher authorities and made responsible for information gathering and mobilisation at the grass roots level. Just above the *umudugudu*, the cell represents a hub where information is compiled and government edicts are distributed to groupings of between five and ten *imidugugu*. Executive decisions take place at the sector level, which has a greater role in delivering services. Executive secretaries at the sector level are government appointed, rather than elected locally, and tend to have a dominant voice in local politics and administration (Ingelaere, 2014:215).

Above the sector level, district offices form the headquarters of local government. These districts hold a significant degree of financial and legal independence from central government authorities in Kigali, particularly regarding economic development, agriculture, tourism and small enterprise. From the district level down, local government in Rwanda dispenses more than twenty-five per cent of the domestic budget and employs over half of the state's public bureaucrats (Chemouni, 2014). Nevertheless, the central government maintains a substantial role in political affairs at this level. District administration tends to be technocratic, tightly monitored, and depoliticised (Ibid.). Purdeková (2011) labels the arrangement as one of 'decentralised disempowerment', and points to the close parallels between the official administrative structure of Rwanda and the political hierarchy of the RPF. In her words: "decentralisation amounts to a mere dispatching of control making central power more, not less, effective" (Ibid. 2011:475). While decentralisation in Rwanda provides an apparatus for the local implementation of top-down state policy, it also aids the RPF's intelligence gathering. Party cadres form horizontal tiers connected to the vertical administrative 'pole', and are said to engage in constant political surveillance of the general population (Ibid. 487).

At the very top of the administrative hierarchy, the office of the President holds a dominant position. Its word, and that of President Kagame in particular, tends to be

final.<sup>51</sup> Openly dissident voices at the highest level have not been tolerated, and a long list of ranking party members have been jailed or forced into exile for contradicting the party line (Hayman, 2009; Reyntjens, 2013; HRW, 2014a). Despite this executive dominance, divisions have nonetheless emerged both around policy (land rights have been a consistent source of internal tensions) and personality (often in the form of disputes between senior party members and the President) (see Nyamwasa et al. 2010).

There is a danger here of assuming that the RPF's means of imposing internal discipline at the highest level of the party are indicative of more general strategies of control that are applied to the population at large. Political space – the critical, public engagement of non-government actors with government policy – may be tightly managed by the RPF, but the mechanisms by which this is achieved are still poorly understood, particularly where they operate outside the elite circles of the capital city (Beswick, 2010:225). One of these mechanisms can be seen in Rwanda's system of performance contracts (*imihigo*). These include lists of targets that are encouraged by certain *ad lib* awards and enforced through fines, personal salary deductions or the loss of formal employment. *Imihigo* exist at every tier up from individual households to government ministries. These targets constitute a centrally organised attempt, in Ansoms' words "... to transform Rwanda into a target driven society from the highest to the lowest level" (2009:289). Performance contracts have not been without controversy, prompting a number of high-profile cases of false reporting, as well as accusations of state over-reach (Ingelaere, 2014). They have also promoted a high degree of physical mobilisation, as local authorities are incentivised to draw on whatever labour force is available in order to meet their targets. By marshalling the Rwandan peasant population to conduct chores on behalf of the state, they use up

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<sup>51</sup> The President's Office has been prone to micro-management on issues that fall unambiguously into the remit of local administrators. One recent example can be seen in the President's personal intervention to impose a traffic-free zone in central Kigali, see The New Times (2016), 'Car free road extended', <http://ktpress.rw/2016/07/kigali-car-free-zone-extended-to-kbc-more-roads-permanently-closed/> accessed 27 July 2016.

time and energy that might otherwise be put into subsistence farming (Ingelaere, 2014, Purdeková, 2011).

A second mechanism can be seen in *umuganda*, a community cleaning programme that takes place on the final Saturday of each month, officially between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m and is compulsory for Rwandans between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five. Communal work varies in nature, but often includes some element of manual labour, building, repairing local infrastructure or cleaning. The practice is not without controversy, and has been regarded as a drain on the time of many Rwandans living hand to mouth (see Ingelaere, 2010).

Where the RPF has incorporated other sections of society into implementing policy, it has maintained close to absolute control over how those policies are made, enacted and enforced (see Beswick, 2010; Chemouni, 2014; Purdeková, 2011; Ansoms, 2009). Even where new arrangements appear to open up political space and give voice to local actors, in practice they tend to entrench state power. Ansoms (2009) writes in detail on the disconnect between the visions of an urban elite in Kigali who draft national agricultural policy and the peasant farmers on whom the policies are imposed. She points to the inefficiency of an urban, agriculturally illiterate minority managing the activities of some seven million peasant farmers, and highlights the unhelpful view of certain government representatives that rural poverty is the result of “the wrong peasant mentality” (Ansoms, 2009:298). Ingelaere (2010; 2014) finds a similar arrangement with respect to transitional justice under the *Gacaca* system, whereby the government’s language of popular ownership serves as a convenient cover for its effective control of the process.<sup>52</sup> Lending weight to these arguments is the fact that the making of public policy in Rwanda has been characterised by secrecy,

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<sup>52</sup> Although Ingelaere’s claims about the degree of popular agency in Gacaca proceedings have been disputed (see Clark, 2014), there appears nevertheless to be a strong theme emerging in the literature on Rwandan development – where RPF policy encourages local participation, this almost always directly serves the stated aims of the party, which retains the capacity to reassert complete dominance over whatever domain may have been decentralised (see Purdekova, 2011; Chemouni, 2014; Booth & Golooba-Mutebi, 2012).

something that has encouraged distrust and the spreading of rumours about the government's real intentions (Booth & Golooba-Mutebi, 2012:384).

These legitimate concerns aside, analysts determined to expose authoritarian state practices in Rwanda ignore the pockets of agency that exist at the different tiers in the country's hierarchical administrative structures. Criticisms of this nature have a tendency, in Clark's terms, to "state, rather than show, the specific ways in which power is distributed from the centre to the periphery" (2014:208). Ingelaere (2010:273) describes a "dialectic of state reach and over-reach" in Rwanda, in which mechanisms do exist to correct problematic policies, albeit after their implementation. Recent changes to both the *Ndi umunurwanda*, officially a reconciliation policy, but one that has been accused of publicly shaming Hutu communities, and the *Nyakatsi* scheme, a programme to abolish thatched roofing which proved insupportably costly for many Rwandan farmers, can be viewed as examples of the RPF altering its stance in the face of popular resistance (Sommers, 2012; Ingelaere, 2014; Reyntjens, 2013).

Overall, the extension of political control outwards from authorities in Kigali is inevitably a complex affair. Research at different levels of analysis, or over different periods, can produce wholly different explanations for political events and behaviours. Analysts who focus narrowly on revealing aspects of the government's character – negative or positive – and those guided by overtly political or normative agendas, risk obscuring the particular mechanisms through which the RPF operates.

## Overseas Development Assistance

Overseas development assistance has promoted Rwanda's economic recovery, helped consolidate the RPF's rule, and established Kigali as a hub for domestic and international elites (Goodfellow & Smith, 2013:3193). The amount of foreign money flowing into the country has been used by critics to account for developmental successes, which were made possible – they argue – not by efficient government implementation, but simply owing to the financial resources made available to the RPF (Reyntjens, 2004; Lemarchand, 2007). Over forty per cent of the national budget is made up of foreign aid (World Bank, 2014).

There can be little doubt that the country has received markedly more foreign aid owing to the events of 1994 (Uvin, 2001; Reyntjens, 2004; Curtis, 2015). Debates persist about the degree to which the government has manipulated international guilt. Critics argue that the RPF has cynically deployed 'genocide credit' to resist conditions being imposed on aid that would interfere with some of its more authoritarian modes of its governance (see, for example, Reyntjens, 2013).

A struggle continues to play out between donors pressing for influence over the political direction of the RPF on the one hand, and government ministries reliant on budgetary support but resistant to external influence on the other (see Uvin, 2001; Hayman, 2008). The situation is typical of similar negotiations that take place across the developing world, except perhaps that the RPF shows a greater ability than many states to stand its ground and maintains significant control over developmental projects and expenditure (Hayman, 2009).

It is worth noting that over the course of the RPF's leadership, donor programmes have become increasingly guided by the prevailing 'good governance' agenda (Collier & Hoeffler, 2005). In response, part of the government's strategy has been to cultivate an aesthetic of progress, even where the lived experiences of Rwandans may lag behind the statistics (Ingelaere, 2010; Sommers, 2012). Ansoms, for example, refers to 'cosmetic upgrading' and 'imposed modernity', regarding RPF practices

based on improving appearances without addressing the needs of the country's poorest citizens (Ansoms, 2009:304). This is largely a technical question for developmental specialists interested in ensuring that the impacts of any individual project align with the indicators used in monitoring and evaluation. But it has been complicated by the government's active interference in the scientific construction of knowledge about Rwanda, a persistent methodological challenge for researchers working in the country (Ingelaere, 2010:41).

### Ethnic and National Identities

Since 1994, the public portrayal of ethnic identities in Rwanda have been reconstructed into a form less explicitly confrontational between Hutu and Tutsi, while less threatening to the elite Tutsi minority (see Hintjens, 2008). This has involved controversial legislation prohibiting the open discussion of ethnic categories, particularly anything resembling political mobilisation based on them. Critics have labelled the government's approach as one of 'enforced amnesia' (Lemarchand, 1999), which they see as a strategy deployed to disguise the 'tutsification' of senior government offices (Reyntjens, 2013). More positively, these policies have undeniably made a practical contribution to quietening overt discussions of inter-ethnic rivalry in the country, at least for the time being.

At the same time as legislating on ethnic divisionism, the RPF has deployed a range of historical, pre-twentieth century cultural practices as sources of national unity. Policies from *umuganda*, a monthly mandatory community service, to *imihigo* performance contracts and the *gacaca* genocide trials, have been implemented in a manner designed to invoke Rwanda's pre-colonial history.<sup>53</sup> The official government narrative is relatively straightforward: the twentieth century, marred by colonial rule

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<sup>53</sup> The name *umuganda* is taken from a traditional Rwandan practice of mutual support when an individual requires help with a challenging task. *Imihigo* refers to the traditional Rwandan vow of bravery. *Gacaca* is a corruption of the Kinyarwanda word *umucaca*, the name of traditional outdoor gathering places for community meetings. All three names allude to customs drawn from Rwanda's pre-colonial history.

and inter-ethnic conflict, was an aberration. Rwanda's true identity can be found in the eight hundred years of political organisation predating the German and Belgian administrations. New RPF policies are intended as reminders of that common heritage, even where they resemble 'invented traditions' (see Hobbsbawm & Ranger, 1983) that transparently serve the interests of a political elite which is struggling to its assert common ancestry with the broad base of the population. The social impacts of *umuganda* in particular are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

There can be no question that the Rwandan population remains deeply divided. However, the crude categorisation of the Hutu as a repressed majority and the Tutsi as a dominating minority fails to capture the country's more nuanced social cleavages. These include a regional north-south divide, entrenched by the rival historical strongholds of the Kayibanda and Habyarimana administrations, as well as important distinctions within the ethnic Tutsi population: the *Abasope* who remained in Rwanda during the genocide, the *Abasaija* who returned from Uganda, the *Abajepe*, returnees from Burundi and the *Dubai*, Tutsi from DRC, as well as other Tutsi populations returning to Rwanda from Europe and North America.<sup>54</sup> Viewing Rwandan politics exclusively through the lens of Hutu – Tutsi divisions oversimplifies a complex social environment, and raises serious challenges for researchers, since the open discussion of these topics is not permitted in the country.

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<sup>54</sup> Informal Discussion, Research Assistant, Kigali, 18 June 2014.

### 3.3 Policing Rwanda

The following sections revisit Rwanda's political trajectory through the lens of policing, crime, and public order. Police behaviour offers insight into broader patterns of state practice, government ethos, and the quality of political life (Bayley, 1971). Police both reinforce the *idea* of the state in the popular consciousness, and represent the 'nexus point' between the state and the people. Individual police officers are some of the most influential agents of political socialisation. Their demeanour affects popular attitudes not only towards themselves, but also towards the law, the government, and political authority in general (Marenin 1982; Bayley, 1971).

The 1994 genocide has been treated as a blank slate moment in Rwandan history, after which new institutions and practices were built 'from the ground up' or 'out of the ashes' (Gourevitch, 1996; Baker, 2006). Considering the damage done to the country and the near complete removal of the Habyarimana administration, this account has some intuitive value. It has appealed to observers eager to depict subsequent government policies as being unique to the RPF, whether they view them favourably or unfavourably.

The blank slate image does not hold up well on closer inspection, however, and notable historical continuities can be found in almost all fields of Rwandan governance. I argue that policing is no exception to this. Although significant changes have been made in the training, appearance, and operations of the Rwanda National Police as compared to its pre-genocide predecessors, broader features of the policing system in Rwanda – both state and non-state elements – have shown a striking persistence over time, particularly in terms of their structure and the manner of their control.

The sections below focus on social organisation at the local level in Rwanda, the function of the police at this level, and the role of centralised political authorities in coordinating them. They show how certain technologies of information gathering

that have become central to modern crime prevention in Rwanda grew out of developments in the north-western borderland regions around Gisenyi.

Table 3. Timeline of Policing Institutions in Rwanda

Period	Official Policing Actors
Pre-Colonial Period ~ 1600 – 1890	<i>Ingabo z’u Rwanda</i> (Rwandan Military)
Early Belgian Colonial Period 1916 – 1949	<i>Force Publique</i>
Late Belgian Colonial Period 1949 – 1962	<i>Force Publique</i> <i>Police Territoriale</i>
First Republic President Kayibanda 1962 – 1973	<i>Police Nationale</i> <i>Police Communale</i>
Second Republic President Habyarimana 1974 – 1994	<i>Gendarmerie Nationale</i> <i>Groupe Mobile</i> (1990 – 1994) <i>Police Communale</i> <i>Police Judiciaire</i>
Post-Genocide President Bizimungu 1994 – 2000	Gendarmerie Communal Police Judicial Police Local Defence Units
2000 – Present President Kagame	Rwanda National Police Local Defence Units (1997 – 2014) DASSO (2014 –) Community Police Committees (CPCs)

### Early Policing

Oral histories<sup>55</sup> indicate a period of centralised political organisation in Rwanda that stretches back almost a thousand years (Vansina, 2005). These accounts spotlight the *Ingabo z’u Rwanda*, the Rwandan military, as an institution that served as the cornerstone of early Rwandan society (Muzungu, 2003; Rusagara, 2009). The Kingdom’s durability and its reputation as a dominant military force in the region

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<sup>55</sup> Often in the form of poems, locally *ibisigo*.

from the seventeenth century onwards remain sources of national pride for many Rwandans.<sup>56</sup>

Historical accounts stress the intricacy of the Rwandan Kingdom’s societal structure and its relationship with the nation’s military hierarchy, particularly under the *Nyiginya* dynasty of Tutsi kings (Vansina, 2005). At the lowest level was the nuclear family (*urugo*), the country’s basic social unit. These supported small protection units of young men within a particular age bracket (Rusagara, 2009:41). Above the nuclear family was a much broader family unit (*inzu*), which could include several hundred individuals through extended familial and marital ties. The *inzu* was often associated with a particular hill of origin (*umusizi*, *pl. ibisizi*), and broadly overlapped with a lineage (*umuryango*) that contained other families who were related through marital ties dating back several generations:

Table 4. Social Hierarchy under the Rwandan Kingdom, Nyiginya dynasty

Social Unit	Kinyarwanda
Nation <sup>57</sup>	<i>Ishyanga/Gihugu</i>
Clan	<i>Ikibanda</i>
Region	<i>Umuheto</i>
Lineage	<i>Umuryango</i>
Extended family	<i>Inzu</i>
Nuclear family	<i>Urugo</i>

Each of these tiers was represented by a leader (*umutware*), who served under the Rwandan King (*umwami*). According to Rusagara, the hierarchical construction of leadership in ancient Rwandan society paralleled modern military ranks:

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<sup>56</sup> In local accounts, the name ‘Rwanda’ is thought to originate from a corruption of the verb *ku-andaa*, to grow or expand, linking military conquest to the kingdom’s very identity (Informal discussion, Kigali, 14 December 2014; see also Rusagara, 2009).

<sup>57</sup> Although broadly speaking hierarchical, the divisions between the different tiers listed here are not clear-cut. There is significant overlap between, for example, the regional level and the clan unit (see Newbury, 1980).

*The section commander, therefore, coincides with the head of the nuclear family, the platoon commander with the extended family head, the company commander with the lineage chief and the battalion commander with the clan head.*

Rusagara (2009:44)

Under the Nyiginya dynasty – a period of military expansion beginning in the seventeenth century – every Rwandan man was required to be part of a military regiment (*itorero*). Individuals went through five to six years of training in martial arts and civic values.<sup>58</sup> When not fighting with the national army, they were responsible for keeping the homesteads and livestock of their extended family safe.

Early Rwandan society was moderated by a code of ethics known as *imiziro*, the policing of which was a communal activity. The police and the military, as understood in terms of contemporary institutions, were not distinguished. Mugambage writes that the national army had two main functions: “it acted as the King’s army, charged with defence [and] it ensured social harmony and adherence to social norms by arresting social deviants” (Mugambage, 2005:48). Rusagara (2009) likens the system to a single cell organism, in which the Rwandan elite represented the nucleus, while the population (the plasma in his analogy) produced a protective membrane: the military *ingabo*. It was onto this social structure that new external enforcement agencies were layered under colonial rule.

### Colonial Policing

The surrender of the Rwandan monarchy to German forces in 1890 fractured the societal structure of the country. Some regional and lineage leaders (*abatware*) disputed the monarch’s decision to capitulate. Although the broad structure and ethical code of Rwandan society endured, the *ingabo* became divided and reverted

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<sup>58</sup> The same word, *itorero*, is used for the military training schools of the period.

to self-protection units at the level of the extended family (Des Forges, 2011). Following the defeat of the German administration in 1916, Belgian colonial authorities continued the German practice of administrative decentralisation. In 1926 the country was split into nine territories: Nyanza, Astrida, Shangugu/Kibungu, Ruhengeri, Biumba, Kibuye, Gitarama, Kigali and Kisenyi. Each territory was divided into chiefdoms (*chefferies*) and sub-chiefdoms (*sous-chefferies*), run by co-opted traditional authorities, often lineage leaders from the pre-colonial system. Each sub-chiefdom included named hilltops that housed particular extended families.

Table 5. Structure of Belgian colonial administration, 1926 - 1963.

Belgian Colonial Administrative Unit	Number across Rwanda
Administrative District: Ruanda-Urundi	1
Territories	9
Chiefdoms ( <i>chefferies</i> )	45
Sub-chiefdoms ( <i>sous-chefferies</i> )	565
Hilltop Communities <sup>59</sup> ( <i>collines</i> )	N/A

For internal security, the Belgian authorities deployed the *Force Publique*, the first organisation in the country's history that resembled a dedicated police force. Although a relatively small group in raw numbers (an estimated 250 corporals and privates in 1925, led by three Belgian officers and four non-commissioned officers), the *Force Publique* developed a reputation for arbitrary brutality and was widely feared (see Rusagara, 2009). The rank and file of the *Force Publique* were never recruited from Rwanda or Burundi, and were drawn instead from the Belgian Congo. This gave rise to a language barrier, as the force spoke Swahili or Lingala while the population they oversaw would speak Kinyarwanda or Kirundi. Local issues could only be poorly communicated to the force, who made use of indiscriminate violence in quelling popular dissent. The system was predicated on hostility between the police and the community. There was little attempt at partnership in solving local problems. This was typical of other arrangements across the continent at the time (see Alemika, 2009).

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<sup>59</sup> The exact figure is unknown.

The Rwandan population endured this arrangement for over thirty years, until popular dissatisfaction with the *Force Publique* was identified as a threat to the nation's stability (Des Forges, 2011). The response of the governing Belgian Resident was to divide the duties of the *Force Publique*, which was maintained for the military purpose of territorial defence while policing the civilian population was turned over to a new institution, the *Police Territoriale* on 12 February 1949. The *Police Territoriale* was commanded by Belgian officers and headquartered in Usumbura (now Bujumbura). It managed a force of recruits drawn from across the Ruanda-Urundi territory. The *Police Territoriale* was responsible for policing public order infractions including road safety, night patrols, the protection of livestock and the arrest of "criminals and vagrants including drunks, drug users, the mentally sick, beggars, vandals and idlers" (RNP, 2014:23).

By 1960, Rwanda's police force numbered 446 officers, divided between headquarters in each of the country's nine territories. Respective to the population, these numbers were very low. To give an example, the *Police Territoriale* force in Astrida was comprised of between fifty and one hundred officers throughout the 1950s, while a census shows that the territory housed over seventy-thousand adult men during the same period. The *Police Territoriale* did not carry firearms, and complained of difficulties in apprehending suspects. When it came to actual law enforcement, the *Police Territoriale* relied heavily on pre-emption and surveillance. Part of their job was to report incidents of "military deserters, escaped prisoners, or anyone found carrying dangerous weapons [...] and subversive documents" (RNP, 2014:23).

Although commanding more popular support than the *Force Publique*, the *Police Territoriale* continued to prioritise protecting the regime over ensuring public security. In cases where criminal activities or popular unrest risked overwhelming local police authorities, the new territorial police had recourse to the *Force Publique*, which in serious cases could employ its notoriously violent unit, *Maintien et Rétablissement de l'Ordre Public* (MROP) (RNP, 2014:24).

## Post-Independence Policing

Immediately following independence, despite some Rwandan officers being promoted to commanding positions within the *Police Territoriale*, ethnic Tutsi were actively excluded from the police force. Many Tutsi officers already in the *Police Territoriale* at the time of independence pushed to remain in the central headquarters in Usumbura (Burundi), as interethnic violence drove tens of thousands of Tutsi out of Rwanda. As a result, Rwanda's police force was drawn predominantly from Hutu populations in the country's southern provinces, the stronghold of the new President Grégoire Kayibanda.

When the Belgian Congo became independent in 1960, a large contingent of the Rwandan *Force Publique* rebelled against the departing Belgian authorities. They secured the right to return to the Congolese territories from which they had originally been recruited. The result was an overall restructuring of the enforcement agencies in Rwanda, with the *Force Publique* replaced by a new, locally recruited *Garde Nationale*. The *Police Territoriale* was rebranded as the *Police Nationale* and placed under the Ministry of the Interior. A recruitment and training centre was established in Ruhengeri and the police force expanded significantly under the First Rwandan Republic (1959 – 1973).

In 1963, the nine sub-national territories became prefectures administered by *Préfets*, each controlling a number of so-called communes, run by a local *Bourgmestre*. These communes, which elected their own councillors and *Bourgmestres*, became the core administrative unit of the country, and enjoyed a high degree of financial and administrative autonomy (World Bank, 1987). Each commune was allowed to establish its own police force, a *Police Communale*, to complement the *Police Nationale*.

Table 6. Local administration under the First and Second Rwandan Republics, 1963-1994.

Administrative Unit	Councils/Committees	Responsible Delegate	Number across Rwanda
Prefecture	Council (appointed)	<i>Préfet</i> (appointed)	10
Sub-Prefecture		<i>Sous-Préfet</i> (appointed)	22
Commune	Council (elected)	<i>Bourgmestre</i> <sup>60</sup>	143
Sector	Committee (elected)	Councillor (elected)	Approx. 10 per commune. <sup>61</sup>
Cellule		<i>Responsable</i> (elected)	Approx. 10 per Cellule.
<i>Nyumba Kumi</i> (unofficial unit of ten households)		<i>Responsable</i> (elected)	N/A

In 1973, Kayibanda was removed from office by his Military Chief of Staff, Juvénal Habyarimana. In the early years of the Habyarimana administration, the so-called 'Second Republic', the *Garde Nationale* and the *Police Nationale* were replaced by the *Forces Armées Rwandaise* and the *Gendarmerie Nationale* respectively. The President's preference was for internal security to be managed by Rwandans from his stronghold in the north of the country (northerners, or *abakiga*). Habyarimana harboured a personal suspicion of the police force, which was disproportionately staffed by southerners (*abanyenduga*) thought to be sympathetic to the old Kayibanda regime. The early years of the Second Republic coincided with a low-level insurgency in the country's southern prefectures, made up of Tutsi '*Inyenzi*' fighters from across the Burundian border. Interethnic tensions became heightened, and the more ethnically integrated southern police units were side-lined in favour of soldiers and paramilitary police recruited from the northern areas around Gisenyi and Ruhengeri.

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<sup>60</sup> The *Bourgmestre* position went from being elected under the Kayibanda administration, to appointed under President Habyarimana.

<sup>61</sup> Numbers vary significant over the period 1963 – 1994 due to population grown and displacement.

The new Rwandan paramilitary *Gendarmerie* was modelled on the contemporary French *Gendarmerie*. It held a dual mandate of maintaining law and order and defending the national territory, and worked under the remit of the Ministry of Defence (RNP, 2014:48). A specialist branch, the *Police Judiciale*, was set up to run criminal investigations in conjunction with civilian inspectors who worked out of the Ministry of Justice. All branches of the police were characterised by a high degree of politicisation in terms of recruitment, deployment and the promotion of senior officers. For the most part, the regime favoured Hutu from the country's northern prefectures.

Although the general administrative structure of the First Republic was maintained, the 1973 coup saw a marked re-centralisation of power, with a dominant executive branch in the Office of the President. In a relatively subtle but significant change, the *Bourgmeister* position at the head of each commune went from being locally elected to being appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. As a result, the *Bourgmeisteres* became exceptionally powerful in local politics, and were granted a broad spectrum of personal powers for so long as they carried out the government's core policies. Among the communities they administered, *Bourgmeisteres* were referred to as *abategetsi*, or absolute rulers, rather than by the more sympathetic '*abatware*' used traditionally for community leaders. Local police units often found themselves serving as the enforcement arm of these individuals, who would delegate duties, sometimes in the service of personal interests (RNP, 2014:46).

Through increased control over the local *Bourgmeisteres*, the Habyarimana regime could coordinate the operations of the *Police Communale* more closely. These local police monitored the lower administrative tiers of the country, down to the *Nyumba Kumi*, (lit. 'ten households') – an unofficial administrative tier echoing the *Inzu* extended family unit of the pre-colonial era. The Second Republic saw the increasing politicisation of Rwanda's administrative hierarchy. Cadres for Habyarimana's MRND Party were built into the commune and sector levels. Aside from resolving local disputes, the *Police Communale* were involved primarily in surveillance, acting as

“antenna for the gendarmerie”, particularly regarding political dissent (RNP, 2014:45).

The RPF invasion of northern Rwanda in 1990 saw a blurring of boundaries between different enforcement institutions. The *Gendarmerie Nationale* took on a more direct combat role on the front lines around Ruhengeri, while the FAR began to perform functions previously assigned to the police, such as conducting weapons searches in private homes. The country’s major cities were fortified during this period, and a specialist unit of the *Gendarmerie Nationale*, the *Groupe Mobile*, was deployed to Kigali and charged with securing key government facilities and strategic points throughout the city. It controlled access to the major thoroughfare roads throughout the capital, patrolling crossroads and setting up roadblocks. The unit quickly developed a reputation for brutality and extortion, which it justified in the name of anti-insurgency and the hunt for Tutsi RPF infiltrators (*ibiyitso*).

As the war continued into 1992, the extremist *Interahamwe* and *Impuzamugambi* militias grew out of the Hutu youth movement of the MRND party. Their activities precipitated a deterioration in the everyday functions of the *Police Communale*, who became side-lined by the more numerous and often more violent militiamen. Local power struggles pitted commune *Bourgmeisters* against local militia leaders, while *secteur* administrators and police representatives were either unable or unwilling to prevent the arbitrary abuses of the *Interahamwe*. In 1994, all branches of Rwanda’s security forces were complicit in the planning and execution of the Genocide Against the Tutsi (Prunier, 1995). Across the territory they either deliberately coordinated and armed local *Interahamwe* cadres to commit massacres, or else lost control of them altogether.

### Post-Genocide Policing and Reconstruction

In post-conflict environments, police are often called upon to do the impossible: simultaneously reassert the state’s control of violence while protecting the

population at large (Potholm, 1969:140; Francis, 2012:9).<sup>62</sup> The scale and the intimacy of the violence perpetrated in 1994 sets Rwanda apart from other post-conflict states. Many of the killings more closely resembled individual murders than impersonal ‘battle-deaths’, and private grievances flourished in the devastated local communities that survived the genocide. Popular expectations of the government’s role in security, law and order were almost entirely eroded by the time the RPF took over control, while many among the population were terrified about how the new government might act (Prunier, 1995).

Policing in the post-genocide era can be split into distinct stages.<sup>63</sup> Immediately following the genocide, policing was one part of a concerted effort by the RPF to restore some baseline of public order. In 1996 there followed a crisis brought about by returning Hutu refugees, which precipitated the North-Western Insurgency in the late 1990s. The early 2000s saw a range of new challenges associated with rapid urbanisation, particularly in Kigali. More recently, terrorist grenade attacks in Kigali, Gisenyi and Rusizi have forced a rethinking of security at the country’s strategic hotspots. Contemporary challenges tend to be associated with (1) a growth of ‘intellectual crimes’, in particular fraud and money laundering, (2) competition for work in the informal sector, compounded by youth unemployment, and (3) conflicts over land use and ownership.<sup>64</sup>

### Early Days, 1994-1996

*First we had the problem of retaliation – both revenge attacks or people killing to destroy the evidence against them. We had to disarm the population, and try to get between these people [to] pacify them.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

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<sup>62</sup> For a detailed analysis of the nuances involved in restoring policing systems in post-conflict environments, see Marenin (2005) ‘Restoring Policing Systems in Conflict Torn Nations’.

<sup>63</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

<sup>64</sup> Interview, Theos Badege, Head of RNP Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali, 2 March 2015.

After the fall of Kigali, remnants of the Habyarimana regime fled across the border into Zaire. They left behind very little by way of police personnel or equipment for the incoming RPF. The new government selected Colonel Deogratias Ndibwami, a senior officer in the pre-genocide *Gendarmerie Nationale*, as the first Chief of Staff of the new force. For personnel, it drew on elements of the RPF that had experience in maintaining public order in northern Rwanda during the ceasefire of July 1992 – April 1994 to build a new National Gendarmerie. Due to conditions in the Arusha Peace Accords, some preparation and training had already been undertaken for officers in the RPF to join the Rwandan police force. UN policing staff undertook further training. The first batch of officers they trained graduated November 1994, raising the strength of the force to nine hundred (UNDP 1995). These recruits joined an organisation that lacked functioning police stations, vehicles, or basic office equipment, from chairs to pens and paper, all of which had to be borrowed from other fledgling government agencies (RNP, 2014:80). A UNDP report from the time states that the Gendarmerie lacked “even the minimum basic material resources required to fulfil its tasks, and that funding for its successful rehabilitation [...] cannot, at the present time, be made available by the government of Rwanda” (UNDP, 1995).

In these circumstances, the new government recruited a police force at the commune level, on the model of the *Police Communale*. This force required less formal training and expensive equipment than the Gendarmerie, but could provide information to better direct its operations. A recruitment drive was pushed forward across all 140 communes. Funding was eventually obtained for a Communal Police through donations from the Japanese, Dutch and UK governments, as well as from the UNDP. The first function of the new force was to open genocide cases and compile lists of suspects from the communities in which they worked. One of the main challenges for government authorities was to prevent genocide perpetrators from joining the new force.

There is relatively little information available on Rwanda’s internal security between late 1994 and 1995. The bulk of international attention at the time was focused on

the refugee crisis across the border in Zaire. At the same time, the RPF was trying to re-establish a baseline of social order in Rwanda without compromising its international reputation. Critical accounts emerged nonetheless, including a detailed report from *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) (Binet, 2004), which throws a spotlight on inhumane prison conditions (notably in the Gitarama detention centre) and the massacre at Kibeho refugee camp on 22 April 1995. The report claims that MSF teams witnessed: “abuses and brutalities committed by the administration and armed forces, particularly against displaced persons and the hundreds of thousands of detainees crammed into prisons” (Ibid. 2004:9). Rwandans themselves tend to be reticent to talk about the period, which was characterised by fear, post-genocide trauma and a wave of opportunistic, violent crime.

Collecting evidence and arresting individuals suspected of involvement in the 1994 massacres was an enormous undertaking, hampered by the limited capacity of the new police force. Murder rates spiked markedly in 1995 and 1996.<sup>65</sup> This can be attributed to the twin threats of revenge killings and desire to remove potential witnesses to genocide crimes. Commune branches of the Gendarmerie were inundated with accusations made by citizens against other members of the community. These needed to be investigated even when they turned out to be baseless (a denouncement process known locally as *gutunga agatoki*, lit. ‘pointing fingers’).

To compound these problems, the genocide and its aftermath spread small-arms across the Rwandan countryside. These had been distributed from military barracks under the departing Habyarimana regime, either for self-protection or to actively resist the new RPF authorities (Binet, 2004). The police dedicated a significant amount of energy to collecting army issue rifles and grenades, a process that involved regular and unannounced searches of private properties (RNP, 2014).

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<sup>65</sup> Interview, Theos Badege, Head of RNP Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali, 2 March 2015.

## Borderland Policing and the North-Western Insurgency, 1996-1998

From 1995, the ousted FAR coordinated with the remnants of the *Interahamwe* and began to launch systematic attacks into Rwandan territory from refugee camps in Zaire. In 1996 and 1997, waves of returning refugees included armed groups intent on resisting the RPF. They infiltrated communities in the borderland region around Gisenyi and began preparing for civil war in the Northern Prefecture. In the early months of 1997, this developed into a full-scale insurgency (African Rights, 1998). Although the fighting was relatively short-lived, peaking in May of 1997 and subsiding by the end of the year, it was significant both in asserting the RPF's control of security and in trialling its new security protocol. Senior officers in the Rwandan Patriotic Army at the time claim the insurgency posed an existential threat to the state authorities, in which communal police were explicitly targeted by insurgents (RNP, 2014:85):

*It is a little-known fact, but [the RPA] lost more soldiers fighting that insurgency than during the liberation of Kigali in 1994. If we lost the fight there, we knew we could lose the whole countryside ... and this [was] not a war that can be won easily. That was Habyarimana's home, and we were not welcome there. We had to convince the people that we could bring them security and the opposition could not. [...] Without their support we could not win.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

*At the start it was like we were blind, we could not see into the towns and villages. We had no information.*

Interview, Retired Gendermerie Officer, Kigali, 25 January 2015

*The military tried to use its force but it was impossible. That fight was only won by what the people told us.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, 25 January 2015.

The civil conflict and the return of large, predominantly Hutu, refugee populations across the border from the DRC in 1996-1998 put strain on security arrangements, particularly in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (now Musanze), the largest towns in north-western Rwanda. Over six thousand civilians died in massacres attributed to both the opposition and to government forces, while some six hundred thousand were displaced during the conflict (Amnesty International, 1997). The killing of several hundred civilians, allegedly by RPA soldiers at Mohoko market in Kanama, Gisenyi Prefecture on 8 August 1997, remains seared into the popular consciousness in Gisenyi, where Kanama has become a by-word for government abuses.<sup>66</sup>

Alongside the political violence of the insurgency, both opportunistic street crime and more organised crime linked to drug trafficking and cattle theft, took hold in the region (African Rights, 1998). As a result, small communities formed self-protection groups. Volunteers organised rotas to perform night shifts. Young men were assigned a number of night patrols per month to keep watch over properties and livestock. The practice was encouraged by prefecture administrators in the North-West.

*We were fighting more than the opposition and the old regime. Th[e] road that comes from Kisoro [Uganda] through Ruhengeri and to Gisenyi has always been a big route for smugglers. Many drugs and weapons are passing through that way. When we fought the opposition, we were disrupting these criminals, and they would fight us.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

As the violence of the insurgency subsided, so did incentives to volunteer as *abanyerondo*. Individuals began making excuses to shirk their unpaid duties. To fill the gap, the government expanded Local Defence Units (LDUs) in 1998. These operated out of offices at what is now the district level and were identifiable by their distinctive red uniforms. LDUs trained personnel in Rwanda's lowest administrative

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<sup>66</sup> Informal discussion, Rubavu District, 16 November 2014.

tiers, especially in more remote parts of the country. Training included the handling of weapons, and many LDUs carried firearms.

In a region in which low-grade insurgency has often proved intractable, with ‘bush wars’ dragging on for years or decades, the suppression of the North-Western Insurgency in Rwanda stands out as a short and successful military campaign. Although violence has persisted in the Kivu provinces of the DRC, the conflict was effectively expelled from northern Rwanda in 1997 and has not spilled back across the border since. The counter-insurgency strategies used in Ruhengeri and Gisenyi displayed many of the hall-marks of contemporary policing in Rwanda. Policies trialled during the insurgency have since been rolled out to the country as a whole. Most significantly, counter-insurgency efforts saw the first systematic enforcement of villagisation, in which scattered homesteads were uprooted and concentrated first into camps and then smaller hilltop clusters that were maintained after the fighting had ended. At the time of its implementation, the aim of this policy was to “isolate, identify and disarm” rural communities around Gisenyi and Ruhengeri.<sup>67</sup>

Villagisation was the first step in a series of government policies focused on encouraging the local production of intelligence. It produced an apparatus that was later adapted to crime prevention more generally. The policy is one of the more striking examples of large-scale social engineering in the country’s history, and is not without controversy (Ansoms, 2009:302). It coincided with the government coordination of locally organised night patrols (*amarondo*) and the expansion of LDUs. Prunier (2008:336) commends the informal policing networks set up by the RPF during this period, which he considers to have played an impressive role in maintaining public order. As the deputy chief of staff in the RPA, who would later become the first Inspector General of the Rwanda National Police, remarked:

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<sup>67</sup> Interview, RDF Senior Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

*Efforts by the community greatly complemented the work of the security forces, for it would have required a large number of security forces and resources to deal with the situation. The success in ending the insurgency in the north-west attests to the effectiveness of community based approaches.*

Mugambage (2005:54)

Overall, the late 1990s through to the early 2000s saw Rwanda's north-western borderland acting as a site of additional challenges and of new innovations regarding the national policing system. The impact on present day arrangements in the region are discussed in depth in Chapter Six.

### Urban Policing and its Challenges

*This city is always moving. If you let it, it can lose you.*

Interview, Rogers Rutikanga, RNP Kigali Metropolitan Police Commander, 8 October, 2014

In the years following the genocide, Kigali was repopulated in several successive waves. First came returning 'old case load' refugees, predominantly ethnic Tutsi, populations that had fled the anti-Tutsi massacres in 1958 or during the anti-*Inyenzi* crack downs in the 1970s. Two years later saw the return of 'new case load' Hutu refugees who had fled the country in 1994. Individuals in both groups laid claims to properties, giving rise to a crisis of ownership that heightened inter-ethnic tensions in the city.

In 1997, as the security situation in the north of the country deteriorated, refugees flooded into Kigali's outer townships, further complicating policing arrangements as the security forces became concerned about the possibility of infiltration by anti-government insurgents. Many people had been attracted to the city's rapidly growing informal settlements where they could achieve a degree of personal anonymity that was impossible in the countryside. These individuals placed added stress on the fledgling RPF police forces, which were tasked with managing disputes between genocide survivors, old-caseload returnees, new-caseload returnees (those who had

fled the country during the 1990-1991 civil war and 1994 Genocide) and suspected genocide perpetrators.

More recent years have seen a dramatic rise in rural-urban migration, as well as rapid population growth in the capital. Goodfellow (2014:311) observes that growth rates in urban populations across the country grew by five hundred per cent between 1990 and 2014, compounding at a rate of almost ten per cent per year. The police have a particular concern about second generation rural-urban migrants, whom they see as particularly prone to criminal behaviour:

*Today we have a new generation on the streets. The city made them. They are vijana – teenagers, maybe they are twenty years [old] now. They did not see the war and they do not share the traditional code of people who come in from the villages [...] keeping control over them is one of our biggest challenges.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015

As social units, urban neighbourhoods operate differently from rural hilltops, particularly in terms of the anonymity afforded to local residents. As Hills writes: “cities lack the traditional control mechanisms of rural areas; it is relatively easy for people to find anonymity in bigger cities; and tarmac roads make it easy for robbers in fast cars to enter and exit.” (Hills, 2008:218). In Kigali, the fresh challenges brought about by expanding informal settlements have been complicated by a series of recent terrorist attacks linked to violent opposition groups in the DRC. Between 2008 and 2013 the government has recorded twenty-eight grenade attacks in the city. Seventeen people have been killed and 398 wounded. These incidents brought about a much increased police and military presence in Kigali city centre, with visible patrols and permanent armed guards at strategic locations and major cross-roads, reminiscent of the city’s fortification in the early 1990s. Despite this, the city’s overall trajectory has been towards greater crime control and security in the years following the genocide. Kigali is now considered a ‘regional anomaly’, characterised by orderly urbanization and low levels of crime (Goodfellow & Smith, 2014:3186).

## The RNP, Recent Reforms and Community Policing Initiatives

In 2000, the Rwandan Gendarmerie, Judicial and Communal Police Forces were combined to form the Rwanda National Police (RNP), which according to the country's 2003 constitution, is the "...organ in charge of the safety and security of people and their properties and which has the jurisdiction over the entire territory of the Republic of Rwanda" (Republic of Rwanda, 2003).

Table 7. Police Institutional Reforms, 2000.

1994 - 2000		2000 - Present	
Department	Government Ministry	Department	Government Ministry
Gendarmerie	Ministry of Defence	Rwanda National Police	Ministry of Internal Security
Communal Police	Ministry of Internal Security		
Judicial Police	Ministry of Justice		

The merger was part of a general streamlining of the security sector in Rwanda, in which a range of agencies had previously held overlapping mandates. It was also an attempt to distance the policing agencies under the RPF from those of the Habyarimana era.<sup>68</sup> It followed a two-year period of popular consultation to determine what kind of police force local communities engage with most positively. The national police were rebranded, down to the uniforms of individual officers (from green to blue to reduce popular associations of the RNP with the military), and thousands of unqualified communal police officers were made redundant.

The new force was put under the control of Colonel Frank Mugambage (Director General of Police, 2000-2004), former Deputy Chief of Staff in the RPA. Its original 3500 trained officers were drawn primarily from three backgrounds: former officers in the RPA, former judicial officers transferred from the Ministry of Justice, and

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<sup>68</sup> Interview, Senior Police Officer, Kigali, 5 December 2014.

civilian recruits. Since then, the RNP has rapidly expanded.<sup>69</sup> In the first decade of the RNP, between 2000 and 2010, over 8800 officers were added to the force, while in 2011 alone, almost 2000 judicial officers passed through the Gishari training programme, increasing the force by twenty-five per cent. Despite this, Rwanda's current police capacity remains well short of the UNODC recommendation of one police officer to four hundred and fifty members of the population. In Rwanda today, the ratio is approximately 1: 1000, up from 1: 1600 in 2010 (RNP, 2013).

The RNP's strategies for dealing with this shortfall draw on lessons learnt during the North-Western Insurgency. They involve the co-option of local patrols in performing security roles, such as guarding public properties, managing public events and supporting police at the sector level and below.

In the years following the insurgency, LDUs quickly developed a negative reputation among the Rwandan population. An official survey (see RNP 2014:106) records a meagre 54 per cent popular confidence in LDUs in the mid-2000s, a remarkably low figure for a government document. By contrast, the police and defence forces scored 97 per cent and 98 per cent respectively. The report goes on to state that LDUs had become a "liability in their engagement with the citizens they were meant to protect, with some officers using their guns to intimidate the public and carrying weapons into public spaces such as bars" (Ibid.).

The government responded first by disarming LDUs, and ultimately by ending the programme and temporarily disbanding its membership. They were replaced by the District Administrative Security Services Organ (DASSO), a smaller and better trained outfit. Even before the establishment of DASSO, however, the failings of the LDUs saw many communities reviving the traditional *amarondo* patrols, this time paid for originally by voluntary household donations. Many disbanded LDU and communal police officers found security roles in the new local patrols. With time, government

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<sup>69</sup> This was an exceptionally large intake based in part on the counter-terrorism drive in Kigali at the time. Nevertheless, the school has produced roughly 500 new recruits each year since.

administration at the cell and *umudugudu* level co-opted and formalised the *amarondo*. Patrolmen were systematically registered at local administration headquarters and a drive to provide them official uniforms is currently being rolled out from the capital. Household contributions in most neighbourhoods are today mandatory and can be enforced by judicial police in the case of non-payment.

Local patrols are part of a broader system of community policing, which has become one of the flagship initiatives of the new RNP.<sup>70</sup> In the President's terms, the new force represents "an evolution of the policing function from the authoritarian, paramilitary, top down model to [...] participation by ordinary citizens in policing their own communities" (President Kagame, quoted in RNP 2014:11).

Government documents detailing Rwanda's community policing model tend to be both vague and laden with aphorisms. The RNP's strategic plan for the period of 2013-2018 describes it as, "[a strategy] whereby local communities are involved in identifying security issues and consequently finding solutions for such issues" (RNP, 2013:10). The official RNP handbook on community policing asserts that the policy "is founded on the principle that in a democratic society, the police are entrusted by their fellow citizens to protect and serve the public's fundamental rights to liberty, equality and justice under the law [...] the police must be part of, and not apart from, the communities they serve" (RNP, 2010:9). It goes on to state that officers should perform their duties in accordance with the "Seven Cs": "communicating with the community to create cooperation, collaboration, coordination and change in order for sustainable peace, democracy and development to take root" (RNP, 2010:11). Statements of this kind, very often reproduced in government documents and research interviews, are of limited analytical value. The language used here is probably a reflection of more general guidelines and standard texts on community

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<sup>70</sup> Officials also cite financial difficulties, the lack of reporting to judicial police (resulting in incomplete case files) and lessons learnt from the counter-insurgency campaign as being behind the adoption of community-orientated models of public order maintenance and reporting (RNP, 2014). Mugambage (2005:54), himself responsible for much of the transition process, notes how the popularity of these models with international donors as the "reforms of choice" also played a role.

policing, which suffers from a somewhat shapeless definition when espoused by professional police trainers.

In more practical terms, the policy involved establishing a Directorate of Community Policing in 2007, which grew to become one of the RNP's sixteen core departments in 2014 and is now housed in the RNP central headquarters in Kigali. The department's stated purpose is to "direct and implement policy, [and] devise crime prevention strategies in close collaboration with the community through community policing committees" (RNP, 2014:81). The RNP handbook, generally somewhat imprecise, does set out in more concrete terms the relative responsibilities of civilian committees and the police at the cell and *umudugudu* levels:

- 1. The community will be responsible for [the] mobilisation and organisation of the community policing committees (CPCs) they select to engage their local police at various defined levels on crime prevention.*
- 2. Community policing encourages a broad, but not unlimited role for the community and sets to guard against creating unrealistic expectations of the police.*
- 3. The community must reciprocate by providing criminal intelligence and cooperating with the police.*
- 4. Both the community and the police must create a working partnership to solve security problems.*

RNP Handbook of Community Policing (RNP, 2010:14).

By late 2013, when this research began, the total number of neighbourhood committee members (*imbanzabigwi*) reached 71,085, just under five individuals per *imidugudu*. Table 8 shows how they complement the police deployments at the local tiers of Rwanda's administrative hierarchy. The specific duties of the committees are discussed in Chapter Five.

Table 8. Administrative Units and Policing Infrastructure, 2013.

Administrative Level	Number	Level of Police Hierarchy	Number	CPCs	
Provinces	5	Regional Command	5	-	-
Districts	30	Police Districts	30	-	-
Sectors	416	Police Stations	75	-	-
Cells	2150	Police Posts	216	Cell CPC members	10,100
<i>Imidugudu</i>	14,953	-	-	<i>Umudugudu</i> CPC members	71,085

Data from RNP (2013)

### 3.4 Crime Statistics, 2014

The crime statistics below give an indication of the distribution and frequency of particular crimes across Rwanda for the first quarter of 2014.

Figure 2. Incidence of Crime by Province, First Term, 2014

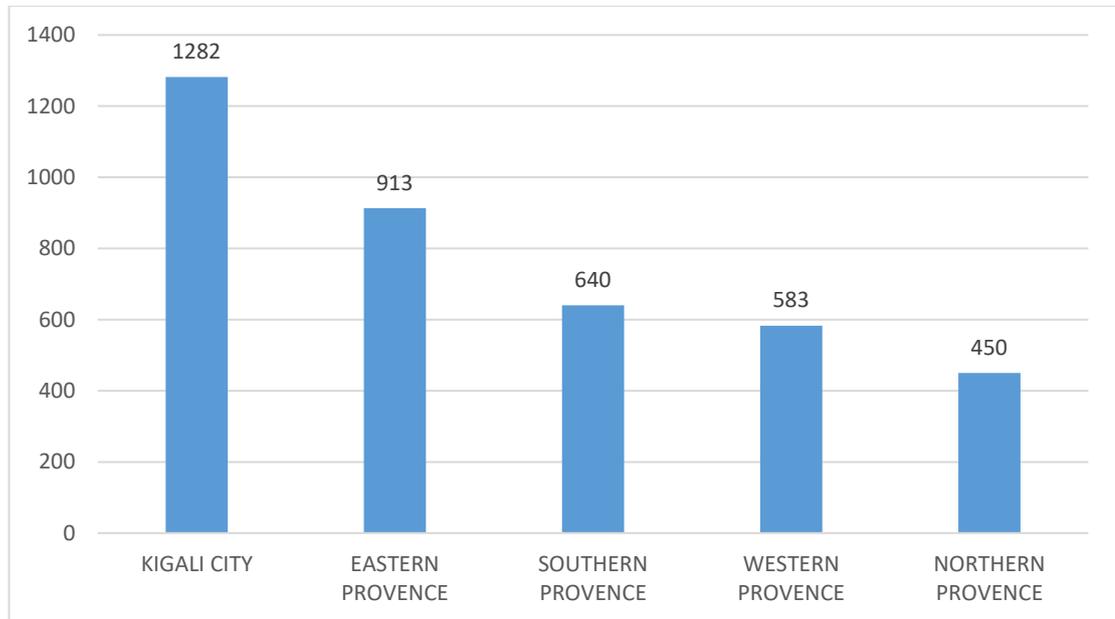


Figure 3. Incidence of Crime by District, First Term, 2014

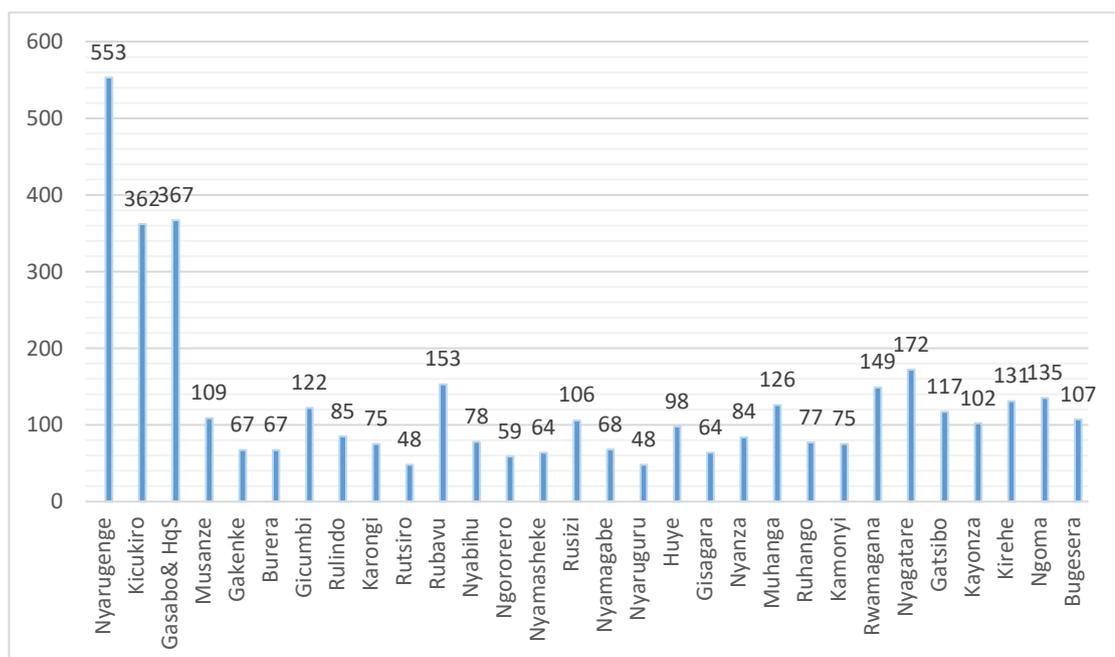


Figure 4. Incidence of Crime by Offence, First Term, 2014

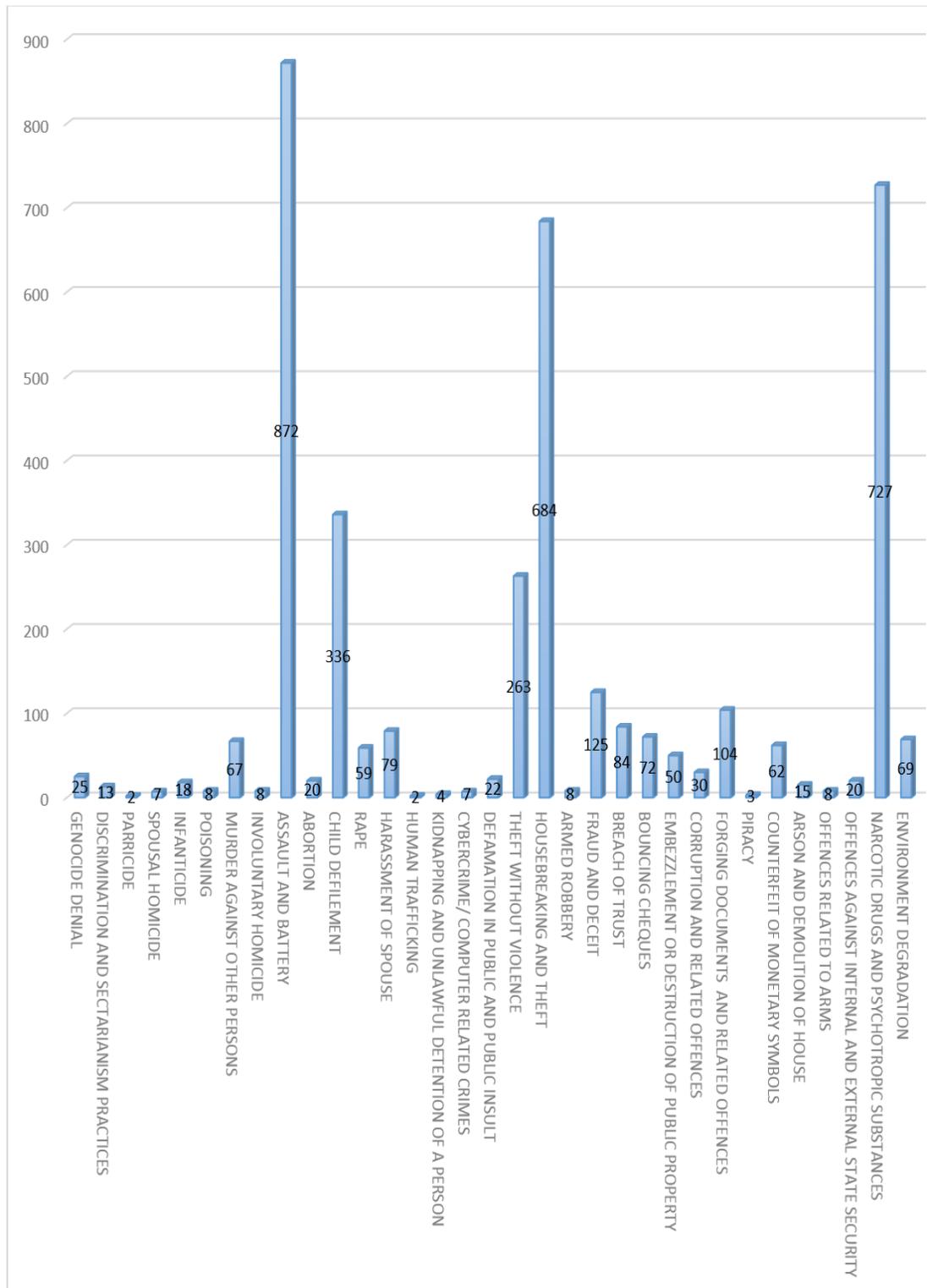


Figure 5. Incidence of Crime by Offence for Kigali City and Five Border Districts

DISTRICTS  CRIMES	KIGALI			SELECTED BORDER DISTRICTS				
	Nyarugenge	Kicukiro	Gasabo	Rubavu (Gisenyi)	Rusizi	Burera	Kirehe	Gisagara
GENOCIDE DENIAL	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	0
DISCRIMINATION AND SECTARIANISM PRACTICES	2	1	1	3	0	0	0	2
PARRICIDE	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
SPOUSAL HOMICIDE	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
INFANTICIDE	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0
POISONING	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
MURDER AGAINST OTHER PERSONS	2	8	4	1	1	0	1	0
INVOLUNTARY HOMICIDE	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	1
ASSAULT AND BATTERY	103	64	71	29	7	17	28	27
ABORTION	2	1	2	1	2	0	1	1
CHILD DEFILEMENT	31	22	53	14	13	5	11	6
RAPE	10	1	6	1	1	2	3	0
HARASSMENT OF SPOUSE	0	7	23	4	0	4	0	3
HUMAN TRAFFICKING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
KIDNAPPING AND UNLAWFUL DETENTION OF A PERSON	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
CYBERCRIME/ COMPUTER RELATED CRIMES	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	0
DEFAMATION IN PUBLIC AND PUBLIC INSULT	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
THEFT WITHOUT VIOLENCE	74	62	38	5	0	1	0	0
HOUSEBREAKING AND THEFT	97	85	30	26	28	13	22	16
ARMED ROBBERY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FRAUD AND DECEIT	46	16	18	9	5	0	3	0
BREACH OF TRUST	23	13	12	5	3	0	2	0
BOUNCING CHEQUES	25	9	15	2	2	0	0	0
EMBEZZLEMENT OR DESTRUCTION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY	4	6	4	1	7	3	3	2
CORRUPTION AND RELATED OFFENCES	12	4	3	0	0	1	0	1
FORGING DOCUMENTS AND RELATED OFFENCES	21	9	16	10	5	0	2	1
PIRACY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COUNTERFEITING MONEY	13	1	9	3	2	1	1	0
ARSON AND DEMOLITION	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
OFFENCES RELATED TO ARMS	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
OFFENCES AGAINST INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STATE SECURITY	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES	79	49	46	39	22	19	46	4
ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION	1	0	5	0	1	0	1	0
TOTAL/DISTRICT	553	362	367	153	106	67	131	64

Figure 6. Incidence of Bribery by District, 2013

Province	District	Frequency	Percent
Kigali City	Gasabo	126	5.5 %
	Kicukiro	72	3.1 %
	Nyarugenge	83	3.6 %
West	Rubavu	229	10.0 %
	Ngororero	258	11.3 %
East	Kirehe	251	11.0 %
	Nyagatare	295	12.9 %
North	Gicumbi	237	10.4 %
	Rulindo	182	8.0 %
South	Huye	262	11.5 %
	Kamonyi	291	12.7 %
Total		2286	100.0 %

Source: Transparency International, Rwanda Bribery Index (2013)

Statistics are taken from the first quarter of 2014, the period immediately before I began conducting interviews. The specific definitions of different crimes listed in these statistics can be found in the Rwandan penal code (Republic of Rwanda, 2012). Although I was shown statistics from a more extended timeframe – figures that broadly reflect those included here – I was unable to gain permission to reproduce them. Crime statistics in Rwanda are a particularly sensitive issue for the RNP, one that is complicated by the contradictory pressures to simultaneously demonstrate a falling trend in crime while promoting a higher degree of crime reporting from the public.<sup>71</sup> I draw two main points of analysis: first, these numbers represent remarkably low levels of micro-level violence, and, second, that crime rates across Rwandan territory appear to be relatively uniform outside of the capital city.

*National rates of micro-level violence and street crime in Rwanda are remarkably low:*

To give these statistics some context in comparison to international averages, the World Economic Forum combines survey and statistical data to rank Rwanda ninth internationally in terms of the control of organised crime, twenty-first in terms of the reliability of the national police and sixth with respect to the low business costs of

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<sup>71</sup> Interview, Senior Officer, Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali, 12 February 2016.

crime and violence (World Economic Forum, 2014). Gallup has ranked the country as the safest in Africa in both 2014 and 2015, and as the fifth safest territory internationally in 2015 (Gallup, 2015; 2016).

Considering the current tone of debate on the RPF, these reports are likely to be contested. Both the potential disconnect between national statistics and the lived experience of local residents, as well as the government's involvement in the production of data, raise questions about the validity of the more strikingly positive findings in developmental reports on Rwanda (Ingelaere, 2010). Nevertheless, even the Rwandan government's staunchest critics tend to acknowledge the high degree of internal security that it has been able to achieve (Reyntjens, 2013:5; Thomson, 2011:12).

Nothing in the way these crime statistics were presented gave cause for suspicion that they may have been doctored. They were intended for internal use, each incident was meticulously reported in paperwork, and the numbers were confirmed by hand written statistics marked up on the walls of individual district headquarters that I visited. Deliberately massaging statistics as they pass from local police stations to the RNP headquarters in Kigali would incur severe penalties, especially in the aftermath of recent controversies involving other government department statistics.<sup>72</sup>

A degree of under-reporting certainly occurs, something that senior officials in the RNP acknowledge quite openly as a challenge.<sup>73</sup> Communities and households are reluctant to involve uniformed officials in what they consider to be personal matters (domestic violence was often cited as an example, and the RNP is currently introducing a range of programmes in attempt to address this). Reporting is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five. Even when regarded with cautious scepticism,

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<sup>72</sup> See, for example, New Times (2015) 'How probe uncovered the rot in *Mutuelle de Sante*', <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2015-02-03/185585/>, accessed 16 June 2016.

<sup>73</sup> Interview, Senior Officer, Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali RNP Headquarters, 12 February 2016.

however, these figures still speak to an exceptional developmental success story, especially when seen in the context of Rwanda's recent history.

Figure 4 shows assault, theft and drugs offences to be by far the most common crimes perpetrated during the period in question. Political crimes, of which genocide ideology has perhaps received the most attention to date, are shown to be relatively infrequent. I acknowledge that the threat of punishment may be as powerful as its application in these cases, stifling political discussion at the local level in Rwanda. Nevertheless, the prevalence of political crimes appears somewhat less significant in statistical terms than has been implied in recent critical accounts of Rwandan political governance that have claimed these laws are arbitrarily applied to "anyone who makes public statements that the government perceives as critical" (Thomson, 2011:442; see also Reyntjens, 2013).

*Outside of Kigali, rates of crime across Rwandan territory are relatively uniform, including in its borderland districts:* Figures for Kigali's three districts, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge and Gasago show rates of crime that are several times higher than the national average outside of the capital. Other districts deviate relatively little from the mean, except for those housing the country's larger cities Muhanga, Rwamagana, Nyagatare, Rubavu and Gicumbi, which present marginally higher figures than rural districts.

The relative uniformity of crime rates across Rwanda suggests consistency in the administrative structures, resources and practices of different departments, all of which are bound by the same set of centrally coordinated guidelines, and are tested against regular *imihigo* security performance contracts. This is in keeping with the stated aims of the RNP that "every district shall be policed with the same rigour, in order that the rule of law is brought to all Rwandans" (RNP, 2013:5).

Nevertheless, it is of note that, once the more heavily border related crimes such as cross-border smuggling and the forging of documents are put aside, Rwanda's border districts show almost no deviation from national averages outside of Kigali, and are,

if anything, slightly safer than districts set at greater distances from international borders in terms of violent offenses. Border towns are notoriously unruly spaces, and recent borderland analysis would suggest that just to hold these border districts to the national average would require some additional energy on the part of national police departments, due to the added challenges associated with governing them (see Martinez, 1978; Nugent, 2012).

### 3.5 Summary

As the academic literature reviewed in this chapter indicates, despite heated debates on the character of the RPF, the government's police have to date received very little systematic analysis. Government and police, Bayley (1971:102) argues eloquently, "cannot be distinguished any more than a knife and knife edge can be usefully distinguished in the act of cutting". Researchers' neglect of policing in Rwanda is a missed opportunity for better understanding the state.

The establishment of the RNP in 2000 was the first time that a single dedicated organisation has been responsible for state policing in Rwanda. The move marked a departure from arrangements dating back to the post-colonial administrations of Presidents Juvénal Habyarimana and Grégoire Kayibanda, under which state policing functions were split between the paramilitary gendarmerie, the judicial branch, and the communal branch, all run out of different ministries of state. The new national police force expanded quickly, and has recently crossed the threshold of one officer per one thousand citizens. This is considered a significant milestone by international organisations that advocate the UN recommended ratio of 1:450 (RNP, 2014:105). The growth of the RNP has not been limited to the raw number of new recruits, however. The organisation has shown a constant internal evolution, creating new directorates and departments on an almost annual basis.<sup>74</sup> Backed by funding from

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<sup>74</sup> Most recently in the form of a new forensic laboratory in central Kigali to aid in criminal investigations.

the Belgian and German development agencies, as well as the European Commission, the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the United Nations Development Program, it has undertaken professionalization and training programmes for staff and officers, and maintains an excellent reputation among development partners for its efficiency in crime prevention and its control of petty corruption.<sup>75</sup>

Behind these recent developments in the police as a *state institution* lie notable continuities in Rwanda's historical *policing system*. Rwandan society has existed for centuries under political arrangements with very strong and clearly defined hierarchies that exist below what is today the district level. Examples can be traced from the *umuryango* lineage unit of the pre-colonial period, through the Belgian colonial *sous-chefferies* and the *communes* and *cellules* of the Kayibanda and Habyarimana administrations to the modern decentralised state structure. Different arrangements of local policing have been built into the political hierarchy, with information being reported up and orders of enforcement being passed down. At the most local level, modern self-protection units comparable to the *Inzu* protection units of the pre-colonial *Ingabu z'u Rwanda*, have endured in one form or another, with most small communities able to recruit and coordinate a group of young men to patrol and protect properties in difficult times. Thus Rwandan policing agencies have always been interwoven with the country's decentralised bureaucracies. These entwined structures extend from central authority in the capital city to the level of individual neighbourhoods throughout the country.

From the colonial era on, policing has consistently had two faces in Rwanda: (1) an official coterie of uniformed officers representing the central state (the *Force Publique*, the *Police Territoriale*, the *Police Judiciaire*, the *Gendermerie* and more recently the Rwanda National Police) and (2) informal communal police legitimised at a more local level (*the Police Communale*, *Nyumba Kumi* militiamen, Local Defence Units and more recently DASSO and Community Policing Committees). Throughout

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<sup>75</sup> Interview, GIZ Development Staff, Kigali, 20 April 2014.

the latter half of the twentieth century, the nature of policing in Rwanda has been shaped by the interaction between these assemblages. Where the former enforce the law and protect the governing regime, the latter report information up the chain. They are also involved in the day-to-day regulation of local neighbourhoods, which takes place more often according to the informal *umuco nyarwanda* (the Rwandan cultural code, which is a descendent of pre-colonial *imiziro* ethics) than parliamentary legislation. Neighbourhood leaders are more often concerned with *kirazira*, such things as drunkenness, indecency, and other behaviours of a type not strictly illegal but strongly frowned upon in traditional Rwandan society, than with actual criminality, which tends to be much less common.

Without local mobilisation, central police forces in Kigali would lack antenna at the neighbourhood level and be hamstrung by their limited capacity. However, empowering local patrols without sufficient oversight has in the past resulted in widespread abuse. Twice in recent history the balance between state police and local patrol groups has swung this way, first during the uncontrolled criminality of youth militias in the run up to the 1994 genocide (after which they were intentionally unleashed on the population), and then, although to a much lesser extent, in the reported abuses of Local Defence Forces in the late 1990s and early 2000s. This balance between local mobilisation and oversight has been in constant flux throughout the course of Rwanda's troubled history. Rapid social and demographic change, particularly in the country's larger cities, raise new and pressing challenges for government policy makers who define the interaction between policing groups operating at different tiers of Rwanda's administrative hierarchy.

The proliferation of Community Policing Committees, whose members today number over one hundred thousand<sup>76</sup> (or roughly one per one hundred Rwandans), is reshaping the landscape of policing in Rwanda. Sitting atop this army of non-state policing partners is the newly rebranded and rapidly expanding institution of the RNP,

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<sup>76</sup> Private communication, RNP Senior Officer, 16 June 2016.

which has introduced a spectrum of new initiatives under the auspices of a community policing strategy. Chapter Four details how this arrangement plays out in terms of the personal interactions between key players in Rwanda's security network.

Finally, recent crime statistics from Rwanda confirm international reports that rates of criminality in the country are remarkably low, especially compared to the surrounding region. The incidence of crime is highest in the capital city, Kigali and is otherwise relatively uniform across the country. This suggests that Rwanda is policed under a consistent system, and not subject to the idiosyncrasies of local departments and the personal command of their senior officers. At the same time, it raises questions about the specific practices of policing in the country's border towns, which once adjusted for border specific crimes such as cross-border smuggling and the counterfeiting of documents, differ little in their prevalence of crime compared to districts at distance from international boundaries.

## CHAPTER FOUR - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN RWANDAN POLICING

### 4.1 Introduction

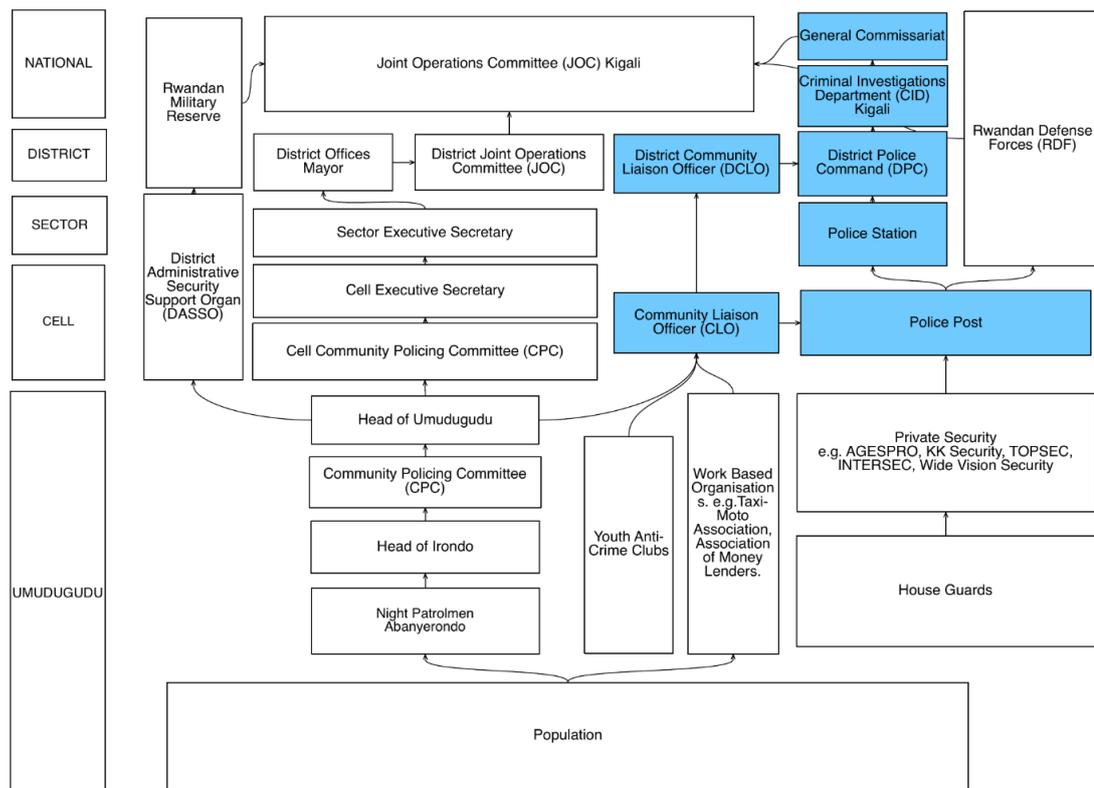
This chapter approaches public authority in Rwanda from below, mapping the actors involved in the prevention of street crime. It progresses through a series of sub-sections – on *abanyerondo* night patrolmen, house guards, community policing committee members, police community liaison officers, judicial police officers, district security officers, private security guards, and RDF military patrols – looking both at the individual duties associated with these positions and their points of contact in the broader policing system. Each sub-section amalgamates information from a range of interviews and informal discussions to offer a representative overview without identifying individual contributors.

The second section of this chapter makes use of thick description to provide illustrative accounts of four criminal incidents that occurred in 2014 and 2015. These descriptions demonstrate the importance of Rwandan policing systems below the cell tier of government administration. They show the diversity of actors working at this level and the range of channels available for information to pass to state authorities. Providing this degree of detail on Rwanda's policing groups, their work and their interactions has not been done before in a systematic manner. It allows not only for the identification of central themes in Rwandan policing (discussed in Chapter Five), but also for the comparison of nuanced mechanisms of local crime prevention between different urban centres in the country (discussed in Chapter Six).

## 4.2 Actors and Activities

Figure 7, below, is drawn from my own observations and from the accounts of Rwandans working in policing roles. The diagram represents a security network, an arrangement of individual agents, groups and formal institutions that are “interconnected to authorise and provide security for internal and external stakeholders” (Dupont, 2004:78). It provides an overview of what is a complex, multitiered system, containing dominant (higher) and dominated (lower) nodes, and mediated by the inter-personal interactions linking them together (Shearing & Wood, 2000). My concern is with the lower tiers (those closest to the population at large, aligned with *‘umudugudu’* on the left of the image), the nature of their work and their interactions.

Figure 7. Rwanda's Policing Network – Actors in Public Order Maintenance



## The Abanyerondo Patrolman

*Irondo* (a patrol, lit. to patrol, pl. *amarondo*), and *abanyerondo* (patrolmen, sing. *umunyerondo*) became established in the late 1990's as the North-Western Insurgency triggered a rise in traditional self-protection groups. *Abanyerondo* I met were for the most part otherwise without formal employment. They took odd jobs during the day to supplement their income from the night patrol (between 12,000 and 20,000 RWF / month depending on region and time spent in the role). Although women were not explicitly excluded from the *amarondo* role, in practice they were all men. Their ages varied, but typically patrol men were quite young, in their mid-twenties, or else much older, often in their fifties or sixties.

The employment of these men, at night, in uniform, is part of a government strategy to co-opt otherwise underemployed elements of the community into state-sanctioned roles. In the words of one senior Police Commissioner "*we don't just keep an eye on our youth, we give them something to do*".<sup>77</sup> The same logic applies to *abanyerondo* who are older but otherwise idle.

The routine of *abanyerondo* begins at 5 p.m. with a meeting at the cell administrative offices. Here they are joined by up to one hundred fellow patrolmen, approximately five from each *umudugudu* contained within the cell. These meetings are lively events, varying from cell to cell, in which patrolmen sing songs together and practice drill. Once assembled, the group is briefed by a representative of the military reserve force or a member of DASSO. They are handed their uniforms and nightsticks (*abanyerondo* never carry firearms), and reminded of the main rules of their job – that they have no 'right to punish', that they are forbidden from drinking alcohol on patrol, and that any illegal activity on their part will result in their immediate

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<sup>77</sup> Interview, Rogers Rutikanga, Kigali City Police Commander, Kigali Metropolitan Police Headquarters, 8 October 2014.

dismissal.<sup>78</sup> They are also briefed on any recent incidents in their area. *Abanyerondo* then patrol for twelve hours, taking rests on street corners or in newly constructed *irondo* posts (small wooden kiosks found in more affluent *imidugudu* and reminiscent of traditional police boxes in the UK).

Accompanying *abanyerondo* on their patrols, I observed their role in the community first hand. Night patrolmen find their work both exhausting and unstimulating. The bulk of patrols are uneventful. For the most part, *irondo* work consists of meandering walks along silent and poorly lit dirt tracks. Only in exceptional circumstances do they enter houses.

*Abanyerondo* observe the sounds and lights of night life seeping out from under the door frames or through the closed blinds of their neighbourhood. At least one member of the patrol carries a small portable radio, which provides some entertainment through the early hours. Otherwise *abanyerondo* make intermittent small talk and keep an ear out for the phone of their leader, which on eventful evenings guides them from complainant to complainant. At 5 a.m. the head of each patrol messages the cell executive secretary and the head of their *umudugudu*, most often the words '*bwakeye neza*' (lit. "dawn has arrived well"), the all-clear that marks the end of their shift.

There were occasional notable incidents, but accounts of them were mostly months old. Those most commonly described were drug offences, either discoveries of illegal brew, or small quantities of cannabis. The main exceptions occurred in neighbourhoods with clusters of small bars, where *irondo* patrols were called upon to intervene in occasional drunken brawls or fights between prostitutes competing for clients.

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<sup>78</sup> Drinking on the job is done only subtly and depends on the leniency of the patrol leader. Most *abanyerondo* can recount tales of fellow patrolmen dismissed, fined or otherwise disciplined by their CPC for drunkenness. As a result it is very rare to see *abanyerondo* drinking to the point of obvious intoxication.

The occasion for *abanyerondo* to use violence occurs very rarely in most communities. When patrolmen did speak of violent encounters, examples fell broadly into cases where they acted in self-defence, of suspects attempting to escape, or in the breaking up of disputes in the streets or in bars. The main exception was where suspects were caught in the act of crimes during the early hours in which judicial police patrols are temporarily suspended (approximately 3 a.m. to 4.30 a.m.), when *amarondo* patrols are expected to hold them until the police patrols restart and they can be handed over. With the justification of ‘preventing escape’, suspects are often beaten during this period.

The overzealous use of force by young men in otherwise mundane security roles is nothing new. Notably local communities and judicial police reacted to this in different ways. Community policing committee members either tacitly encouraged some degree of physical punishment or turned a blind eye to it. Sector police, on the other hand, uniformly condemned this behaviour. While they are bound to voice the official narrative, they also acted on it, enforcing a strict policy against the arbitrary use of violence by night patrols. Patrolmen were required to pay hospital bills in cases where suspects were badly injured. Examples circulated of cases where *abanyerondo* had been held, fined, or dismissed from the jobs for the use of unnecessary force. In two cases I encountered, patrolmen had done prison time for enacting this kind of street justice. It was notable that police tended to frame these policies as matters of discipline in which the night patrol had overstepped its boundaries, as one officer stated explicitly: “*that is not their [abanyerondo] job. Only we [police] have the right to punish*”.<sup>79</sup>

On occasion, members of the community (young men in each case) would run from the patrols I accompanied. The response of the *abanyerondo* was relaxed, and they rarely gave chase. These men were not in their own *umudugudu* but lived close

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<sup>79</sup> Interview, Judicial Police Constable, Kicukuru District, 28 August 2014.

enough to be recognised. They could have any number of reason for not wanting to be seen. Maybe it was drugs, maybe some breach of the Rwandan cultural code that might have social repercussions should they be identified (cases of unsanctioned romance were often cited). They were not likely to be thieves, and even less likely to be violent. Most often the patrolmen would look on and laugh: '*ni vijana tu*' (they're just youth). *Amarondo* protect their own turf, and are acutely aware of the boundaries of their jurisdiction. Once an intruder had left their neighbourhood, the matter was most often dropped.

For the most part, local residents ignored night patrolmen altogether. This was an odd response in streets where acquaintances normally exchange warm greetings. In conversation, residents would address *abanyerondo* as subordinates, asking them to perform small tasks around the neighbourhood, scolding them for the appearance of laziness, or requesting information about the resolution of local incidents. Their attitude is in part a reaction to the recent enforcement of *amarondo* payments, a fee of between 1,000 and 3,000 RWF per household per month. These payments have aroused some local resentment, especially where they do not accompany a corresponding reduction in petty theft. Consequently, members of the community regard patrolmen with an element of disdain.

The exception is the head of each *irondo*, who carries significantly more social standing than his subordinates. Very often he also serves as head of security on the *umudugudu* community policing committee, and is known locally by name. It was not unusual for *irondo* leaders to have past military experience, and all have undertaken some level of training under the Rwanda National Police. With respect to crime reporting, the *irondo* leader is the first point of call. He is telephoned in the case of incidents, and most residents have his phone number.

## The House Guard

The number of house guards has swollen with the growing middle class and the increasing presence of international staff in Rwanda's larger cities. No longer confined to the most elite suburbs, they can be found in properties far from concentrations of wealth. Similar to night patrolmen, house guards are almost exclusively male. They play a significant role in information sharing in cities, often at the headwaters of information flows.

Typically, these individuals live in small rooms connected to but insulated from the interiors of larger properties. Their daily routine involves a dawn start, after which they launch immediately into odd jobs: gardening, cooking and general upkeep around the property. Other than occasional visits to local markets, guards pass their day inside the compounds they protect. It is a solitary existence, living and eating alone, but one that is coveted in a population struggling with youth unemployment, especially in cities (see Sommers, 2012).

To break the solitude, guards engage in doorstep conversations. They stand on the thresholds of their gates sharing gossip and the occasional cigarette or disguised liquor with the guards of neighbouring properties, private security officers in the neighbourhood, and at night with passing *abanyerondo*. In this manner neighbourhood news, especially relating to crime, spreads quickly. Guards demonstrated a remarkable level of knowledge about their social surroundings. It was not uncommon for them to be able to describe in detail the occupants of upwards of twenty neighbouring properties.

This local knowledge can be double-edged, and petty theft on the part of house guards is one of the more common crimes in affluent areas.<sup>80</sup> In the cases I encountered, dishonest gate guards were most likely to be reported by their peers,

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<sup>80</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Criminal Investigations Department, Kacyiru (Kigali), 8 February 2015.

who either overheard them bragging in doorstep conversations, or who had been asked for assistance in criminal acts. As a safeguard against petty theft, many house guards have only been able to obtain their positions through personal connections. Often they are distant relatives of the property owner, or originate from the same village making them easily traceable. They understood that their misdemeanours would carry back to their places of origin, often where extended families were reliant on their income. As one guard explained: *“If I steal here I lose everything [...] I lose my house and my salary. Even if I am not arrested I cannot go back to my village. They will know what I have done”*.<sup>81</sup>

House guard pay is variable and is negotiated with the landlord or house occupier. In Kigali it can be counter-intuitively high in comparison to other security roles that confer greater societal status. A generous occupier can pay their guard comfortably more than an entry grade judicial police constable receives. Similarly, although the cost of hiring from private security companies is often significantly higher than the pay of private house guards, their actual take-home pay is roughly the same (approximately 30,000-50,000 RWF per month in Kigali and somewhat less outside of the capital). In many cases private house guards earn more than their uniformed counterparts in private companies.<sup>82</sup>

The presence of house guards is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the prevention of street crime. This is clear in other countries throughout the region, where even heavily armed security behind gates has seemingly no impact on the violence that engulfs the streets beyond them (see Steinberg, 2008). Nevertheless, in Rwanda’s larger cities these individuals play a significant role as witnesses and informants. They coordinate with the more mobile *amarondo* patrols. A network of house guards turns collections of properties into a more organic social unit that communicates internally, increasing resistance to criminal activities in the neighbourhood.

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<sup>81</sup> Interview, House Guard, Kigali (Kibagabaga), 12 February 2014.

<sup>82</sup> See Appendix 1 for comparative salaries in Rwandan security roles.

## The Head of the Umudugudu and the Community Policing Committee

In 2007, the elected heads of each *umudugudu* were put in charge of committees including four other members: a head of information (dissemination or 'sensitisation'), of welfare, of development and of security (doubling as the head of the local *irondo*). These village CPCs are made up of unpaid volunteers, with a relatively even split of men and women in positions of responsibility. In 2014, the number of CPC members trained by the RNP topped 100,000, approximately one for every one hundred Rwandan citizens. Where *irondo* patrols represent the enforcement body at the local level, CPCs provide monitoring and oversight. They have grown extremely rapidly: from June 2008 to June 2013, CPCs numbers were increased from 14,953 to 75,081 members. 1472 CPC members were trained at Nkumba Center from 2009 to the end of July 2013; while a further 23,371 went through less formal training at the district level (RNP, 2015). Those trained at Nkumba are known locally as *Imbanzabigwi*. This training is funded through the National *Itorero* Commission, a name adapted from the traditional military training schools of the pre-colonial period (see Chapter Three).

Brief CPC meetings are convened every morning and at any moment that notable incidents take place in the neighbourhood, while more substantial meetings are held on a bi-weekly basis. The committees are the first tier of policing in Rwanda that has a state endorsed capacity to punish offenders. This is limited to minor infractions (most often public order offences or breaches of household performance contracts). Penalties involve small fines or referral to *abunzi* community courts. With respect to public order infractions, particularly among youth, CPCs can also recommend that repeat offenders be transferred either to *Ingango* re-education camps or else to *Iwawa*, an island detention centre on Lake Kivu. This was generally a last resort, part

of a three or five-strike policy depending on the neighbourhood and the nature of the infraction.<sup>83</sup>

CPC meetings across the country are the source of a torrent of information that flows into the central police headquarters each day. According to the official RNP handbook on community policing:

- 1. Each committee submits a report to its immediate higher level on the problems identified and the possible measures taken. The report must be submitted not later than 24 hours after each session.*
- 2. Each committee submits a monthly, quarterly and annual report to the immediate higher level in hierarchy; each report is submitted within a period not exceeding 15 days after the end of the given period.*
- 3. The chairman of the committee shall always provide information to the nearest Police Unit, and is obliged to urge people in his locality to provide him/her or any other security organ with first-hand information.*
- 4. At the district level, the District Police Commander (DPC) coordinates the Sector Community Policing Committees in the District. At the provincial and Kigali city level, the Regional Police Commander (RPC) represents all committees in the Province or Kigali City.*
- 5. Every Regional Police Commander (RPC) collects information from all committees under his/her area of responsibility and submits them to the Commissioner General of Police.*
- 6. Reports of Community Policing Committees are analysed at the different set administrative levels.*

RNP Handbook on Community Policing (2010:17-18)

Heads of *imidugudu* are expected to be *inyangamugayo*, individuals with an upstanding reputation for moral decision making in their local community. They

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<sup>83</sup> Interview, head of security on CPC, Gisenyi, 3 November 2014.

receive certain perks, which may include health insurance, a toll-free phone to contact cell offices or practical tools such as bicycles to assist in their work. These, along with enhanced status in the neighbourhood make for clear incentives to accept an unpaid position. Ordinary CPC members do not receive these benefits, and it is more difficult to understand the incentives to undertake this demanding role. They are required to attend the Rwanda Peace and Leadership Centre in Nkumba for two weeks, and dedicate significant time and energy to the role without any tangible compensation.

In general, incentives to participate in local security vary from location to location. The differences are important because they influence the way that information is shared. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six, which unpacks local policing in the border town of Gisenyi, away from the centre of power. One of the emerging challenges in Rwandan crime prevention is how best to ensure continued community participation in these roles in the face of changing circumstances and shifting demographics.<sup>84</sup>

Away from the central hills of Kigali, the committee positions of welfare, development, and information tended to be in-name-only. This may be temporary as new structures expand out of the capital. For the time being the actual responsibilities of CPC members in towns such as Kamembe and Gisenyi were less differentiated. Each of them is expected to have an excellent knowledge of their respective portion of the *umudugudu*, approximately twenty households per member. When asked, many CPC members could offer detailed accounts of household goings-on in these small clusters – in particular where marital tensions existed or where young men were considered to be potentially troublesome. In many suburban *imidugudu* (particularly in more sensitive areas of the country) CPCs monitor the comings and goings of people passing through their neighbourhoods. Individuals planning to stay overnight are required to meet with the head of the

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<sup>84</sup> Interview, Market Stall Holder, Gisenyi, 18 November 2014.

*umudugudu* and sign a registration book, giving their name, place of residence and their local host. Hosts, in turn, are held responsible for the actions of their guests. When speaking of surveillance in Rwanda, this intra-communal monitoring is the core mechanism. It is both more penetrating and more ubiquitous than the clandestine monitoring often attributed to undercover government agents from the NISS, the CID or MINADEF (discussed in Chapter Five).

CPCs at the *umudugudu* level report to similar committees at the cell level. Cell CPCs are chaired by an executive secretary, the first salaried government employee in the Rwandan administrative hierarchy. Committees are made up of four positions: a youth representative, a women's representative, a security representative (often the head of a local *irondo*) and more recently one member of the military reserve (*inkeragutabara*), who is responsible for training on matters of security and for liaising with local military offices. Cell CPCs are the hub of local security, the forum in which communal forms of crime prevention first encounter individuals who are unambiguously representative of the state. They are overseen by police community liaison officers and report up to a security council that sits at the sector level.

### The Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and Work Based Organisations

In Rwanda's administrative hierarchy, the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) is the lowest branch of police representation. Members of the Rwanda National Police (most often at the rank of sergeant), CLOs work out of private offices, often within cell and sector administrative headquarters rather than from police posts. They answer to a District Community Liaison Officer (DCLO), another member of the police who is housed outside of the commissariat in district administrative headquarters. As well as interacting with the community at large, CLOs bridge the institutional divide between the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Internal Security. As with CPCs, the position was established in 2007 under the Ministerial Order No.02/07 on Community Policing (Republic of Rwanda, 2007). On the CLO position, which was created under his leadership as the first Inspector General of the RNP, Mugambage writes:

*[CLO methods] include: running seminars and workshops for the community; incorporating community policing programmes in schools; initiating crime and neighbourhood watch programmes; initiating community policing forums; [the] publication of brochures, pamphlets and posters; conducting surveys on the responsiveness of the community; developing partnerships with particular stakeholders in the community, [...] exhibiting police services at trade fairs and shows; and the use of the mass media in sensitization.*

Mugambage (2005:57)

CLOs are involved primarily in the dissemination of information, or “sensitisation” regarding new government programmes, as well as the coordination and monitoring of cell CPCs. They are also responsible for documenting individuals who occupy lower roles in the security hierarchy. The offices of CLOs with whom I interacted were lined with folders containing detailed inscription forms of all CPC and *irondo* members (see Appendix 1) in their area. New personnel are required to meet with their local CLO in order to register, and must provide information about their current residence, village of origin and next of kin. CLOs are contacted in the event of complaints made against *abanyerondo*, and mediate with *umudugudu* CPCs to determine appropriate penalties.

CLOs coordinate community policing strategies with elements of Rwandan civil society. They do this in two ways. The first is the establishment of anti-crime clubs in local secondary schools. In 2014, over half of Rwanda’s 1,500 schools had formed such clubs. These clubs have been set up in partnership with the First Lady Jeanette Kagame’s *Imbunto* Foundation. They meet weekly and students are instructed specifically on elements of the Rwandan penal code. Much attention is devoted to the discouragement of drug use (with an almost exclusive focus on cannabis) and the consumption of illegal home brews.

A CLO’s second point of engagement is through regular meetings with the representatives of work-based organisations, most notably with market trader

cooperatives, the association of taxi-moto operators and local money lender associations. The chief purpose of these interactions is to encourage members of the organisations to operate within the law and to report any malpractices by their peers. CLOs exert significant influence. They are able to enforce the exclusion of individuals from the cooperatives, effectively rendering them jobless.

The relationship between CLOs and taxi-moto drivers is particularly revealing regarding the government's interaction with work-based organisations. Drivers are at once a threat to public order and a practical tool for information gathering. Most often young men, they live on narrow and uncertain profit margins cut into by purchases of fuel. The nature of the work and of competition for passengers encourages traffic violations and at times violent confrontations between drivers. Taxi-moto drivers have been implicated, more so than other groups, in drug dealing as a means of supplementing their income.<sup>85</sup>

At the same time, the strategic importance of taxi-moto drivers in information gathering is clear. They number over one thousand in Gisenyi, a town of just over one hundred thousand in total. Drivers are constantly mobile, entering areas that police patrols do not go. In the event of crimes or road accidents they are known to seek out patrol officers and transport them free of charge to the site of the incident. The popular perception of these drivers reflects the government's own attitude towards them. They are at once *vijana*, troublesome youth, and *maneco*, government informants. Which of these categories they belong to depends on the individual in question.

Police liaison officers frequently brief the leaders of the taxi-moto organisations. Occasionally there are government crackdowns in which vehicles are confiscated if drivers lack appropriate documentation. One prominent feature of almost any police post in Rwanda is its fleet of confiscated motorbikes. As with other elements of

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<sup>85</sup> Interview, DPC Karangwa, Rubavu District Police Commander, Rubavu District Commissariat, 24 October 2014.

Rwandan society, registration is a central part of the government's strategy of control. Moto drivers are registered with the police traffic department, and are required to wear numbered uniforms and helmets as identification. In larger cities, plain-clothes police officers monitor the main collection points of taxi-moto drivers, conducting random checks for drugs and licences. Attempts to control the association do involve some positive encouragement, and the RNP has been known to make significant financial donations in support of its membership. While I was conducting research in Gisenyi, the Inspector General of Police arrived unannounced to meet with taxi-moto drivers. Among other things, he offered 2,000,000 RWF to support their organisation. The administration of such pledges is overseen by the local liaison officers. The taxi-moto organisation of Gisenyi has since formed an anti-crime club of its own, which meets weekly to share information with the local CLO.

#### The Judicial Officer and the Police Post

'Blue uniform' judicial police are the front-line state representatives responsible for crime prevention in Rwanda. My focus here lies with the lower ranks of the RNP: constables, corporals, sergeants and chief sergeants, and the officer positions of Assistant Inspector (AIP), Inspector (IP) and Chief Inspector (CIP). Individuals at these ranks manage and operate district police stations and smaller sector police posts. They are still widely referred to as 'judicial' police, despite the official merger with the communal police and the *gendarmerie* in 2000 (Karamaga, 1999; see Chapter Three).

Daily duties are split between enforcement roles involving local patrols and administrative roles keeping up the basic functioning of the police post. Around the station, the typical day is spent dealing with complainants and people visiting suspects held in the station's cells. The Rwandan police post is very much a public space, and throughout the day large groups gather in dedicated waiting areas to be seen by judicial officers or DASSO representatives. Among these duty officers is one representative of the police Criminal Investigations Department and one dedicated women's officer, identifiable by her white sash.

Most police posts have lists of strategic sites or 'hotspots', which are written up on the walls of police station entrance hallways. These include local schools, NGO offices, major crossroads, government buildings, bus stations, banks, hotels, factories, memorial sites, health centres, markets, power plants and churches. Patrols are organised around these sites, and the more important ones host dedicated guard shifts. Patrol officers carry automatic weapons. Although driven to the start of their patrol routes, they work most often on foot. Sector police posts are contactable through a central phone exchange housed in the Kigali headquarters, and through the emergency number 112. Specialist numbers also exist for particular concerns, including 113 for traffic accidents, 3512 for issues of gender based violence and 3511 to report abuses by police officers.

Commanding officers at sector police posts receive a constant stream of situation reports ('sit reps') through their phones. They have recently adopted online text messaging services (particularly WhatsApp), which has allowed for the cheap transfer of information even where phones are not connected by toll-free government schemes. It has also made it possible for messages to be accompanied with photographs. Sitting with sector police post commanders, it was remarkable how active this stream of information has become. At busy times of day individuals could receive several messages a minute. Officers showed me photographs of suspects in possession of drugs, vats of allegedly illegal brew, and minor car accidents moments after they had been photographed by judicial patrols, *irondo* leaders or CPC members. Through the cooperation of CPCs and *amarondo* patrols, they gathered information and coordinated security, including ordering arrests, without leaving the police post itself.

More direct police interventions do occur, but only in exceptional circumstances where local forms of crime prevention have proved inadequate. One notable example is the RNP's recent approach to organised crime around Nyabugogo bus station, the central transport hub in Kigali. Nyabugogo is a bustling urban centre, a crowded ring of shops, ticket offices, and major roads that surrounds a stage of

several hundred vehicles, and, at busy times, several thousand people. The disorderly environment is attractive to petty criminals. In 2011 and 2012 a group of young men calling themselves the 'Marines' (because they swam through storm drains to escape arrest) began to conduct more daring and organised thefts.

Security within the bus station is handled privately by a cooperative of bus companies. When it became evident that private security guards were being overwhelmed, and that petty criminals had begun carrying weapons, the RNP intervened in force. After a period of plain-clothes investigation, police conducted a series of raids on the bus station and surrounding underground drains, cutting off the drainage ditches and arresting anyone attempting to flee through them. Ticket touts and local shop owners were called upon to identify repeat offenders, and crime rates at the site dropped significantly.

Interviewees recounted similar police reactions to cross-border car theft at the Ugandan border and to drug related violence in Nyamirambo in the early 2000s. According to these accounts, the cases involved brutal examples of the state's capacity for violence through short, well-informed operations by armed judicial police. Perhaps contrary to outside perspectives of Rwandan security, operations such as these are rare. In the words of one senior officer: "*The best operations only need to happen once. If we did this more they would find ways to fight us [...] they would also come to hate us. We make our point and we leave the rest to [...] the community*".<sup>86</sup> Infrequent demonstrations of hard state security capacity linger in the popular consciousness, deter organised criminal activity and reassure unarmed community security that a safety net exists if situations deteriorate to the point where their own roles become dangerous. The inertia of these interventions in deterring crime lingers long after control has been returned to more local forms of security (discussed in Chapter Five).

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<sup>86</sup> Interview, Senior Security Officer, Kigali, 20 November 2014.

## The District Administrative Security Services Organ (DASSO)

DASSO replaced Local Defence Units in May 2013. DASSO officers are commonly demobilised soldiers, and are at times still referred to as *inkeragutabara* or 'reserve force' officers. They are armed with nightsticks rather than firearms and are identifiable by their pale green uniforms. Officially, the new programme was framed as an "antidote to the duplication of responsibilities among the multiplicity of community neighbourhood watch initiatives, local defence forces and reservists, all of which are part of the overarching community policing policy" (RNP, 2014:120), although a much more common unofficial narrative was that they were the direct result of the failings of the LDFs:

*We had a problem [with the LDFs], we recognised it ... and so we fixed it. They went from red to green and the system is working much better now.*

Interview, Senior Police Officer, Kigali, 15 January 2015

DASSO is not a part of the Rwanda National Police, and operates under the remit of the Ministry for Local Government (MINILOC), rather than the Ministry of Internal Security. Although its command structure intersects with the Rwandan Defence Forces through Joint Operations Centres, DASSO answers officially to district mayoral offices.

Although some overlap of duties remains, DASSO is expected "to leave space for other crime prevention initiatives at the lower administration levels" (Law No.26, Republic of Rwanda, 2010b). District officers' first duty is to guard government administrative offices, in particular district headquarters. DASSO reproduce a number of the functions of judicial police. They have the power to make arrests and to deliver suspects to local police posts. Similarly they perform a number of administrative functions around the police station, and are involved in the documentation and questioning of individuals being detained. Like judicial officers, DASSO patrol strategic sites and provide regular situation reports to the commanding police officers at sector posts.

In practice, the role of DASSO officers whom I encountered was predominantly a supportive one. They were called upon in cases where disputes became too heated for local CPCs to handle without the presence of uniformed state officials. These often occurred in more remote regions where judicial police were spread thinly.

Two things stand out with respect to DASSO. First, the programme is new, still in the process of being rolled out from the capital. DASSO numbers remain relatively low and it was evident that their place in the local security apparatus was still being negotiated during the time of research. In particular, a great deal of attention is being put on distancing DASSO from past Local Defence Units. Second, elements of DASSO's role duplicated those of other positions under a separate command hierarchy. This is neither an accident nor inefficient. The hierarchies intersect further up the chain at the Joint Operations Centres at both the district and national level. The duplication of command chains extending down to the local level provides internal mechanisms of oversight and verification. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, state security representatives at the local level in Rwanda are themselves under intense scrutiny, particularly with respect to anti-corruption measures. The introduction of DASSO alongside cell CPCs and judicial police offers one more lens through which the state can keep an eye on its own.

### The Private Security Guard

The last ten years have seen a surge in the registration of private security companies in Rwanda, especially in Kigali. This is in part a response to government demobilisation drives, which have shrunk the official size of the RDF by up to thirty per cent since 2000. The private security sector has absorbed many demobilised soldiers. New companies must register with the Ministry of Internal Security through the Rwanda National Police. They are required to demonstrate that their employees have undergone sufficient training and that the proposed uniform does not too closely resemble any state uniform already in use.

The most visible private security companies in Rwanda include Aegispro, KK Security, Intersec Security, Wide Vision Security, RGL Security and Top Sec Security. Alongside these, a range of smaller private companies have also been registered as security branches of the institutions that they guard. To give some indication of their number, Aegispro alone employs some 4000 security personnel country-wide, 3000 of whom are based in Kigali. This is roughly the same number as other organisations including KK Security and Top Sec Security, while Intersec Security is somewhat larger with approximately 5,500 security personnel across the country.

Article 41 of the Law Detailing Police Powers (Law No.46, Republic of Rwanda, 2010b) states that the Rwanda National Police will oversee private security companies and provide them with advice on the improvement of their performance. In practice, private security personnel are in constant contact with judicial police in their sector. They salute passing police patrols and share situation reports with sector police posts in the event of incidents. As with *amarondo* patrols, private security guards are licensed to detain suspects, but only until they can be turned over to judicial police.

Intersec Security stands apart from other PSCs in Rwanda. It is administered by Crystal Ventures, a government parastatal linked to the RDF, and unlike other organisations its guards are licensed to carry firearms (see Booth & Golooba-Mutebi, 2012). The organisation is contracted more than other firms to protect government buildings and financial institutions and employs a higher proportion of demobilised soldiers. The popular perception of Intersec is that it is a *de facto* branch of state security linked to the RPF.

Most companies have two basic ranks for their security personnel: inspectors and supervisors. Starting salaries are between 40,000 and 50,000 RWF per month, and increase with promotion and good performance (see Appendix 1). Although comparable to the starting salaries of judicial police constables and DASSO officers, private security personnel do not enjoy the same perks with respect to subsidised health insurance or free accommodation in local barracks.

Perhaps the key difference between private security guards and other elements of the security apparatus in Rwanda is that they are stationary, confined to the properties or institutions that they are charged with guarding. Aegispro goes one step further, with its guards required to stay physically inside the compounds or institutions they guard, rather than be posted in the street outside as with other organisations. Shifts last up to twelve hours, and tend to be uneventful. Accounts of past incidents date back months or years, most often cases in which suspected criminals attempted to enter the property and fled once spotted. Private security guards are a crude deterrent, as well as one further element of Rwandan society who monitor full-time their immediate surroundings.

### The Soldier and the Military Patrol

The creation of the RNP in 2000 was intended to reduce overlapping responsibilities between different security agencies, and to free up the RDF from the task of everyday crime prevention in order to focus on threats to state security and terrorism. The fact that the senior command of the RNP was drawn originally from the military, and that senior military officers have on occasion been transferred into the police to address particular issues or to fill capacity shortfalls, is testament to the division of labour between the two organisations. This is in contrast to accounts of other state security apparatuses across the African continent, in which the police and the army overlap significantly in their everyday duties (Owen, 2014), competing for the personal rents that can be extracted through police work (Hills, 2009). The result is that soldiers of the RDF play only a limited role in preventing crime in Rwanda's cities.

Among the different branches of the Rwandan security network, the RDF commands the highest status, and on the streets soldiers are treated with deference by private security guards, police and DASSO officers.<sup>87</sup> In practice, soldiers perform a relatively

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<sup>87</sup> Despite a general subservience to the military on the part of the RNP, police officials were quick to cite Chapter 4, Article 21 of Law No.46/2010 (Establishing Police Powers), which guarantees their right to "arrest any soldier involved in the commission of an offence" (Republic of Rwanda, 2010b). There

similar role to that of private security guards, protecting sensitive government infrastructure, key government offices and main road intersections. They are capable of rapidly closing down the country's road network if called upon to do so, something that has occurred in recent years, notably in the immediate aftermath of grenade attacks in the capital. At 3 p.m. in most of Rwanda's major cities, military foot patrols depart from central barracks and do rounds of commercial districts before returning to base. The sight of at times fifty or more heavily armed soldiers amounts to a visible display of force, a reminder of the state's capacity for violence. But notably these troops rarely enter residential districts, and tend to avoid any interaction with the population, who are generally content to do the same, simply getting out of their way. As one military officer remarked: *"That is not their job. If they do see something [criminal activity], maybe if it is very serious they will stop it [...] if not, they keep walking. And they call the police"*.<sup>88</sup>

When the military does become involved in policing issues, it tends to be following up on intelligence provided by the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) and relating to issues of internal security, counter-insurgency or terrorism.<sup>89</sup> In general, soldiers are detached from the broad apparatus of crime control that connects *umudugudu* leaders, patrol leaders and local police in a network of personal relationships. They communicate with other patrols and with their commanding officers by military radio, rather than cell phone, and often have little attachment to the communities through which they patrol.

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have been some notable examples of this in recent years, including the arrest of two ranking RDF generals by junior police officers, see The New Times (2006) Rusagara, Kaka ruling for September 21: <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/Printer/2007-09-06/1110/>, accessed 10 July 2016.

<sup>88</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Remera (Kigali), 6 February 2015.

<sup>89</sup> Anecdotally, I encountered cases of soldiers conducting special investigations in the manner of the police where elite interests were concerned, such as recovering goods stolen from ranking RPF officials.

### 4.3 Incidents and Interactions

On arriving in Rwanda I began to compile accounts of past criminal incidents. I also asked individuals to contact me in the immediate aftermath of crimes so I could observe the way that these events were handled. This approach, although a supplement to interview and ethnographic data, yielded many useful observations. The examples below have been selected either as representative of my encounters between 2013 and 2015, or as otherwise particularly revealing of specific elements of policing. Here are many of the hallmarks that directed my research: the networked interactions between uniformed and non-uniformed groups, the relatively peripheral role of state police, and the importance of anonymity.

Rather than to stand as empirical data in their own right, these cases were selected to illustrate observations and information supported by interviews and informal discussions. While the plural of anecdote is not evidence, they offer a more visual description of crime and crime prevention as I experienced it, than interview analysis alone. On occasion, I would use these incidents as conversational prompts to elicit reactions and reassure me that I had understood what had happened.

## Incident 1. A break-in in Kacyiru

August 2014

*A man turns off the King Faisal road in Kacyiru and immediately begins behaving suspiciously. He scans the dirt track for onlookers and climbs the garden wall of a property known to house foreign staff. Peering inside he spots a guard, drops back to the street and walks away. Unknown to him, a gardener in the compound opposite is watching through a hole in the fence. It is his second attempt to enter the property, and both times he has been spotted.*

*The man is caught on his third attempt. It is 3 a.m. and the night guard, colluding with a friend, is pretending to sleep at the back of the property. As the intruder climbs the wall, they surprise him, drop him to the ground and hold him. Looking out at their dimly lit driveway, the house's occupants presume two intruders are attacking the one guard. They call the emergency number of the Rwanda National Police (112). An officer at the metropolitan headquarters picks up but it is difficult to communicate directions. The house is deep in a maze of unsignposted dirt roads on one side of the Kacyiru ridge. The duty-officer informs the Remera Sector police station of a disturbance and says they will send a patrol to the area.*

*Meanwhile the guards, holding their prisoner, have called the local ironde night patrol. In a few minutes the intruder is encircled by seven men. They ask him questions and beat him periodically. By the time I arrive with a soldier from the local military police base the situation is relatively calm. The chief of the local ironde, a demobilised soldier, sits on a stool above the intruder and is demanding his personal details. His name, his family, his umudugudu (village). The man has no identification card and is resisting giving away personal information. Despite this he answers questions about politics – the names of ministers and of administrative structures (umudugudu, akagari, umurenge, akarere and so on). These are tests of whether he is indeed Rwandan, or belongs to the much derided foreign enemy indiscriminately referred to as 'FDLR' in the city. The other night watchmen look with derision at their prisoner.*

*They lean on the walls in weatherbeaten brown uniforms, smoking cigarettes and gripping their nightsticks. It is clear that the events are entertaining for them, a break from the mundanity of the night shift. The soldier relaxes too; he has seen this before. He reassures me and the occupants of the house, passes on his phone number in case of future incidents and returns to his own post.*

*At 4:30 a.m. the police patrols restart in Kacyiru. The intruder is given a cloth to wipe the blood from his face – abanyerondo delivering wounded captives to the police may face fines or the loss of their paid position, particularly where victims are hospitalised. He is bruised but not seriously hurt. He swears at his captors and is handed over to blue uniformed judicial officers, taken to a local police post and held in a cell. His arrest is recorded and he is subsequently released – ultimately his only infraction was to climb over a wall. The head of his umudugudu is informed of the case and advised to keep an eye on the man in future. To all parties, this was the expected outcome. The house guards later joke about the incident: “hatarudi hapa”. He won’t come back here.*

This incident, which occurred relatively early in my fieldwork, provided some important insights into the operation of crime prevention in Rwandan neighbourhoods. I draw the reader’s attention to:

1. The vigilance of the gardener across the street, his ability to identify an individual who was not a resident of the neighbourhood, and his reaction to report suspicious behaviour to the house guards responsible for protecting the property. This speaks to a more general observation, that even in the quietest residential streets of Rwanda’s cities, it is extremely rare to be alone and unobserved.
2. The absence of police patrols in Rwandan cities between the hours of 3 a.m. and 4.30 a.m., during which policing is handled almost exclusively by neighbourhood patrols. Travelling that night to the site of the incident, I expected to encounter government patrols on the major cross-roads, from whom I could solicit help. There were none. Nonetheless, when the emergency number of the RNP was called the

system worked extremely well. The occupants of the property were immediately put in contact with the district command of the police (at the Remera police station). Nevertheless, due to the lack of house numbers and street signs it was not possible to direct a patrol car accurately to the house.

3. The nature of the violence involved: in effect, this was a case of mob justice moderated by the knowledge that serious injury to the arrested man could incur penalties for the local patrolmen. On my arrival at the scene, the patrolmen were already in the process of trying to mask the man's injuries, which appeared to be relatively superficial. I later enquired at the Kigali King Faisal hospital, where administrative staff at the emergency ward told me that admittances for individuals seriously injured by patrolmen were rare, and were followed up by officers from the police criminal investigations department.<sup>90</sup>

4. The nature of the questioning: this took place principally to determine the identity of the man who had been caught, whether he was a petty criminal or someone with links to committed anti-government organisations.

5. The repercussions: ostensibly these may appear minimal but they were important. The man was held in a police post cell and released shortly afterwards. According to members of the *irondo* that captured him, however, the consequences will be more enduring, particularly in terms of bringing him to the attention of local authorities in his own neighbourhood. As one member of the patrol commented: "*Now they will all know that he is maybe a thief, and they will be watching him ... if it happens again maybe he will go ... to Iwawa*<sup>91</sup>".<sup>92</sup>

6. The reaction of the local community: they strongly condoned the actions of their local patrol, including the use of violence. As one neighbour commented: "*we do not*

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<sup>90</sup> Informal discussion, hospital staff member, King Faisal Hospital, Kigali (Kacyiru), 29 August, 2014.

<sup>91</sup> A detention and re-education centre set on an island of Lake Kivu.

<sup>92</sup> Informal discussion, Amarondo Night Patrolmen, Kigali (Kacyiru), 20 August 2014.

*know what [he] would do if he came into the house. Maybe he has a weapon. [The guards] did a very good job – if I was there, even me, I would have hit him!”.*<sup>93</sup> The incident below shows a different set of circumstances in which the relationship between a patrol and the local community was more strained.

## Incident 2. A fight in Kimironko

December 2014

*A heated verbal exchange has led to a scuffle in the back rooms of a bar near Kimironko market (Kigali). The larger of two men chases the other, who is taunting him, in circles around the pool table. The patrons laugh and continue drinking, but the mood changes when the larger man throws a heavy pool ball across the bar. There is a general clicking of tongues. When he attempts to restrain the assailant, an elderly man whose job is to sit and watch the front gate is thrown to the ground. He falls through a plastic table that collapses its umbrella and sends a tray of bottles onto the floor.*

*By this point everyone in the bar is on their feet. A friend of the larger man clasps him by the shoulders and tries to calm him down, but is pushed aside as the taunting goes on. Two men in irondo uniforms enter. The aggressor swears at them, pointing indignantly at the smaller man. It is clear that he knows the patrolmen personally, but his respect for them does not run much deeper than that of an unarmed man facing two with nightsticks.*

*There are five minutes of heated discussion, in which the larger man continues to lunge at the smaller. He grabs the shirt of a patrolman, who waves a cell phone at him – a threat of bringing in higher authorities. Before this can happen, the bar*

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<sup>93</sup> Informal discussion, local residents, Kigali (Kacyiru), 20 August 2014.

*manager – a man in a suit, drinking with two wealthy colleagues – shouts at the crowd to leave. Evicted, they disperse, filtering out into the street.*

*There are a few verbal parting shots, violent threats, before the assailant flags down a motorbike taxi and leaves the scene. The smaller man crosses the street and approaches two soldiers on patrol. He points to the motorbike, and tells them that if he dies that evening, they will know who is responsible. A few of the other patrons support the man's story. The soldiers glance uninterested at the disappearing tail light, smile at the man and continue wordlessly on their patrol. He shouts thank you repeatedly after them in English, and the crowd laughs.*

*Some time afterwards, a police patrol arrives at the scene and questions the bar manager about the disturbance. To my knowledge there were no repercussions for any of the parties involved.*

1. It is worth noting the range of actors involved in this case: other patrons at the bar, the door guard, the night patrolmen, the bar manager, the military patrol, and finally the national police, all of whom played some role in the resolution of this situation. This example typifies the rapid escalation of policing in Rwanda, as additional branches of the security hierarchy become involved. What was notable, in this and similar incidents, is that bringing in reinforcements takes place at a person-to-person level, very often by cell phone. Communicating with representatives of the 'next tier' up the security hierarchy was rarely a case of calling 'the police' or 'a patrol' so much as contacting a named officer or patrolman, known personally to the individual making the call.

2. The willingness of the bar patrons, all Hutu and to some degree publicly intoxicated, to greet a Tutsi military patrol and solicit their help: I was surprised by how comfortable locals appeared to be in communicating with armed soldiers, who are a regular sight at the sector's major crossroads and close to the Kimironko covered market, which is a security hotspot and considered a potential target for terrorist grenade attacks. One of the bar patrons commented afterwards: "We are

*used to the soldiers now. We take care of our own business and they take care of theirs ... they do not interfere in the street unless something is very serious”.*<sup>94</sup>

3. The lack of respect for the night patrolmen: they were unable to compel the aggressor to stop, and were abruptly evicted from the property by its manager along with the rest of the crowd. In my observations, this was typical. For security representatives with official uniforms *abanyerondo* command very little legitimacy or status. One informant commented: *“these amarondo, they have no power. Their only power is their stick ... If they make trouble for you, you can say ‘[expletive] you’ and go ... only when the police come do you have to do what they say”.*<sup>95</sup>

### Incident 3. An arrest in Kicukiro

February 2015

*An irondo patrol in Nibuye cell has received complaints from local residents about young men smoking cannabis in the unlit back streets of their umudugudu. The issue is raised at the 5 p.m. meeting of security officers at the cell headquarters, where other patrol leaders attest to seeing the same group during their rounds. When chased, the young men run for the small irrigation channel separating the hillside communities of Nibuye and Nyakabanda.*

*The meeting is coordinated by an officer of DASSO, who asks for details about where exactly the sightings were made. He discusses a strategy with the heads for three patrols in Nibuye, then calls the Nyakabanda cell headquarters. If the boys are seen again, the irondo is to send around a series of messages to a group of recipients set up on the internet text messaging service WhatsApp, wait for different patrols to move between them and the swampy water front, and then arrest them.*

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<sup>94</sup> Informal discussion, Hutu youth, Kigali (Kimironko), 1 December 2014.

<sup>95</sup> Informal discussion, Taxi driver, Kigali (Kimihurua), 15 December 2015.

*Later that evening, the plan is put into effect. Two teenagers are held by the patrolmen. A photograph of each, holding up the illegal drug, is sent around the policing group. The DASSO officer, who has spent the evening on duty at the district headquarters, arrives with a colleague to escort the young men out of the neighbourhood. They forward a message to the local police post, and a police pick-up truck meets them on a main road nearby.*

*The boys are held in a cell at the police post, where they are identified and visited by family members. They are later referred to an Ingando re-education camp.*

I include this example in part because of how typical it was of patrol activities that I witnessed. Again, several points are worth noting:

1. This arrest involved the coordination of some twenty patrolmen, as well as DASSO and judicial police officers. It offered a break from routine for those involved, since most neighbourhood patrols are uneventful. This gave rise to an enthusiasm on the part of the patrol leaders that was accompanied by what appeared to be an exaggerated sense of mission, as they described their role in *“saving the community”*.<sup>96</sup>
2. It brought up the entrenched popular narrative condemning drug consumption, which was described as *“completely destructive”* and *“not Rwandan”*.<sup>97</sup>
3. This case offers some insight into the geography of anonymity in Rwanda’s cities. It was striking that young men seeking to evade the authorities would flee into uninhabited areas rather than seek to blend into densely populated neighbourhoods.

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<sup>96</sup> From the Swahili *‘Kuwaokoa jamii’*.

<sup>97</sup> Informal Discussion, Irondo Patrol Leader, Nibuye Cell, 2 February 2015.

#### Incident 4. A shooting in Nyamasheke

The following account comes from police press statements made by the spokesperson of the Police Department of Public Relations, Celestin Twahirwa, on 30 September 2015.<sup>98</sup>

September 2015

*The Executive Secretary of Gasayo cell, Felix Ndagijimana, has asked for police protection while conducting a routine inspection of the Nyamugari umudugudu. Accompanied by two police officers, he encounters a man, Zakary Niyibizi, illegally constructing a house on land designated as 'high risk' due to the danger of landslides.*

*In line with district regulations, Niyibizi is told to stop and to demolish the parts of the structure that had already been built. He refuses and responds violently, threatening the Executive Secretary with a machete. A fight breaks out, and members of the local community come to the support of Niyibizi. The cell leader is assaulted and tied up, and the police officers fire repeatedly into the air in an attempt to disperse the crowd.*

*This fails, and one of the officers is seized by the crowd, who attempt to disarm him and tear at his uniform. The other officer shoots and kills Niyibizi, whom he claims was threatening the life of the executive secretary. At this point the crowd disperses, giving the officers time to pick up the unconscious Ndagijimana and carry him out of the umudugudu.*

*They fall into an ambush at a bridge a kilometre away, where they are encircled and threatened with machetes. The officers shoot twice, injuring two more residents, in*

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<sup>98</sup> An account of the incident can be found online through Makuruki News (2015) 'Police Reasons on Nyamasheke Shooting Incident: <http://makuruki.rw/en/spip.php?article526>, accessed 15 September 2016.

*the thigh and lower leg respectively (one would later die on route to Bushenge hospital), before they are rescued by backup from the Karengera Police post.*

Upon returning to Rwanda in December 2015, I discussed these events with senior officials. The case highlights several important points:

1. The example was exceptional during my time in Rwanda: the police response, especially that a specialist team from the Kigali CID was sent to the site, speaks to the infrequency of similar events, as do the press statements made by ranking officials.

2. The situation arose out of several of the most incendiary issues that play out at the state-society interface in Rwanda. That the cell leader was accompanied in his daily duties by a police escort reflects the fact that there was already a strained relationship between the community of Gasayo Cell, which is in the relatively remote lake-front district of Nyamasheke, and its state-appointed executive secretary. The local standing of a cell executive secretary is a litmus test for more generalised popular anti-government resentments in small Rwandan communities, as discussed in Chapter Five. A further complication in this case was the fact that the executive secretary found himself in conflict with residents over the highly sensitive issue of land rights.

3. The demand to dismantle what had already been constructed is in keeping with other examples of state over-reach in Rwanda, described elsewhere (see Ingelaere, 2010). In this case it was not accompanied by the enforcement capacity to actually see it through. Furthermore, the case is a disturbing example of what can happen when residents are not adequately informed of changing government regulations. According to local accounts, Niyibizi did not know that he was building on a prohibited site.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Informal Discussion, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 18 December 2015.

4. The resulting violence, and most acutely the ‘ambush at the bridge’: this constitutes a nightmare scenario for the police and for the RPF more generally. Not only did the local community rise up violently against the state agents present, but they made use of the intra-communal cohesion and rapid means of communication inside the *umudugudu* to coordinate an attack on police officers.

#### 4.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined the roles and responsibilities of individuals who work in the lower tiers of Rwanda’s security apparatus. It establishes the policing duties ascribed to different groups by Rwandan law and illustrates how these duties are performed in practice. My aim has been to highlight the breadth of different actors involved in maintaining public order at the local level in Rwanda and to give an indication of their relative status.

In raw numbers, uniformed state police in Rwanda are vastly outnumbered by policing actors drawn from and legitimised by the small communities in which they work. The actual *performance* of controlling violence, a function tied inexorably to the *idea* of the state, falls to local actors. The RNP designates the limits of this performance, and coordinates these groups into a coherent system of crime prevention.

The relationships between these groups are illustrated through particular incidents selected from my fieldwork. The majority of law enforcement work in small Rwandan communities, as in the first three incidents, relates to petty theft, assault and minor drugs offenses. The fourth incident is altogether different, and concerns an atypical case in which community relations with the police broke down to the point of violence. The relationships and activities in these incidents are analysed in greater depth in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FIVE - POLICING SMALL COMMUNITIES

### 5.1 State, Violence, and Crime in Rwanda

This chapter builds on the empirical materials in Chapter Four to investigate how state structures and local agency interact to keep urban neighbourhoods in Rwanda safe. These interactions reflect issues at the heart of Rwandan political governance: state reach, the control of violence, and the maintenance of public order. My focus is on micro-level violence (see Kalyvas, 2006) related to street crime: murder, theft, mugging, assault, home-invasion, public order infractions, drug offences and other crimes driven by opportunism.<sup>100</sup> Such crimes have plagued other cities across the region (see Anderson, 2002; UN ODC, 2015).<sup>101</sup>

I argue that there are three principal drivers at work to prevent these crimes in Rwanda: (1) the country's hierarchical security apparatus and the way it extends into civil society, (2) the construction of small, self-contained community units that are intolerant of anonymity, and (3) an aversion to social disharmony on the part of both state and non-state actors, in large part resulting from the country's recent violent history.

Rwanda's policing system combines elements of intelligence-led policing, community policing, and zero-tolerance policing into a unique arrangement. The system benefits from the country's social composition, demographics, and from a cultural code, the *umuco nyarwanda*. At its core, it relies on information and the way that it moves into

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<sup>100</sup> Locally '*ibyaha*', or in Swahili '*jina*'. Commonly, discussants would use the Swahili term '*dhambi*', literally 'sin' to describe these activities, the statistical occurrences of which are shown in Chapter Three.

<sup>101</sup> Gender-based or domestic violence I deemed too particular to include without the focused research that these crimes warrant, especially in the Rwandan context where government approaches to GBV were being overhauled during my stay (the establishment of the Isange One-Stop Centre and a toll-free police emergency number for victims of GBV are two examples of the new measures being brought in). Although some references will be made to police practices of combatting GBV, in general its prevention in Rwanda involves a different set of individuals and strategies to the approach to street crime, and was regrettably beyond the scope of this research.

the policing hierarchies to inform state authorities who can then intervene accordingly. The movement of information is facilitated by an efficient, professionalised state security apparatus, but depends on a significant degree of non-state, often voluntary, participation in policing at the local level.

## 5.2 Rwanda's Security Apparatus

*The RNP shall collaborate with other security organs, judicial and public organs as well as other organs [...] that may assist in accomplishing its mission and share information with them in order to maintain public order and security.*

Law on Police Powers, Chapter 5 Article 40 (Republic of Rwanda, 2010b)

*Policing in Rwanda has taken the path of high visibility [...] preventative patrols, timely intervention and rapid response [are] a source of fulfilment for communities expending time and energy on activities directed at ensuring law and order.*

'Policing a Rapidly Changing Post-Conflict Society' (RNP, 2014:118)

As these extracts suggest, the RNP takes pride in promoting a more preventative, less reactionary approach to crime prevention. The organisation emphasises the importance of a consistent presence in the streets, while promoting a form of intelligence-led policing based on the timely movement of information up a hierarchical chain of command.

At every administrative tier of the Rwandan state hierarchy, policing representatives parallel local government representatives. Table 9 (below) shows the various points of contact. Through this structure, the RNP has partitioned the population into small policing units. It coordinates the activities of non-state policing groups in the clusters of *imidugudu* that make up the cell administrative tier.

Table 9. Police and Local Government Representatives

Administrative Unit	Local Government and Civil Society Representatives	Policing Representatives
Nation	Central Government	Rwanda National Police Headquarters Joint Operations Centre (JOC)
District	Mayor	District Police Commanders DASSO Commanding Officers
Sector	Sector Executive Secretary Church Leaders Youth Cooperative Leaders Work Cooperative Leaders	Sector Police Station Commanders Community Police Liaison Officers
Cell	Cell Executive Secretary	Cell CPC members
<i>Umudugudu</i>	Head of <i>Umudugudu</i>	CPC members Irondo Night Patrol members Private Guards

### Leadership and Hierarchy

Rwandans from all tiers of the internal security network consistently singled out effective leadership as an essential component of crime control. Many security officers interviewed consider themselves to be part of a larger mission of national development, one that is tied to a sense of patriotism (*gukunda igihugu*). They were generally appreciative of the consistency of message between their orders and the edicts of the national project which are articulated through government broadcasts, notably presidential speeches:<sup>102</sup>

*We are doing what we need to do, because of the love of our country. We want to rebuild it and make it safe [...] It is how the President says, and it is what we do.*

Interview, Abanyerondo Patrol Leader, Gisenyi, 14 November 2014

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<sup>102</sup> The dominance of the executive branch of the RPF undoubtedly plays a role in holding together the party and producing a consistent direction in public policy (Hayman, 2008, see also Hills 2007 on the governance of police departments according to presidential preference).

*Without the patriotism of our citizens and the effective leadership [...] at the highest level, we could not have security in Rwanda.*

Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Kacyiru (Kigali), 2 February 2015.

Declarations of this kind, very common in formal interviews, seemed at times to involve little more than verbal salutes to President Kagame. The notion of effective leadership in Rwanda goes beyond presidential example, however. Police and district security officers spoke of the clarity of their roles and the consistency of their work, which they attributed to the leadership of the different branches lower down the administrative hierarchy. While different security branches (notably the RNP and DASSO) share certain *roles*, there is little duplicated *command* in the policing system. Following the reforms in 2000, it is now difficult to imagine a scenario in which individual officers, guards, or patrolmen would receive contradictory orders from different sets of superiors or had difficulty determining who was the higher authority. An *abanyerondo* patrolman answers to his patrol leader, who answers to security representatives at the cell level, who are in turn coordinated by DASSO officers at the district level, and so on up the chain of command. This formalised security hierarchy allows for the rapid mobilisation of different tiers of security as circumstances require (see Incident 2).

Within the police, officers emphasise the importance of rank and the status it confers. Their positions are not undermined by informal structures to the same systematic degree that has been documented elsewhere (see Owen, 2014). The Rwandan Police Code of Conduct provides a detailed rulebook on the deference that junior officers are expected to afford to their superiors (Republic of Rwanda, 2010a). In the words of one junior officer: “*A constable is a constable. No matter who his father is*”.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, a rigorous set of intra-organisational disciplinary procedures are laid out in

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<sup>103</sup> Interview, Police Sergeant, Kicukiro (Kigali), 7 October 2014. As with the RDF, rumours abound about the domination of the most senior ranks in the police by *Abasajja*, Tutsi of Ugandan upbringing (see also Hintjens, 2008; Reyntjens 2013). I have no way to confirm this. What was striking in the RNP was how strongly even the idea of irregularities in recruitment or promotion in the lower ranks was condemned at all tiers of the organisation, and how few examples circulate, even anecdotally.

the Law Establishing Police Powers (Republic of Rwanda, 2010b). Interviewees in the RNP were often familiar with the precise wording of these documents.

Senior officers manifest a significant amount of pride in the internal discipline and professionalism of the institution.<sup>104</sup> They attribute these qualities to a lengthy training process at the police cadet school in Gishari and the National Police Academy in Musanze, both of which involve a gruelling physical training regimen and a heavy emphasis on professional conduct.<sup>105</sup> Respondents suggested that the RNP's historical links to the military and the past military experience of many of its senior officers (including its current Inspector General), have given rise to a military-style internal chain of command:<sup>106</sup>

*You obey your senior officer, or you face discipline. It works the same as the military, only the ranks have different names.*

Interview, Inspector of Police, Kicukiro (Kigali), 6 December 2014.

*Even off-duty we are held to a different standard than regular civilians. We must always represent the police [...] We must pay attention to our appearance and our behaviour.*

Informal Discussion, Sergeant, Kacyiru (Kigali), 15 January 2015.

Officer training at the RNP is supported by a range of international actors who put a similar premium on professional conduct.<sup>107</sup> In recent years, these have included the

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<sup>104</sup> This was matched by a sincere concern on the part of officers that they should not appear to be corrupt. On more than one occasion, officers joked to me that they exercised in their free time so as not to develop a 'belly', something that their commanding officers could consider the result of taking bribes. A deliberate exaggeration, these narratives nonetheless indicated the degree to which corruption in the organisation has been stigmatised.

<sup>105</sup> Interviews, Kicukiro Police Station, Kicukiro (Kigali), 9 October 2014.

<sup>106</sup> Since the establishment of the RNP in 2000, it has been a relatively common practice for senior officers to be brought in, often only temporarily, from the RDF to fill gaps in the rapidly expanding senior command of the police or to deploy prior experience in setting up new directorates (Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 16 January 2015).

<sup>107</sup> Interview, Huw Gosling, Project Manager for Rwanda at the UK College of Policing (Bramshill College), Bridgend (Wales), 24 June 2013.

United Nations Development Programme, the German Development Agency, and the British Bramshill Police College, all of which provide some degree of external oversight. The RNP is subject to further monitoring from government and civil society bodies in Rwanda.<sup>108</sup>

Internally, the RNP established an Inspectorate of Police Services and Ethics in 2013, which includes a Directorate of Inspectorate, a Directorate of Internal Audit, an Anti-Corruption Directorate and the RNP Ethics Centre, all of which engage in monitoring and anti-corruption measures within the organisation. It has also set up a police call centre, with several toll-free numbers the public can use to complain about police conduct (3511 for a complaint against a police officer, and 997 to report corruption). Although it was not possible to determine how much these lines are used, some indication can be drawn from the fact that in 2013 public complaints against 110 officers were forwarded to the Police Disciplinary Committee. Sixty-three of these were referred to the Police High Council to be dismissed from the force (RNP, 2014).

The RNP's reputation for internal discipline is reflected in popular accounts. National police departments are one of the state's "principle socialising and symbolic agencies", and their behaviour affects popular perceptions of the state (Marenin, 1982:384). For the most part, junior officers in Rwanda did not have the reputation for personally profiting from their position. Corruption (*rushwa*) was so heavily stigmatised that the slightest suggestion, even inadvertent, of attempting to bribe a police officer carried inherent risks. As one respondent attested: "*if you even show them money, they can arrest you*".<sup>109</sup> The commander of the Kigali City Metropolitan police confirmed that even the smallest irregular financial transactions would elicit harsh penalties: "*even 1,000 or 2,000 francs [approximately one or two USD] ... you go! [to prison]*".<sup>110</sup> The Office of the Ombudsman periodically publishes lists of

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<sup>108</sup> Notably the Executive Office, the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Security, the National Human Rights Commission, the Auditor General, the Ombudsman and the Rwanda Governance Board.

<sup>109</sup> Informal Discussion, Taxi-moto Driver, Kigali, 17 December 2015.

<sup>110</sup> Interview, Rogers Rutikanga, Muhima Metropolitan Police Headquarters, 8 October 2014.

individuals recently convicted of corruption, together with their profession, *umudugudu*, the amount of the bribe, the fine (often twice the size of the bribe) and the prison sentence (often several years, even for very small financial transgressions). Notably, sentences depended in part on the profession of the accused. Police officers found guilty of taking bribes received markedly longer prison terms than other public servants.<sup>111</sup>

Figure 8. Rwanda Ombudsman Corruption Penalties

	NUMBER	CONVICTED				COMMITTED	
38.	RPA 0276/15/TGI/ NYGE	<b>NIZEYIMANA Jean Remy</b> , son of Basomingera Deogratias and Mukanyonga Florence, born in 1975 in Gatumba- Ngororero- West, residence of Marembo- Rwimbogo- Nyarugunga- Kicukiro- Kigali City	Male	Civil Servant	TGI Nyarugenge	Receiving a bribe of 330,000Rwf	Imprisonment of 1 year and a fine of 660,000Rwf
39.	RP 0027/15/TGI/ RBV	<b>BYIRINGIRO Nelson</b> , son of Bishamura and Nyirahimbya, residence of Kivumu- Kivumu- Gisenyi- Rubavu- West	Male	Farmer	TGI Rubavu	Giving a bribe of 2,000Rwf	Imprisonment of 1 year
40.	RP189/15/TGI /RBV	<b>Mugabuhamy J.Nepo</b> , son of Ndahabagabo and Karugwiza, domiciliated in Gitaba- Gisiza- Rukoma- Gicumbi- North	Male	Policeman	TGI Rubavu	Receiving a bribe of 20,000Rwf	Imprisonment of 3 years and a fine of 140,000Rwf
	RP189/15/TGI /RBV	<b>HAKIZIMANA J.Claude</b> , residence of Buhumba- Birembo- Kavumu- Ngororero- West	Male	Farmer	TGI Rubavu	Giving a bribe of 20,000Rwf	Imprisonment of 1 year and a fine of 100,000Rwf
41.	RP 0161/15/TGI/ RBV	<b>NYIRINKWAYA Jacques</b> , son of Rudodo Pierre Claver and Nyirangendahimana, residence of Kalisimbi- Kivumu- Gisenyi- Rubavu- West	Male	Driver	TGI Rubavu	Giving a bribe of 2,000Rwf	Imprisonment of 1 year and a fine of 10,000Rwf

Source: [http://ombudsman.gov.rw/IMG/pdf/2015\\_second\\_quarter.docx.pdf](http://ombudsman.gov.rw/IMG/pdf/2015_second_quarter.docx.pdf)

accessed 21 September 2016.

<sup>111</sup> Despite these measures, a recent corruption perception survey conducted by Transparency International ranks the RNP and in particular the traffic police) as having the highest propensity for taking bribes among different government departments in the country (Transparency International, 2013). This was a source of some embarrassment for senior police officers, who emphasized that additional measures were being taken to combat corruption among traffic officers and that despite the ranking relative to other state branches, the figures remained very low in absolute terms. Supporting this, the same Transparency International survey ranked Rwanda as the fourth least corrupt state in Africa.

Although it is difficult to gauge public trust<sup>112</sup> in the RNP, Rwandans with whom I spoke described interactions with state police as being for the most part predictable and transparent. This accords with recent survey reports from Transparency International (2013 and 2014). Interviewees considered state police officers to be uncompromising in their execution of the law. They operated ‘by the book’, without much scope for negotiation.<sup>113</sup> This professionalism is projected onto CPC members and *abanyerondo* patrolmen at the interface between state and non-state policing. As one patrol leader recounted: “*if we want to be taken seriously, we must behave like the police officers do*”.<sup>114</sup>

To place this arrangement in a theoretical context, Dupont’s (2004) ‘metaphors of capital’ provide a revealing way to look at the relationship between state and non-state policing groups. As a state institution, the RNP has an abundance of political capital in its links to central government, of cultural capital in terms of expert knowledge and training, and of symbolic capital in terms of mechanisms and symbols that confer legitimacy. Police train non-state patrols and grant them a legitimacy they would otherwise lack in exchange for the human capital that patrolmen offer in terms of raw numbers, and the social capital of their embeddedness in small communities.

This exchange of capitals is heavily weighted in favour of the state police. Civilian patrolmen are deprived of the forms of capital that would allow them to leverage state officials. A file on each *abanyerondo* patrolman is held at the cell offices and in the office of the district’s community police liaison officer, where box files containing thousands of personalised documents line the shelves (see Appendix 1). A patrolman’s right to work can be removed at any time without warning. They are poor, they are often held in relatively low esteem by the communities in which they work, they are not allowed to carry firearms, and their use of violence is heavily

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<sup>112</sup> ‘Trust’ has gained popularity in recent years as a metric for assessing the interaction between public institutions and populations (see Goldsmith, 2005). It remains plagued by definitional challenges, however.

<sup>113</sup> Informal Discussion, Small Business Owner, Kigali, 4 May 2014.

<sup>114</sup> Interview, Irondo Patrol Leader, Nibuye Cell (Kigali), 18 November 2014.

restricted (see Incident 1, in which a patrol goes out of its way to ‘clean up’ a suspect before delivering him to police patrols, for fear of being penalised by state authorities).

The state hierarchy counteracts these limitations by creating institutional incentives for individuals to volunteer into the local security roles (notably CPC membership, *amarondo* patrols and positions in charge of *imidugudu*). Engaging in state-led activities signals a commitment to the Rwandan project that provides regular citizens security against being labelled as subversive. It is also a way in which they can derive some small degree of state authority. In some cases it could even offer a route into more lucrative positions in private security companies or as private house guards, particularly for young men well liked by their community. Due to the RNP’s educational requirements, however, it was not considered a stepping stone towards joining the state police (for the RNP’s formal recruitment criteria, see Appendix 2).

Overall, the degree of coordination that state police exert over CPCs and *abanyerondo* in institutional terms goes beyond what Baker (2012:279) has termed “permission to row”. Regular meetings with DASSO officers, RNP community liaison officers and cell administrators provide a significant degree of steering and direction to local non-state security.<sup>115</sup>

### Intelligence Gathering

Information is passed up to central government bodies through a number of different channels. It can move through the RNP’s internal chain of command, the government administrative hierarchy, the party hierarchy of the RPF, and in more selective and high profile cases the military and NISS. These interconnected hierarchies provide a range of mechanisms intended to promote internal discipline and monitor each other. Corrupt or abusive practices can rarely remain hidden by the silence of one official in

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<sup>115</sup> This is illustrated in the coordinated arrest described in Incident 3, Chapter Four.

one chain of command. Working together, they provide an intricate and efficient system of intelligence gathering, one that has attracted criticism for the degree to which it penetrates the private sphere of the general population (see Thomson, 2011:444; Beswick, 2010:241; Begley, 2009:5).

In recent years, commentators have alluded to the surveillance of cell phone calls and email communications, to the monitoring of listed individuals by agents of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (now the NISS) and the Presidential Protection Unit, and to the planting of professional government spies into organisations, as among the means the government employs for controlling the population (Purdeková 2011:488; Thomson, 2011:444; Beswick, 2010:240). In the aftermath of the genocide, Reyntjens (2009) argues that a ‘security machine’ was put in place by the RPF, he writes:

*In an emerging police state, the press and civil society were put under increasing control, party political activities were prohibited, mail was opened, telephones and other communications were monitored and movements inside the country and abroad were carefully watched.*

Reyntjens (2009:28)

Almost every researcher working in Rwanda hears stories of pervasive government surveillance, and many will find themselves consciously or unconsciously adapting their behaviour accordingly (see Chapter Two). I can say nothing about the claims regarding full-time, trained and salaried government informants, as it was not something that I personally encountered.<sup>116</sup> I was aware that both private and state

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<sup>116</sup> The RNP’s use of plainclothes police is sanctioned by Article 20 in the Ministerial Code on Police Conduct (Republic of Rwanda, 2010a). Under special conditions, these officers are permitted to carry concealed weapons. Although undercover policing is a tool of any police department, local accounts in Rwanda, including those within the security sector, suggest it is especially commonplace in the country, and deployed not only by state organisations but also private security companies. Perhaps most insidiously, plainclothes security is deployed on university campuses in the form of ‘fake students’, justified on the basis that the campus buildings were a potential target for terrorist attacks linked to the FDLR (Interview, Head of Private University Security Company, 3 November 2014).

security groups commonly deploy plainclothes security officials. In the routine work of everyday policing, undercover officers support police and military in their patrols and in the monitoring of strategic hotspots.<sup>117</sup>

It is worth stressing that many similar claims, which circulate widely among diplomatic, developmental and academic circles in Rwanda and among diaspora opposition groups overseas, remain extremely difficult to verify. Even if credible evidence periodically emerges to support them, it is almost always accompanied by a wealth of unsubstantiated rumours. Certainly there is cause for suspicion, as the Rwandan state is characterised by a very high degree of clandestineness, especially in terms of internal security (see Booth & Golooba-Mutebi, 2012:340). As Abrams (1988:63) argues, “the fact that someone can impose secrecy is surely evidence both that that person has power and that he has something to hide – common sense infers”. What exactly is being hidden, however, does not necessarily align with popular assumptions, and some of the more extreme accounts of Rwandan surveillance call for a common-sense re-evaluation.

The political monitoring of several hundred high profile individuals is a completely different matter from maintaining close surveillance of over eleven million citizens. It seems unlikely that the Rwandan government possess anything like the infrastructure, funding or human capital required to deploy this kind of personalised surveillance to the population at large. Nevertheless, the effects of such rumours are tangible. Once it has been established that any degree of undercover or plainclothes security is in operation, popular suspicion is inclined to exaggerate the frequency of their deployment and the capacity of the institutions involved. Speculation and rumours play an important role in shaping popular perceptions of the security apparatus. States engage constantly in constructing an image of policing and its boundaries that ‘does not correspond with reality’ (Baker, 2012:276). As such, the

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<sup>117</sup> Informal Discussions, Senior RDF and RNP Officers, Kigali, January-March 2015.

Rwandan government has little incentive to dispel accounts that exaggerate its capacity to monitor the population.

My approach to this issue is to draw a careful distinction between political monitoring, particularly among elites, and the gathering of information for the purpose of crime prevention. The focus here is on the latter, and involves temporarily putting aside such 'shadow methods' as tapped phones, monitored emails and full-time government agents, which are both difficult to investigate and most likely confined to the upper echelons of the political realm (Beswick, 2010; Purdekova, 2011). The Rwandan government obtains a considerable knowledge of its population by less secretive means. It has a formidable capacity to draw information upward to centralised authorities through a lengthy chain of personal communications. Individuals are identified by a range of cards issued by the state, including a personal identification card (*indangamuntu*), an *umuganda* attendance card and a *mutuelle de santé* health insurance card.<sup>118</sup> In local administrative offices, files are kept on every household, particularly regarding state payments owed (see also Purdeková, 2016:74).

In terms of crime reporting, each incident conveyed by a patrol leader to the head of his *umudugudu* at the end of the night shift is discussed at the morning CPC meeting, and, if deemed significant, passed on to cell authorities. Representatives at the cell level filter this information and pass on relevant details to individuals at the sector headquarters, to local police station commander (as a 'sit rep' message) or directly to the district authorities. Information moves between individual agents, rather than between agencies, and passes upwards through the hierarchy via a series of short steps between people known to one another, increasingly through the medium of internet text messaging.

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<sup>118</sup> In 2014, the National Identification Agency issued smart ID cards containing biometric data to over eighty per cent of the population (Purdeková, 2016:74).

Minor incidents are filtered out and handled at the appropriate tier. More serious matters continue to be passed up the chain until they are presented to a daily meeting of senior military, intelligence and police officials at the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) in Kigali. Meetings of the JOC are used to discuss any case involving murder, the discovery of weapons (particularly explosives), fatal car accidents, high profile corruption cases, rape, abortion, the discharge of weapons anywhere in the country, and a range of other serious or out of the ordinary criminal activities that have occurred in the past twenty-four-hour period. These meetings are attended by ranking members of the RNP, the RDF and the NISS, and are a forum in which all the intelligence drawn up different hierarchical chains of command can be discussed together. A report of the JOC is presented to the Chief Inspector of Police and to the Minister of Internal Security every morning. Thus, intelligence gathering works from the bottom up. Despite its internal cohesiveness, the hierarchy would be ineffectual if ordinary citizens did not pass information to it in a timely fashion. The battle for crime prevention in Rwanda depends on incentivising local communities to participate.

## Sensitisation and Top-Down Information Flows

The RNP has embarked on a campaign of ‘sensitisation’, in which police commanders, cell executive secretaries and liaison officers are charged with keeping local communities abreast of changing regulations, encouraging non-state participation in crime prevention, and promoting civic values. To this effect, the RNP uses a range of different media outlets, including publications in the government-owned *New Times*, the monthly *Police Kinyarwanda Magazine* and quarterly *Police English Magazine*, as well as call-in radio shows on Contact FM, Rwanda Radio, Radio One and Flash FM. These outlets are often used to publicise week- or month- long sensitisation campaigns, such as ‘Anti-GBV Week’, ‘Community Policing Week’ or ‘Road Safety Month’, and are run officially out of the RNP Department for Public Relations.

More directly, the RNP holds monthly town hall meetings at the sector level and regular consultations with civil society organisations. One police officer responsible for these meetings reflected on the challenges of keeping the population informed about changing regulations<sup>119</sup>:

*We are still living in a transitional society, and the laws are changing [...] just to keep up with the population. That means we have to be constantly communicating with the people, and sometimes it is not perfect. It is a serious problem in poorer areas, or where many people are illiterate – just to make sure that everybody knows the law.*

Interview, District Police Commander, Kigali, 24 November 2014.

Judging by informal responses from moto-taxi drivers, night patrolmen, and market stall holders, as well as observations from the sensitisation events I attended, it was rare for much to be said that was not already known to those gathered. Rather than political socialisation *per se*, I had the impression that these meetings were first and

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<sup>119</sup> Avoiding events like those of the police shooting case in Nyamasheke in Incident 4, in which police-community hostility was sparked by a misunderstanding of the rules.

foremost about reminding civil society organisations of the police presence in their communities and about the particular elements of the penal code – notably the penalties linked with different crimes – that applied to their trade.<sup>120</sup> They also encouraged non-state groups to inform the state about suspicious or criminal behaviour, and provided them access (such as specialist toll-free phone numbers) by which to do so. At times, tangible encouragements were also provided, including monetary contributions to civil society groups or practical tools such as mobile phones and bicycles. Local government authorities might also offer exemptions from the many ‘contributions’ (*umusanzu*) that Rwandans are required to pay into the state system, for example waiving the monthly *mutuelle de santé* health insurance payments for civil society leaders and heads of *imidugudu*.

The efficiency of the government’s hierarchies for gathering information and its mechanisms for encouraging civic participation in policing through sensitisation campaigns are significant factors in crime prevention, but do not sufficiently account for why information moves so readily from small communities in Rwanda up into the state machinery. The following sections provide additional environmental, cultural and behavioural explanations.

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<sup>120</sup> Often the statistical prevalence of particular crimes was also emphasized, particularly if trends suggested that they were on the rise. This reflected the pressures put on senior district officers, bound to security performance contracts, to show falling crime rates in their jurisdictions.

### 5.3 The Organisation of Small Communities

Despite the efficiency of the state hierarchy, the RNP, the RDF and DASSO represent a relatively small superstructure that sits atop a much larger policing system at the cell and village level. This reflects significant historical continuity with the country's recent past. The significance of non-state participation in Rwanda has at times been obscured since, to the outside observer, the visibility of uniformed officials on the central hilltops of Kigali gives the impression of a country swamped with government security. Since 2010, grenade attacks have prompted an exceptional security presence in the central business sectors of Rwanda's major cities. This is not representative of the security environment across the bulk of the country's urban districts. In most residential *imidugudu*, blue and green uniformed state security (Police, DASSO and the RDF) rarely stray from the main roads connecting strategic hotspots. This is expressed in government documents:

*Policing and ensuring law and order in Rwanda is as much a societal function as it is the responsibility of the police and other organs of state, in a partnership that allows the latter to extend their reach beyond where the traditional approaches to policing would allow.*

'Policing a Rapidly Changing Post-Conflict Society' (RNP, 2014:117)

Unlike cases, such as the South African or Nigerian police forces, where officers take great lengths to avoid deployment into outer townships for fear of violent resistance (see Steinberg, 2008; Owen, 2014), I was never given the impression that individual police in Rwanda were intimidated by the prospect of entering neighbourhoods that lie off their main patrol routes. Rather, because the RNP relies on the self-policing mechanisms of small communities, they can justify a light presence in many residential zones on the basis that these neighbourhoods are lower-profile and less prone to criminal activity than busy central market areas. Interviewing one patrol officer, this contrast was made explicit. Pointing to residential *imidugudu*, made up of low build-quality housing stretching down a hillside off the main road, he commented: "Those are the safe places. The people there handle their own security."

*They bring the suspects to us*".<sup>121</sup> These small, self-policing communities have certain distinctive features, detailed below.

### Demographics and Population Density

The first distinctive feature of Rwanda's urban neighbourhoods is the sheer density of humanity contained within them. Rwanda is among the most densely populated countries in the world, and is ranked internationally third among countries with a population over ten million (behind Bangladesh and The Republic of Korea) (World Bank, 2014). High population densities in urban neighbourhoods are commonly associated with the kinds of micro-level violence that are of concern in this analysis (see Danzinger, 1976; Harries, 1980). Rwanda's cities have expanded at a speed that has elsewhere resulted in serious security concerns and rising crime rates. The growth of densely populated townships on the outskirts of the country's larger urban spaces has been a source of alarm for police authorities. Street and house numbers have yet to be assigned in a way that allows police patrols to be accurately directed to the sites of ongoing crimes (RNP, 2013:38; see also Incident 1, above). Of even greater concern, high population density is prompting conflicts over land (André & Platteau, 1998; Sommers, 2012). The Police Criminal Investigations Department has identified a disturbing rise in violent crime associated with land ownership (RNP, 2014:102; see Incident 4, above).

There is another side to the relationship between population density and street crime, however. When internal coordination is strong, high concentrations of people can exert a level of scrutiny over each other that is not possible in sparsely populated regions (Herbst, 2000). When asked about surveillance and complaints from Rwandans that feel they are being constantly watched, one military official commented:

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<sup>121</sup> Interview, Police Sergeant, Kigali Nyamirambo Sector, 18 October 2014.

*In some sense they are right. But [...] you have to realise it is because there are just so many people. It is not like Europe or America here. Look around you. Where can you go where you can be alone in Rwanda? Even inside the houses there are many people staying there. It is not easy to commit a crime here. To do anything in fact, without someone seeing you do it.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 10 January 2016.

Wherever there are people in Rwanda, there is surveillance, intra-communal policing, and information channels to state authorities. Individuals attempting to evade state police in Rwanda tend to flee into unpopulated areas, rather than try to blend into densely populated neighbourhoods. This is illustrated in Incident 2, a case of young men in Nibuye cell evading patrols by escaping the densely populated, maze-like informal settlements on the banks of the Ruganwa river. This tendency was also emphasised by officers in the Criminal Investigations Department.<sup>122</sup>

This surveillance mechanism is linked to the relative immobility of the Rwandan population. In traditional Rwandan society, a house is something that a young man constructs as part of his initiation into manhood, and then lives in permanently (Sommers, 2012). The desire for a life-long family home still endures among people who have migrated to the country's major cities, and contributes to the relatively low levels of permanent intra-urban migration.<sup>123</sup> Urban neighbourhoods may be densely populated, but residents tend to be well-known to one another.

Furthermore, the disinclination to move lessens one of the key mechanisms that has been associated with deteriorating societal cohesion. Elsewhere, when a neighbourhood develops a reputation for hosting criminal activity, law abiding residents often move out rather than to attempt to restore order internally through collective action (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). At least for the time being, small

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<sup>122</sup> Informal Discussions, Police Officers, Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali (Kacyiru), 18 October 2014.

<sup>123</sup> Interview, Senior Official, Rwandan Governance Board, 15 June 2014.

communities in Rwanda produce self-correcting mechanisms due to the frustrations of permanent residents. An example of this can be seen in the rise of voluntary *amarondo* patrols in the late 1990s during periods of escalating crime. It can also be seen in modern day-to-day practices. Rwandans habitually engage with their local CPCs to voice neighbourhood concerns or complaints about particular residents or patrolmen.

In general, population density can impact rates of micro-level violence in one of two ways. It facilitates either more anonymity or more internal monitoring depending on the communities in question, how they are internally organised and how well they are coordinated by state security. For the time being, in combination with other factors, Rwanda's very high population density appears to be a supporting factor in crime prevention.

#### Orderly Urban Aesthetic and Public 'Hygiene'

The clean roads and manicured lawns of Rwanda's larger cities stand out in a region marked by the visual signs of poverty. Some debate has taken place as to whether the country's distinctive aesthetic reflects successful development (Gourevitch, 2009:37), or is merely 'cosmetic upgrading' that masks more pressing challenges faced by the poor (Ansoms, 2009). These debates at times obscure the impact of the physical setting on local security.

A growing literature that dates back to Wilson and Kelling's 1982 'Broken Windows' thesis has shown how the appearance of order and cleanliness in a neighbourhood environment can reduce rates of street crime (Kelling & Coles, 1997; Sampson et al., 2004).<sup>124</sup> The appearance of disorder has a profound impact on the behaviour of both residents and potential criminals:

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<sup>124</sup> Wilson and Kelling's (1982) original contribution has been subject to intense scrutiny over thirty years, while debates about broken windows and community policing have become politicised due in part to controversies about their perceived effect on policing practices in New York City. Although

*[...] at the community level, disorder and crime are usually inextricably linked, in a kind of developmental sequence. Social psychologists and police officers tend to agree that if a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken. This is as true in nice neighborhoods as in rundown ones. Window-breaking does not necessarily occur on a large scale because some areas are inhabited by determined window-breakers whereas others are populated by window-lovers; rather, one unrepaired broken window is a signal that no one cares, and so breaking more windows costs nothing.*

Wilson and Kelling (1982)

By the same logic, clean, orderly environments discourage criminal behaviour, and produce greater social cohesion among residents, emboldening them to challenge any disorderly behaviour they encounter (Corman & Mocan, 2002). Government authorities in Rwanda have adopted the term ‘hygiene’ to refer to this kind of generalised public order, and the Ministry of Local Government, in conjunction with the RNP and One-UN Rwanda have recently begun a scheme of ‘hygiene and security’ awards at the sector level.<sup>125</sup>

The mandatory community service, *umuganda*, provides an example of the Rwandan government’s awareness of the mechanisms that link security to cleanliness. *Umuganda*, described briefly in Chapter Three, is a community cleaning programme that takes place on the final Saturday morning of each month. It is compulsory for Rwandans between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five to take part. Communal work varies in nature, but often includes some element of manual labour, building, repairing local infrastructure, or cleaning. *Umuganda* serves the twin functions of

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engaging directly with these debates is beyond the scope of this thesis, I draw on a series of more recent studies and review articles that show how many of the original claims about the relationship between public order and crime have survived rigorous empirical analysis (see Sampson et al. 2004; Xu et al. 2005; Corman & Mocan, 2002).

<sup>125</sup> Public Speech, Stanislas Kamanzi, Rwandan Minister of Natural Resources, Kigali, 28 June 2013.

physically cleaning up small communities and encouraging residents to share information. One high ranking RNP officer made the link between these activities and security explicit:

*Umuganda brings people together each month to [...] meet their neighbours and know who's who in their community. They keep their space clean [...] They share information, so they can act like a unit when there are problems. It makes them safer.*

Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Kigali, 8 July 2014

By making monthly interactions between residents compulsory, *umuganda* safeguards against what Wilson and Kelling (1982:13) call “shrinking from the street”, in which neighbourhood residents cease to cooperate in the face of deteriorating circumstances. Simultaneously, cleaner neighbourhoods have a tangible psychological effect on residents, one that promotes greater social order and reduces the fear of criminality (Sampson et al., 2004; Xu et al. 2005). Such fears can otherwise threaten to destroy, in Hill’s words: “not only the physical security of individuals, but also the social networks and technical infrastructure sustaining cities. That is, their order” (Hills, 2012:7). As such, the cleanliness of Rwanda’s streets is more than an aesthetic nicety. It is driven by a government agenda to physically construct social order, to build it into the lived environment of the country’s cities, and to promote internal security.

### Cultural homogeneity and the Umuco Nyarwanda

Rwanda’s locally administrated, densely populated, and scrupulously tidied neighbourhoods also tend to be relatively culturally homogenous. Although ethnic divisions remain a central concern of the national police, behind the historical schism between Hutu and Tutsi there is relatively little linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity, especially when compared to the country’s larger regional neighbours (Hintjens, 2008). When dealing with relatively homogenous societies, community

policing proponents are seldom called upon to tailor programs to the needs of diverse sub-groups (Davis et al. 2003:287).

Since it is forbidden to discuss issues of ethnicity, I was not able to establish whether communities with larger Hutu or Tutsi populations were policed differently. What I could establish is that there are noticeable differences in the manner that more affluent communities in central Kigali were policed compared to poorer ones. Policing in the central business sector of Muhima, the wealthy residential sectors of Nyarutarama, Kiyovu and Kimihurua, and the government administrative sector of Kacyiru operates somewhat differently from the majority of urban neighbourhoods. These wealthy areas have a much larger uniformed state security presence than other residential zones, as well as a higher proportion of private security and house guards. They are more socially and culturally diverse than elsewhere, and contain the country's highest proportion of non-Rwandans. They also contain a disproportionately high number of what the police regard as strategic hotspots: sensitive infrastructure, government offices, and financial institutions. Residents were less likely to know their neighbours by name, and government mobilisation schemes such as *umuganda* were less rigorously enforced. These sectors account, however, for a very small fraction of urban neighbourhoods, and should be treated as non-representative outliers when it comes to general characteristics of urban crime prevention.

Outside of the country's wealthiest sectors, the notion of a unified 'Rwandan culture' featured prominently in interviews, where respondents emphasised its role in keeping down rates of crime. How durable this culture is over time, how strongly it impacts behaviour, and how much it is reinforced by government edicts, is difficult to say. Government sensitisation campaigns have attempted to tap into cultural norms to foster support for government policies and to encourage financial exactions (*umusanzu*, *lit.* contributions) (see also Purdeková, 2011; 2016). This means that references to positive cultural attributes may be merely 'safe answers' that stick closely to the acceptable government line.

Nevertheless, I am not convinced that references to Rwandan culture are purely for show. The consistency with which these explanations emerged out of the spectrum of interviews I conducted, as well as the enthusiasm with which they were recounted, suggested a sincere national pride in the *umuco nyarwanda*, the Rwandan cultural code. Behind the formal penal code imposed by state police was a more general code of behaviour that was frequently referred to in communal gatherings. The most skeletal form of the *umuco nyarwanda* can be split into three broad and at times overlapping categories:

1. The first involve 'absolute taboos', principally against incest and the sexual abuse of children.
2. The second comprises a set of traditional 'village' ethical values, more-or-less universally known and often gender-specific, but adhered to only in particular social settings.
3. The third category is most relevant to the discussion of policing. It consists of a complex series of ethical values, divided between *indandadaciro*, behaviours which are encouraged, and *kirazira*, which are discouraged.

*Kirazira* refers in effect to public order infractions. Examples include not being seen eating, smoking cigarettes, kissing or showing overt affection in public places, littering, and making too much noise in the streets. Respondents tended to label as *kirazira* any actions that involved a loss of personal control, notably drunkenness or other kinds of intoxication.<sup>126</sup> I return to these examples below in accounts of a generalised intolerance towards forms of social disharmony. More immediately, two points are worth emphasising:

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<sup>126</sup> Certain of these cultural considerations may account in part for Baker's (2007:347) observation that: "even the moral overtones of leadership discourse and mayoral edicts that ban short skirts, bare feet, local church music, and spitting and urinating in the street [...] are not protested as they might be in the West". These behaviours are all explicitly *kirazira*.

First, among Rwandans with whom I interacted, this cultural code was consistent and universally known, even when at times disregarded. This was true regardless of their region of origin, ethnicity, religion or social background. Similarly, it was apparent that *kirazira and indandadaciro* amount to more than a generalised code of politeness, and were instead perceived as a relatively formal set of social rules. Many respondents recounted an identical list of principles, often in precisely the same wording as others in different settings.

Second, this code of behaviour was not associated with the state and pre-dates the RPF's ascent to power in 1994. One respondent made this point emphatically: "*these are our rules; they are not political. They do not come from the government*".<sup>127</sup> Government authorities have nonetheless attempted to exercise a degree of ownership over the cultural behavioural code. Lists of *indandadaciro* and *kirazira* behaviours are put up on the walls of district administrative buildings and police posts. They are read out at anti-crime clubs along with legal infractions and other local government priorities. Despite this, respondents consistently emphasised the separation of the Rwandan penal code from the *umuco nyarwanda*. They stressed the importance of the cultural code as a source of social cohesion: '*the thing that binds our society together*'. They also made clear that it was articulated, monitored and enforced not by state representatives, but '*inside the umudugudu*', particularly by *inyangamugayo*: local leaders with an upstanding moral reputation.

There is often a difference between the way that states and populations define the 'irreducible minimum' of general order (see Marenin, 1982:838). In Rwanda, it appears that locally constructed accounts of *kirazira* may offer an insight into what such a public definition looks like. Societal enforcement of these principles employs a range of sub-state practices within the *umudugudu*, practices that the state has co-

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<sup>127</sup> Interview, Head of *Umudugudu*, Rubavu District, 3 November 2014.

opted to crime prevention by partnering with village leaders in the policing of local communities.

### Community Policing: Information and Anonymity in Small Communities

This section returns to the concept of community policing, not as a government strategy, but in more practical terms as a community's internal mechanisms for maintaining public order. Accounts of community policing in Rwanda are often expressed in banalities: "*the society will live in harmony*", "*the people will be aware of crime prevention*", "*human rights will be promoted*", "*terrorism awareness will be present*", "*problems in dangerous places will be known in time*", "*there will be partnership and team building between police and the community*".<sup>128</sup> Perhaps understandably I was at first sceptical of the government narrative invoked by these soundbites, and was inclined early on in my research to disregard the significance of community policing initiatives as being anything more than window dressing.<sup>129</sup> Behind the ornamental rhetoric, however, lie concrete mechanisms for maintaining public order in which the most salient feature is the way that information concerning security flows between the public and private spheres.

It is important to note that the Rwandan security network described in Chapter Four is designed, rather than spontaneous. This sets it apart from systems elsewhere on the continent, in which community policing and sub-state security have expanded in response to government inadequacies (see Baker, 2004; Abrahams, 1987). Organised local security groups in Rwanda are not so much "tacit acknowledgements by the state of the limitations and ineffectiveness of its fragmented and monopolistic intervention strategies" (Dupont, 2004:79) as additional appendages that the government can control. The community policing apparatus (notably night

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<sup>128</sup> These quotations are taken from the RNP Handbook of Community Policing (2014), and were recounted in a range of interviews and informal discussions.

<sup>129</sup> Brogden (2004) has written at length about the mismatch between the rhetoric and practice of community policing initiatives elsewhere.

patrolmen, CPC members, and civilian anti-crime clubs) is subservient to the state. In the community policing lexicon, the RNP remains the 'senior partner' (see Alemika, 2009) when it comes to their interaction. Despite this, there remains space for local, non-state agency in terms of intra-communal social monitoring and the circulation of information.

Rwandan communities encourage vigilance as one of the core *indandadaciro* cultural principles. This is something identified by Purdeková (2011), who offers a rare insight into the mechanisms of surveillance in the country. Government agencies, she writes: "maintain control not only by creating a widespread network of indirect rule, but also through a network of eyes and ears that is much more present on a daily basis" (Ibid. 287). Her representation of a highly repressive system in which Rwandans are uniformly fearful of government surveillance, however, risks oversimplifying the complex system of intra-communal relations that plays out at the *umudugudu* level.

Critical accounts of this kind offer a partisan representation of a series of very common narratives about local surveillance in Rwanda. Purdeková's (2011) provocative title quotation, 'Even if I am not here, there are so many eyes', is taken from an interview with the coordinator of an *Ingando* re-education camp, conducted inside the camp itself. I encountered similar statements made in residential *imidugudu*, to the effect that '*everyone is always watching their neighbours*' and '*we are all the eyes of each other*', but was struck by how often this was intended as a positive reflection of communities that '*look out for themselves*'. Few people seemed uncomfortable with this idea, which was voiced both by police officers and ordinary citizens, and was, in my experience, rarely intended as a criticism of the policing system. This is not to say that Rwandans are not intimidated at times by the intense gaze of *umudugudu* society, only that this was not always the point of a range of quotations that, out of context, may sound sinister to a western ear.

Furthermore, the forms of scrutiny described in these cases were not always associated with government monitoring. Indeed, a great deal of energy in small Rwandan communities is dedicated to forms of intra-communal monitoring that take

place separately from state administration. Information circulates constantly among residents, house guards, *abanyerondo* patrolmen, CPC members, private security guards and heads of *imidugudu*, who show a remarkable degree of knowledge about the composition of the neighbourhoods in which they live and work.

Individuals working in the lower tiers of the policing apparatus are often able to list, by name, the occupants of households throughout their *umudugudu*, and are aware of who else is performing policing roles within them. Owing in part to the relative immobility and the high density of the Rwandan population, residents know their neighbours to such an extent that, as one respondent put it “*if someone new walks into this neighbourhood for the first time, everyone who saw them would know ... and would watch them*”.<sup>130</sup>

This local knowledge is supported by more formal methods on the part of the headpersons in charge of many urban *imidugudu*, who often keep written records of newcomers planning to stay overnight. In an arrangement that is reminiscent of the *nyumba kumi* (ten household) unit at the base of the Habyarimana administrative hierarchy, each of the five CPC members for many small communities is informally responsible for knowing the inner household workings of one fifth of the *imidugudu*, or approximately fifteen to twenty-five houses. This intense level of intra-communal scrutiny is often justified in terms of protecting vulnerable members of the community from domestic violence. It was carefully disassociated from government or police monitoring:

*We look inside those houses to know that everyone is safe and no one is being badly treated.*

Interview, CPC Member, Gisenyi, 3 November 2014.

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<sup>130</sup> Informal Discussion, CPC member, Nyamirambo (Kigali), 3 October 2014. The vigilance of the gardener described in Incident 1 is one illustrative example of the sensitivity to outsiders and the high degree of internal vigilance directed towards them.

*The police? [...] Their job is to deal with crimes when they happen. Our job is to prevent crimes before they happen.*

Interview, CPC Member, Kigali, 6 November 2014.

Intra-communal scrutiny is directed towards a set of social infractions (*kirazira*) that, although not necessarily formal, are defined, universally understood, and enforced in collaboration with the local population. The result is that urban *imidugudu* tend to demonstrate the very high level of cohesiveness that is typical of communities described by Wilson and Kelling (1982), in which “families [...] care for their homes, mind each other’s children and confidently frown on unwanted behaviour”, even where that behaviour is not explicitly illegal.

At the *umudugudu* level and below, the system also provides oversight of its own policing mechanisms. Many Rwandans I spoke to did not trust *abanyerondo* patrolmen not to engage in illegal activities, and younger patrolmen were closely monitored by regular citizens, who reserve the right to withhold patrol salaries if there are serious complaints about their conduct. As testament to this, CPC members and *abanyerondo* patrolmen are much more likely to be replaced as a result of community grievances than by top-down government interventions.<sup>131</sup>

The RNP openly relies on locally generated information in the prevention of crime and in the oversight of *amarondo* patrols. A government document asserts that the community policing agenda “is effective only to the extent that the community is minded to get involved in working with the police” (RNP, 2014:108). Furthermore, given the lack of street signage and house numbers in many residential *imidugudu* local knowledge of who occupies which property is essential to the police. Officers linked the response time of police patrols to the effectiveness with which communities would self-police and the propensity of local security representatives to provide ‘sit-rep’ messages to police posts.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Interview, Sector Executive Secretary, Kigali, 18 September 2014.

<sup>132</sup> Interview, RNP Officer, Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali, 8 February 2015.

Populations in most places prefer to resolve intra-communal or familial disputes locally, without the involvement of state police (Hills, 2009; Francis, 2012), and the Rwandan case is no exception. For the most part, *amarondo* patrols protect their own turf and tend not to stray out of their own *umudugudu* unless some policing activity has been directly coordinated from above. Internal discipline of the neighbourhood is meted out locally. CPCs, led by their *umudugudu* leader, can call public meetings in which to reprimand residents for inappropriate behaviour and levy fines where regulations have been breached.<sup>133</sup> Most information on the behaviour of residents is pooled in these local policing forums and progresses no further up the state's hierarchical ladder, particularly where it does not explicitly concern threats, perceived or actual, to state security.

The relationship between local headpersons of *imidugudu*, who are predominantly Hutu and elected by their local communities, and the executive secretary at the cell level, a state appointee and often a delegate of the RPF party, is one of the key determinants of whether information is effectively shared with the appropriate state authorities (see also Ingelaere, 2015). Incident 4, in which a community in Nyamasheke turned violently on its executive secretary and his police escort, provides an unsettling illustration of the dangers that exist should these relationships break down. In general, they tend to be more amiable, but nevertheless mark a dividing line between the formal hierarchy of the state and communal organisations closer to the population.

One strategy on the part of the RNP Department of Community Policing has been to co-opt elements of Rwandan civil society that might otherwise be threatening to public order and put them to work in the security hierarchy. This is evident in the way *abanyerondo* patrolmen are selected. They very often come from the sections of

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<sup>133</sup> Officially, fines must be signed off at the cell offices, although this is often little more than a formality. Larger disputes are referred to *abunzi* mediation committees (essentially local courts), which can recommend that repeat offenders be detained at an *ingando* camp for civic re-education.

society, especially unemployed youth, that might otherwise be disruptive. It can also be seen in the work of CLOs who organise anti-crime clubs in civil society. They encourage associations such as motorbike taxi drivers and money lenders to enforce internal discipline and provide information to the police on criminal activities (see also, Goodfellow & Smith, 2013:3196; Purdeková, 2011:493). The CLO's ability to exclude individuals from membership in cooperatives is a powerful tool of state coercion, and a penalty that cooperative members particularly fear.

Alongside these large male-dominated work cooperatives, a range of women's associations play a similarly important role in information gathering at the local level. Government accounts of the North-Western Insurgency emphasise the fact that women discouraged men from participating in anti-government operations and passed vital information to the RPA.<sup>134</sup> The RNP has attempted to sustain this relationship in peacetime. Women's cooperatives, often artisanal groups and market traders, are 'sensitised' and organised into hierarchies by state policing representatives in the same manner as the other groups detailed above. There is a woman's representative on every CPC, and a women's officer at all sector police stations. Their inclusion is officially part of a government drive to improve gender equality and reduce GBV, but these women also serve as another set of antennae by which relevant security information can pass to state authorities.

Rwanda has nothing resembling the religious police institutions that have attracted attention elsewhere (Baker, 2012; Abrahams, 1987). Nevertheless, church communities, predominantly Catholic, Protestant, Seventh-Day Adventist and Muslim, play a role in local security. Congregations act as an additional forum in which residents can assemble and share information. Many have been encouraged to establish anti-crime clubs, and serve as a platform from which government sensitisation campaigns can be launched.

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<sup>134</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 28 January 2015.

Overall, the points of interaction between civil society leaders and *imidugudu* chiefs on the one hand, and police CLOs, cell executive secretaries and DASSO district security on the other, is the closest thing that Rwanda has to a clear society-state interface. Regarding information flows, this divide is not entirely permeable, and underreporting has been a consistent concern of the RNP, particularly regarding violence between family members.<sup>135</sup> The space below the cell level, occupied by the *umudugudu* leadership, policing committees, community patrols, civil society hierarchies and private security guards, constitutes the margins of the state, where policing takes place in what Abrahams (1987:179) has termed the “shadows, rather than the bright lights of legitimacy and consensus”, and where residents live under the intense gaze of intra-communal monitoring, in which anonymity is all but impossible to attain.

#### 5.4 The Allergy to Social Disharmony: State/Local Responses to Disorder

The following sections investigate behavioural accounts of crime prevention in Rwanda, centred around the intolerances toward social disharmony that have resulted from the country’s recent history. I argue that a range of personal motivations determine the propensity of residents to monitor their neighbours and report information about suspicious or illegal behaviour. This results in a lack of predictability about who might be an impromptu informant of the state, which discourages dissent and contributes to distrust and suspicion at the grass-roots level, something that has been observed by other researchers working in the country (Purdeková, 2011; Thomson, 2011; Ingelaere, 2010).

Rwandan policing is most effective when it comes to issues that are of mutual concern to *umudugudu* leaders and state and police representatives at the cell level

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<sup>135</sup> This underreporting has been attributed in part to cultural values of secrecy, particularly within the nuclear family unit and regarding sexual violence. (Interview, Theos Badege, Head of RNP Criminal Investigations Department, 2 March 2015).

(and above), when security is co-produced by state and non-state groups. Approaches to preventing drug related crime provide a useful example of where local and state interests merge around preventing social disharmony, and where the country's community policing model is at its most efficient.

### Fear, Social Disharmony and the Monopoly of Violence

Between 1994 and 1997, the RPF violently reasserted the Rwandan state's monopoly of force. There were substantiated accounts of atrocities, most notably the Kibeho massacre in 1995, which circulated alongside more general rumours of government brutality (Binet, 2004; African Rights, 1998; Reyntjens 2013).<sup>136</sup> This period left the population afraid to step out of line, and produced a level of fear that has endured in the popular consciousness. For the most part, however, the government's use of violence has subsided. The RPF's reputation for forceful intervention has been maintained more by recollection than by action (see Giustozzi, 2011). It no longer relies on the systematic use of violence in its day to day operations.

Throughout the late 1990s, the RPF had to contend with armed resistance from elements of the previous regime while at the same time, urban districts, first abandoned and then repopulated after the genocide, were engulfed by crime (Prunier, 1995; African Rights, 1998). Interviewees indicated that the situation was particularly difficult in the outskirts of Kigali, which suffered an 'epidemic' of micro-level violence involving armed gangs. Some even speak of 'a shoot-on-sight' policy on the part of security forces fighting this crime wave.<sup>137</sup> The situation was brought under control around the same time as the North-Western Insurgency was defeated (see Chapter Three). Urban crime control involved many of the same methods as the counter-insurgency campaign, including the beginnings of the community policing

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<sup>136</sup> Public executions were recorded across the country, culminating in the shooting of twenty-one suspected genocide perpetrators in Nyamirambo stadium on 24 April 1998. Officially these were the final state executions, after which a 1997 ban on capital punishment came into effect.

<sup>137</sup> Interview, Local Businessmen, Muhima, Kigali, 10 April 2014.

systems already described: the deployment of Local Defence Forces, the spread of the *amarondo* patrol system and the expansion of an intricate apparatus of local intelligence gathering.

Periodic accounts of police violence persisted into the early 2000s. In Nyamirambo, local, albeit conjectural accounts, offer an illustrative incident that took place in approximately 2002, when a man known to be coordinating a network of drug dealers was shot dead outside his house, allegedly by plainclothes police officers. When uniformed police officers later arrived, they told residents not to move the body, and returned only after twenty-four hours to collect it. The incident was widely known throughout the sector, where residents suggested that the delay had occurred deliberately to 'send a message'. I have no way of confirming this story further, but the fact that it continues to circulate over ten years later is itself informative. This indicates the extent to which the post-war reconstruction period has left an imprint on the minds of many Rwandans about the willingness of their government to resort to violence in order to enforce public order.

Today, according to both local and official accounts, security forces in Rwanda subject the population to violence infrequently. This is acknowledged even by the government's most outspoken critics (Reyntjens, 2013; Thomson, 2011). Police shootings do occur, however, and over the course of this research I took note of the following:

*28 September 2015, Protogene Niyonsenga and Zakary Niyibizi were both shot dead in Nyamasheke (see Incident 4, Chapter Four).*

*26 February 2015, Dr. Emmanuel Gasakure, former physician to President Kagame, was shot and killed while in police custody.*

*17 October 2014, Vedaste Niyomugabo, a street vendor, was shot and killed in Nyabugogo, allegedly attempting to disarm a police officer.*

*On 15 June 2014, an alleged poisoner, Eric Hashakimana was shot and killed trying to escape police custody.*

*16 May 2014, Alfred Nsengimana, previously executive secretary of Cyuve sector, Musanze District, was killed in police custody by a Rwanda Correctional Services Officer.*

*15 May 2014, two people were shot and killed in an armed robbery in Ruli Cell, Muhanga District.*

*6 May 2014, A pickpocket was shot and killed in central Kigali (Muhima) while allegedly running from police officers.*

The nature of these incidents and the government's response to them provide some insight into police attitudes towards violence. All seven cases both prompted official government statements and attracted critical commentary online. Piecing together this information, the death of President Kagame's personal physician remains shrouded in political controversy. The deaths of Eric Hashakimana and Alfred Nsengimana similarly have a political backdrop. Nsengimana was arrested in Musanze on suspicion of being an infiltrator from the FDLR. He was said to be showing police the location of a cache of weapons belonging to anti-government forces when he was shot trying to escape. Hashakimana was being held on suspicion of involvement in an assassination attempt on General Emmanuel Ruvusha, commander of the RDF's third division, which is stationed on the DRC border. Both cases appear to be linked to the ongoing counter-insurgency campaign in the North (discussed in Chapter Six), rather than routine crime prevention. The remaining incidents sparked internal debate within the RNP. This centred on how to prevent similar occurrences in the future.<sup>138</sup> Police responses reflected Frankel's (1980:495) argument that, for social order to be maintained over an extended period, it is "a

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<sup>138</sup> Informal Discussions, RNP Officers, Kigali, 10 October 2014.

critical minimum that police-community relations avoid situations in which police actions inevitably fuel popular discontents which are then projected onto the political system”.

The international political context at the time of this research made for revealing discussions with Rwandan officers. In late 2014, the news of the Ferguson riots against police violence in the USA was a regular topic of conversation among Rwandan police with whom I interacted. At closer proximity, accounts of arbitrary police abuse in neighbouring Burundi prompted similar internal discussions at the RNP. Rwandan officers uniformly condemned these foreign police departments on two accounts. First, they emphasised that the arbitrary or ill-disciplined use of violence was ‘unprofessional’. Second, they stressed that by the time the riots broke out in Bujumbura and Ferguson, the police had, as one Rwandan officer recounted, *“already failed in their duty ... it is our job to know about these things in advance, and to prevent them”*.<sup>139</sup> These comments feed into the topic of state intolerance towards social disharmony, discussed below, whereby any violence – even state-led – that prompts social upheaval is to be avoided. When asked whether the cycles of anti-government protest and violent government crackdown that were playing out in Burundi could ever be reproduced in Rwanda, one Kigali resident, a university student, replied, *“It would never get that far. Here, they [government authorities] already know what we are thinking”*.<sup>140</sup>

There are no recent accounts in Rwanda of anything resembling the police ‘death squads’ identified in contexts such as Kenya (Al-Jazeera, 2014), Burundi (HRW, 2016) or in Nigeria, where the Mobile Police (Mopal) unit is known locally as ‘Kill-and-Go’, owing to a “trigger happy approach to crime control” (Hills, 2008:219). Over the past decade in Rwanda, while there have been isolated incidents of state perpetrated violence in enforcing internal security, even the most critical accounts do not amount to anything resembling the level of brutality enacted in these cases (see HRW,

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<sup>139</sup> Informal Discussion, Police Sergeant, Kimihurua (Kigali), 18 January 2015.

<sup>140</sup> Interview, Student at *Université Libre de Kigali*, Kigali (Kiyovu), 10 December 2015.

2014a).<sup>141</sup> This comparison is not intended to excuse Rwandan abuses where they have occurred, but instead to point out that even where the government has developed a reputation for authoritarianism – both among critics and among Rwandan citizens intimidated by the state’s monopoly of force – it has done so despite relatively little overt violence perpetrated in the everyday operation of the state.

The population is nevertheless periodically reminded of the state’s strength of arms. The heavy police intervention in Nyabugogo bus station in 2013 to thwart the ‘marines’ is one such example (see Chapter Four). In addition, according to Human Rights Watch (2014) at least fourteen people were abducted, held in military custody and later accused of affiliation with the FDLR in Gisenyi in early 2014. Perhaps the most revealing aspect of this case was the President’s public response, *“We will continue to arrest more suspects and if possible shoot in broad daylight those who intend to destabilise our country.”*<sup>142</sup> The message intended for the population is extremely clear – the government can and will intervene with force if pushed to do so.

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<sup>141</sup> Hills (2008:223), for example, writes of the police in Nigeria that: “the use of torture and degrading treatment of ordinary citizens in local police stations was widespread, routine and often resulted in death”.

<sup>142</sup> Kagame, comments made at a public speech in Nyabihu, see The East African (2014) ‘Rwanda to arrest or shoot anyone posing a security threat’: <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Rwanda-to-arrest-or-shoot-anyone-posing-a-security-threat/2558-2338314-9i3v3cz/index.html>, accessed 10 August 2016.

## State Intolerance of Disorder

*These days, even when a tyre bursts, it must be reported [...] anything that signals fighting, we must stop it before it spreads.*

Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 28 January 2015.

*Security is our number one priority, everything else is secondary. We cannot go back to fighting a war with ourselves.*

Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Kigali Metropolitan Police (Muhima), 8 October 2014.

The return to intra-communal violence constitutes an existential threat to the governing elite in the RPF. Significant energy is dedicated to preventing the normalisation of violence in the country. There is a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to policing that is catered specifically towards crimes – however minor – that indicate social disharmony. This model involves using arrest, even only temporary, for all types of crimes, but especially public order misdemeanours and ‘quality of life’ crimes (Lum, 2009:794). Its aim is a general reduction of violence.

Assaults, the most commonly reported offense, are consistently followed up on by police, while bars and nightclubs that are the scene of too many fights are fined or closed down. Similarly, drugs offenses are heavily penalised, in part because they are associated with a loss of control (discussed in greater detail below).

This approach has already proven controversial. In 2015, Human Rights Watch released a damning report on conditions in the Gikondo Detention Centre, known locally as ‘Kwa Kabuga’ (lit. ‘for movement’, since people held there would very often be transitioned on to *Ingando* re-education camps around the country or to the Iwawa island detention centre on Lake Kivu) (HRW, 2015a). The camp remains one of the police’s main tools in an escalating conflict with ‘street hawkers’, and officials

have disputed the critical claims.<sup>143</sup> Among government officials with whom I spoke, 'hawkers' was used indiscriminately to describe anyone informally trading, begging or loitering in Kigali's central sectors, all of which were considered unacceptable markers of disorder.

The state's intolerance of social disharmony can also be seen in the types of incidents that are presented to the JOC in Kigali. Violent deaths, the discovery of hidden weapons and the discharge of firearms are all reported. So too was any indication of escalating levels of violence in small communities and any deliberate damage to, or defacement of, government buildings.<sup>144</sup> In one example joked about by officials, an empty sports bag left in the street was reported to the highest security council. Later it was discovered that the bag contained the property of a man who had been thrown out of his household by his spouse. As one official commented: "*It is about stopping crimes before they occur, and that means knowing about anything that may look dangerous [...] any threat is reported*".<sup>145</sup>

The RNP's control over firearms is particularly strict. This is partly out of a desire to disarm the population and mitigate against further armed rebellion after the North-Western Insurgency, and partly as a reaction to the unpopularity of Local Defence Units (see Chapter Three), who used their weapons to intimidate and at times extort the population before being disarmed in 2007.<sup>146</sup> Among police officers, every weapon is engraved with a yellow service number and turned in at the end of each shift. Outside of government shooting ranges, every bullet fired, even in mistake or into the air as a deterrent, is meticulously accounted for in JOC reports. In October 2007, the RNP implemented a Central Firearms Registry, responsible for weapon

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<sup>143</sup> See The East African (2014), 'Kigali city officials fight back as detainees allege abuse': <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/Rwanda/News/Kigali-city-officials-fight-back-as-detainees-allege-abuse-/1433218-1906224-4o1j69/index.html>, accessed 22 November 2016.

<sup>144</sup> As an example, the theft of RPF party flags from local sector offices was presented to the centre (Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 8 February 2015).

<sup>145</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 28 January 2015.

<sup>146</sup> The New Times (2007) 'Rwanda police withdraw military equipment from LDU': <http://allafrica.com/stories/200703150353.html>, accessed 10 December 2015.

registration, stock-pile management and the tracing of illegal firearms within Rwanda. The department includes a machine for the destruction of obsolete, redundant or illegal firearms. The state's high degree of control over weapons is reflected in the rhetoric of senior officers. Commenting on armed militias in neighbouring Burundi, and in the context of a discussion of the disarming LDF patrols, one senior officer stated candidly: "*how can someone who has a gun control someone who has a gun?*".<sup>147</sup>

Incident 4 (Chapter Four) showcases the kind of chain reaction that the government most fears. In response to an overbearing executive secretary at the cell level, an *umudugudu* community turned violently on uniformed police. The government's response was a comprehensive inquiry into the events, and a string of public statements justifying the police shootings and explaining the circumstances in which they took place.

The intolerance of social disharmony extends to the conduct of state and non-state security representatives, as evidenced in some of the internal disciplinary procedures that have already been described. It is perhaps best reflected in the manner in which state authorities control violence on the part of *amarondo* patrols. Security officials insist that *abanyerondo* have 'no right to punish'. They serve as antennae for the central authorities but can themselves be reprimanded for an overbearing use of force. This relationship distinguishes Rwandan policing from accounts of vigilantism in other parts of Africa, where non-state patrols operate with little to no state coordination, and exercise violence with relative impunity (Buur & Jensen, 2004; Pratten, 2008).

The behaviour of the political elite in Kigali indicates a lingering vulnerability stemming from the recollection of extreme inter-ethnic violence of 1994 (Hintjens, 2013). The government is strongly inclined to extinguish any sign of violence,

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<sup>147</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 28 January 2015.

particularly ethnically motivated, that could otherwise spark more widespread disorder or anti-government resistance. State concerns about ethnic divisionism are evident in police practices. In murder cases, investigators must establish whether genocide witnesses were being killed or whether attacks were motivated by ethnic reprisals. Similarly, in gender-based violence (GBV) cases with mixed Hutu and Tutsi families, steps are taken to establish whether the crimes were ethnically motivated.<sup>148</sup>

Public speech is monitored for statements that could be considered incitement, and in December 2001, 'sectarianism' and 'divisionism' were made illegal in Rwanda (Law No. 37, Republic of Rwanda, 2001). A specific law on 'genocide ideology' was passed in 2008 (Law No.18, Republic of Rwanda, 2008), with the term defined as:

*An aggregate of thoughts characterized by conduct, speeches, documents and other acts aiming at exterminating or inciting others to exterminate people basing [sic] on ethnic group, origin, nationality, region, color, physical appearance, sex, language, religion or political opinion, committed in normal periods or during war.*

Law Relating to the Crime of Genocide Ideology (Republic of Rwanda, 2008).

It is important to note that the actual enforcement of these laws is relatively infrequent. Since 2010, there have been on average between one hundred to one hundred and fifty cases of genocide-denial, sectarianism, and divisionism combined per year in a population of just over eleven million. By comparison, this number equates to approximately half the country's murder rate.<sup>149</sup> While researchers such as Thomson (2011:443) have argued the laws are "arbitrarily applied to anyone who makes public statements that the government perceives as critical", it is worth keeping the actual numbers of criminal cases in proportion.

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<sup>148</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 20 January 2015.

<sup>149</sup> Criminal Investigations Department Statistics (RNP, 2015), see Chapter Three.

Public speech is nevertheless extensively policed, but this policing occurs within small communities, most often without the physical presence of state representatives. Uncertainty about who might be inclined to report suspicious or explicitly anti-government behaviour stifles political discussion at the local level. What is notable, however, is that this takes place without incurring the kind of witch-hunt associated with mass informant networks elsewhere (see Childs & Popplewell, 1996; Schrecker, 1998). According to both local accounts and to senior officials in the Police Department of Criminal Investigations, the instrumental use of false accusations, something that could be expected if vaguely worded speech laws were being applied systematically, is rare in Rwanda.<sup>150</sup> This matter warrants further research. I suspect it can be attributed to three factors: (1) the double-checking of information through parallel chains of informants, (2) the nature of intra-communal surveillance in which incriminating evidence was rarely held only by one individual who could personally profit from it, and (3) to a strong cultural value condemning false testimony.

For all the policing of public speech, genocide-denial laws are seldom applied, and when they are, it appears to be done selectively and occurs in a political sphere that most Rwandans carefully and effectively avoid entering. Regarding speech laws, what I witnessed more closely resembled a form of every-day avoidance of the state, rather than active 'every-day resistance', a term that has been adapted from Scott's (2008) work on peasant revolt in Malaysia and applied to Rwanda in recent years (see Thomson, 2011). Rwandans whom I met astutely navigated the regulations on acceptable and unacceptable public statements, compartmentalising the divisive issues of ethnicity and elite politics and generally avoiding them altogether. The police, meanwhile, let these self-policing mechanisms operate without the need for systematic crackdowns.

Overall, the RNP appears torn in two directions over the issue of force. On the one hand, it enjoys a reputation for the capacity to use violence, something that deters

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<sup>150</sup> See Kalyvas, 2006 for a nuanced analysis of false accusations used for personal benefit in uncertain and violent political contexts.

criminal activity in itself. On the other, the institution must take care not to develop a reputation for arbitrary or systematic brutality, as this could spark more active resistance. The maintenance of social order in Rwanda relies on Frankel's (1980:495) 'critical minimum' of police-community relations, below which the police risk fuelling discontent that is directed against the political system. The sections below explore where state approaches to crime control find popular support in the attitudes and behaviours of Rwandan citizens.

### Local Intolerance of Disorder

*There is no more room for violence in Rwanda. It was made full in 1994.*

Interview, Head of Umudugudu, Nibuye (Kigali), 16 October 2014.

*Once you have seen darkness, you do whatever you can to stay in the light.*

Interview, Irondo Patrol Leader, Gisenyi, 5 November 2014.

Rwanda suffers from palpable conflict fatigue, and the state's intolerance of violence and disorder is reflected by the sentiments of large sections of the population. When speaking of attitudes towards violence, many Rwandans refer to the cultural principle of '*kwanga guhemuka*', literally to restrain hatred, and commonly heard statements (such as those above), indicate that the legacy of the genocide remains a motivating force in the every-day maintenance of public order. A study from 2008 suggests that even fifteen years on from the genocide, over twenty-five per cent of adults in Rwanda displayed symptoms of clinical post-traumatic stress disorder relating to the events of 1994 (Munyandamutsa, et al. 2008). The notion of renewed conflict is an intolerable thought to many in the population.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> There are significant ethical and practical difficulties involved in researching post-conflict trauma, and the Rwandan government has been tightening its control over this type of research (Informal Conversations, Rwanda Research Roundtable R3, Kigali, 6 March 2014). What studies do exist suggest a degree of PTSD that is both widespread and not confined to sections of society who were specifically targeted during the genocide (the *abacikacumu*, lit. survivors) (see also Pham et al., 2012; Rieder and Elbert, 2013).

These fears are not only associated with politically and ethnically motivated violence. Both the genocide and the North-Western Insurgency were accompanied by opportunistic and violent crime that went on long after the official cessation of hostilities. This is a common feature of post-conflict environments, which produce what Marenin (2005:12) calls “a significant diffusion of threats away from the state”, in which residents fear “organized crime, normal crime, civic violence [and] local militias acting without the law and with little conscience”.

The fear of crime is rarely discussed in Rwanda, and the academic focus has remained principally on popular responses to government abuse (see Ingelaere, 2010; Ansoms, 2009; Reyntjens, 2013). Hayman (2009:13), nevertheless, writes of a “genuine fear among many people about a resurgence of violence”, while Purdeková (2011:494) argues that intra-communal suspicion and distrust are “strongly compounded by genocide fear”, which decreases dissent and assists the state in governing, particularly its ability to “gather and disperse, to stage and broadcast, to extract resources and attempt its desired transformations” (Ibid.). Participation in crime prevention is seen as both a communal activity, linked to the cultural code and the control of *kirazira* behaviours (again, essentially public order infractions that are policed locally), and as a public good in the context of the country’s violent past. The head of one *umudugudu* commented to this effect: “*Our history has taught us that we are all responsible for protecting ourselves [...] from these kinds of crimes*”.<sup>152</sup>

A popular intolerance towards violence does not lend itself to straightforward empirical or comparative analysis. Nevertheless, local narratives condemning violence are commonplace. In the few cases of violence in public settings that I witnessed, it was striking how quickly the attitudes of onlookers changed the moment a verbal dispute became physical, and how uniformly and vehemently condemned any violent action was.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Interview, Head of *Umudugudu*, Kigali (Nyamirambo), 18 November 2014.

<sup>153</sup> Incident 2, of a bar fight near Kimironko market, provides some empirical material to this effect.

It is important to note that these sentiments are held to an uneven degree throughout the population, often related to specific family histories.<sup>154</sup> The propensity for individuals to hold a strong psychological aversion to disorder based on their personal experience of violence or ‘genocide fear’ is not readily known, even to peers, colleagues or neighbours. This is another source of uncertainty about who might be inclined to report negative behaviours to local cell, police or district security officers. It was reflected in the way that house guards, private security guards and drivers in taxi-moto cooperatives were all most frequently reported for breaking the rules by their associates, particularly when their actions involved violence or drug use. This uncertainty, that, based on indeterminable aspects of their character or personal history, neighbours and friends may turn out to be impromptu informants, is both more pervasive and more ubiquitous than the fear of paid and trained government informants operating clandestinely within small communities.

#### Drug Related Crime and Public Order

*For the one who beats you, he will beat you and go. But for the one who is consuming drugs he will destroy the whole nation.*

Interview, Young Student and Crime Club Attendee, Gisenyi, 21 October 2014.

The reaction of Rwanda’s policing system to drug offences is indicative of both state and local intolerance towards social disharmony.<sup>155</sup> Perhaps to an even greater extent than violence, drug use is framed as an almost existential affront to Rwandan culture. Behind this rhetoric is a popular backlash against the loss of control associated with taking illegal substances, evidenced in both official government statements and the attitudes of residents:

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<sup>154</sup> The intolerance towards disorder based on historical factors was particularly strongly espoused by the heads of *amarondo* patrols with whom I spoke, although it is unclear whether they were selected for the job on this basis.

<sup>155</sup> Human trafficking is another example of a shared concern that has received a lot of government sponsored attention in local and national media.

*Illicit brew, just like narcotics is becoming a menace to the Rwandan society. It [...] fuels the rate of criminal activity. Today those who commit crimes such as domestic violence, robbery, rape among others are most of time under the influence of illicit brews as well as excessive consumption of alcoholic drinks.*<sup>156</sup>

Ministry of Internal Security, Official Statement on Drug Consumption (2014)

*These drugs, they can make the youth crazy and do dangerous things. [...] They must be controlled to protect everybody.*

Interview, Head of *Umudugudu*, Kigali (Nyamirambo), 27 August 2014.

In 2013, the RNP handled over three thousand cases of drug traffickers and illicit alcohol manufacturers. These constituted almost one third of all listed criminal incidents in the country for that year. The overwhelming majority relate to cannabis and illegal gins, which are either home brewed (*Kanyanga*) or from banned providers such as 'Blue Sky', 'Chief Waragi', 'Zebra Waragi' and 'Kitoko'.<sup>157</sup> Most cases were reported to the police by the public, with residents contacting CPC members, police or DASSO to pass on information about suspected drug or alcohol abuse.

According to the Rwandan penal code, the growing, selling, transportation, storage and consumption of narcotic drugs are prohibited (Republic of Rwanda, 2012a). Article 594 states that "any person who consumes, injects, inhales, anoints himself/herself with or makes any other unlawful use of narcotic drugs shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of one to three years and a fine of Rwf 50,000 to Rwf 500,000". Prison terms are extended to between three and five years for anyone caught selling or making drugs, with a minimum 500,000 RWF fine (approximately \$620 USD).

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<sup>156</sup> Full statement available at:

[http://www.mininter.gov.rw/index.php?id=17&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=173&cHash=e29c1d54c7e9684a75437e0e9c748ea3](http://www.mininter.gov.rw/index.php?id=17&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=173&cHash=e29c1d54c7e9684a75437e0e9c748ea3), accessed 25 November 2016.

<sup>157</sup> Rwandan law prohibits "any drink that exceeds forty-five percent of alcohol and any other drink which doesn't have the required quality for consumption" (Law Governing Narcotic Drugs, Article 24, Republic of Rwanda 2012a).

Cases relating to illegal substances dominated much of my discussion of crime and crime prevention in Rwanda. Drug consumption is an issue on which both local community leaders and police officials tend to agree, with the result that significant energies are dedicated to combating it. Harsh state penalties tend not to be publicly decried, and people involved in local security feel comfortable talking about anti-drug crime measures.<sup>158</sup> There are several identifiable reasons for this:

(1) Illegal drugs are considered an external threat to Rwanda, and local accounts frequently say that cannabis and illegal gins were ‘not grown’ and ‘not brewed’ in the country, but brought in from regional neighbours, particularly from the DRC and Uganda. They are transported in particular along the pre-1994 smuggling routes that transit the borderlands around Gisenyi and Musanze.

(2) Cannabis consumption is strongly associated with the country’s younger generation, and close to ninety percent of cases in 2013 and 2014 involved individuals aged between eighteen and thirty-five (RNP, 2014:201). The association between drug consumption and young people matches the concerns of both heads of *imidugudu* and state representatives about keeping control over the country’s youth.

(3) Drug consumption is linked to a loss of personal control for the drug user. In addition to being strongly condemned by the cultural code, it is possible that there is also an historical factor in effect, since drug use was closely associated with some of the more extreme violence that occurred in 1994 (Prunier, 1995). In the country today, the availability of drugs in particular communities is also taken to indicate a wider, societal loss of control that police authorities link to the failure of intra-communal mechanisms of monitoring.

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<sup>158</sup> A draft bill in 2010 proposed the legalisation of cannabis as a painkiller in hospitals, but was shelved due in part to popular resistance (Informal Discussion, Senior Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister, 16 April 2014).

## 5.6 Summary

This chapter has argued that the pillars of crime control in Rwanda are (1) the state security hierarchy and its ability to syphon information up to the relevant crime-prevention authorities, (2) the construction of orderly environments, partitioned at the *umudugudu* level, that exhibit high degrees of self-policing and informal control, and (3) the incentivisation of Rwandan citizens to participate in intra-communal surveillance, either informally, or else in formal but unpaid positions as members of anti-crime clubs and CPCs.

On the whole, the prevention of street crime is achieved locally in small Rwandan communities, rather than by the uniformed state officials who have a highly visible presence at strategic sites. Investigations are secondary to the construction of a general environment, partitioned and self-contained into small neighbourhood units, that is resistant to crime. Rwandan state authorities have approached crime prevention as a process within public order, which is in turn shaped by a range of demographic, environmental and cultural factors (see also Hills, 2009:12).

Rwanda's policing system uses a unique combination of intelligence-led, community-based and zero-tolerance models. The core strategy involves maximising the number of situations in which individuals responsible for maintaining public order interact with one another. The key to success is the timely movement of information, which passes rapidly up the chain towards central government authorities via a long series of close personal links. Current arrangements give rise to a remarkably efficient apparatus of information gathering in which individuals reporting crime are not required to interact with officials distant to them in the administrative hierarchy.

The enemy of crime prevention in Rwanda is individual anonymity, and significant measures have been taken to restrict it. Rwandan authorities effectively identify and co-opt individuals, such as unemployed youths, who potentially threaten public order. Certain of these measures have attracted criticism elsewhere, as the population lives under intense local surveillance by both state and non-state groups.

## CHAPTER SIX – POLICING THE BORDERLANDS

### 6.1 Introduction

Gisenyi, Rwanda's largest border town, offers a unique view of the mechanisms of crime control that have been discussed up to this point. It is far removed from the central hilltops of Kigali, where much of the academic research on Rwandan political arrangements has been conducted (see Ingelaere, 2010b). State power, as Asad (2004:279) writes, "is always unstable, something best seen when one moves away from the centre". Focusing on urban areas outside of the capital city shows the extent to which policing practices are evenly extended throughout the country.

In principle, Gisenyi represents one of the most difficult environments for state law enforcement. Its urban districts are pressed against the international border between Rwanda and the DRC, exposing the city to borderland dynamics that complicate its political governance. It lies on a well-trodden smuggling corridor connecting the unstable provinces of eastern DRC, through northern Rwanda and Uganda, to Kenya and ultimately to international markets via the port of Mombasa (Lamarque, 2014). It is situated in the country's North-Western Province, the heartland of the ousted Habyarimana regime and the epicentre of the anti-government insurgency in 1997. Finally, its streets run across the border into districts of the Congolese town of Goma that are renowned for their high levels of urban crime. It is a site that challenges Rwanda's state reach, and reveals some of its more nuanced mechanisms.

Rwanda's western border is relatively frictionless; few regulations are imposed on residents wanting to cross between Goma and Gisenyi.<sup>159</sup> On a typical morning, over twenty thousand people walk over the *petite barrière*, a small checkpoint connecting the two towns (Kimanuka & Lange, 2010; Brenton et al. 2011). Goma and Gisenyi

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<sup>159</sup> Anyone with an identity card registering them as living within the city limits on either side of the border can cross free of charge. Congolese and Rwandans from further afield are required to buy a *laissez passez*, at a cost of 3000 RWF (approximately \$3.50 USD).

merge completely at the border line, which is marked by nothing more than a dirt track running down the hill from the checkpoint towards Lake Kivu. Close to the border in Gisenyi, most houses are compounds, with walled gardens and brightly coloured roofing. Once in Goma, these buildings give way to the informal constructions of wood and corrugated iron that are ubiquitous in poorer townships across the continent (see Maps 5 and 6, below). At the boundary, economic, demographic, and infrastructural imbalances generate opportunities for the local populations on either side and shape the relationship between them.

In Chapters Four and Five, I argued that the bulk of policing in Rwanda takes place in the institutional margins of the state, in tightly organised *umudugudu* communities below the cell level of government administration. Most local policing actors are not official state representatives, and the system relies on the timely movement of information up an extensive law enforcement hierarchy from small communities to central government authorities. Despite a high degree of state coordination, social relations at the community level matter.

These social arrangements are likely to differ in the country's border towns (see Nugent, 2012; Martinez, 1978; Dobler, 2008). The core questions addressed here are: (1) How consistent are policing practices in Rwanda from town to town? and (2) How, when goods and people cross with ease, can violent criminality be confined to the Congolese side of the border?

This chapter revisits the three principal drivers of crime prevention in Rwanda described in Chapter Five: the state security apparatus, the organisation of small communities, and the intolerance of social disharmony. It explores each of these in the paired border towns and identifies aspects of policing that are specific to this setting. I argue that although the structures of state policing are the same as in other parts of Rwanda, community policing differs in important ways in Gisenyi, both in terms of the actors involved and in how communities engage with state representatives. Maps 1 and 2, below, show the border neighbourhoods of the two towns.

Map 2. Street Map, Goma (left) and Gisenyi (right) Border Neighbourhoods



Source: OpenStreetMap Contributors (2016)

Map 3. Satellite Map, Goma and Gisenyi Border Neighbourhoods



Source: Google Earth (2016)

## 6.2 Policing and State Reach in Border Towns

Border towns tend to come in pairs that are connected across a state boundary by the interactions between their residents.<sup>160</sup> They can vary in the degree to which they are 'inward' or 'outward' facing (Nugent, 2012:557), and in most cases find themselves pulled in both directions. Political arrangements drive a centripetal force towards the metropole, while cross-border economic practices produce a centrifugal force outwards towards communities across the border line (Jackson, 2006). The governance of paired border towns reveals how states promote their agendas, and how their advances are "received, appropriated, and very often thwarted" (Nugent, 2012:557).

Recent political analysis of African border towns has been dominated by themes of state intervention and local resistance (Dobler, 2010; Nugent, 2012; Zeller, 2010). Sovereign authority tends to seep outward from capital cities like a droplet of water on filter paper. It dissipates as it approaches a state's territorial edges, and at times fails to reach them altogether. States with limited capacity to govern effectively tend to prioritise capital cities (Bierschenk & Sardan, 1997). In borderlands, they also encounter competition; borders generate alternative modes of governance, often based on informal economic interactions between residents (Zartman, 2010).

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<sup>160</sup> These urban arrangements have proven remarkably difficult to name. A range of efforts have been made, including twin-cities, sister cities, trans-border cities, binational cities, neighbouring cities, connected cities and companion cities, all with subtly different meanings (see Buursink, 2001). Significant criticism has been levelled against the popular 'twin' analogy, as well as other familial metaphors, since they imply similarity (see Arreoloa, 1996 on the "Gemini complex"). Buursink (2001) compromises with "border-crossing cities", but even this remains somewhat unsatisfactory, partly due to some grammatical ambiguity – the cities themselves are not crossing the border – and partly because the observation that pairs of border towns contain crossing points says little about how they interact. For the purposes of description, I adopt 'paired border towns' to describe Goma and Gisenyi. With border interaction built into their definition, border towns cannot be entirely inward facing, their "backs turned to each other" (Nugent 2012:558). The border may be present in these cases, but it plays a very limited role in the everyday practices of the towns' inhabitants. Conversely, towns set at some distance from a border that, by merit of strong transport and economic linkages ensure that residents are in constant interaction with cross-border processes, may well be able to take the name border town (Wilson & Donnan, 2016).

The border town environment complicates state-led policing, due to a range of factors. These include:

*The power of local networks and their inclination to subvert government regulations:* Borders are profitable 'resources' for people living close to them (Feyissa & Hoehne, 2010). Across Africa small differences in the market prices of foodstuffs and low-value manufactured goods drive a high degree of small-scale cross-border trade. For various reasons, this trade is subject to limited customs duty. In regions far from the capital, regulations may not be known, the state may lack the power to enforce them, or they may be deliberately evaded. Where more valuable commodities are concerned, the border resource can attract military entrepreneurs intent on controlling exchange (Nugent 2002:569). Often, state power in peripheral areas must be locally 'brokered' by individuals who accommodate the interests of powerful local actors (Goodhand, 2013).

*The lack of incentives for state authorities to police peripheral urban districts effectively:* Across sub-Saharan Africa, states have struggled to extend their political control effectively outwards from political centres in capital cities into more sparsely populated rural regions (Herbst, 2000). Even at the centre, their power is often contested, constrained by limited resources, and undermined by informal networks (Zartman, 1995; Jackson & Rosberg 1982; Allen, 1999). Border towns tend to be a low priority for governments that suffer from weak institutions, and state authorities in Central Africa have often been content to retreat to capital cities and let peripheral zones fend for themselves (Rayemaekers, 2010).

*The lack of incentives for local officials to police effectively:* State institutions in borderlands are rarely the only ones exercising public authority (Lund, 2006b). This leaves local police operating as just one coercive actor among many. A common result is that local police become complicit in activities which subvert the state, extracting rents through taxation and customs regulation, for example, and depriving central authorities of revenue (Coplan, 2012; Englebert, 2009; Lamarque, 2014). State police in border towns may be torn between loyalty to distant central authorities and the

need to stay relevant in the border-town political environment. Or they may exploit their position as gate-keepers for personal profit. In these situations, street crime and micro-level violence are often left unchallenged.

*The lack of coordination between the police forces of neighbouring states:* In cases where central authorities are disinclined to cooperate effectively, borderland residents can take advantage of networked ties across the border to evade state enforcement, benefitting from local knowledge that agents from the capital cities on either side may lack (Coplan, 2012; Nugent, 2002). These cross-border networks are a common problem for borderland policing, particularly where hostilities exist between the governing states on either side.

Overall, border towns, and borderlands more generally, have been depicted as zones of transition and of 'concentrated intractability' (Goodhand, 2013). They generate power relationships that challenge central state authority and produce regions of limited statehood, or 'governance without government' (Rosenau & Czempiel, 1992; Zartman 2010). They are "at once [...] areas of opportunity and/or insecurity, zones of contact and/or conflict, of cooperation and/or competition, of ambivalent identities and/or the aggressive assertion of difference" (Anderson & O'Dowd, 1999:595). They are liminal spaces, and are often dangerous and unpredictable (Donnan, 2016).

With respect to violence and criminality, African borders have for the most part proven to be sources of, rather than barriers to, insecurity and conflict (Korf & Raeymaekers, 2013). Insurgent groups and criminal gangs find themselves well accommodated in border regions. Empowered by the economic opportunities of the border and emboldened by state incapacity, they shelter behind national boundaries and operate freely across them (Coplan, 2010; Jackson, 2006).

## 6.3 Goma and Gisenyi

### Paired Cities across a Frictionless Border

Goma and Gisenyi came into being as Belgian and German military outposts respectively. These were constructed in 1900 following colonial border disputes between the two European powers. The towns have since 'grown up together', both rapidly expanding over the course of the twentieth century (Mathys, 2014). Today, they are provincial capitals, and house the government headquarters of North Kivu Province (DRC) and Rubavu District (Rwanda). They have a combined population of just over one million (Brenton et. al, 2011).

The paired border towns have an exceptionally violent recent history. In 1994, Gisenyi was the last Rwandan city to fall to the victorious RPF. Its capture on 18 July marked the official end of the Rwandan Genocide (Prunier, 1995). By this time the town had suffered the near complete annihilation of its Tutsi population. Throughout the 1990s, the FDLR continued to launch sporadic attacks and cattle raids across the border from strongholds in DRC into rural areas north-east of the border town. Violence peaked during the 1997 North-Western Insurgency, although isolated incidents have continued to the present day (see African Rights, 1998). In recent years, the FDLR's presence in the borderland has been used to justify Rwandan military excursions into the DRC, as well as Rwandan support for Tutsi militias in North Kivu (UN, 2012). Civil conflict in Rwanda has also had a profound impact on neighbouring Congolese territories. Between 1996 and 2003, during two destructive inter-state wars, North Kivu acted as no-man's-land between the military influence of Kigali and Kinshasa. To this day, Congolese central government has been unable to exert authority over its eastern provinces or to subdue the range of militias still at large there.

Goma is an archetypal border town as characterised in the literature discussed above. It occupies a zone of limited statehood where there is a pronounced administrative

disconnect between its provincial authorities and the central government in Kinshasa some 1,500 kilometres away (see Büscher, 2012; Büscher & Vlassenroot, 2010). Goma's status as a site of what Büscher (2012) calls "urban governance beyond the state" is enshrined in Mobutu infamous pronouncement '*débrouillez-vous*' (fend for yourselves), a phrase he directed at the country's eastern provinces and which is still cited by local government actors (Büscher, 2016). The politics of the so-called '*Système-D*' in which individuals openly subvert state regulations against hawking, smuggling and embezzlement just to get by, endure in the city.<sup>161</sup>

Gisenyi experiences a vibrant daily economic interaction with its Congolese counterpart. Three official crossings connect the border towns: the *grand barrière*, which lies on a major road by the lake front, the *petite barrière* in the town centre, and the *makaburi* (lit. graveyard) border-post a few kilometres to the north. Informal crossing elsewhere is prohibited, and the borderline – a narrow dirt track running through densely populated residential districts – is loosely patrolled by the militaries on both sides. The erection of a physical barrier separating the cities has been discussed but never implemented, and past attempts to close the border during times of crisis have been quickly reversed due to popular outcry. At present the border is open and relatively frictionless, in that it is free for local residents to cross (Doevenspeck, 2011; Brenton et. al, 2011)

Small scale cross-border trade, amounting to earnings of under \$100 USD per day, provides a survival economy for over twenty-two thousand traders and their dependents in the two cities. Most are resellers who cross the *petite barrière* carrying goods from the Rwandan markets of Murigare, Mudugudu and Yakabungo, to Goma's

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<sup>161</sup> Debates about the extent of ongoing Rwandan military interests and support for rebel militias across the border in DRC have been heated. The argument that violence throughout North Kivu is a form of controlled burn, lit by the Rwandan government to serve its own interests but directed expertly out of Rwandan territory may find some support in the history of militias operating in the borderland (particularly the CNDP and AFDL). However, it does not seem plausible when it comes to micro-level violence in the paired border cities, since there has been no suggestion that the Rwandan government has any stake in, nor means by which to control, the street crime of Goma. In short, these discussions take place at the wrong level of analysis to account for why micro-level violence in Goma does not spread to its Rwandan neighbour.

larger and less regulated central markets, Virunga and Birere (Lange & Kimanuka, 2010). This trade is driven by the greater employment opportunities and the generally higher market prices for foodstuffs on the Congolese side.

Perhaps surprisingly given their contrasting appearance, Goma, the poorer looking, is the wealthier of the two border towns. Prices in the city have been inflated by humanitarian non-governmental organisations and international peacekeepers, as well as by a strong mining sector that provides employment for unskilled labourers in the surrounding countryside (see Buscher & Vlassenroot, 2010). These economic resources are unavailable in Gisenyi, where residents lament the lack of available work.

Doevenspeck (2011) highlights five common narratives used to describe the border in Goma and Gisenyi by those who cross it. It is: (1) a source of threats, either from Rwandan aggressors entering the DRC, or from Congolese instability spilling over into Rwanda; (2) an exit point for poor Rwandans seeking money across the border; (3) “a site of recreation” that allows the elite of North Kivu to sleep in the security of Gisenyi while working in Goma; (4) the source of the social and political exclusion of the Congolese Tutsi, who since the border was originally drawn have found themselves unwelcome on both sides; (5) an “irrevocable fact” of the nation state arena, offering a territorial separation of the Rwandan and Congolese political spheres. He summarises the essential difference between the cities as one of “[...] food security and freedom of expression but pronounced criminality in Goma versus personal security but political oppression in Gisenyi” (Ibid., 2011:11).

### Crime in the Border Towns

The overall incidence of crime in Gisenyi is exceptionally low relative to its population (Republic of Rwanda, 2012; UNODC, 2015). This is characteristic of security in Rwanda more generally (see Chapter Three). There is sense of physical safety at the border, which is palpable and not just confined to government statistics. Two striking features of life in Gisenyi are the very low level of background chatter about crime

and the carefree behaviour of residents, who wander the darkest streets after sunset. Figure 9 shows crime statistics for Gisenyi's Rubavu District in 2013, while Figure 10 shows the district in comparison to the rest of Rwanda for the first quarter of 2014. Figure 11 is a photograph taken from the Gisenyi central police post showing how crime statistics are presented locally.

Figure 9. Crime Statistics, Rubavu District, 2013

Month/Offense	J	F	M	A	M	Jun	Jul	A	S	O	N	D	Total
Drug Offences	8	11	13	7	16	16	15	25	24	14	14	10	173
Murder	0	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	1	11
Defilement	5	5	4	6	2	5	5	5	6	4	8	3	58
Assault	8	10	8	7	13	11	16	5	11	6	6	13	114
Rape	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	9
Theft	7	17	10	17	16	13	16	11	10	13	12	8	150
Deceiving	2	2	4	4	3	3	3	1	1	1	0	1	25
Counterfeiting Money	4	1	0	0	1	1	1	4	3	0	0	3	18
Bouncing Checks	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Forging Documents	0	1	0	6	2	1	6	2	1	1	0	1	21
Rebellion	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Animal Destruction	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Environmental Destruction	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	8
Illegal Possession of Firearms	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	4
Genocide Ideology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>598</b>

Source: Gisenyi Central Sector Police Post

Figure 10. Selected Crime Statistics by District for Q1, 2014

District/Offense	KICUKIRO	NYARUGENGE	GASABO	RUBAVU	MUSANZE	HUYE	MUHANGA	KAYONZA	NYAGATARE
	Kigali								
Murder	8	2	4	1	2	2	3	1	5
Assault	64	103	71	29	22	19	21	11	N/A
Theft without violence	62	74	38	5	5	18	1	16	4
Housebreaking	85	97	30	26	19	7	39	5	32
Armed Robbery	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
Drugs Offenses	49	79	46	39	29	24	20	22	35
Illegal Possession of Firearms	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Genocide Ideology	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	8	1
Kidnapping	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Involuntary Homicide	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: RNP Criminal Investigations Department, Kigali

Figure 11. Crime Statistics, Rubavu 2013

CRIME STATISTIC 2013

CRIME	JANV	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
CRIMINALS	08	11	13	07	16	16	15	25	24	14	14	10	133
MURDER	-	-	01	-	02	02	01	01	02	01	-	01	11
RECKONMENT	05	05	04	06	02	05	05	05	06	04	08	03	58
ASSAULT	08	10	08	07	12	11	16	05	11	06	06	13	117
GBH	07	07	01	02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
THEFT	07	77	10	77	16	13	16	11	10	13	12	08	150
RECOVERING	02	02	04	04	03	03	03	01	01	01	-	01	25
PROPERTY CONTROVERSY	04	01	-	-	01	01	01	04	03	-	-	03	18
BOUNCING CHECK	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	01	01	-	-	03
BREAK OF TRUST	01	-	-	-	02	06	06	-	01	-	-	-	03
PEACE AGREEMENT	-	01	-	02	02	01	06	08	01	01	02	01	21
REBELLION	-	01	-	07	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	08
ANIMAL RESTRICTION	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RESTRICTION	01	01	02	01	-	-	-	-	01	01	-	01	08
RESTRICTION	-	-	-	-	01	-	01	02	-	-	-	-	04
GENOCIDE IDEOLOGY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	05
TOTAL	37	50	43	52	58	71	57	58	61	46	49	43	626
OTHER INCIDENTS													
SUICIDE	-	-	-	-	01	01	-	01	01	01	-	-	05
TAVENDER SPORE	-	-	-	02	-	-	-	-	02	02	-	-	06
DEMANDING IN	-	-	-	05	04	-	01	-	-	02	-	-	14
OTHER DEATH	03	02	01	01	03	-	03	01	05	01	-	-	14
TOTAL	03	02	01	08	08	01	04	02	08	06	-	-	43

Source: Central Gisenyi Police Post, author's photograph.

These tables, in accordance with the national statistics cited in Chapter Three, indicate that, aside from drugs and counterfeiting offences, Rubavu is typical of

districts housing similar-sized Rwandan cities without border-contact (Huye, Muhanga, Nyagatare, Kayonza and Musanze). Its crime rates are a fraction of those in the three districts in the capital city: Kicukuru, Gasabo and Nyarugenge.

The low incidence of crime sets Gisenyi apart from the general characterisation of border towns as especially unruly urban centres. It also contrasts starkly with the levels of criminal activity in Goma. Regrettably, comparable statistics were not available from the Congolese town's mayoral office.<sup>162</sup> Local government broadcasts nevertheless refer to a 'crisis' of street crime in the city.<sup>163</sup> In international statistics, the DRC is ranked among the world's most crime-ridden states (Gallup, 2015; World Bank, 2015), while Goma is considered one of the country's hotspots for micro-level street violence (Büscher, 2016; Brenton et al., 2011; Kimanuka & Lange, 2010).

Birere district, pressed against the border, is plagued by opportunistic and violent crime. Goma's poorest *quartier*, the township is the gateway to DRC through the *petite barrière* from Gisenyi and is a bustling commercial centre during the day. It is conspicuous by night for its lack of electricity, a maze of unlit and unpaved streets set among low quality informal housing.

Youth-underemployment in Birere leaves many young men (*maibobo*<sup>164</sup>) standing idle. They cluster around small bars, harassing and extorting payments from cross-border traders during the day, and are prone to committing more serious and violent crime by night. In informal discussions, residents recounted dozens of criminal incidents that had taken place in the *quartier* in the months immediately prior to

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<sup>162</sup> Due in part to the lack of police capacity to gather them. This in itself is testament to the imbalance in state reach and 'legibility' achieved by governments on either side of the border (see Scott, 1998). Furthermore, asymmetries shown through crime statistics alone should be treated with some scepticism. This is partly because they tend to be gathered according to different methodologies on either side of a border, and partly because different regulatory regimes create their own legal infractions, impacting on the statistics (see Coplan, 2012).

<sup>163</sup> Radio broadcast, *Radio Okapi*, Goma, 16 November 2014.

<sup>164</sup> Literally street children, but also a generic term for Congolese youth in the city, encompassing local groups including the *Bas-Peuple*, a "mafia-esque" organisation based in Birere (Kimanuka & Lange, 2010).

being interviewed. Due to its violent reputation, after sunset the darkened streets are generally avoided by all but their own residents. One family of frustrated market-stall traders summarised the situation: *“Is it dangerous? We reset each morning. At night we hide, and they take everything”*.<sup>165</sup> Nevertheless, the dangers of the Congolese side of the border coincide with significant economic opportunities, and one interviewee commented that Goma is a place where: *“anyone can do anything, tomorrow [...] but at their own risk”*.<sup>166</sup>

For logistical reasons, it was not possible to conduct systematic research on root causes of crime in Goma (see Chapter Two). Nevertheless, the significant asymmetry in rates of micro-level violence linked to urban street crime between the two sides of the border has been established elsewhere (Brenton et al. 2011; Conflict Research Group, 2016; Doevenspeck, 2011), and I take this as established. Rather than disorder and violence on the Congolese side, the remainder of this chapter focuses on the high degree of public order and low prevalence of crime in urban districts of Gisenyi.

## Summary

Overall, Gisenyi has endured the kind of violent history that would normally result in lingering security concerns. It was decimated by genocide in 1994 and by the subsequent North-Western Insurgency in 1997 (African Rights, 1998). Its urban sprawl merges across the DRC state boundary with Goma's poorest and most crime-ridden *quartier*, a neighbourhood that houses armed criminal gangs whose operations are relatively unrestricted by Congolese government authorities (Büscher, 2010; Kimanuka & Lange, 2010).

The wider political context of the borderland is similarly hostile. Cycles of civil conflict persist in the Congolese border province of North Kivu, which is plagued by violence

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<sup>165</sup> Informal Discussion, Market Stall Trader, Goma (Birere), 9 November 2014.

<sup>166</sup> Interview, Petrol Trader, Goma (Birere), 21 June 2011.

and hosts a flourishing small-arms trade linked to extracted commodities (Raeymaekers, 2009; Titeca & Vlassenroot, 2012; Stearns 2011). Under these circumstances, the challenges of policing Gisenyi should be enormous. Nevertheless, it is a quiet, suburban place, where wealthy Congolese and Rwandans take weekend breaks to relax on the beaches of Lake Kivu. Even in outlying townships far from the district offices and tourist hotels, the streets are calm and relatively crime-free. Considering how open the border is, with both people and goods crossing *en masse*, the fact that Gisenyi remains insulated from the higher levels of violent crime demands further explanation.

## 6.4 Incidents and Observations

Here, as in Chapter Five, I include two descriptive accounts based on fieldwork observations. These cases are intended to illustrate some of the key points on crime control in Gisenyi that guided further interviews in the border town.

### Incident 5. Rising Crime in a Border Neighbourhood

*The head of an umudugudu in Gisenyi has been concerned about intermittent thefts of livestock and of household property, which she suggests may be linked to drug trafficking across the DRC border. She attributes the emergence of these threats to an increasing number of unknown outsiders passing through the neighbourhood. The umudugudu is often used by locals as a route into town from areas to the north and west, or to the border crossing at the petite barrière. Frustrated by the situation, she calls on the military reserve (inkeragutabara) to intervene.*

*Members of the military reserve, DASSO and the RNP meet with the neighbourhood leader, and patrols are redirected to pass more frequently close to its outskirts. Within the umudugudu itself there is a noticeable increase in intra-communal monitoring. CPC members go from door to door contacting residents asking about criminal activity. Community policing forums are held daily (rather than weekly or bi-weekly), to discuss recent occurrences in the neighbourhood. The head of the umudugudu tightens restrictions demanding that any outsider intending to stay in the community overnight, along with their host, must first meet with her at her house and sign a guest registration book along with their host. At the same time, the local night patrol receives special training, particularly in identifying illegal drugs and alcohol, and in reporting terrorist activities.<sup>167</sup> These measures involve a high degree of public interaction between residents in the neighbourhood and the uniformed state*

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<sup>167</sup> Patrolmen were not willing to discuss the specific details of this training.

*representatives who either pass by it on patrols, or are encountered by residents on their way to the border.*

*The irondo patrol leader, a demobilised ex-FAR soldier told me explicitly: “everyone here is happy to talk [to the police]. They cannot be afraid. The police cannot do anything in Goma, and that’s where the money is [...] Here people just want to sleep safely”.<sup>168</sup>*

The measures taken to ensure the security of this neighbourhood illustrates how Rwandans respond to the perception of escalating disorder. The account is taken in an *umudugudu* that I have visited repeatedly since 2009. Over this time span, I have been able to observe more general trends and to discuss them with local residents. I draw the reader’s attention to the following:

(1) The community’s connections with Goma: In the words of one resident, people cross ‘to eat, drink, buy things, sell things [...] to work, or to study, or even just to celebrate’.<sup>169</sup> Crossing into the DRC is a mundane activity for most the neighbourhood’s residents. They do so several times a week or more depending on the opportunities they find over the border.

(2) The cooperation between the head of this *umudugudu* and state security officials: the head of the neighbourhood went over the head of local cell authorities to contact RDF officers from the military reserve base. She did this seemingly without fear or hesitation. This cooperation was matched by a very high degree of interaction between residents and the neighbourhood CPC, its *irondo* patrol and state authorities at the local police post and district headquarters.

(3) The perceived threats to the community and the language used to describe criminal activity: It was striking that criminals were referred to as *adui*, literally

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<sup>168</sup> Interview, Irondo Patrol Leader, Gisenyi, 18 November 2014.

<sup>169</sup> Informal Discussion, Local Resident, Gisenyi, 21 November, 2014.

'enemies', rather than *wizi* or *abajura* (the Swahili and Kinyarwanda terms for 'common thieves'). Equally striking was the way that the perception of an increase in minor crimes – the theft of chickens or of clothes from laundry lines – was framed as a threat to state security, rather than simply to the neighbourhood. Despite the use of militarised language, the most common concern among residents was not of Congolese crossing into Gisenyi, but of impoverished rural Rwandans, who were accused of walking into town from surrounding villages to steal livestock, clothes, tools and electronics from unlocked houses and gardens.

(4) The intense distrust of outsiders passing through the *umudugudu*. This sensitivity to the presence of strangers was even more pronounced in the border town than elsewhere.

## Incident 6. A Disturbance at the Makoro Bus-station

November 2014

*Shortly after the opening of the border crossings to Goma in the morning, a police patrol vehicle in Gisenyi is directed by cell phone to a disturbance at the bus station close to the petite barrière. On arrival, the officers find two men seated on the steep concrete curb at the edge of the vehicle staging ground. One is half-conscious with drink, the other holds his head in his hands. They are surrounded by a small crowd, and watched over by a Wide Vision private security guard from the bus station.*

*The guard explains that the men had been involved in a fight with one of the local bus drivers, who has since left on his journey east to Kigali. They had negotiated with the driver to drop them in Musanze (a large town approximately one third of the way to the capital), where they would be met by a family member with money for the ride. The driver had initially agreed, but before the bus could depart, tickets for all its seats were sold at the company stand. The men had refused to dismount when challenged, and one of them had fallen from the bus when pushed by the driver and the private security guard.*

*The two men are driven back to the sector police post in Gisenyi. They are held in a covered waiting area before being questioned by a member of DASSO. They had crossed the border into Goma to buy tools and had stayed to take advantage of the city's nightlife. At some point in the early hours of the morning they had been mugged. When the border reopened at 6.a.m. they had returned to Gisenyi unable to afford a bus ticket home.*

*The men are released after receiving a warning from the DASSO officer, who takes their details. The officer suspects that they had crossed the border to drink the cheap home-made gin available in Goma, and double checks that they are not bringing any back with them. A family member later arrives from Musanze with money for their return journey.*

This case raises several relevant points:

(1) The vibrancy of Goma's nightlife and the availability of cheap alcohol, illegal in Gisenyi: The Congolese bars and nightclubs drive a nightly migration across from Rwanda, particularly on weekends, and Goma is often described as a place 'to celebrate'.<sup>170</sup> This was one of a number of asymmetries that allow residents in the paired towns to exploit the advantages available on either side of the border. They reinforce the difference in reputations between the urban spaces.

(2) That a small scuffle resulted in an immediate police response: This was often the case with criminal behaviour close to the border posts, which are located several hundred metres from the bus station, but also reflects police intolerance to even minor incidents of violence. Bus stations are particularly sensitive places. This is partly because they have been subjected to terrorist grenade attacks in the past, and partly because they are one of the few sites in Rwanda in which strangers routinely congregate.

(3) The range of policing actors who operate in the border town and the subtle differences in their duties: Notably, DASSO officers worked directly in the police post alongside officers of the RNP, something not often seen in Kigali. Furthermore, the man who alerted the police to the incident was not the Wide Vision private security guard, but a plainclothes state security officer also working in the bus station. The officers of the police patrol recognised the man on arrival and were deferential to him. Plainclothes police were rumoured to be common along the main streets close to the border, and neighbourhood residents were aware of their presence and knew how they were. Although it was obviously not possible to verify this, it is hard to imagine undercover state agents routinely infiltrating the border's *imidugudu*

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<sup>170</sup> 'Kusherehe', from the Swahili *kusherehekea*, often implying alcohol-fuelled celebration.

without being locally identified. As Incident 5 has shown, these communities are highly sensitive to the presence of strangers.

(4) The role of language and of national identity in the borderland: Although I was unable to confirm it in this case, accounts of similar robberies in Goma saw victims singled out on the basis of being Rwandan (see also, Brenton et al., 2011). Notably, the men had been able to return to Gisenyi from Goma despite having been robbed of their identity cards. Seeing that they had no money, the Congolese authorities had given them a new *jeton* without hassle. Their Rwandan citizenship was never in doubt, something the Rwandan police attributed to the quality of their spoken Kinyarwanda and the fact that they could identify their *umudugudu* of origin.

(5) The sensitivity to drug crime (and by extension illegal brew) on the part of police in the border town: Even though there was no evidence of abuse and the two men had themselves been victims of violent crime, this was the chief concern of the DASSO officer on duty. The occurrence of a violent mugging on the Congolese side of the border was almost taken for granted by police at the Gisenyi sector police post, where one officer remarked “*These days, it is what we expect over there. There is no surprise*”.<sup>171</sup> There was no indication that the case would be followed up by police on either side of the border.

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<sup>171</sup> Informal Discussion, Junior Police Officer, Gisenyi, 16 November, 2014.

## 6.5 Insulating the Borderland – Policing Gisenyi

A range of unique features embedded in Gisenyi's policing system set it apart from arrangements elsewhere in the country. The following sections revisit the three drivers of Rwandan crime prevention described in Chapter Five to determine what is distinctive about policing practices in the border town.

### Gisenyi's Security Apparatus

Compared to other regions of Rwanda, Gisenyi has a heightened state security presence. The headquarters of the Army Special Forces and the Third Division of the RDF lie approximately ten kilometres north-east of the town along the Kigali road. These are significant garrisons, amounting to approximately one quarter of the RDF's total personnel, and their presence could create the impression that the district is firmly under the heel of the national army. I am not convinced this is the case. The bulk of troops deployed to Rubavu are there in anticipation of escalating inter-state tensions with DRC. Confined to barracks, they play only a minimal role in maintaining public order and preventing street crime in the border town.

Gisenyi itself houses a small military base behind the district police headquarters on the main thoroughfare leading to the *petite barrière*. A second RDF facility sits on the lakefront just outside the town centre, combined with a naval contingent that monitors boat traffic on Lake Kivu. Soldiers from these hubs patrol the lakeside road and commercial centre by day and seal off the town's beaches at night.

In the aftermath of isolated grenade attacks in 2010, small groups of soldiers and armed police have been stationed to guard the district offices, the central bus station and the Nyakabungo market. Their visibility gives a misleading impression of the broader security environment. In over six months in the border town, I encountered no uniformed soldiers outside the immediate city centre. Residents explained that

daily military patrols serve more “to give [soldiers] something to do”<sup>172</sup> than as a substantive part of crime prevention in the city. Police or DASSO officers are more likely to be seen in the residential areas that house the bulk of the town’s population, but again only rarely, most often when summoned by CPCs or *amarondo* night patrols. For the most part, police patrols centre around a staging post for vehicles and supplied, and two small police posts near the town centre.

These deployments need to be understood in the context of the borderland’s recent history. In terms of internal security, the stakes are highest in the north-west of the country, where the RPF has faced active resistance in the past. Behind the scenes, a counter-insurgency campaign dating back to the civil conflict in 1997 has continued even during periods of relative stability. Government agents (*maneco*) are pitted against insurgents (*ibytso*) not only in actual terms, but also in the popular consciousness by residents who continue to perceive the situation as tense. In the words of one demobilised soldier, ‘a hidden war’ persists in the borderland region.

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These tensions intensified during my time in the field. Following the defeat of the M23 militia in November 2013, the Congolese Army recaptured territories along the border in the Virunga National Park on the DRC side (see Appendix 1). Ranking Rwandan security officials suspected that the Congolese Army was either supported, or infiltrated by, elements of the FDLR.<sup>174</sup> Concerned that FDLR fighters might cross the border and infiltrate Rwandan towns, the government redoubled its counter-insurgency efforts around Gisenyi and Musanze. This was the political backdrop behind the abduction of fourteen recent returnees from the DRC to Rwanda in the early months of 2014. In a case that attracted significant international condemnation, they were held *incommunicado* by the RDF (HRW, 2014a).

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<sup>172</sup> Interview, CPC Member, Gisenyi, 2 November 2014.

<sup>173</sup> Informal Discussion, Demobilised Soldier, Gisenyi, 21 November 2014.

<sup>174</sup> Interview, Senior RDF Officer, Kigali, 25 January 2015.

The impact of counter-insurgency efforts on crime is difficult to determine, while the subject is a sensitive one for officials who are disinclined to discuss it. To avoid conflating the activities of military and national intelligence agencies with the more routine practices of policing, I discuss crime control separately from these issues in so far as possible. Nevertheless, this political backdrop is important, and its effect on behaviour will be addressed below in discussions of the aversion to social disharmony close to the border.

Police priorities in the North-West are laid out in district security performance contracts. These place particular emphasis on the control of money laundering, smuggling, drugs offences and the illegal possession of small arms or light weapons, crimes that the government has come to associate with the borderland region.<sup>175</sup> Importantly, these contracts stress that Gisenyi is considered relatively low risk in terms of ‘normal criminal activity’ and that ‘the most sophisticated crimes’ remain in Kigali. Regional differences in police priorities are also apparent in some of the subtle ways that the security apparatus has been adapted to the border town environment:

First, *abanyerondo* patrolmen in the border town receive special training from the RNP, particularly in the identification of illegal substances and counterfeit money. They are more likely to perform professional drill before launching into their duties. In general, there is more regular contact between patrols and state police in the town than in other sites I visited. Almost all patrol leaders I met in Gisenyi had, at one time or another, been professional soldiers, including many who were ex-FAR, the demobilised military of the pre-genocide Habyarimana regime.<sup>176</sup> This was confirmed in conversation with local police, who acknowledged that there were more

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<sup>175</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Gisenyi, 15 November 2014. These crimes receive an additional emphasis in the border town when it comes to RNP sensitisation campaigns. Although the illegal possession of firearms is rare in Rwanda, it is highest in the North and Western territories according to the Central Firearms Registry (RNP, 2014:105). Residents in Gisenyi spoke of regular, (approximately bi-annual) property searches for hidden weapons throughout the early 2000s.

<sup>176</sup> Under the Habyarimana regime, the north was ‘grossly favoured’ its representation in the state security forces, particularly the military (Ansoms, 2009:294; see also Prunier, 1995). Many of these soldiers have since been demobilised or retired from the army, but have found employment in the non-state branches of Rwandan policing.

demobilised soldiers occupying positions in the lower tiers of the administrative hierarchy in Gisenyi than elsewhere in the country.<sup>177</sup> Officers emphasised the fact that police, military and private security guards do not stop working, even when they are officially 'off duty', and that the higher proportion of security officials living in Gisenyi's residential areas means there are more direct channels for information to pass to state security via mobile phone contacts among serving officers, including those who have retired.

Because of its proximity to Goma, Gisenyi houses a range of financial institutions and hotels used by both Congolese and Rwandan citizens. Most of these businesses have contracted private security companies, which means there are an unusually large number of officers from KK Security, Intersec Security, RGL Security and Aegispro working in the town centre. Similarly, Gisenyi has a high number of private guards not associated with the major companies, and most of the larger residences close to the border accommodate a full-time house guard.

Finally, both private and official accounts indicate that plainclothes security officers are systematically deployed in areas that immediately contact the border, particularly those close to the *petite barrière*. Their principle role is to monitor the border for anyone crossing illegally. These officers engage in a daily battle with the '*chora-chora*<sup>178</sup>', networks of local smugglers who deal in low value products that are illegal or subject to high import tariffs when passing from DRC to Rwanda, such things as milk-powder, plastic bags, charcoal and certain alcohols (see also Doevenspeck, 2011). As I have argued in Chapter Five, any use of plainclothes officials is likely to produce rumour and speculation about the extent of the practice and about who may be involved. Their presence at the border contributes to heightened suspicion among residents.

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<sup>177</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Gisenyi, 15 November 2014.

<sup>178</sup> From the Swahili *kuchora*, to draw, based on the way these smugglers develop and navigate new routes across the international boundary.



Map 5. GIS Map of Border Neighbourhoods in Gisenyi



These maps, when combined with census data and details on house occupancy from the heads of *imidugudu* and their CPC members, have meant that the RNP has access to spreadsheets listing the occupants of every property in Gisenyi by name and by the mobile phone number of the head occupant. This information can then be matched to a precise location by using each house's code. This is a very powerful tool, one that allows a significant degree of state policing to take place without officers leaving the police post. Following the report of a disturbance, the police can directly contact an *umudugudu* leader, or the head of security on their CPC and coordinate the local *amarondo* patrol. At the time of research, the use of similar maps had yet to be rolled out to policing other parts of the country.

### The Organisation of Small Communities

As elsewhere in Rwanda, below the cell level the non-state policing system in Gisenyi is much larger than the state security structures that sit atop it. Community policing in the border town takes place in broadly the same fashion as has been already described. Local knowledge on the part of CPC members and *amarondo* patrols is collected by the heads of *imidugudu* and passed, where relevant, to cell headquarters and police posts.

With the exception of cross-border smuggling, counterfeiting, and the possession of cannabis, police officials remarked on the relative ease of policing Gisenyi's residential neighbourhoods compared with those of Kigali and other medium-sized Rwandan towns (Musanze, Butare and Nyagatare). Their opinion is supported in reports from the JOC, by the Rubavu District security contracts, and by national crime statistics (see Chapter Three). Officers also highlighted a greater propensity for residents in Gisenyi to interact with state security organs in the city. This was observable at the town's police posts, where I witnessed markedly more public engagement with the officers than at sites in the capital. Police posts in Gisenyi are very much public forums, housing large gatherings of civilians who lodge complaints or make requests of the state police. Police and *amarondo* patrols were frequently approached by residents either soliciting help or providing information, again to a noticeably greater degree than at other sites across Rwanda (see Incident 5). Similarly, the incentives to volunteer for security roles appear to be augmented in the border town. Police and residents alike described an increased willingness on the part of Gisenyi's residents to take up unpaid security roles at the neighbourhood level (*kutumia nchi*, to work for the nation).<sup>179</sup>

These observations can be attributed in part to subtle differences in the organisation of neighbourhoods in Gisenyi, which are exposed to cross-border interactions with adjacent areas of Goma. Gisenyi's demographic profile is broadly similar to that of other Rwandan cities in population density, social composition and religion (from census material, Government of Rwanda, 2012).<sup>180</sup> Here, as elsewhere, residents made frequent reference to the *umuco nyarwanda* in interviews and informal discussions about crime. What differed in the border town was the way in which

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<sup>179</sup> Voluntary positions include CPC members, the heads of *imidugudu*, the coordinators of anti-crime clubs, and (until recently) *abanyerondo* patrolmen.

<sup>180</sup> Ethnicity is more complicated, however, and though demographic data is unavailable, some residents suggested the town may be more uniformly Hutu than other areas. Gisenyi was the site of particularly intense ethnic violence during the genocide, and much of its Tutsi population had been wiped out by the time the RPF captured the town at the end of the war. A Tutsi elite has since repopulated some areas in the centre and along the Lake Front, although not in the same proportions as elsewhere.

Rwandans contrasted these values favourably with a negative ‘culture of Congo’, which they portrayed as both opportunistic and disorderly. Distinctions such as this tend toward unhelpful stereotypes and need to be challenged. Nonetheless, they indicate the degree to which the two populations have developed separate identities since the relatively recent and arbitrary establishment of a border between them (see also Barth, 1969).

Both Rwandans and Congolese modify their behaviour significantly depending on which side of the border they are on. Accompanying residents cross the border in the course of their daily activities revealed some stark transformations. The same people who had, moments before, reprimanded a passer-by in Gisenyi for littering would discard their plastics on the side streets of Birere without a second thought. Approaching the border posts from Goma, individuals fastened their seat belts, carefully dusted off clothes and extinguished cigarettes as they crossed over into Gisenyi. The range of adapted behaviours was not confined to those that avoided legal infractions, but suggested a much more ingrained notion of normal behaviour in the two urban spaces. One Congolese interviewee summarised the situation succinctly: *“going into Gisenyi is like going into a church, people behave differently there”*.<sup>181</sup> As a mental construction, the border functions as the threshold between neighbourhoods that are locally associated with different behaviours.

Perhaps the most notable transformation involved the instrumental use of language. Rwandans entering DRC switch immediately from Kinyarwanda to Congolese Swahili, and are for the most part able to conceal their identity as Rwandan nationals – something that might otherwise attract unwanted attention or even harassment in Goma. The reverse is not true. Congolese are less likely to speak Kinyarwanda, let alone speak it well enough to mask their Congolese nationality.<sup>182</sup> The result is that

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<sup>181</sup> Informal Discussion, Congolese Businessman, Goma, 29 October 2014.

<sup>182</sup> The Rwandan language is notoriously idiomatic, and native speakers tend to be very good at recognising people speaking it as a second tongue (see also Ingelaere, 2010b).

Congolese in Rwanda are conspicuously foreign to the local population, and are subject to suspicion.

The fact that Congolese are easily identified in Gisenyi undoubtedly plays a role in insulating the border neighbourhoods of the Rwandan town from the micro-level violence that plagues the townships of Goma. Police in Rubavu for example explained that they knew the majority of theft in Gisenyi could be traced to Rwandan villagers from beyond the ridge of hills north-east of the town centre, not to Congolese gangs in Birere, because foreigners would be “immediately recognised” by CPCs and neighbourhood patrols.<sup>183</sup> Officers also talked of cross-border crime taking place in the opposite direction. A recent rise in Rwandan involvement in Congolese street crime was said to be a growing problem.<sup>184</sup> They suggested that the relationship between the two towns might not only deflect certain crimes out of Gisenyi, but could actively draw them over the border into Goma.

Finally, the residents of Gisenyi appear even less mobile than inhabitants of other parts of Rwanda. There is relatively little rural-urban migration into the border town, and the residents tend to have known their neighbours for a period of years or decades. The result is that neighbourhoods in Gisenyi have stronger mechanisms for limiting anonymity than elsewhere. For their part, strangers, particularly Congolese with limited Kinyarwanda, know that they are likely to be recognised immediately as outsiders.

### Gisenyi’s Urban Aesthetic

Neighbourhoods of Gisenyi do not differ significantly in their appearance from those of the outskirts of Kigali, or from other smaller Rwandan towns that make no contact with a national border. Recent major roadworks have temporarily detracted from the

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<sup>183</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Gisenyi, 6 November 2014.

<sup>184</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Gisenyi, 24 October 2014.

orderly appearance of the central cells of the border town, as mounds of earth and volcanic rock are stacked on the roadside, but this is only a temporary disruption.<sup>185</sup> In most residential neighbourhoods, public order has been built into the urban environment. There are monthly *umuganda* community service days and the local district administration employs work cooperatives to collect garbage and keep the streets meticulously cleaned. Certain 'security and hygiene' measures in the town have even been cause for local complaint, such as the ban on cattle in the streets of the town's northern residential *imidugudu* and the ban on bicycles using the paved lake-front road.<sup>186</sup>

At the border line separating the two towns, the recently constructed, high quality compounds of Gisenyi give way to low quality informal housing on the Congolese side. The side-streets of Birere are unpaved, unlit and strewn with waste, and the visual contrast between the paired towns is stark. Although the lakefront of Goma is generally well-managed by the wealthy elite who reside there, the expansive townships that stretch away from it to the north and west, home to close to one million people, suffer from poor build quality and endemic underinvestment in such basic services as electricity and water. Many of Goma's streets display the kinds of visual stimuli that have been identified as one of the environmental factors linked to criminal activity (Xu et. al, 2005).

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<sup>185</sup> Notably, throughout much of Gisenyi, street lights have yet to be installed, and at night even some of the most central areas are enveloped entirely in darkness.

<sup>186</sup> Informal Discussion, Local Residents, Gisenyi, 16 November 2014.

## The Aversion to Violence and Social Disharmony

Ever since the extended civil conflict in the 1990s, the DRC border at Gisenyi has served as the front line between the RDF and armed anti-government militias, most notably the FDLR (Prunier, 2008).<sup>187</sup> Allegations of Rwandan support for Congolese rebel groups continue to trigger hostilities between indigenous Congolese and Rwandans in both cities (Büscher, 2016). Meanwhile, rumours of FDLR infiltration into communities in Gisenyi have resulted in government crackdowns targeting returnees from DRC (Human Rights Watch, 2014b). Tensions still run high, and ongoing political volatility pervades the borderland. Rwandan authorities have exploited the status of the FDLR as a common enemy to encourage local participation in security. The FDLR threat sits at the heart of the RPF's concerns about social disharmony, and features prominently in security sensitisation campaigns.

Regarding the effect of recent history on crime prevention, interviewees in Gisenyi made frequent references to strategies of self-protection that emerged from periods of conflict in the 1990s. Elements of the informant culture which was fostered during the 1997 insurgency have persisted in the border town, and structures for gathering intelligence through communal networks remain particularly well-honed.

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<sup>187</sup> The city carries a generally higher security profile than elsewhere due to its proximity to regions of the DRC housing groups that are openly hostile to the Rwandan government. Although specific incidents of violence relating to this perceived threat are rare, a number are of note: In May 2010, a grenade exploded killing one soldier in Gisenyi, on the same day as coordinated terrorist grenade attacks in Kigali. The Gisenyi explosion was later said to have been accidental, see Reuters (2010), 'Grenade blasts kills one, injure 16 in Rwanda: police': <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E62404420100305?sp=true>, accessed 15 November 2016. In July, 2011, anti-government insurgents shot at and threw grenades at the homes of several local government administrators in Gisenyi, although there were no casualties, see US Department of State (2011) 'Country Reports on Terrorism': <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195541.htm>, accessed 15 November 2016. In December 2012, a small group of FDLR soldiers crossed the border north of Gisenyi and killed a Rwandan park ranger, see OSAC (2016), 'Rwanda 2016 Crime and Safety Report': <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=19752>, accessed 15 November 2016. In August 2013, mortar fire crossed the border in Gisenyi town centre, killing one woman at the *petite barrière*, see HIS Global Insight, 'Risk of inter-state war increases following shelling of Rwanda from DRC': <http://www.ihsglobalinsight.com/SDA/SDADetail22726.htm>, accessed 15 November 2016.

During the civil war, many communities formed their own voluntary self-protection groups to guard properties and livestock against cross-border incursions. These groups led to the formalisation of the *amarondo* night patrol arrangements that have since been implemented across the country as a whole. Whereas elsewhere these patrols were created by government edict, in the border town they emerged organically in response to a breakdown of civil order. As a result, participation in patrols in Gisenyi is still more likely to be enforced by the small neighbourhoods themselves than by police liaison officers or DASSO.

Finally, threats emanating from the other side of the border affect how local residents describe criminal behaviour in Gisenyi. During parallel interviews in the Rwandan districts of Kicukiru and Rubavu, in which the same range of street crimes were discussed, it was striking how often in the border town the word *adui* (enemies) was substituted for *wizi* or *abajura* (common thieves) (see Incident 5). *Adui* was applied in particular, although not exclusively, to Congolese offenders, and was the most repeated of a range of linguistic turns that suggested crime near the border was regarded in more militaristic terms. Local officials emphasised the role of patriotism and the love of their country (*gukundu igihugu*) when accounting for the town's high degree of public order.

*Umudugudu* leaders in Gisenyi seem able to use the state's national security agenda to serve more localised forms of crime prevention. In the community described in Incident 5, the possibility of drug trafficking – a subject made even more high profile in the border town due to government suspicions that the profits of the cannabis trade filter back to the FDLR in the DRC – was raised with police and DASSO when the chief concern of the local CPC was in fact the rise in opportunistic theft by countryside peasants sneaking into the neighbourhood at night. Framing the issue in terms of drug crime was guaranteed to provoke a proactive response from the police and the military reserve, and to put an end to chicken theft.

## Fear and Civic Participation in the Borderland

The spectre of both intra-communal and state orchestrated violence throughout the 1990s lingers in the popular imagination in Gisenyi, and its effects vary from person to person. Nevertheless, a great deal of care must be taken to avoid over-simplifying popular fears, the causes of which are multi-faceted close to the border.

Recently, disappearances linked to the government crackdown in 2014 created heightened suspicion between neighbours, who were concerned about both FDLR supporters and government informants in their midst. As one interviewee confided, *“it was a very difficult time here. Everyone was on high alert”*.<sup>188</sup> Compounding these uncertainties, state controlled and private radio stations leak their signals across the border, exposing residents on both sides to a wealth of often contradictory information about local politics and recent events. Face-to-face interactions also subjected Congolese and Rwandan residents to different spheres of information, giving rise to a vibrant rumour mill that is unique to the border setting.

As more information began to emerge about the nature of the disappearances in 2014, uncertainty was replaced with a more acute fear of government monitoring in the border town, and the heightened sensitivity to any signs of criminal behaviour by both state and non-state actors hardened neighbourhoods against crime. The current situation is such that borderland residents are equally afraid of FDLR insurgents and of being mistaken for insurgents themselves in government crackdowns. They are therefore doubly incentivised to share information with the state.

Once again, contrasting Gisenyi with urban neighbourhoods in Goma is revealing. When asked to compare the relationship between local residents and state officials on the two sides of the border, the most common responses focused on the relative rigidity of economic regulation rather than incidents of violence or abuse. On the

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<sup>188</sup> Interview, University Staff Member, Gisenyi, 15 November 2014.

Congolese side of the border, the multitude of state agencies who monitor, and regularly profit from, cross-border trade, have a well-documented track record for subjecting traders to physical harassment and extortion (see Brenton et. al, 2011; Titeca & Kimanuka, 2012). Strictly with reference to violence, corruption and arbitrary exploitation, there seems to be every reason for the borderland population to fear Congolese officials at least as much they fear their Rwandan counterparts. One Rwandan trader summarised the situation:

*In Rwanda, when you see a policeman, you fix your jacket [...] you hide your liquor [...] you become serious. In Goma, when you see a policeman, you run!*

Informal Conversation, Rwandan Trader, Gisenyi, 18 November 2014

Residents tended to describe interactions with Congolese police as “*straightforward*”, and “*simply a question of money*”.<sup>189</sup> Rwandan officials, on the other hand, had a reputation for doing things “*by the book*” or “*very strictly*”. The strictness<sup>190</sup> of the Rwandan regulatory environment was regarded as source of intimidation and was more frequently cited than threats of state brutality or arbitrary arrest. Gisenyi’s residents are subject to an ever-growing and not always well-communicated list of regulations linked to economic activities and security procedures. They must take care to avoid even small infractions lest the inflexible bureaucratic processes of the Rwandan state subject them to fixed penalties. The regulatory environment is changed very rapidly in an effort to keep up with creative informal practices, as one local trader complained, “*they change everything every day*”<sup>191</sup>. Encounters with Rwandan authorities are potentially unpredictable and expensive, and residents have little recourse to negotiation once a rule has been breached.

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<sup>189</sup> Informal Conversations, Traders at the Grand *Barrière*, 3 November 2014.

<sup>190</sup> From the Swahili word *kali*, also meaning fierce or severe.

<sup>191</sup> Interview, Rwandan Market Trader, Gisenyi, 15 November 2014.

Despite this kind of intimidation, for the significant proportion of Rwandans who either work full-time in Goma, or else do regular business there, a different logic applied. This was described in Incident 5, where a night patrol leader claimed that residents in Gisenyi were more willing to interact with state police in the Rwandan city because of their access to a zone of economic informality in Goma. This attitude has significant implications for the relationship between the paired border towns, and I attempted to triangulate it with cross-border traders. The result was a series of revealing discussions about attitudes towards social disharmony in Rwanda. Goma, unlike Gisenyi, was said to manifest a particular kind of social and economic disorder known locally as '*kavuyo*'. Importantly, *kavuyo* does not carry the same negative connotations of chaos and inefficiency as literal translations might suggest. The examples I was offered were of individual rational actors pursuing their own self-interest unabated. When applied to life in Goma, *kavuyo* was used to describe the economic opportunities of the city in ways that conform with the case made by Douglas in *Purity and Danger*:

*Order implies restriction; from all possible materials; a limited selection has been made, and from all possible relations a limited set has been used. So disorder by implication is unlimited, no pattern has been realised in it, but its potential for patterning is unlimited. We recognise that it is destructive to existing patterns; also that it has potentiality. It symbolises both danger and power.*

Douglas (1966:95)

Narratives on the border frequently reflected Douglas' analysis, where *kavuyo* referred both to Goma's disorder and to its potentiality. Notably, despite its use in describing the economic contrast between two cities, *kavuyo* is considered first and foremost a political term.<sup>192</sup> When asked about the source of *kavuyo*, of profitable

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<sup>192</sup> Testament to the term's political significance, Rwandan respondents often discussed themes relating to *kavuyo* only after taking great care to ensure they would not be overheard or misrepresented.

disorder, in Goma, the answer from respondents was almost uniformly *'l'état'* (the state). This type of disorder was confined to the Congolese side of the border, and the imbalance between Goma and Gisenyi reflects the extent of state reach on either side. The Rwandan state extends its authority effectively into Gisenyi, while the authority of Congolese central authorities in Goma is fragmented and locally contested (Büscher, 2016). These contrasting modes of governance are effectively exploited by local residents and to some degree sustained by their activities.

## 6.6 Policing Gisenyi – Borderland Dynamics and Cross-Border Asymmetries

Returning to the question of how Gisenyi remains so well-insulated from Congolese insecurity, it is worth recognising that this apparent paradox rests on the assumption that crime and violence tend to spill over border lines. Although this widely accepted notion is supported by other African examples (see Coplan, 2010; Korf & Raeymaekers 2013), it does not seem to apply to street crime in Goma and Gisenyi.

Street crime is subject to different constraints than other forms of violence found in borderland regions (politically or ethnically motivated violence for example, or violence linked to the extraction of valuable resources in the absence of state regulation). Perhaps most importantly, the kinds of criminal activities addressed in this thesis are mitigated by a relatively low threshold of ‘target hardening’: the possibility, real or perceived, that criminal activities will be thwarted, and the degree of personal risk to the perpetrator. For this reason, crimes of this sort do not necessarily spread. Instead, they emerge in contexts where targets are perceived as soft and as profitable (see Marenin, 2009). This distinctive characteristic raises the question of whether street crime is not just pushed out of Gisenyi by successful policing but actively pulled across the border by conditions in Goma.

Goma and Gisenyi operate differently from the sparsely populated territories, border posts and truck stops that have dominated recent borderland analysis. Behind the peculiar characteristics of policing close to the border lies a broader logic in the relationship between Goma and Gisenyi that plays out in the everyday practices of their residents. Despite appearances, Goma is significantly more affluent than its Rwandan counterpart. Its markets are larger, its rents are higher, its elite is wealthier (resulting in marked inequalities between *quartiers*), and there are greater opportunities to earn money. In short, in terms of profitability, Goma has abundant targets for street crime, more so than Gisenyi, while elements of its urban environment may make it more susceptible to criminal activity.

Many residents of these paired border towns benefit from the ability to separate their economic activities which are conducted in Goma, from their private lives in Gisenyi. This separation increases the incentives to share information with the local security apparatus in the Rwandan town, as they can do so without the concern that interactions with the police will impact on their interests in Goma. Elsewhere in Rwanda, interacting with uniformed police or community police representatives carries the risk that the complainant will be found in breach of some regulation of which they were previously unaware.

Goma provides an outlet for behaviours and informal economic practices that are either illegal or culturally outlawed in Gisenyi (see Incident 6). This applies to the economic elite in the border town as much as it does to the thousands of local traders who cross daily back and forth. Powerful brokers, particularly on the Congolese side of the border, have much to gain from the present asymmetrical relationship between the two towns. Many of them live in newly constructed high quality housing in the border neighbourhoods of Gisenyi and use the Rwandan financial institutions while they control businesses in Goma. They have a strong incentive to use their influence, where they have it, to ensure that criminal activity remains confined to the other side.

These observations are not in keeping with the growing body of literature on state reach and contested authority in borderland regions. This is, in part, because they are related directly to the asymmetries across the border line. They are 'border' dynamics, concerned with sharply delineated difference, rather than 'borderland dynamics' concerned with how far a single government can extend its authority into its territorial periphery. Baud and van Schendel (1997:220) write that "where income, employment, and life expectancy vary sharply, a border can mean the difference between poverty and material well-being and occasionally between life and death". This is typical of how cross-border asymmetry has been discussed, where the implication is that one side of the border is preferable, rather than that both sides are linked – with the advantages of one shaped by what takes place on the other. As

paired border towns, Goma and Gisenyi operate with a kind of ‘organic solidarity’, in which each city resembles a separate organ of a larger organism.<sup>193</sup>

## 6.7 Summary

This chapter has considered how border proximity, cross-border asymmetries and the dialectical relationship between insecurity in Rwanda and in the DRC shape each of the drivers of crime prevention identified in Chapter Five:

*Regarding the security apparatus*, proximity to the international border and the historical sensitivity of the north-western district for the RPF have prompted a degree of militarisation in the Rwandan border town. This manifests itself in a greater role for the military reserve, a greater military presence, and more demobilised soldiers in non-state policing roles, particularly as CPC members and *irondo* patrol leaders. It also sees the state security apparatus prioritising security concerns that are more strongly associated with the borderland context: smuggling, counterfeiting, drugs trafficking, weapons trafficking and human trafficking.

*In terms of the organisation of small communities*, neighbourhoods in Gisenyi do not differ substantially from other Rwandan neighbourhoods in their demographic and social composition, cultural behaviour, or urban aesthetics. What differs at the border is the fact that these urban qualities exist in immediate contrast to a radically different kind of town across the border in Goma, with residents passing regularly back and forth with ease. Over time, the two towns have become associated with different behaviours. Where Goma has a reputation for *kavuyo*, a profitable disorder stemming from limited state reach, Gisenyi is seen as economically limited but safe. These reputations are sustained by local practices that take for granted the different qualities of the two urban spaces.

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<sup>193</sup> As opposed to ‘mechanical solidarity’ in which the two resemble identical cogs performing the same function in a larger system (see Durkheim, 1893).

*The aversion to social disharmony*, identified elsewhere in Rwanda in Chapter Five, appears to be magnified in Gisenyi. For state officials, the town carries an especially high security profile due to its proximity to the DRC and also to the region's history of armed anti-government resistance, something still manifest in ongoing counter-insurgency efforts. The state is especially attuned to any signals of social disharmony, and this sensitivity extends to crime prevention. At the same time, local accounts suggest two important facets of popular intolerance toward violence in the town. On the one hand there is a genuine fear of the FDLR returning from across the border. The genocide was especially violent in Gisenyi and survivors spoke passionately about preventing further civil conflict. On the other hand, government crack-downs on insurgent activities increase the incentive to participate in non-state security roles out of self-protection.

The empirical findings in this chapter have been used to investigate how cross-border asymmetries between the paired border towns impact the policing system embedded in Rwandan communities. Contrary to what theoretical discussions of borderland regions might suggest, they indicate that *proximity to the Democratic Republic of Congo* may act as an additional driver of crime control in Gisenyi.

Gisenyi appears to be a model case of effective state reach in an African border town. Local government administration operates consistently in accordance with national policies, and the town's security is guaranteed by powerful state-led institutions. Owing to the political sensitivity of the borderland, there is a heightened security presence throughout Gisenyi's surrounding district. Nevertheless, explanations that focus solely on the strength of the Rwandan security forces provide an insufficient explanation of how the border town is shielded from crime. Popular engagement remains critical to maintaining public order, and varies in both form and degree with its closer proximity to the DRC border. Crime prevention in the border town is tied to a language of national security in a manner that encourages local participation in policing in the face of external threats.

Taking the various asymmetries that exist across the border as a starting point reveals less visible mechanisms that contribute to the relative safety of Gisenyi. Although security is not *made* at the border – the basic structures and actors are broadly the same as elsewhere in the country – I have argued that it is *made differently* there in terms of the day-to-day practices of policing and the priorities of the police. Counter-intuitively, Gisenyi's proximity to a larger and more chaotic urban space in the DRC may promote logics of policing that facilitate, rather than compromise, a high degree of urban public order.

A range of mechanisms in the organisation of small communities and the mindset of border town residents impact on how information passes into the state security hierarchy. In local accounts, one narrative stands out regarding the effect of the border on crime prevention. With access to a commercial zone in a nearby but separate jurisdiction, where governance is informal and often negotiable, Rwandans participate in policing and intra-communal surveillance in the knowledge that doing so will not conflict with any elements of their economic lives that they would prefer to keep hidden.

## CHAPTER SEVEN – POLICING AND STATE REACH IN RWANDA

### 7.1 Crime and Policing in Rwanda

This thesis has addressed a number of central research questions: What makes urban neighbourhoods in Rwanda resistant to criminal activity? How can a landlocked, post-genocide, rapidly urbanising country that borders areas of intractable insecurity be ranked the safest in Africa (Gallop, 2015)? How are its mechanisms of crime prevention affected by distance from the state capital (Kigali), and by proximity to the international border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)? Why does street crime remain confined to one side of a border that is crossed by more than twenty-two thousand people every day. And finally, why, despite its proximity to very high levels of micro-level violence, is the Rwandan town of Gisenyi not more crime-ridden than other towns of similar size elsewhere in the country?

In answering these questions, previous chapters have singled out various aspects of Rwandan policing and examined them in detail. What remains is to look at how this material fits with established academic theory and with previous studies conducted in Rwanda. Recent academic research has focused on the strength of the state under the RPF. Although some positive aspects of the current government have been highlighted, particularly its impressive capacity to implement developmental policies (Goodfellow, 2014; Chemouni, 2014), it has also been criticised for authoritarianism (Purdeková, 2011; 2016; Reyntjens, 2013; Ansoms, 2009). Under President Kagame, the RPF has been plagued by controversy over its uncompromising mode of governance. In recent years, Rwanda has been labelled a ‘police state’ by journalists, academics and dissident political figures in exile (Sundaram, 2016:7, Reyntjens, 2009:28; Nyamwasa, 2010:1).

Surprisingly, these critics seldom discuss the Rwanda National Police, nor do they give an account of the broader policing system that operates in the country (see Chapter Three). They tend to regard the Rwandan state as a unitary, centrally coordinated

apparatus that is reinforced in the popular imagination by the *idea* of the state as a powerful political monolith (Reyntjens, 2013; Thomson; 2011). This view of the state obscures the *practices* of individuals working in various branches of the its administration, especially in the security sector.

In light of this imbalance, this thesis has provided an institutional outline of the RNP, something that is otherwise available only in documents promoting government policy (see RNP, 2008; 2013; 2014). Chapter Three investigated how policing arrangements in the country developed over the course of the twentieth century, highlighting the fact that the RNP is a new type of institution which has consolidated the Rwandan state's policing apparatus under a single command structure. Beneath this new umbrella organisation, the responsibility for policing Rwandan communities remains divided between state and non-state partners in a manner that maintains a significant degree of historical continuity.

Chapters Four and Five considered state strength in Rwanda from the perspective of individuals working to control violence at the local level. I have argued that the visibility of uniformed state officials at strategic sites obscures the fact that the bulk of crime prevention in Rwanda is achieved locally. Criminal investigations and other police interventions are secondary to the construction and maintenance of a general environment of public order, which is achieved by partitioning the country into small neighbourhood communities. Within these, policing is carried out by a network of individuals who operate in the margins of state authority: night patrolmen, *umudugudu* leaders, members of local CPCs, and members of civil society anti-crime clubs.

Three principal drivers of crime prevention have been identified in the Rwandan towns where this research was sited: (1) the state security apparatus, (2) the organisation of small communities to limit anonymity and control public order, and (3) the incentives, both positive and coercive, for individuals to share information with government security. Having undertaken an extended period of qualitative research in small Rwandan communities, I argue that the avenues for information to

pass to government security are many, and that the circulation of security related information is guided in part by a widespread intolerance of social disharmony that results from the country's violent history.

Chapter Six examined the workings of crime prevention in what should be among the most difficult environments for Rwandan law enforcement: the country's largest border town, Gisenyi. There is no doubt that the Rwandan police and military maintain a strong presence throughout the whole Rubavu borderland district, particularly when contrasted with Congolese police across the border, who are widely perceived as either ineffective, avaricious or altogether absent. This explanation risks oversimplifying self-policing in small communities in the border town, however. It also underplays Gisenyi's dialectical relationship with Goma, which impacts both street crime and local surveillance. I argue that state-centric explanations offer only a partial account of why criminal activities do not leak into Rwanda from the Congolese side, and of why Gisenyi's crime rates are consistent with those of other similarly sized towns closer to Kigali.

The Rwandan case demonstrates notable inconsistencies with respect to each of the three bodies of literature outlined in Chapter One. (1) On state reach, the country shows a remarkable centralisation of political control despite its recent history of mass violence. The post-conflict state under the RPF has been able to effectively define its outer boundaries and control the legitimisation of violence at the local level. (2) Its police force remains the senior partner among a host of non-state policing actors below the cell level, who cooperate in the suppression of violence and disorder. The RNP has a reputation for efficiency and professionalism despite a tight budget and a staffing level that falls markedly short of the UN recommended ratio of officers to members of the population. (3) The authority of state institutions in Kigali extends remarkably evenly across the territory, and can be felt even in border districts far from the capital. Its reach is facilitated by a decentralised administration that is mirrored by a hierarchical security apparatus, in which security officers are paired with government administrators at every tier.

The following sections revisit the main conclusions of previous chapters with respect to recent theories of policing, state reach and border town dynamics in Africa, then go on to reconsider methodological concerns and possible future developments.

### Policing and State Reach

Rwanda's policing arrangements do not find easy parallels beyond its borders. The system combines elements of zero-tolerance policing, community policing and intelligence-led policing. These call for policing responsibilities to be simultaneously consolidated and decentralised and have not always proved compatible with each other (Bullock, 2012; Brogden, 2004; Ruteere & Pommerolle, 2003).

Although the RNP exercises dominant control over community policing forums at the cell level, state authorities in Rwanda are not, as Baker (2012:283) has observed elsewhere "dismissive of sub-state policing". Instead, the police perceive it as one of the most essential tools at their disposal, and depend on the way local communities are organised to circulate information and restrict anonymity in residential neighbourhoods. The attitude of RNP officers to community policing in the country closely resembles the findings of Wilson and Kelling, who argue that:<sup>194</sup>

*The essence of the police role in maintaining order is to reinforce the informal control mechanisms of the community itself. The police cannot, without committing extraordinary resources, provide a substitute for that informal control. On the other hand, to reinforce those natural forces the police must accommodate them. And therein lies the problem.*

'Broken Windows: The Police and Neighbourhood Safety' (Wilson & Kelling, 1982)

Rwandan police use the apparatus of community policing to inform an intelligence-led, proactive approach to crime control. Whereas the majority of policing actors are

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<sup>194</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Directorate of Community Policing, Kigali, 16 February 2015.

not state officials, they nonetheless provide essential information to the government institutions that coordinate them. Non-state policing groups, particularly night patrols, CPC members, civil society anti-crime clubs, and *umudugudu* leaders, all act as antennae for the RNP and its patrols. They are monitored intensely by their peers, by other branches of the security network, and by the community at large. Non-state policing groups act consistently as the 'junior partner' in their relationship to state police, and conflict between the RNP and community policing actors is extremely rare. This sets the Rwandan case apart from situations common elsewhere in which non-state police act as vigilantes (cf. Abrahams 1998; Baker, 2012).

The interaction between the visible police patrols that circle around residential sectors, and the non-state community police who work inside *imidugudu*, marks the dividing line between those who legitimise policing (the RNP) and those who provide it (CPC committee members and local patrolmen). Broadly speaking, the institutional interface of the Rwandan state is marked by the difference in the roles performed by these groups. Civil society organisations and work-based associations, patrols and private security guards, community leaders, and community policing committee members working below the cell level (often within an individual *umudugudu*) all operate in the state's margins.

The character of the state, as Lund (2006b:687) argues, is "intimately connected to the capacity to make distinctions"; a quality that, in his view, forms the "essence of public authority". The state's institutional boundaries are unusually well-defined in Rwanda (cf. Abrahams, 2000; Mitchell 1991). The government effectively distinguishes policing groups that act *with* its authority from those that act *on* its authority, extending its reach to the lowest level while compromising very little on its monopoly of legitimate force. It strictly controls the violence that local patrols can exercise in their line of work, and has dismantled Local Defence Units when they were seen to be undermining public order.

In Rwanda there are a range of local actors performing functions traditionally associated with the state – particularly the control of violence managed by local night

patrols – who are not locally considered to be representatives of the state and are not treated as such. In short, the dividing line of who ‘represents the government’ in local politics is very clear in Rwanda, while the margins of state authority in terms of who performs state-like functions remains murky.

Pockets of local agency do exist in the policing structure, particularly at the level of *umudugudu* leaders. In Chapter Five, I cited cases in which information was deliberately withheld from cell authorities and police posts, particularly information about family disputes the sharing of which would contravene cultural norms of privacy. Local leaders make use of their state authorisation to enforce a set of behaviours that do not necessarily align with the government’s definition of the critical minimum of public order. The cultural repudiation of *kirazira* (discouraged behaviours) extends well beyond what is enshrined in the Rwandan penal code and enforced by state agents.

In general, however, the government security agenda is built around an aversion to social disharmony at the local level that is shared by the population at large that still bears the scars of mass violence in the 1990s. The intense intolerance that Rwandans expressed towards violence and social disorder was perhaps the most striking revelation of this research. This aversion can be attributed in part to conflict fatigue in the aftermath of the genocide. Rwandans live with uncertainty about who among them is so affected by the country’s violent history that they might report suspicious behaviour to the state. Nevertheless, in an atmosphere of post-genocidal paranoia, it is vital to subject speculative accounts of government monitoring to intense and unbiased scrutiny. One of the reasons informants are so hard to identify is precisely because they are for the most part not full-time, trained government spies (*maneco*) but are instead the traumatised survivors of brutality in the 1990s.

Normative questions about the police are often set at the level of government legitimacy. These risk blinding observers to the more every-day realities of police practice – who is involved, how they work, and how the population reacts to them. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to conduct research into the policing of Rwanda

without addressing the question of policing ‘for whom’. It is necessary to ask whether the state’s infrastructure of information gathering is motivated by the public good of preventing crime, or by self-protection. Based on the materials presented here, it seems clear that the answer in this case is not one or the other, but both. Effective crime prevention in Rwanda *is* regime protection, in terms of the control of violence, the active demonstration of state security capacity, and in the popular legitimacy derived by ensuring security in every-day activities.

### Border and Borderland Dynamics

The case of Gisenyi exposes Rwanda’s policing system to two separate but related political phenomena: (1) geographical distance from central state authorities, and (2) proximity to an international border that separates Rwanda from a radically different mode of governance in the DRC. Looking at the immediate effects of this border prompts a separation of ‘borderland’ and ‘border’ dynamics, and a reemphasis on the latter.

The concept of the ‘borderland’ has its roots in a reconceptualization of state boundaries. This has involved moving away from the border’s role in international relations towards a more localised account of its functions, particularly in terms of how it affects social frameworks and informal economic systems (Coplan, 2012; Stoddart, 1989). This shift in focus has been accompanied by a reconsideration of international relations models that have traditionally taken for granted the definition of the state as a ‘bounded unit’ (Agnew, 1994).

To a degree, the border *per se* has been a casualty of this shift in analysis from the international to the local. Strassaldo emphasises that “neighbouring relations between border communities are not international relations” (1996:393), while Coplan (2012:2) observes: “borderlands, *as opposed to borders*, are about border communities, not the management problems of nation states” (my emphasis). Baud and van Schendel (1997:220) are more direct: “borders are too easily reified ... there has always been an enormous gap between the rhetoric of border maintenance and daily life in the borderlands”. As it zooms-in, this approach loses the international

boundary and brings into focus cross-border communities living in the state's margins. The process has been driven in part by an ideological concern with giving voice to marginalised groups who grapple with the aggressive expansion of centralised state authorities (Fisher & Downey, 2006).

While researchers have 'zoomed in', the borderland concept itself has spread out, moving from the field of political geography into areas where there is no national border, and where the language of boundaries is deployed only metaphorically (Newman & Paasi, 1998:188). Powerful anthropological explorations initially into the internal boundaries and the institutional margins of the state (see Das & Poole, 2004), have given way to the discussion of more abstracted boundaries between institutions, ideas and individuals, pursued through interdisciplinary approaches that share little in their methodologies and theoretical frameworks.

Here the border is lost in two ways. First, because once so far abstracted, the idea of the border as a mental construct can be applied indiscriminately. We can conceive of borders anywhere, regardless of their significance in terms of entities that are distinguished on either side. Second, because it appears that what was most attractive about boundary metaphors as adapted from political geography was never really the border-line itself, but rather the idea of a space 'in-between'. Borderlands as spatial representations of Victor Turner's (1967) liminality have captured a great deal of imagination across different fields.

The Goma-Gisenyi case emphasises that the border itself matters, especially when the focus zooms in to the local level. Cross-border asymmetries shape the work and interaction of residents in both towns. With frequent movement back and forth, the two sides have come to be associated with different modes of behaviour, of doing business, and of interacting with the state. There has been a tendency towards greater contrast rather than greater similarity over time. With respect to crime, police accounts suggest that the Congolese town has begun to act as a lightning rod that diverts crime and disorder out of Rwanda.

Local government administration in Gisenyi operates in a manner that is largely uninterrupted by traditional borderland dynamics of contested governance. It provides a counter-example to the dozens of documented cases, both across the region and across the African continent as a whole, in which central authority is contested and economically subverted in border towns (Nugent, 2012; Dobler, 2008; Zeller, 2010). At the same time, the paired Congolese and Rwandan towns challenge the intuitive assumption that rising crime rates on one side of a border naturally spill over to the other. Goma is one of the most crime-prone cities in central Africa, while neighbouring Gisenyi has some of the lowest occurrences of micro-level violence of any urban district in Rwanda.

The theoretical model in which violence develops around national borders and flows freely across them does not apply. As I have discussed in Chapter Six, this is partly because street-crime differs from other kinds of violence, and may be mitigated by what police practitioners call ‘target hardening’ in Gisenyi.<sup>195</sup> The town’s location in a sensitive borderland region prompts both greater state attention and greater intra-communal monitoring, both of which protect it against criminal activity.

Extending theories that link physical environments to crime prevention into the international arena may help to account for the difference between the two towns (see Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Kelling & Coles, 1997; Sampson et al., 2004). It is widely accepted that aesthetic qualities such as damaged infrastructure and visible waste in the streets reinforce an impression of pervasive disorder. Goma’s reputation for being unsafe is owed in part to features of this sort. The result is low levels of community participation in the maintenance of public order, and combined with the absence of effective state-led law enforcement, this emboldens criminal behaviour. Conversely, on the Rwandan side of the border, a high degree of both government surveillance and intra-communal monitoring produce the perception that the town

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<sup>195</sup> Comparisons with other borderlands discussed in the literature risks conflating urban street crime with organised crime, with crime related to illegal cross-border smuggling networks, as well as with political, nationalist and ethnic violence.

is more secure. When, as in this case, one side of a border is popularly associated with high crime rates and the other with effective enforcement, their reputations become self-perpetuating, and they tend toward greater difference over time.

## 7.2 Methodological Considerations and Avenues for Future Research

Wherever possible, I have attempted to inform qualitative interview material with personal observations, and have triangulated accounts between regular citizens and government representatives. My efforts to do this are indicated throughout the text by the recurring preamble ‘according to both state and local accounts’, and by the use of thick description to illustrate criminal incidents and local reactions to them. This approach required a considerable amount of methodological flexibility with regard to field sites and subject matter as well as the choice of participants.

As the result of research design or the limited access granted by government authorities, researchers in Rwanda have too often found themselves confined either to the state or the non-state sphere. Restricting research in this way can be misleading. My attempt to combine these perspectives at times exposed significant discrepancies between government and local accounts, particularly where state officials recited the authorised government position and non-state interviewees had personal prejudices against the RPF.<sup>196</sup> Comparing the two viewpoints also highlighted consistencies in areas that I did not originally expect, particularly the aversion to social disharmony described in Chapter Five.

Rwanda is a uniquely difficult place in which to conduct qualitative research. Rwandans customarily use language in ways that can reveal and conceal at the same time (Ingelaere, 2010b; see also Pottier, 2002). This way of speaking constitutes a barrier to access almost as significant as the increasingly tight government regulation of research. Even seemingly straightforward descriptions could at times be compromised by imprecise or idiomatic language use. The term *inkeragutabara*, for example, officially refers exclusively to members of the military reserve force.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Other authors have highlighted these discrepancies to indicate widespread dissatisfaction with the Rwandan government, in particular its agricultural policy and its reconciliation agenda (Ansoms, 2009; Thomson, 2012).

<sup>197</sup> A standby division of the RDF under the command of the serving Brigadier General Eric Murokore.

Many *inkeragutabara* are still stationed on base and continue to wear military uniform, and despite their reservist status, they retain a formal role in the RDF command structure. Nevertheless, in common usage, *inkeragutabara* often refers to anyone who has past military service, and at times the term is extended to DASSO officers and *abanyerondo* patrolmen. To cite another example, 'CPC' has become a generic term used in many parts of Rwanda to describe any security position in the *umudugudu*, including *abanyerondo* patrolmen, patrol leaders and at times the head person of the neighbourhood. Similarly, 'FDLR' can be used to describe various enemies of the state, regardless of their affiliation with the rebel militia. In more mundane conversation, I found that dates and locations could be stated in ways that were deliberately non-specific, even when the events were innocuous and I was speaking to contacts known to me for months or years. Ethnographic material rarely fits neatly into theoretical moulds, and ought to reflect some of the messier realities of fieldwork. Most Rwandans have only incomplete information about how local security is provided, and their conflicting accounts provide an accurate reflection of the policing system described in these pages. Some of what I consider to be the most revealing material in this research came from the observation of events, behaviours and statements that were openly contradictory. Given the way rumour, misinformation and official narratives all circulate together, straightforward answers warrant a great deal of suspicion in Rwanda.

This thesis is the product of what it was possible to do in the time available, with official limits on access and taking account of ethical challenges. To my knowledge it is also the first attempt to systematically research policing at the local level in modern Rwanda. It constitutes an initial foray into a complex but important subject. I can point to a great many details that warrant investigation in greater depth, over a longer period, or in different parts of the country. Most particularly, however, two subjects that captured my attention, had to remain on the periphery of this project.

The first concerns the broader function of cross-border asymmetries between Goma and Gisenyi. These paired border towns are starkly asymmetrical in a great many respects: in the behaviour of their law enforcement agencies, in their penal codes,

informal border regulations, employment opportunities, external linkages (to international markets, state authorities and international organisations), infrastructure, demography, natural resources and physical geography, to name only a few. These differences prompt two questions that have received inadequate attention in the growing literature on border towns: (1) under what conditions do cross-border imbalances tend towards greater difference over time, or towards greater similarity? and (2) how do these imbalances relate to one another?

The second subject is specific to Rwanda and concerns the North-Western Insurgency in 1997. The frequency with which the insurgency was cited in interviews with Rwandan police and military officials implied that it may be more significant in the historical development of the RPF than has been suggested to date. A few features stand out. First, it is an extremely rare example of the total and rapid defeat of a rebel insurgency. These have elsewhere proven intractable, especially in the Central African region (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). Second, it appears to have produced strategies that have informed the policing models now in operation across the country, not least the widespread use of *amarondo* patrols, the 'villagization' of society and the manner in which information is gathered at the *umudugudu* level.

Finally, the issue of gender dynamics in local modes of Rwandan policing warrants a significant degree more targeted analysis than was possible in this broader study of the male-dominated institutions of state security. As Rwanda's security apparatus expands to include local anti-crime clubs built into civil society organisations, it is beginning to integrate a much larger number of women into surveillance roles. The effects of this trend at the interface between state-led and community-led policing actors in Rwanda would make for the subject of extremely fruitful further investigation. Throughout this project I have been careful to ring-fence particular manifestations of street crime that were combatted by the arrangement of actors outlined in Chapter Four. Regrettably, this meant that crimes relating to gender-based violence were not thoroughly investigated in the course of fieldwork. Through the *Imbuntu* foundation, the Rwandan government has been trial-running original modes of addressing both GBV itself, as well as local attitudes towards it. The country

provides an excellent laboratory for targeted research into these issues, and I sincerely hope that future researchers in the country take up the challenge.

### 7.3 Transitional Security in Rwanda

I have aimed to regard policing in Rwanda dispassionately, without my observations being tainted by preconceptions about the RPF. In reality, the subject is both political and deeply contentious. I am aware that there have been dire warnings about impending collapse in Rwanda from critical academic voices (Reyntjens, 2004:210; Thomson, 2011:456).

I am not as convinced that Galtung's (1969) work in *'Violence, Peace and Peace Research'* is tailor-made to the Rwandan case in the way that other authors have presented it. The confident prediction that structural violence in the country is tending towards a resurgence in actual violence undertheorises the former, just as it oversimplifies the mechanisms by which it can produce the latter. Much will depend, no doubt, on the politics of the executive branch. The office of the presidency retains enough centralised power to stabilise or destabilise in equal measure, and over time both elite and local grievances may well accumulate. Forecasting a return to mass violence or 'even genocide' (Thomson, 2011:456) based on current conditions, however, seems to me sensationalist.

Nevertheless, the coming years will bring changing conditions that may threaten to heighten levels of crime and disorder in Rwandan cities. This is likely to prompt additional changes to the country's policing system and to the operation of its state policing agencies. The most fundamental threat appears to be a demographic one, as is recognised in the government's poverty reduction strategy papers and by the RNP itself (Republic of Rwanda, 2013; RNP, 2014). Rwanda's cities are growing at an exceptionally fast rate, producing a crisis of housing and of land ownership (André & Platteau, 1998; Goodfellow, 2014). Currently over two-and-a-half million Rwandans, approximately twenty per cent of the population, live in urban areas. This marks an increase of over five hundred per cent since 1990 (Goodfellow, 2014:311). Across

Africa, as cities grow, second and third generation rural-urban migrants have begun to organise themselves and make demands of governments which often lack the political and social mechanisms to meet them (Hills 2009).

Despite the sophistication of Rwandan crime control, there are already troubling signals in Kigali. The RNP is involved in a protracted conflict with informal street hawkers that shows little sign of abating. Many of those trading informally on the streets of the capital are second generation migrants born into the poorer townships on the outskirts of the city. This 'assertive generation', who are said to be 'increasingly aware of their rights' (RNP, 2014), have no personal memory of the 1994 Genocide. This may significantly lessen the aversion to social disharmony discussed here in Chapter Five, and may in turn come to reduce the level of volunteering into non-state policing roles. Relatedly, the RNP officers interviewed expressed concerns that the Rwandan cultural code has been undergoing change in the capital. The *umuco nyarwanda*, and notions of *kirazira* and *indandadaciro*, traditionally built into village life, are being adapted and increasingly side-lined in urban neighbourhoods, and officials I spoke with lamented a perceived erosion of social controls at the neighbourhood level.

Future problems with street crime are unlikely to remain confined to the capital. As crime increases in capital cities, improved infrastructure tends to carry it back to rural areas, often where the police are not equipped to deal with it (see Potholm 1969:149). This is currently one of the principle concerns of the RNP, and is listed as a major threat in its 2013-2018 Strategic Plan (RNP, 2013:88). In discussions relating to crime in Gisenyi, one senior police commander in Kigali said that if the rates were to rise it would most likely be the result of events in Kigali – either because more sophisticated crimes were leaking out of the capital, or because criminals were being pushed out by more effective enforcement.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Interview, Senior RNP Officer, Kigali, 8 October 2014.

Changes in the nature and the degree of criminal activity are likely to be matched by further changes to the policing system. Unlike many police departments across the continent, the RNP has not been resistant to reform (cf. Francis, 2012). Government methods have proven controversial, particularly the forced resettlement of recent urban migrants back into rural areas (Sommers, 2012), and the use of transition and re-education camps, most notoriously the Gikondo Detention Centre (HRW, 2014b).

Recent years have also seen frequent reforms of state police institutions in Rwanda, including the disbanding of Local Defence Units, the establishment of a new state enforcement arm in DASSO in 2014, and the thorough restructuring of RNP departments in 2013, in which the Department of Community Policing was expanded into a full directorate. Continuous professional development is a high priority of the RNP. The monthly work schedule of officers, often pasted to their office walls, are punctuated with regular workshops and training days. I was impressed by the professionalism and dedication of the RNP officers I met throughout the middle ranks of the organisation. These were educated, hardworking technocrats, performing difficult work.

The major changes in Rwandan policing are taking place beneath the surface, however. To maintain an internal coherence throughout this thesis I have stuck to data from the period at which fieldwork was conducted (2014-2015). At the time of submission, in December 2016, there are currently over 170,000 registered members of CPCs in Rwanda (up from 82,000 in 2013), over 1,500 school anti-crime clubs (up from approximately 1,000) and roughly 100,000 Rwanda Youth Volunteers in Community Policing (again a significant rise, although numbers from 2014 were not available). Speaking of community modes of policing, Baker (2012:281) questions whether they will “survive the initial enthusiasm”, or whether, lacking an historical root in the culture of the police service they will “wither for lack of police support”. These numbers suggest that in Rwanda, the system is set to endure for some time.

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## Appendix 1. The Rwanda National Police – Organisation Details

### Organisational Details

Table 10. RNP distribution across Rwanda, showing growth from 2009 - 2013.

Indicator	2009	2013
Population of Rwanda	10 124 927	10 537 222
Police Officers	6 515	10 562
Police/Population Ratio	1/1 600	1/1000
Police Regions	5	5
Police Districts	30	30
Police Stations	69	75
Police Posts	229	216

Table 11. RNP organisational profile by rank.

Rank Description	2012/2013		
	Male	Female	TOTAL
Inspector General (IGP)	1	0	1
Deputy Inspector General (DIGP)	2	0	2
Commissioner	11	0	12
Assistant Commissioner	21	0	20
Chief Superintendent	61	0	60
Senior Superintendent	77	5	77
Superintendent	91	9	99
Chief Inspector	179	10	189
Inspector	168	37	204
Assistant Inspector	1143	157	1300
Chief Sergeant	106	0	106
Senior Sergeant	470	9	479
Sergeant	406	65	479
Corporal	1308	306	1614
Constable	4859	1061	5982
TOTAL	8903	1659	10562
%	84.3%	15.7%	100%

Source: RNP (2013)

## Police Responsibilities in Law

Police powers in Rwanda are established under Law No.46/2010 of 14 December 2010, the 'Police Act' (Republic of Rwanda, 2010). Article seven lists the following central responsibilities of the Police force:

- 1. Ensuring compliance with the laws;*
- 2. Maintaining public order inside the country;*
- 3. Ensuring safety and security of people and property;*
- 4. Assisting any person in danger;*
- 5. Immediately intervening in case of calamities, disasters or accidents;*
- 6. Ensuring respect of laws relating to airspace, borders and waters;*
- 7. Combating terrorism;*
- 8. Participating in international peacekeeping missions, humanitarian assistance and training.*

Article Eight lists the following more practical functions of the police:

- 1. Ensuring ground, lake, maritime and airspace safety;*
- 2. Preventing, detecting and investigating offences;*
- 3. Conducting general inspection of any premises it deems necessary;*
- 4. Implementing instructions relating to the maintenance of the security;*
- 5. Ensuring road safety;*
- 6. Ensuring security in courts;*
- 7. Cooperating with police of foreign countries in combating transnational offences;*
- 8. Ensuring security of national official dignitaries and visitors to Rwanda otherwise provided for by a specific law;*
- 9. Providing fire-fighting services;*
- 10. Coordinating humanitarian activities in case of calamities, disasters or accidents.*

The General Secretariat of the police force emphasises the following activities in addition to those laid out in the Police Act (RNP 2014:105). The Rwanda National Police will:

- 1. Assume the responsibility of mobilising and sensitising the community on matters of security, law and order.*

*2. Discourage conduct seen as unbecoming in the community and prevent crime by sourcing first-hand information as intelligence gatherers from members of the community.*

*3. Encourage local communities to conduct night patrols and report to the leadership instances of unusual behaviour or people who are unknown to the local community.*

### Recruitment Requirements

Section Two, Article Six of the Presidential Order on Specific Statute for Police Personnel (Presidential Order no.30/01 of 2012, see Republic of Rwanda, 2010) lists the following criteria for joining the RNP:

*To be of Rwandan nationality.*

*To voluntarily apply.*

*To be between 18 and 25 years of age unless specific skills can be demonstrated.*

*To have good conduct and morals.*

*To have no previous criminal conviction within six months of applying.*

*To have a diploma or certificate of education at the requirement of the recruitment level (a university degree for officers and a senior six certificate for constables).*

*To be healthy and strong enough to work in the national police, demonstrated in a letter from a state registered doctor.*

*To have no previous job dismissals without consultation.*

*To have passed the RNP tests.*

### Institutional Structure 2013

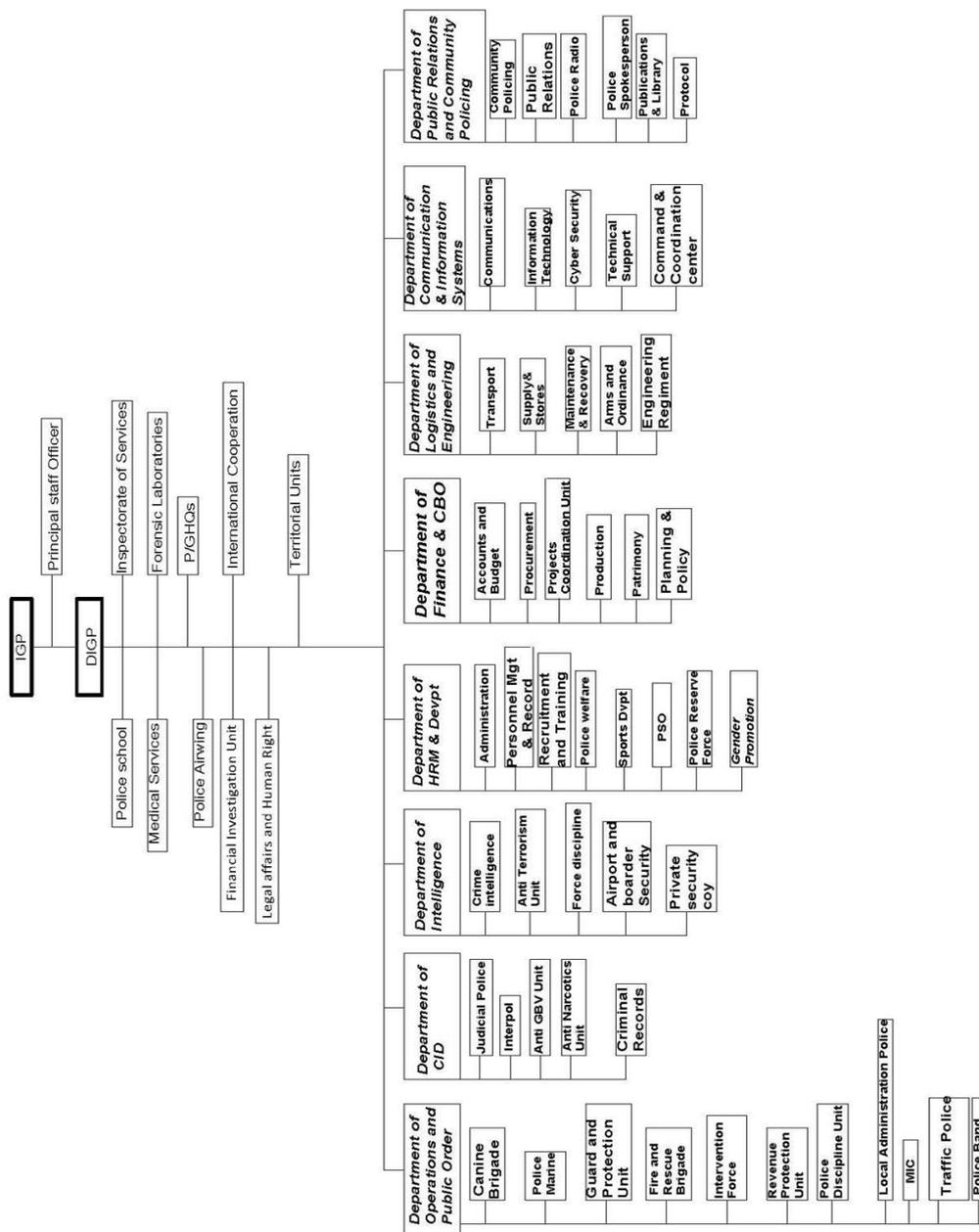
Although the RNP has since undergone some internal restructuring, at the time of field research in 2013 and 2014 it was organised into ten departments.<sup>199</sup> These operate under a General Commissariat headquartered in Kigali and managed by the

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<sup>199</sup> The organisation has since been restructured in a general expansion intended to increase operations and accommodate an influx of new staff. Notably, the directorates of public relations and of community policing have been separated into two full departments, testament to the department's increasing emphasis on community policing strategies.

Office of the Inspector General (IGP) and its current occupant Emmanuel Gasana, and two branches of the Kigali headquarters, each managed by a Deputy Inspector General of Police (DGIP).

Figure 12. RNP departments and organisational structure, 2013



Source: RNP, <http://www.police.gov.rw/about-rnp/organisational-structure/>, accessed 15 December 2015.

## Officer Ranks by Insignia

Figure 13. RNP Officer Ranks

		
CORPORAL	SERGEANT	CHIEF SERGEANT
		
ASSISTANT INSPECTOR	INSPECTOR	CHIEF INSPECTOR
		
SUPERINTENDENT	CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT	ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
		
COMMISSIONER	DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GENERAL	COMMISSIONER GENERAL

Source: RNP, 2013

## Approximate Security Sector Salaries

Table 12. Salaries in State and Private Security, 2014/2015

Position	Approximate Salary (RWF/Month)
RDF Special Forces (Entry Level)	200,000
DASSO Supervisor	150,000 – 200,000
INTERSEC Private Security	60,000
AEGISPRO Private Security	55,000
KK Security	50,000
HighSec Security	50,000
WideVision Security	50,000
RGL Security	50,000
Private Business Security (e.g. ULK University Security, Night Club Security)	50,000
DASSO Regular	40,000 – 60,000 as set by District
RDF Patrol Soldier (Corporal)	40,000 + Insurance, a food ration, a transport allowance, a housing allowance, access to a subsidized Armed Forces Shop (AFOS) and credit through the military bank CSS Zigama.
RNP Police (Constable)	40,000 + Insurance, a food ration, a transport allowance, a housing allowance, access to a subsidized Armed Forces Shop (AFOS) and credit through the military bank CSS Zigama.
Private House Guard	20,000 – 60,000
Abanyerondo Patrolman	15,000 - 20,000
Head of <i>Umudugudu</i>	Unsalaries + Insurance and certain <i>ad hoc</i> perks such as transport and telephone costs.
CPC Member	Unsalaries + Insurance

Approximate salaries are based on interviews with security representatives in 2014 and 2015.

Table 13. Monthly Gross Police Salaries by Rank, 2016

Rank	Monthly Gross, January to June 2016
Inspector General	1,931,655
Deputy Inspector General	1,665,089
Commissioner General	1,408,619
Deputy Commissioner General	1,129,102
Commissioner	820,815
Assistant Commissioner	686,278
Chief Superintendent	554,004
Senior Superintendent	527,784
Superintendent	461,750
Chief Inspector	315,029
Inspector	262,192
Assistant Inspector	201,808
Officer Cadet	201,609
Chief Sergeant	201,609
Senior Sergeant	164,045
Sergeant	96.877
Corporal	83.829
Constable	77.799
Recruit	77.799

Source: Rwanda Parliamentary Gazette (Republic of Rwanda, 2016).

Abanyerondo and CPC Personnel Identification Forms

Figure 14. Umunerondo Personnel Identification Form

REPUBLICA Y'URWANDA

UMUJYI WA KIGALI  
AKARERE KA KICUKIRO.

UMWIRONORO W'UMUNYERONDO:

AMAZINA YOMBI: [REDACTED]  
IRIHIMBANO: [REDACTED]  
IGITSINA: [REDACTED]  
No Y'INDANGAMUNTU: [REDACTED]  
ITARIKI Y'AMAVUKO: [REDACTED]  
AHO YAVUKIYE: [REDACTED]  
AMAZINA YA SE: [REDACTED]  
AMAZINA YA NYINA: [REDACTED]  
AMASHURI YIZE: [REDACTED]  
ICYO YIZE: [REDACTED]  
AKANDI KAZI AKORA: [REDACTED]  
IRANGAMIMERERE: [REDACTED]

Ingaragu:  Yarashatse:  Gutandukana:  Umubare w'abana:

UBWENEGIHUGU: [REDACTED]  
TELEPHONE: [REDACTED]  
EMAIL: [REDACTED]

AHO YAVUKIYE	AHO ATUYE
Umudugudu: [REDACTED]	Umudugudu: [REDACTED]
Akagari: [REDACTED]	Akagari: [REDACTED]
Umurenge: [REDACTED]	Umurenge: [REDACTED]
Akarere: [REDACTED]	Akarere: [REDACTED]
Umujyi: [REDACTED]	Umujyi: [REDACTED]

Figure 15. CPC Personnel Identification Form

**RWANDA NATIONAL POLICE**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
AND COMMUNITY POLICING**

**PHOTO**



**CPC'S PERSONNEL IDENTIFICATION FORM**

AMAZINA YOMBI: .....

IRIHIMBANO: .....

IGITSINA: .....

No Y'INDANGAMUNTU:.....

ITARIKI Y'AMAVUKO:.....

AHO YAVUKIYE: .....

AMAZINA YA SE: .....

AMAZINA YA NYINA:.....

AMASHURI YIZE:.....

ICYO YIZE:.....

AKAZI AKORA MURI COMMUNITY POLICING:.....

IRANGAMIMERERE:

INGARAGU:  YARASHATSE:  GUTANDUKANA:  UMUBARE W'ABANA:

IR WENGIHUGU

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

AHO YAVUKIYE	AHO ATUYE
UMUDUGUDU: .....	UMUDUGUDU: .....
AKAGARI: .....	AKAGARI: .....
UMURENGE:.....	UMURENGE:.....
AKARERE: .....	AKARERE: .....
INTARA:.....	INTARA:.....
IGIHUGU: .....	IGIHUGU: .....

**NB: BYABA BYIZA BURI MUNTU ASHYIZEHO PHOTO COPY Y'INDANGAMUNTU YE BIKABA AKARUSHO WOMETSEHO N'AGAFOTO KA PASIPORO K'AMABARA.**

## Selected Security Uniforms

Figure 16. Selected Security Uniforms

RNP Officer Uniform



DASSO Security Uniform



Umunyerondo Uniform



Intersec Security Uniform



KK Security Uniform



Aegispro Security Uniform



ULK Security Uniform



Highsec Security Uniform

