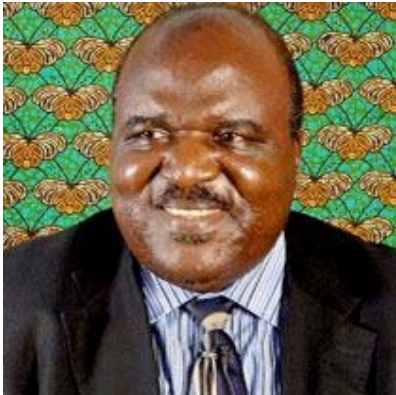


Official Transcript: Alfred Kwende (Part 5 of 6)



Role:	Acting Chief of Investigations
Country of Origin:	Cameroon
Interview Date:	28 October 2008
Location:	Kigali, Rwanda
Interviewer:	Lisa P. Nathan
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Alfred Kwende contrasts investigating small-scale crimes in domestic jurisdictions with the unique challenges of investigating crimes against humanity and acts of genocide in Rwanda. He explains the process of selecting ICTR cases and how the investigation process has evolved over time. Kwende discusses his frustrations at the lack of properly trained investigators selected by the ICTR at its inception. He also reviews the difficulties associated with capturing and arresting accused individuals and ensuring cooperation from other states.

The transcript of Part 5 begins on the following page.

Part 5

- 00:00 **Lisa P. Nathan: I'm going to ask you now to, in a way, step a little bit away from your, your job and your role here but to reflect as a human being on this experience. You came from, as you said before, a national jurisdiction where you might be investigating o-, one murder or two murders or you know, but now you have been exposed to mass atrocities.**
- 00:26 **LPN: You have been working, investigating; you know as much as anyone. I mean you are here in Kigali. You have seen evidence. You have heard so man-, so many stories. How do you feel this is ex-, experience has affected you as a human being?**
- 00:46 We've asked a, a qu-, you bring me back to a question we ask quite often – how and why did this happen? Because within the process of investigations we've come across some of the techniques and procedures used in killing, the killing with machetes. Rwanda was on an arms embargo so they didn't have sufficient we-, weapons and bullets to use, so bullets were maintained for the war.
- 01:20 And so they were trained to use local instruments to kill and they killed extensively. In fact, we go to some, to some of the memorial sites here where I've had time to go as an individual to see some of them and they explain to you what was being done. You feel very, very touched. Sometimes you say you must go further.
- 01:48 If you go to Nyamata, for instance, a church there where I was shown an indelible spot in the wall where rather than use weapons to kill children and babies, they were held in the Achilles tendon and the heads, the skulls, fractured on the wall.
- 02:07 If you go down south to Murambi, it's a big school there, you see a number of bodies, quite a number of them, they're still there. I don't know how they preserved them but they're rather mummified – flesh is still on them to this day. And you see how many of them were killed there.
- 02:31 If you listen to some cases where the killers were (___), were tired of killing and for fear that they may leave the victims to escape, if they were not maimed on the spot, and so they used machetes to cut off their Achilles tendon so they could stay immobilized for late-, they could be killed the following day.
- 02:53 Or we found people who wanted to have a hasty death rather than wait to be killed in this gruesome manner and paid for the bullets that was used to kill them. They were going to die anyway but they preferred to use money which these people could get w-, even whether they kill them or not, but they still took the money as payment and used the bullet to kill them.
- 03:20 Now, all this seen together and this I always say when they come to, they providing counsel for our witnesses, for trauma counseling, I say the investigators themselves are trauma, trauma patients because some of them have seen a lot of things. They may not immediately realize them but when they do move away from here, they may have that silent effect of eating back into them.

- 03:52 I even think that some people may actually dehumanize life from seeing so many deaths or seeing so many people. So many deaths, they no longer have that shock of meeting a corpse which is a, a general feeling of most people who are brought up in a, a decent society.
- 04:14 So as a person this has affected me a lot. I know of people who've led to certain sites, if they've seen corpses or bodies and they swear they will never eat meat in their lives, so that is an effect of its own. Otherwise, yes, but I also do think on the other hand that the experience and some of the things we've known to have been causes of what happened in Rwanda, could be communicated to other societies where they have the same seeds of discord.
- 05:04 I even think, when I think of it in hindsight, I believe that my country, Cameroon, averted a similar genocide only by circumstances. Rwanda has a community of, I will say, three distinctive ethnic groups and so, they could easily be pitched against each other.
- 05:29 In my country we have about 250. Just by number itself, they cannot be pitched among against each other but some of the things that happened here prior to the genocide, happened to my country using the state radio to incite people to harm people of other sides.
- 05:50 You have a () other ethnic group, send them away from the capital, accuse people and even when a few upheavals come up, you actually find people being bodi-, bodily affected or maimed or killed and so on but not to the extent of here. Maybe one or two people (), but you see the germs because I do remember following the radio back home.
- 06:18 So these are things which politicians can avoid and I think humanity itself should avoid in fragile societies because it may not necessarily happen in the west, though if you look at the Nazi, we'd say it happened if you have another Hitler to come up somewhere.
- 06:37 But in fragile communities like the Third World, especially Africa, where politics i-, is, is not a disciplined profession or a disciplined activity, people don't seek support through ideas; they seek support through their ethnic alliances.
- 07:03 Now, you'd always have that. You may always have that, because once in power and since your, your power base is your ethnic group, you may sometimes, you know, be victim of some of the things that are said and done around you.
- 07:20 These are some of the things I think may affect others and I still think that in most African countries you have that, that feeling, that urge. You don't have national personnels and authorities who think beyond their ethnic, ethnic original alliances, so. But with time if people are sufficiently educated, we may overcome that.
- 07:47 LPN: Yeah, I hope you are right.**

