



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Angeline Djampou (Part 4 of 10)



Role:	Chief Librarian
Country of Origin:	Cameroon
Interview Date:	30 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Lisa P. Nathan Ronald Slye
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Angeline Djampou describes the facilities provided by the ICTR library and the different groups using library services. She speaks about embedded prejudices towards Hutus at the Tribunal, and the challenges of working with detainees, drawing attention to the importance of the presumption of innocence. Djampou reflects on travelling to Rwanda as part of her ICTR induction and stresses the importance of this experience for her work. She notes that many of those working at the Tribunal have never travelled to Rwanda.

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Part 4

- 00:00** Lisa P. Nathan: In your time here, some of the – can you reflect on some of the challenges, perhaps the surprises that you’ve experienced in working here?
- 00:16 You come here, I came here because I was looking for a job. And now I feel like it’s a vocation because you just feel that this, this process has to be done. And also the challenge is being an information delivery service and having this, having this obligation to serve all the parties equally even though it is not really achievable or the circumstances don’t a-, always allow us to serve all the parties in equal, in equality.
- 01:12 When I came in the beginning, I had a prejudice with Hutus. You know, whenever I saw a Hutu it, it meant something. And then, the challenge is to serve, you know, not, not to have prejudice. Just to, just to consider everybody to be the same. When I was enumerating groups who we serve, I omitted the prisoners, the detainees. This is also one group that we serve.
- 01:56 We’ve put a small collection at UNDF, the detention facility but they often complain that, you know, it has to be renewed and there are some who are really involved in the preparation of their case, or i-, in addition to the fact that they have a counsel so they will conduct research themselves.
- 02:21 We receive request and they always complain that, you know, they’re not being looked at or they’re not being served as they should have been. But (), as I al-, also re-, reminded earlier, we tried to do the best that we can even if it is not perfect.
- 02:43 So the challenge is to serve everybody equally. And the challenge is also not to have a prejudice because there is a very popular saying that everybody is innocent until proven guilty.
- 03:04 So there’s this prejudice that we have – or that I had – that when you are at UNDF, you are a killer, which should not be the case. I remember when I also came here, I went to UNDF because I needed some context so I went to UNDF to meet with those people. And it is with difficulty that I even greeted them. And that should not be the case, you know.
- 03:39 But I’ve learned. I’ve learned over the years to not be as, to be l-, r-, less rigid and, and also what I’ve learned is that there is not one category of killer, and there’s not one category of innocent; that everybody can kill. It can happen.
- 04:06 And one of things that shook me also is that we have some acquitted people who, while they were waiting to, to have countries that will receive them, the only place they could come to was the library.
- 04:29 And I remember when it was, the decision was made that they will be using the library, one staff of the Court Management Section who was actually in charge of, you know, catering

for them, came to the library and said, “You know, these acquitted people will be using the library. I would like you to receive them, to welcome them.” And I said, “No.”

04:54 “They, if they use the library, they will be treated as any other library user. I don’t want to give them any specific status in the library.” So I refused to receive them. So they were using the library and over the years – because this went on for years – over the years, it’s amazing. We just became used to them and we (___), we became friends.

05:21 And even when we wouldn’t see them, we inquire, “Are they sick?” You know. So you develop some sense of understanding. They are acquitted for many reasons. You know, they may be acquitted for many reasons and maybe because they’re innocent. It maybe because the Prosecutor did not really make his case, but they dis-, they are acquitted people.

05:47 So, they were there and then we, we built this relationship and, which in the end I, I knew from that relationship that I’ve come a long way, yeah.