



The UN High Commissioner for Refugees and international aid agencies supplied trucks to assist in the return of refugees to Rwanda in 1996 following the 1994 genocide.

NGOs are exploring a voluntary scheme that could encourage countries to open their doors to independent monitors.

Meanwhile, with support from DFAIT and other agencies and foundations, PAC continues its research and advocacy with partners in Belgium, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom. Its efforts have not gone unnoticed. In March 2002, PAC and its British partner, Global Witness, were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for their work around the Kimberley Process.

Healing the scars of genocide

By the mid-1990s, Richard Batsinduka had been living in exile from his native Rwanda for more than 20 years. He had completed high school and university in Burundi, worked in Swaziland, and by 1992 was employed in Ottawa as a French teacher. When the 1994

genocide took the lives of between 800,000 and 1 million Rwandans, Mr. Batsinduka lost his parents, two brothers, a sister and some 500 members of his extended family.

"I was not able to teach any more because what happened profoundly affected me," he says.

By 1996, he was enrolled at the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution (CICR), a non-profit organization based in Ottawa that offers community-based conflict resolution programs. During his one-year residency, Mr. Batsinduka saw how the principles of resolving deep-rooted conflict could benefit his homeland. With support from the Institute, he wrote a proposal for a pilot project that was ultimately funded by CIDA.

In 1997, Mr. Batsinduka returned to Rwanda for the first time in 24 years. "It was really hard to start the work, but the Canadian embassy gave me a lot of support. The key issue was to bring victims and perpetrators

together in a safe environment to do the training."

The sessions went so well that CIDA funded an 18-month follow-up project. This involved "training the trainer" sessions in Ottawa for eight of the 350 Rwandans who had taken the course.

When one of the eight trainees returned to Rwanda, she trained a group of women who had been widowed by the genocide. The training had a profound impact on them. By the end of the five-day session, the women had decided to bring food to genocide suspects as a peace offering.

"There were so many small movements like this, and they were all the right ones," says Mr. Batsinduka. In 1999, he had his own epiphany. He decided to meet with the alleged killer of his brother and sister-in-law in a Rwandan prison.

"I talked with him for about half an hour," he says. "Something happened inside of me. I forgave him."



The closing of the first conflict resolution training session for Rwandan participants in July 1997 at CICR in Ottawa. Participants are holding an Aboriginal "dream catcher."

To learn more about Canada's policies and initiatives for helping developing countries become less marginalized, go to www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca and click on "Foreign Policy," then "Global Issues, Peace and Security" or "International Development." You can also visit the CIDA Web site: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca