



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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HAUSMAN: This is David Hausman, and I am here on May 26, 2010, in Kigali, Rwanda, with Mr. Tito Rutaremara, the chief ombudsman of Rwanda and former secretary-general of the RPF [Rwandan Patriotic Front]. Mr. Rutaremara, have you agreed to be recorded for this interview?

RUTAREMARA: Yes, I have.

HAUSMAN: Great, thanks so much. I wanted to start by just asking you a bit about your background and the positions that brought you to this point.

RUTAREMARA: *My background as what? Starting from when I was young, or...?*

HAUSMAN: Just briefly—starting from the beginning of your career, maybe, briefly.

RUTAREMARA: *Well, I was born here in Rwanda in 1944. Then I did primary and part of the secondary school in Rwanda. Afterwards, I was a refugee in Uganda, where I did secondary and university. Then afterwards I went to France, where I did a master's degree and a PhD in urban and rural planning. But before, I was doing geography. Then I did the PhD in urban and rural planning.*

When I came back—I stayed in France working—and I came back in '87. It's when I was asked to chair a task force, which was supposed to review RANU [Rwandese Association of National Unity]. RANU is the former—

HAUSMAN: Rwandese Association of National Unity—?

RUTAREMARA: *Yes, right—then review RANU from '87. That's why I think Protais Musoni told you, because I was saying he was in that task force. We studied how we can do it and so on, until December after Christmas in '87, when we had the Congress of RANU, and then we changed RANU to RPF. In fact, that's when I became the secretary-general of RPF. After, we organized the RPF, the structures of RPF, the structures and even the youth and women's organizations, until we started war in 1990. I remember in 1990 where we changed the name of the secretary-general to become the coordinator of RPF activity during the war. That's what it became, coordinator for RPF activity. It is the name that changed. I stayed there until 1993, December. It was in 1993 December when I came in the [...] At that time, I was no longer the secretary-general, because I was supposed to be in Parliament.*

In 1994, after the genocide, I was in Parliament heading the RPF group until 2000. In 2000 I was asked to chair the constitutional commission, which was supposed to prepare the constitution, which we prepared until 2003, June of 2003. After that, 2003, in November, is when I became the chief ombudsman until now. I am in the second mandate. Afterwards I don't know where I will be.

HAUSMAN: Great, thanks so much. Let me start by asking you about some of what you did when you first returned to RANU in 1987. You mentioned the task force that you were on with Protais Musoni; that you chaired with Protais Musoni. Can you describe more of what that task force was tasked with?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, RANU was rather a group of young, intellectual people, and we were discussing how to make it dynamic, to make it a mass movement. Then it was what we were asked. Then what we did—and RANU was always depending upon volunteers who were doing other jobs—they were proposing that there should be people who sacrificed themselves and make that work of mobilization be permanent, to work without doing any other job. That's why, of course, we*

were asked to review everything, the structures; to review the ideology, to review the organization, to propose how we can make it dynamic and going to all people and in all countries, because before RANU was only in Uganda and Kenya and some individuals [...] he was in Europe, but it was not between; it was a debate between young intellectual people.

Then, there, we were asked to do it. How we did it: we first took young people who were coming from universities. We started teaching them, because if you want to become a political cadre, you have to get tools of analysis, and we were giving them a political education, which is teaching them what is politics, the definition of democracy, giving them the tools of analysis of analyzing things, teaching them the history of Rwanda, the methodology of mobilization and other things. There are so many other things. We are giving them a bit of introduction to philosophy, introduction to politics, introduction to economics and so on, and the history of Rwanda especially. And the leadership code, giving them the leadership code.

Then, when we were doing, we would take a group of young intellectuals coming straight from school, because it was their agenda to take someone who is already working and tell him to volunteer and be permanent. It would be very hard. So we were targeting the young people coming straight from school.

Then we were to give them one month or two months of political education. After that, we would send them to camps or countries where we tell them to go and mobilize. When he came back we make a workshop to discuss what did you see, how did you find it, and so on. Then we would send other groups; they would come and make discussions and we sat down. By doing that, teaching those young ones and creating the political cadres who were supposed to go out and mobilize the youth and building the structures. We went on even changing the documents of RANU in such a way that we got what we were calling the eight-point program.

HAUSMAN: Sorry?

RUTAREMARA: *The political program, our political program. We wrote a political program with eight points. The political program which had three characteristics. First, to be a program that had to assemble so many people, whether you are a Catholic, a Protestant, a bourgeois or someone who has been having money, unemployed, Hutus and Tutsis, and so on. But the one who was not taken is the one who was working for the interest of the foreigners. If he says, I am working for the interest of France or Belgium or anything, the ones we call, in revolutionary jargon, [...], someone who wants to work for the interests of other people, not of yours—. Because we had seen that our problem was not because people were politicized, but it was because we had people who were not politicized. Then we had to politicize them and teach them what democracy is and so on, and their history and the problems they have. Why are we here? Why is Rwanda like this? and so on.*

HAUSMAN: Was this strategy of recruiting new graduates something that arose out of that task force? Was that something you decided on later, or were you doing it all along while you were also on the task force?

RUTAREMARA: *We were doing it during the task force. We were recruiting those young ones and so on. But it became—then we wrote the political program, which has eight points. One is the unity of the country, building a democracy, economy based on our own means, fighting corruption, welfare of the people, and so on.*

The eight-point program has characteristics of assembling people, inclusiveness. Another one which—the idea that it should be simple. No one can reject the unity of the country. Anyone who says he is—no one obviously would reject it; no one is saying we don't want democracy, we want to be corrupted. Those are things that all people understand and the people are not ready to reject openly. So it has that characteristic, and the other one is that of being simple: that if you give it to someone, he takes it anywhere without changing it. Those were the three characteristics of our political program. Be inclusive, inclusivity. Being universal. No one is ready to refuse it, because if for instance you say I want socialism, someone would say no, not for me; I want communism, I want capitalism.

But if you say I want unity of the country, no one would dare to say no, we don't want unity of the country. But if you say I want democracy, no one in the world openly would refuse democracy. No one would refuse to fight corruption, and so on. That is the way you make ideas universal. You don't give any chance to people to refuse it openly.

HAUSMAN: When you were recruiting these new graduates, about how many did you recruit, and how did you go about finding them?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, we were not finding them, because we didn't have money. We were only asking them to volunteer. We were trying to get some food for them, and we were telling them, we were even using their Bible, saying, "Remember when Jesus was sending people to tell them go and teach. Those whom you are teaching, if you are doing your work properly, they would be feeding you." That's what we were telling them, and they would go around and be fed by the people that they were teaching. Anyway, they would come and we make—we were only looking for some money to make the workshop work, and so on.*

HAUSMAN: About how many were there?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, it went on, it prolonged the movement, it went on moving. I remember we started with about 20, but after a while there were so many. It went on moving and moving and even being decentralized. We started in Uganda, in Kampala, but afterwards in other areas where Rwandese were found. Then it went into Kenya, in Burundi. You see, it started, but it went on extending. You want to ask another question?*

HAUSMAN: I was going to ask how you came up with the way of organizing that you used? Was there a model that you had?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, we had many models, but trying to—for instance, the idea of having political cadres, sacrificing that without doing any other job, it came from the problem that we were having, because RANU was suffering that problem. But again, we brought it from the small booklet written by [Vladimir] Lenin, "What to Do" [What is to be Done]. That is where he was proposing: if you want to succeed in Russia, there should be people who become like professionals. You see? But of course there are so many other people who have written about it; if we read Amílcar Cabral from Cape Verde, who wrote about that idea. But other things; we had read so many books and so many works of people here and there.*

HAUSMAN: The idea of establishing cells in each country, sometimes more than one—where did that idea come from?

RUTAREMARA: *No, you see the organization is an ancient organization in any case; you find it even in the churches, you find it everywhere. That's the thing that you will find to be common. It is not so revolutionary. Something which you find even in churches. The churches have got those cells.*

HAUSMAN: And the use of elected executive committees in each cell?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, the thing which we created in each cell, because we were having a cell, then a branch, and the region. The structure was a cell, a branch—many cells together make a branch. Many branches together made a region. The thing which we did was, we were always having two bodies in a cell or a branch—always having the executive committee, the council. But the most important we were putting over there was the one dealing with security and inspection, with the money or security or anything like that; it was the most important. We were always having three. Because this was—we did it especially on money; we had seen that most of the movements of the world had the problem with money, embezzlement. It is why when we are always electing, the first part we were electing, the biggest was always electing the inspectorate, having the best who were in the inspectorate.*

Second, the executive, and then the council. Those three bodies were—on each level of RPF. But the most important was the inspectorate, because we didn't want—we had seen that many movements, the revolutionary movement and the other movements, the problem was embezzling of money.

HAUSMAN: Can you say how the inspectorate worked?

RUTAREMARA: *First of all, they were the ones dealing with security of the people; they were the ones inspecting whether the money they get is right, and they move it to the right place. They were the ones dealing with the discipline of the people, seeing the discipline of the people.*

HAUSMAN: Was there an inspectorate at every level, or was it—?

RUTAREMARA: *On each and every level. They were elected by the people. They were the first being elected, before you elect the others.*

HAUSMAN: Great. Let me move forward now to the time when you and the RFP—go ahead.

RUTAREMARA: *Another thing that we had in the political program: we made even the operational guideline. The operational guideline is what you can call the structure of liberty. It was making it flexible so that it allows—if you were in Europe, you do it in your own way, but if you are working in Rwanda, where there is no independence, you make sure that you are organizing yourself another way. So it was flexible, our operational guideline was flexible. You are doing it according to the area in which you are. For instance, if you are in Rwanda, you are not having the branches, but you have the cells and the region. So it was dangerous to pass there and go directly to the branch. It was depending upon the area, in which country you are.*

The characteristic in the operational guideline was first to be flexible; second to be, to come—when you come from one to go to another one, each area depending on the other one. Unless you find that you are in a country where there is much insecurity, where we are not supposed to know each other. Then they will do—it is why we are saying that it is flexible.

For example in Rwanda, a cell would work direct with the region without passing through the branches because we didn't want to put so many structures where there was security, and the security services of Rwanda were very strong—it would be depending on the country's nature. Then we again prepared what we called the code of conduct of our neighbors, the code of conduct which was emphasizing rather self-criticism, what we call auto-criticism and constructive criticism. We were encouraging people to have constructive criticism and auto-criticism in that code of conduct.

We then prepared the whole code, organized the youth organizations, creating their organization and women's organizations and the other cells. Then in 1987 is when we took them to the Congress. It is when we presented those things to the Congress, and they passed and we started working.

HAUSMAN: So these things were a result of the task force?

RUTAREMARA: *Yes, the task force. We started working and constructing cells here and there. Having political schools here and decentralizing the political schools and the creation of political cadres who would be helping in the struggle, the organization of women, the organization of youth and the construction of the cells and so on, until when it started, the war.*

HAUSMAN: Great. So let me now move forward and ask you about the time when the RPF actually began to administer territory. Let me ask you either about the administration of the demilitarized zone or about the administration of territory that was captured in 1994. What were the particular kinds of governance challenges that you faced after assuming control of territory?

RUTAREMARA: *We usually didn't have many challenges. The first thing which we—the first problem, the challenge we got first was how to feed those people and give them health, cleanliness, because we did not have enough food to feed our military men and to feed even the population that was there. Then we found that the RPF people could not have drugs for all military men who were in the war and have even for the population. That's why you concentrated on making the people work on their feet and making people be clean, cleanliness in their houses, in their bodies. You were asking them how many times they were washing themselves, checking whether they are washing their houses, things that they were eating with, because we did not have money to spend.*

HAUSMAN: How did you go about enforcing that?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, you start by checking, telling them. We found so many had jiggers [chigoe flea]—you don't know what jiggers are?*

HAUSMAN: No.

RUTAREMARA: *It is a kind of itch that comes in the feet, small insect that goes in the feet, enters and grows inside, those jiggers. We had to bring our political cadres, to remove them out and look for medicine, and those things were coming because people were walking barefoot and were not clean, were not washing themselves every day. But first we had to force to tell them to do it. But after some time, after one month, people were used [to it]. Some who had become clean, you only force them the first time, but in the end they are the ones to do it.*

HAUSMAN: Was the same thing true for cultivating fields?

RUTAREMARA: *Yes, cultivating fields. Of course, organizing them to cultivate in areas where—, and so on, and bringing the army to defend them in the case and choosing the right crops for them because we did not want them to have—, and afterwards—that was only starting, and afterwards...*

HAUSMAN: Did you establish—?

RUTAREMARA: *We established some schools for the children.*

HAUSMAN: Did you establish any kind of government structures at the time?

RUTAREMARA: *We were—the government was—they were depending upon the RPF, but they—the type of cells that we are having today—they elected their people in the cells and even on the district level, electing their people.*

HAUSMAN: This was in the demilitarized zone?

RUTAREMARA: *In the demilitarized zone and even in our zone.*

HAUSMAN: And the elections that took place at the cell and district level: were these the committees that had existed in Rwanda already, or were they modeled on RPF committees?

RUTAREMARA: *No, the ones which we have today? No, we did it in our way.*

HAUSMAN: It wasn't, because I know that there were committees before—

RUTAREMARA: *They were not exactly the same, because they were emphasizing the councils and the executive and the inspectorate, those things which we were having. They did not exist in Rwanda. We were having the same—the ones that we were having with our people outside in our political organization, whether it was in Rwanda or anywhere, those are the ones who we were doing it with. Though we were making them not to, on the political side, but administratively.*

HAUSMAN: How did you go about setting those up, those committees?

RUTAREMARA: *You see, we were telling people, "Elect yourselves," and we first taught them what it is, that they have to organize themselves. So we went around sensitizing them, how to organize themselves, what is the good of organizing themselves, the good of electing their own people who represent them. Those people, they were the ones to directly talk to RPF if they have any problem: if they want to go, for instance, how to go to Uganda to buy things and so on, to get movement papers because it was a zone of war, and so on.*

Then it is why we were organizing them in such a way that they in their cells elect their representatives who would be asking for anything that they wanted or needed. Say, if they needed a school, they have to get a representative to come out. If they needed papers to move from that country to another one because activities would be going on. They were very many...

HAUSMAN: Was there any resistance to this among the population?

RUTAREMARA: *No. The idea, the resistance wasn't there, because we started by sensitizing, mobilizing, discussing with these people, and then telling them to do it afterwards. Our political cadres, what they were doing, they were—mobilization. First, having so many meetings, we discussed with the people,*

visiting the people, telling them and so on, because we did not want to get—we were at war, we did not want to have a problem of the population if we were at war. That was the work of the mobilizers, of our political cadres to go around, teach them, be with them all the time, listen to their problems and so on, serving them, trying to serve them, with them, and so on and so forth.

HAUSMAN: About how long did it take to establish committees?

RUTAREMARA: *It was depending upon the area. When you are taking an area straight, start—any part you are taking—first of all you put the population together in order to remove them from the front where there was war. Then after, you start sensitizing those people, going about their work, cleanliness. Then start sensitizing them, how they should be. Then the political cadres would start teaching them politics and so on, what democracy was, why they should develop democracy, why they should elect people to represent them, what are they supposed to do, and so on. Why they should be together.*

It was the work of sensitizing them because, of course, you could not go and tell them do this and this. You need time to, you have to get time, to give the time to the political cadres to go around and sensitize the population. But at first, of course, because they were few, but from those ones who were already organizing and politicizing, we even created other political cadres who would be helping in other areas, because we were putting there the political school and even bringing in those people, and they will be the ones to—even using to organize the others. But it was the work that was going on with the war. When you are taking an area, the political cadres would start doing the work. Then they can tell you when, how much, and so on. It was the work of the war, the politicization of the people, the organization of the people, the sensitization.

While it was going with the war, it was the work which we were doing more seriously than the war. They would even come in and get in, some who wanted to be in the army, to come in there and fight. Those who wanted to become political cadres, they would become political cadres, those who wanted to go into teaching in schools would stay in the schools and teach. That is how we were organizing as we were moving to the work we were doing.

HAUSMAN: So, for example, in the demilitarized zone, do you remember about how long it took to establish this?

RUTAREMARA: *In the demilitarized zone, we had the time even to mobilize for election, because both the government and us were put there. Now Minister Stanislas Kamanzi of Environment was elected as the prefect of the demilitarized zone. Now the thing is, it took us—I cannot tell you how long it took us, because we went on sensitizing the people. The work of sensitizing or politicization is the work that goes on, goes on. You can't say, this I have finished.*

You go on teaching, because teaching, you have to teach each and every time. But when we started in the demilitarized zone we had already been [...] people already. But after that one we started, because you see, we were more organized than the government. When we sent our political cadres, they knew their work. They went there straight—why the government didn't have that type of political cadres and so on who were ready to go and do that work. It was easier. But for them, they were even allowed to go there—for them they were depending on—. I remember they were doing two things. One was to come for the big meeting done by the government. The second which they were doing, was to come during the night, going to try to infiltrate and saying things that they cannot

say in the open, saying those are the Tutsis who are coming to massacre behind. But for us the political cadres were everywhere even in their field, showed them how they make—a political cadre has to know everything, to go around, even teach them how to go in the field, how to mobilize them to have their water tanks working; if they find something which is not working in their system of water we would call our technician to come and help. If they did not know how to take their goods, for instance to Kigali, we tell them please bring us their lorries over our army. We take them to Uganda to sell them. They were helping in so many things.

It was not only for sensitizing on the political side, it was on each and every life. There is someone who is sick, very sick; if he does not know how to go around, we would bring in our health people to come and help them and our doctors to come and do something. If he cannot go to Kigali, we would even take him to Kabale and Kampala or to Nairobi; that is why—it is the work of the political cadre not only to teach politics but looking at each and every life. Then it is how we did there, and then we were even recruiting young people to come to our political schools, which were behind in our area. They would become our political cadres, to come inside and work with others. Young people who wanted to join the army, they would come and go for training to go back and so on. Those are the things that we were doing.

HAUSMAN: Let me now ask you about your role after the full-scale war broke out in April 1994 and which parts of the country you were, in and how this process of establishing governance structures worked during that time.

RUTAREMARA: *You see, there is a time it went even quicker. At first it was, slowly, we were having a part and having time to mobilize. There was a time when the Rwandese army was running away; then the area would be big and so on and having—during that time we had so many other problems, because we had the problems, now having many people who have been massacred and having people where to go and put them and bury them. It was in each and every area where you were finding people and having people who were injured, we had to take around to doctors and so on. We had orphans, widows, people who were around and fearing internal army, we might be having, now mobilizing in one area, so that we could be with them in the security, and with that security looking for food for them and so on. Those are the first things that we were doing.*

All the political cadres came to do more with those instead of sensitizing. Sensitizing came after. What you are doing, the most urgent thing was to bury people, to take the injured ones to the doctors, to look for the young people and to create orphanages where they can put them and look for political cadres to go on doing that work of taking those orphans, taking other—creating camps where to put these people in order to have their security, looking for food for them and so on. After that really, you had many more problems; then politicizing came afterwards because you had the urgent activities, you understand, after genocide everywhere. Now even fighting, remnants of the internal army were hiding somewhere.

HAUSMAN: So after that initial stage of emergency where the political cadres were helping with all of these urgent, practical things—

RUTAREMARA: *Yes, political cadres and army men who were not fighting.*

HAUSMAN: After that initial stage which lasted about—how long would you say?

RUTAREMARA: *It was depending upon the area. The one that was liberated before it was—but it continued until even when the French people went from the zone; we went there to do the same work. But of course we went to do that work until we even put the government there, because it was an area—we put the government in place while one part of the country was again occupied by French people. We went to do the same work—but now there was a government, until the government was now dealing with things that other governments do and working. But we went on doing the same work, now having even the government helping, organizing and so on. Not only RPF but also the government organizing, government of other political parties were there, because we formed the government of unity that was made of so many political parties.*

HAUSMAN: Do you remember the timeline for some of the specific areas—for example in Kibungo or Ruhengeri, how long it took for this practical phase to be finished and for the election of committees to begin?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, [...] in Kibungo it was [Protais] Musoni who was a prefect there. Because Kibungo was liberated before; by October it was already finished in Kibungo. But in the other areas they were still doing certain things.*

HAUSMAN: Which area were you in?

RUTAREMARA: *By that time I was supposed to be in Ruhengeri, but the RPF had given me the job of forming a human rights commission and to study the impact of genocide and give the report, the impact of genocide. The impacts that genocide had on our people, the impact that it had on RPF, and the consequences; and to look for the solutions. We are the ones who proposed to use the 'Gacaca.'*

HAUSMAN: How long were you in Ruhengeri before you started that?

RUTAREMARA: *I didn't go there.*

HAUSMAN: Oh, you didn't go there at all.

RUTAREMARA: *I was supposed to be the prefect of Ruhengeri, but then they straight gave me that work of doing it, and I went all around. I did not go to Ruhengeri. The one who was my second, [...] Kagiraneza was the one who remained in Ruhengeri.*

HAUSMAN: Excuse me? Who was that? How do you spell that?

RUTAREMARA: *Kagiraneza. Then he was the one who remained, he was the deputy to myself, but because I was given that work—I went to do that work, to go around and know the causes, how it impacted, how this genocide was being prepared, the main sites that they were using, the effect it will have on RPF and so on, and how we can solve that problem. That is the work I was given and doing as a work of diplomacy.*

HAUSMAN: Let me go back and see if I can ask you in a little more detail again about the process of first dealing with the practical issues and territory that you took over, and then politicizing and having cells, elected representatives.

RUTAREMARA: *Well, you see, that part, the real part, the chaos that we found in Rwanda, it took us time. But it depended upon the area where we were, and it was upon even the people who were there to organize themselves, because, really, in some areas, it became quick; in other areas, it took time. It even*

depended upon the impact of the genocide that happened there and the destruction of the things that happened in that area. Take a town which was under the French people, Cyangugu, which is on the border of Zaire: all houses were being destroyed, to give you an example like that, while in other areas like Kigali there were houses that were there. Then it was easy to put people in those houses. But an area where there are no houses, what to do? You understand the problems were not equal each and every time in each and every corner. It was depending on that.

How to look for shelter for those people, it would take long in an area where there was nothing. But in an area where there were houses, you go and bring people and put them—go in this house, you buy it. If the owner comes, you will go out. Then you do other work. For instance, here in Kigali there were very few houses that had been destroyed, it was very easy to find and then you go. You don't have somewhere to be, be there: two families in this, two families in that one. Then we started doing the most urgent one. That shows you it would be depending on areas where things were being destroyed.

HAUSMAN: So for example, in Kigali, when did the politicization start, and were there cell committees elected in the same way?

RUTAREMARA: *You see, in Kigali—because after the war people came in—it was very easy, because you had the construction of a political cadre; even the ministers and others would come during the evening and do the work of mobilization. It was not the same. There it started early. But starting early it went on, because other people were coming afterwards. People were coming from other areas, coming to Kigali. Whether it started early, but finishing in Kigali—there was a lot to be finished, because other people were coming from many areas. The refugees were coming from other parts of the world and coming back to Kigali.*

Though Kigali was having many political cadres, they were having the most; it was an area where the movement of people—people were moving towards Kigali, all of the people were moving towards Kigali, especially the victims of genocide. They did not want to remain in the rural areas because they feared to remain in the rural areas; they were all moving to escape it. An area where you started a long time to sensitize, but it is an area where you went on sensitizing even after the other areas. Those sensitizations and politicizations have to go on; even today they are still going on.

HAUSMAN: So, for example, in Kigali, when did the sensitization start, about? Do you remember what month?

RUTAREMARA: *No, because before we were in the [...] we had started sensitizing people even before the genocide. We went on, we went on sensitizing. The work of sensitization is work that goes on continuously. In an area where we were reaching, even a military man after fighting would sit down and would come back, put the gun on his shoulder, and start sensitizing, and he called for political cadres to come. But he would have found out that the military man had already gathered them, had started teaching them, looked for food and everything, and political cadres would come in and help.*

HAUSMAN: This is the second part of our interview with Mr. Rutaremara. I wanted to ask specifically about the election of cell committees or [...], and when that took place in Kigali and also whether that took place across the country or only in some areas?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, wherever we were, we were doing it, because we wanted people to come out and organize themselves because organizing people is very hard. We always needed people to sit down and elect themselves, people who will be organizing themselves. But you would be helping them with advice and so on. Then we were doing it everywhere. But we were doing it in a way—there were ideas from RPF. But these ideas, we had to bring them to the government and discuss, so that they can become of the government of Rwanda. That one was [...] I was not in the government; I do not remember when they were discussed and put in, being a policy of the government. But I remember they were discussed.*

In any case, we put them in the constitution, the 2003 constitution, but we had been doing it—I remember we were doing it as the RPF, but afterwards we discussed it with the other political parties. I cannot tell you exactly which ones because I was not a member of the cabinet. I cannot tell you exactly when.

HAUSMAN: That is fine. I am mostly interested in the early period, maybe in 1994 or maybe early 1995, when this was happening informally as an RPF way of allowing people to organize themselves.

RUTAREMARA: *You see, wherever you are we always allowed; that was our first time, of course, to give them the main way to be secure and so on, then let them organize themselves. Otherwise we could not succeed. If you don't—and by organizing themselves, even looking for other young people who could come to our political school so that they come and be the political cadres everywhere—that work of bringing young people to political school and making them the political cadres and the way of recruiting for the army, young people to go in the army and come and fight. It went on. Also we were letting people organize themselves—they were to organize themselves for their security. We could not have the military men everywhere. In order to organize themselves for their security they had to elect their committees. They had to organize themselves to start the schooling, the schools of the children and so on, and having the committees to look for teachers. Those are things that we were, people had to do these for themselves.*

HAUSMAN: How did you organize, for example, local elections and make committees realize which tasks needed to be done?

RUTAREMARA: *The local elections were being done in each, wherever we were doing it, and telling them, bringing people together, sensitizing them and telling them to elect. But the real local elections on the national level, I think it was after '96 on the national level. But otherwise they were being—wherever they were taken, we would make them and decide.*

HAUSMAN: So how would the election actually work? Would there be just a meeting in the cell where people would come and raise their hand and vote, or—in this early phase before the formal elections?

RUTAREMARA: *It was depending on the area. In the rural areas they were putting up their hands if they vote for that one. But in the area, like in a town in Kigali, there were being electing—they were writing down.*

HAUSMAN: And these—

RUTAREMARA: *I mean in some other areas, it was someone standing there campaigning. Afterwards those who want him would stand behind him or put up*

their hand. It was depending upon an area. But areas like Kigali, Butare and so on, they organized elections and they wrote it down and they voted for those people. When it became on the national level it was given by the government. But in ours—because our system was always something that was flexible, it was how RPF worked; it was pragmatic and flexible. Doing the work that is possible in that area. If you think this is possible, you do it—possible, quick, and accepted by people, you do it.

But if we find you are among the [...] in Kigali, it is possible but it is not acceptable, no—do the one that they accept. But other elections on the national level, they were doing the same thing that was done by the government. But at first in the RPF we were pragmatic and flexible. It was what we were doing.

HAUSMAN: You mentioned that the local committees organized themselves for the security and looked for teachers for schools. Were tasks like that handed down from the leadership of the RPF, or did they come from the people in the local areas, or both?

RUTAREMARA: *But you see, when you are doing that, there were prefects in the areas. Then afterwards they put there in the community the burgermeisters. But local areas, they elected their own and so on, but of course reporting to the burgermeisters and the prefects.*

HAUSMAN: When were the prefects and burgermeisters appointed?

RUTAREMARA: *Wherever we were liberating, we would put there a prefect and burgermeister.*

HAUSMAN: Immediately.

RUTAREMARA: *Immediately, to coordinate all those people. The first one, the first burgermeisters and prefects were not elected; they were only elected after, when they came on with the government. But local councilors were being elected. We were telling people to elect them themselves and so on.*

HAUSMAN: Did most of the population participate in those elections?

RUTAREMARA: *In an area where they were.*

HAUSMAN: If you could go back and do this again, is there anything you would do differently?

RUTAREMARA: *Go back?*

HAUSMAN: If you had a chance to do some of these things again, if you were in a position to do this over—

RUTAREMARA: *In another country, because this country is already over—?*

HAUSMAN: Yes, of course in another country, if you were giving advice to someone?

RUTAREMARA: *Yes, I think it is—the work which we were doing which was flexible—I think wherever I would be, I would be flexible, letting people, giving the people an orientation and giving them the presence and the help, sensitizing people, teaching them why they should do that. Then letting people do, but letting people*

choose their own methods of doing it. I would always do it like this, because it worked for us and it was very quick. It was helping us a lot.

Anyway, it helped because we had—before we had applied it from '87 up to '90, we had again applied it with people, RPF members and so on. It is something that we had been doing, and then we knew where our mistakes were, [...] and so on, why we should let people choose their own people.

HAUSMAN: What were some of the mistakes that you corrected?

RUTAREMARA: *Well, for instance the mistakes—sometimes people were tending to propose someone that he should be chosen by people, especially higher levels. Those are the mistakes that we were correcting, saying no, no, let the people choose their own, whom they want. And other mistakes were mistaking someone from somewhere and telling him to go and present himself in this area. We are saying no, no, unless those people are the ones who look for someone else. But do not take anyone; let them choose among themselves those who are capable.*

Small mistakes which we were correcting were—of course, there are some times, when you elect people, there is a time when they become overzealous, overdoing it: telling them to please go slowly. Other mistakes were, people had the tendency of seeing someone who had done wrong to chase him straight, not to give him a chance to correct himself. Those are the mistakes that we were making; let him to go slow, let him correct himself and so on, give him time, and if he goes on, of course, you elect another one, but you do not chase him from the movement, because the RPF has never chased anyone from the movement. People go and come back.

HAUSMAN: Let me ask you just one last question. You mentioned that flexibility was very important. What are some examples of different ways that this process was accomplished?

RUTAREMARA: *For instance, take our members in Europe, because they were allowed to go in one area and form their cells and talk in the open; they were doing it. They were in an area where they were not going to put them in prison. But if you take someone here in Rwanda, for instance, they were flexible to make a cell of—There in Europe you could make a cell of a thousand or 200 or anything, but in Rwanda they could never go beyond five, because it was dangerous to have many. Now a cell of five works directly—instead of working with the branch which was organizing seven cells—works directly with the region and with the center. Those were the flexibilities. It was the same in Zaire and in Burundi, where the cells were small. But in Uganda, in an area in Kampala, the cells were small because of the system of intelligence of Uganda. But cells in the camps where there were only Rwandans, there could be big ones. I remember in cells in Kampala they were using cells of—only in Burundi and Congo, cells where there were people drinking together after work, an association of people coming to drink together. They drink together, but afterwards they talk politics and organize themselves. Those are the flexibilities. According to the possibility, for instance, in Burundi, I remember in order to—Burundi was allowing the solidarity. We were encouraging the youth to make during the holiday the solidarity camps where young people would go around helping needy people. Ours, they took that chance to go around and help people, but by helping people organizing themselves, the youth, our youth organization. In Tanzania, for instance, they had what they were calling [...] where they were having this working system together, solidarity, where people were working together and they were not preventing people to come together and work together and so on. Many*

Rwandans were profiting from this. We were making according to the area in which we were; in an area where it is free, you become free.

HAUSMAN: Then later on, in 1994, what were some of the differences in the way it was applied in different areas in Rwanda?

RUTAREMARA: *In 1994 we no longer feared anything. Then we started creating cells, because we could even create them during the day and have meetings anywhere, because there was freedom at that time, even teaching, open market anywhere. Then the structures were the same.*

HAUSMAN: OK. Thanks so much.

RUTAREMARA: *Thanks.*