



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Ololade Benson (Full Interview)



Role:	Translator
Country of Origin:	Nigeria
Interview Date:	23 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Donald J Horowitz Robert Utter
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Ololade Benson speaks about her role as a translator and the challenges of communicating sensitive material such as witness statements concerning rapes and killings. She discusses her personal engagement with an international non-profit organization that she founded in 1998 to help single mothers, widows and children in Rwanda. She emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability for charitable organizations operating in post-conflict settings. Benson draws attention to the targeting and suffering of women in Rwanda during and after the genocide.

The transcript of the interview begins on the following page.

Part 1

- 00:00** Donald J Horowitz: Good morning. My, my name is Judge Donald Horowitz. I'm from Seattle, Washington in the United States and I'm interviewing you today for the ICTR Information Heritage Project and you're aware of that. Are you not?
- 00:16 Yes, yes I am.
- 00:18** DJH: Okay, and would you give us please your name, the country you're, you're originally from and your job title?
- 00:25 Yeah. My name is Ololade Benson, originally from Nigeria. Now I live in the UK and I'm an English translator with the ICTR.
- 00:35** DJH: And you translate what languages to what languages?
- 00:38 From French into English.
- 00:40** DJH: Okay, and when you say you live in the UK, you mean Great Britain?
- 00:44 Yes, Great Britain, yeah.
- 00:46** DJH: And how long have you worked for the ICTR?
- 00:51 I joined the ICTR in September 1996.
- 00:54** DJH: Okay, and before that, when you – we've talked before, we've had a brief conversation. You, when you were I gather in Nigeria or, or in your earlier experience, you had had some concerns over problems with, that children have.
- 01:14 Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 01:14** DJH: Can you tell us a little bit about that?
- 01:16 It just breaks my heart to see children running around half naked, hungry without shoes and . . .
- 01:23** DJH: Whe-, where was, where did it first sort of gr-, grab you . . .
- 01:26 Actually, it first struck me in Addis Ababa.
- 01:28** DJH: Okay, in Ethiopia.
- 01:29 Yeah, because . . . In Ethiopia, yeah. It's a cold country and I just could not understand how children would roam about the streets without shoes, without the proper clothing, you know, for the, for the weather. And sometimes they run after you, pull at you, my, my trousers or something asking me for money, and . . .

- 01:48 DJH: So let me go back and let's put a context to that, okay? You grew up in Nigeria.**
- 01:52 I grew up in Nigeria.
- 01:54 DJH: And when did you l-, – did you have your education in Nigeria?**
- 01:58 Primary, secondary, yes. Then I spent four years in Togo, then I did a post-graduation in translation in Belgium.
- 02:05 DJH: Okay, and in Togo is that where you went to up-, upper . . .**
- 02:08 First degree, four years.
- 02:10 DJH: Yeah, and what was your degree in?**
- 02:11 In French, first degree in French then I . . .
- 02:13 DJH: Is French your native language?**
- 02:15 No, English. We speak in Nigeria.
- 02:16 DJH: English is. Bec-, bec-, in, because of Nigeria.**
- 02:19 Yeah.
- 02:20 DJH: And where, where in Nigeria did you . . .**
- 02:21 Lagos, I am a Lagos citizen.
- 02:23 DJH: In Lagos. Okay, and then Togo and then . . .**
- 02:28 Then I went to Belgium, for a post-graduate in translation and interpretation.
- 02:32 DJH: What led you to be interested in that?**
- 02:35 In French or . . .
- 02:36 DJH: In, in translation.**
- 02:37 In translation. I think my father had a friend who had a hotel in Togo at that time so when I finished my O levels they were looking for something for me to do and he said, "Okay, why don't we go visit my friend in Togo?" And he knew the dean at the faculty of European languages and they got talking and that was how I was enrolled for the course.
- 02:58 DJH: Mm-hmm.**
- 02:59 And I haven't looked back since then. I'm very happy with what I'm doing, yeah.

- 03:02 DJH: That's wonderful.**
- 03:03 Yeah.
- 03:04 DJH: More people should have that, as part of their (___) . . .**
- 03:05 Yeah, I'm v-, I'm really happy because, I mean, the exposure, you know. You meet a lot of people and all that from different parts of the world.
- 03:12 DJH: What year did you get your degree in language trans . . . ?**
- 03:16 '77.
- 03:17 DJH: S-, (___) . . .**
- 03:18 No, se-, s-, sorry. '77 I finished my O level. '81.
- 03:22 DJH: Okay.**
- 03:23 Then '83 I, I finished my post-graduate in translation, yeah.
- 03:26 DJH: And from '83 on why don't you give us, tell us, what was, w- . . .**
- 03:30 I, I worked briefly for the government of Nigeria while trying to find my feet in, you know, in the translation fie-, in the field of translation, because it's very difficult when you come in. Everybody considers you a rookie. You don't have experience. They don't want to give you a chance.
- 03:44 Then I did a few jobs for ECOWAS. ECOWAS . . .
- 03:47 DJH: For what?**
- 03:47 . . . Economic Committee of West African States.
- 03:49 DJH: Okay.**
- 03:49 The sub-regional organization for West African countries. And they had an office in Lomé. And since I had lived in Lomé for four years I found myself shuttling between Lagos and Lomé, and . . .
- 04:00 DJH: Tell me where Lomé is.**
- 04:01 Togo, Togo.
- 04:01 DJH: Okay.**
- 04:02 That's where I did my first degree.

- 04:03 DJH: Right.**
- 04:03 Which is like four, five hours away from Lagos, you know. And then somebody mentioned my name to the guy who recruits at the OAU, Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa and that's how I started doing OAU meetings as well.
- 04:18 DJH: And that's when you went to Ethiopia.**
- 04:19 That's when I went to Ethiopia.
- 04:20 DJH: And tell me what year you, you came to Ethiopia.**
- 04:23 Ethiopia – between '90 and '96, sometimes two to three times a year.
- 04:27 DJH: Okay, and it was there that you, () first ki-, the kids, the kids first came to your attention.**
- 04:29 First, yeah, yeah, yeah, came to me, yeah, yeah.
- 04:32 DJH: And what was your job specifically at, in Ethiopia?**
- 04:37 Translation, English translator.
- 04:39 DJH: Now, is there a difference between translation and interpretation?**
- 04:41 There is, there is.
- 04:42 DJH: Tell us the difference.**
- 04:43 Translator it's more – we, we write. We translate documents. Interpreters interpret people who are talking, speeches. Yeah, so.
- 04:50 DJH: Okay. Have you in, in the course of your career done both?**
- 04:53 I have, but I'm not very comfortable with interpretation, yeah.
- 04:57 DJH: Okay, we'll get to that in, in a bit. Okay, so you were in Ethiopia from . . .**
- 05:02 1990 to 1996, on and off.
- 05:04 DJH: Six years.**
- 05:05 Yeah, six years because I was a freelance translator.
- 05:07 DJH: Ah, okay.**
- 05:08 Yeah, freelance.

- 05:08 DJH: You weren't employed by . . .**
- 05:09 No, no. I wasn't employed. I was freelance.
- 05:10 DJH: But you . . . Right.**
- 05:12 Any time they needed someone to relieve somebody who'd gone on leave or they had a big meeting and they needed more hands, then they'll, they had a list from which they just recruited freelance. They'll send you a ticket and . . .
- 05:24 DJH: Okay, and during that period of time did you do almost exclusively translation?**
- 05:28 Translation for the OAU, only translation.
- 05:30 DJH: Only translation.**
- 05:31 Only translation.
- 05:32 DJH: All right, and then in 1996 . . .**
- 05:34 I joined the ICTR, September '96.
- 05:37 DJH: Let me go back two years.**
- 05:39 Yeah.
- 05:40 DJH: April 1994.**
- 05:42 Yeah, okay.
- 05:43 DJH: Okay. Do you remember where you were?**
- 05:45 I was in the UK then. I had moved to the UK.
- 05:47 DJH: You were in the United Kingdom.**
- 05:48 Yeah, in London, yeah.
- 05:50 DJH: What would you, what were you doing there?**
- 05:51 I had just, I had a – there was an OAU meeting in Tunis, a summit, a summit and from there I moved on to the UK. I just started I think one, two hundred dollars for the ticket the OAU had bought for me and I moved to the UK. And there were problems in Nigeria; election problems, rioting and all that, so my brother just decided to send my two, I have two boys, two sons; so he sends my sons to me.
- 06:14 And all the schools were closed and all that and he said, "Why don't you register your kids in school?" And that is how I moved to the UK. Yeah.

- 06:21 DJH: Okay. And in, so in April 1994, you were in the UK.**
- 06:24 I was in, I was in the UK.
- 06:25 DJH: And di-, is, did you hear about what happened in Rwanda?**
- 06:27 I did and I saw loads of images on the TV.
- 06:31 DJH: Mm-hmm. Had you had any previous connection with Rwanda or the (), or the states around Rwanda?**
- 06:36 Not really, but an interesting thing happened. While I was trying to get a job in the UK, I started doing voluntary work. I was working with Concern Worldwide; they have an office in Rwanda and with Africa Rights, (), and they also had an office in Rwanda. And I was doing some translation and just odd jobs, bits and pieces around the office.
- 06:57 And the more I read materials, the more interested I was in, not just Rwanda as such, but in doing voluntary work, you know. And then, and that really aroused the passion that I had to do that kind of thing more in me.
- 07:09 DJH: Okay.**
- 07:09 Yeah.

Part 2

- 00:00 DJH: So you became even more interested in doing some volunteer work over that period of time and you became interested particularly, I gather, in this area that you'd now been reading about, or the, the events that you'd been becoming familiar with.**
- 00:14 Yes.
- 00:16 DJH: And what did you do at that time about it? Now we're talking '94, '95. You were in UK at that time.**
- 00:23 Yeah, I just started reading and started gathering statistics, you know – how many children go hungry, go to bed on an empty stomach and things like that. I kept myself busy doing that when I wasn't doing voluntary work.
- 00:37 DJH: Okay.**
- 00:38 And the figures were staggering.
- 00:40 DJH: I'm sorry.**
- 00:40 I said the figures were staggering, you know.

- 00:44 DJH: Was it that that led you to think about going to work for the ICTR?**
- 00:50 That was another accident because the, the last meeting I had, the last OAU meeting I had was in February '96 and I decided to stay on to see if I could get something with the Economic Commission for Africa, which is another big UN office in Addis Ababa. And while talking to an interpreter she asked me, "So what are you doing?" I said, "Not much."
- 01:12 "From time to time I get to interpret. In the UK sometimes I go, I mean the lawyers take me. I do prison interpretation and court interpretation." And said, "That sounds interesting. Have you heard about the ICTR?" And I said, "No." She said, "(), do you know that there's a tribunal in Rwanda and since you have some experience with courts and prison interpretation you sound like a good candidate for them."
- 01:32 So she told me to go to the 6th floor at the ECA to get a personal history form. We filled out the form together. I had it faxed to New York. That was in February. Then I got an offer in June to join the ICTR.
- 01:45 DJH: And that was 1996.**
- 01:47 That was '96, yeah.
- 01:47 DJH: Okay. And di-, how, when did you actually physically come to the ICTR?**
- 01:55 9th of September 1996.
- 01:57 DJH: Where did you go?**
- 01:58 To Kigali. I lived in Kigali for four and a half years.
- 02:01 DJH: Okay, and in Kigali what were your duties?**
- 02:06 English translator. I did, at the very beginning I did some interpretation but I wasn't very comfortable. I, I don't like dishonesty in anything I do. I wasn't comfortable with it so I just stuck to translation.
- 02:16 DJH: What – let's talk about it just for a moment.**
- 02:19 Yeah.
- 02:19 DJH: What were you translat-, translating? What kind of proceedings?**
- 02:23 Mostly in Kigali, since we don't have the courts and all that, you do a lot of witness statements. That's where all the investigation goes on. So we have the Kinyarwanda interpreters who go into the field to look for witnesses and then they come back with the witness statements, which we now translate because they have to – the, the witness statements have to appear in both English and French.

- 02:42 So I did a lot of witness statements in, in Kigali.
- 02:45 DJH: And that was translating.**
- 02:46 Translation, yeah.
- 02:46 DJH: Okay. You also said you did a bit of interpret-, interpreting.**
- 02:49 (____), yeah.
- 02:50 DJH: What, in what setting did you do that?**
- 02:52 With the lawyers. Sometimes they would have to talk about an indictment or they had meetings, you know.
- 02:57 DJH: So you did not do interpreting of wit-, of the witnesses themselves being interviewed.**
- 03:02 No, no because they don't speak French, they don't speak English. So we have Kinyarwanda interpreters who go out to the field with the investigators.
- 03:09 DJH: Now during your time in Kigali which was substantial time for over four years . . .**
- 03:16 Four and a half.
- 03:19 DJH: Why don't you give us at least for, for a moment a summary of what your evolution was and what your observations were and what that meant to you?**
- 03:30 Okay, it was a wonderful opportunity to me. For me, sorry, it was a wonderful opportunity for me to now practicalize everything that I had visual-, had in my head, you know, all the figures. Everything I saw on TV became real. It's not the same thing when you read or you watch on TV. When you get there, it's a different ball game.
- 03:51 You have a maid in the kitchen who tells you, "I hid in the cupboard when this thing was going on." I mean, you just see that there's, there, there are needs everywhere to be met. You know, you go to church and you see people who, who haven't had a meal for God knows how many days. You go to the market – I mean you just see everywhere that people are suffering and that was a wonderful opportunity to me, for me to help.
- 04:13 And that was when I now started – and since I wanted to do things in an organized manner I just approached churches and I'd, and I'll speak to pastors and I'll say, "Give me the five, give me five widows in your church, the widows who are really in need." Then I'll go to another church.
- 04:28 I was working through church pastors because I didn't want to approach people. People who will tell you that they are widows and then eventually you find out that they are not,

so I just said to myself I don't think a church pastor or head of a church would lie to me. So that was how I started in Rwanda.

04:42 DJH: You started your own . . .

04:43 Yeah.

04:43 DJH: This wasn't an official thing, this was your thing.

04:45 No, no, yeah, just, just my thing, yeah, yeah.

04:48 DJH: Okay, and that was in – what year did you start?

04:52 Initially I started – there wasn't a structured as such, you know. I would help from my pocket. I would talk to friends and then I decided to – I like doing things properly. And around 1998 I started, yeah.

05:05 DJH: And your, the name of the organization . . .

05:09 It's called Sharing Love, Sharing Love, yeah.

05:10 DJH: Okay. Now you, you just talked over me and I probably have been guilty of talking over you, so. So, let me start again. The name of the organization that you began, you founded was . . .

05:21 Yeah, Sharing Love, yeah.

05:24 DJH: Okay. And you, the stru-, you did it structurally, if you will, in 1998.

05:30 Yeah, around '98, yeah.

05:31 DJH: And you did it unofficially from your pocket and maybe some friends.

05:34 Yeah, yeah, friends, yeah.

05:36 DJH: For a few years before that.

05:37 Yeah, yeah, because people were really interested in helping.

05:44 DJH: And what, who were the focus of your, of this effort on your part personally first and then as an organization second?

05:54 Single mothers and widows.

05:57 DJH: And were there children involved as well?

05:59 Yeah, when you take the mothers definitely you take the, you take care of the kids, yeah.

- 06:05 **DJH: Single mothers and widows and their children.**
- 06:06 And widows, yeah, yeah.
- 06:08 **DJH: Okay. And at the same time you were doing translation in Rwanda.**
- 06:11 Yeah, full time, yeah.
- 06:14 **DJH: And I'm going to come back to the organization and, and to the charitable work in, in a few minutes, but I want to deal with the translation part for a while as well.**
- 06:26 Okay.

Part 3

- 00:01 **DJH: In the translation that you were doing, I take it, you mentioned witness statements. What other kinds of documents were . . .**
- 00:11 Legal documents, you know, motions, indictments every once in a while, yeah, but mostly witness statements.
- 00:19 **DJH: And witness statements were people who had observed very difficult acts, if I can say it that way.**
- 00:23 Yeah, yeah, yes.
- 00:30 **DJH: You're translating, you're taking it from one language to another language. Did it, over time, did that, did doing that with that kind of material have an effect on you personally?**
- 00:41 It, yeah, at the very beginning it was very difficult. Sometimes you just, I just had to stop. Sometimes you'd even cry. (____), when a woman is describing how she was raped, you know, it was a very, very horrifying stories, yeah.
- 00:56 **DJH: And over time, tell us how, how that . . .**
- 00:58 Over time, I think it just became a rou-, routine. I tried to like detach myself from, from what I was doing.
- 01:06 **DJH: Did you, for your own coping, if you will, did you talk with friends? Did you . . .**
- 01:13 Yeah.
- 01:13 **DJH: . . . see a counselor? Did you do any of . . .**
- 01:15 No, we just used to talk with each other, just amongst each other as colleagues, that was . . .

- 01:20 DJH: So other translators were having similar problems if you will.**
- 01:22 Yeah, yeah similar problems, yeah.
- 01:25 DJH: And you try to help each other.**
- 01:27 Each other, yeah.
- 01:28 DJH: Okay. Was there a capability at that time in Kigali, did the ICTR provide some sort of counseling opportunities?**
- 01:37 They didn't until, I was transferred here, about three years ago. They did a post-traumatic stress seminar for everyone but for a long time we complained and (___) nobody really saw the need to do that, but eventually it came about three years ago.
- 01:53 DJH: And it was here in Arusha?**
- 01:54 It was here in Arusha, Impala Hotel.
- 01:56 DJH: At the which?**
- 01:57 Impala Hotel.
- 01:58 DJH: Okay, and was that an all-day seminar, half day?**
- 02:03 (___), we're there for about three days, three full days. They checked us all into the hotel. They got a psychia-, psychiatrist from Kiga-, Nairobi. Two doctors, yeah.
- 02:13 DJH: And when you say we all did, who is we all?**
- 02:17 I think they went from section to section, yeah, section to section and any, yeah.
- 02:20 DJH: S-, so you're the translators' section of, of the language department, I'll call it, was in that and were other sections of the language department in that?**
- 02:33 Yeah, yeah.
- 02:34 DJH: And were there other departments as well? I don't know what other departments you, I suppose various people in other parts of administration or . . .**
- 02:44 Yes.
- 02:44 DJH: . . . people, in, what – maybe you should tell me.**
- 02:46 Yeah, from department – they went from department to department and I know, I, I think WVSS has the witness unit. They've had this seminar about – it's run about two or three times for them, yeah, because of the kind of work they do.

- 02:58 DJH: The witness unit works with witnesses and witness protection.**
- 03:00 Yeah, they work with wi-, yeah, witness protection, yeah, so.
- 03:02 DJH: Okay, all right. Ha-, di-, did – you just had it that once, or your department?**
- 03:06 Just once, yeah, (___) the translators once yes.
- 03:08 DJH: Yes. And how, how, how was it . . .**
- 03:11 It was, it, it, I, it was very good. I liked it because we were able to, they, they broke us up into groups and they made us even share our own personal griefs. And it was really moving. It got people closer to each other. You know, you just see people and you don't know what kind of burdens they're carrying. And it was, I, I, I liked it. I found it very fruitful and very rewarding. But it just came a little bit too late. Other than that, it was fine.
- 03:34 DJH: Would it have been helpful to have had a follow up at some point?**
- 03:37 I think so, yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 03:38 DJH: Okay, and has it had some lasting effects do you think, for you?**
- 03:47 I think so. I think so. It helped. They taught us on things of how t-, how to cope with grief and stuff like that, how to deal with – how to handle stress, exercises and things like that, yeah.
- 03:58 DJH: Okay. So we're, we're going to go back to Kigali for a while, for a few minutes. And in, in Kigali you were there that period of time, did y-, I take it you also have observed not just people. You observed people, you observed the sites where things happened and so forth and (___) . . .**
- 04:18 For a long time I tried to avoid that but then I had my pastor visit from the UK and he said he needed to feel what the people felt, so we had to go to the genocide site at the Nyamata and I had to take him. So that was my first really contact with the genocide site. Other than that, I was, I will just sit in my office and translate, yeah.
- 04:43 DJH: All right, and then what was it that led you to leave Kigali and come to Arusha?**
- 04:49 They, they needed more translators in Arusha so they transferred a whole bunch of people and I was one of the people translate-, transferred to Arusha.
- 04:59 DJH: Okay, and now you've been in Arusha since . . .**
- 05:05 2001.
- 05:06 DJH: About seven years.**

05:07 Yeah, seven years.

05:08 DJH: You're, you're quite a veteran of this organization.

05:11 Yeah.

05:14 DJH: Why don't you give us some general observations about your time here?

05:18 In Arusha?

05:19 DJH: Yes.

05:20 When I first got here, I really, I was a bit confused. First of all, I, I really didn't know in what direction to go. I mean, there were no gen-, there were no genocide widows here so for about a year or two I didn't do anything. I can't really remember how I – okay then there was a lady in the church I used to attend. I think I had mentioned at some point that I do charity work, and she kept inviting me to that.

05:45 She had some, she had a small office, she was helping people on H – people living AIDS. And I had another friend come from the UK who also – she's the one who's doing my website for me. She decided to come and visit me and I just sat in my room and I said, "Where am I going to take her?" Because she loves charity work as well.

06:02 Then I remembered this lady from the church and I now set up an appointment and we went there and that is this HIV AIDS thing started. I went there. I saw what she was doing and I was happy with it. And now I think that was in 2004 December, and that was the f-, that's how the food, food distribution program started.

06:20 DJH: Okay.

Part 4

00:02 DJH: I want to talk about the job again for a minute.

00:04 Okay.

00:06 DJH: The job itself, has it been pretty consistently the same here?

00:10 Yeah.

00:10 DJH: You're translating documents.

00:12 Yeah.

00:13 DJH: And I take it you're translating court documents.

00:15 Yeah, here in Ar-, in Arusha, yeah.

- 00:17 DJH: Is that mostly court documents?**
- 00:18 Mostly.
- 00:19 DJH: Yeah. I take it that you would also however sometimes again do witness statements . . .**
- 00:24 Yes, yeah.
- 00:25 DJH: . . . and things of that sort. And I think you've described to a certain extent the effect that that has on you and the – that that finally those people began to recognize the effects on the staff, started to do something about it.**
- 00:40 Yeah.
- 00:43 DJH: In terms of the job and, and why don't you bring me up to date? What are you doing now? Is it pretty much the same as you have been doing and . . . ?**
- 00:53 You mean translation?
- 00:54 DJH: Yes.**
- 00:55 There is more legal stuff here, a lot of legal stuff; judgments, appeal judgments, appeal documents, motions. Once in a while you get the witness statements or so but it's more legal stuff here.
- 01:07 It's a lot more challenging than it was in Kigali. Kigali, at some point you could just close your eyes, because it's like, "when I heard the Interahamwe come in I went and hid in the cupboard," stuff like that. Where here it's, here it's here. It's, it's the defense submits this and stuff. It's, it's different.
- 01:22 DJH: Are you enjoying it?**
- 01:23 I'm enjoying it, yeah. I like, I like challenges, you know. I don't like, I don't like routine. I like, I like people to throw challenges at me, yeah.
- 01:33 DJH: And are you planning to stay here until whenever it ends? Or what, what are your, what are your thoughts?**
- 01:42 I'm a bit confused about that. If I get something that would make me work with women and children I would not even think about it twice. If somebody offers me a job right now, gender – because I've been doing, I've done about 14 online courses just on gender, conflict prevention, HIV AIDS, and things like that, because that is really where my passion is. So eventually I would like to go in that direction.

- 02:06** DJH: Well that's – and that's a good transition to beginning to question you on the other . . .
- 02:11 Ah, okay.
- 02:12** DJH: . . . on the, on the other pattern of this, of this interview. You talked about going back while in, in Rwanda itself, you, unof-, started unofficially as an individual with some friends to assist single mothers or widowed mothers and their children, or women whether they were childless or not.
- 02:34** DJH: Some of them may have had children and perhaps were now childless. I as-, assume some of them . . .
- 02:39 Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 02:40** DJH: Okay. And di-, were, were there some particular kinds of services or products that you wanted initially when you were sort of still hadn't quite formed the organization that you were focused on, what, the kinds of services that (___) . . .
- 02:58 Initially, I think I used to help in four areas, if I'm not mistaken – I'll pay rent, school fees, I'll set up a business for you, small scale business or if you are over 60, I just give you a stipend, you know, something, very little money, just for you to buy groceries, yeah.
- 03:14** DJH: Okay. I missed the first one you said. A parent?
- 03:16 Rent, rent, rent, rent.
- 03:17** DJH: Oh rent, rent. Okay.
- 03:18 Yeah, house rent.
- 03:19** DJH: House rent.
- 03:19 And I'll sit – I'll meet them. I'll interview them and I'll say I can only help in one area. You decide in what area you need help the most. And if it is school fees it's one child per family and I tell them, "You go home, think about it. People love your children, you give it to, give me, you give me that child and I'll educate that child for you."
- 03:40** DJH: So you developed a structure right at, right from the beginning.
- 03:42 Yeah.
- 03:43** DJH: I take it because you knew you had limited resources.
- 03:46 Yeah, exactly yeah.

- 03:49 DJH: All right.**
- 03:50 And then I also – sorry, I also wanted to be clear from the very beginning, you know, because you are dealing with people who have all kinds of needs and, you know, when they meet you the first time, they want you to do everything for them and I’m usually very, very clear.
- 04:01 “These are the areas in which I operate, these are the things I can do for you. I don’t, my, my resources are limited and I can only help you in one area.” That had to be clear from the very beginning. () . . .
- 04:13 DJH: And then as you began to formulate an organization, that was like ’98 I think you said. ’96-, ’98 . . .**
- 04:21 Yeah, ’98, ’98 yeah.
- 04:22 DJH: Yeah, ’98, okay. Did – what changed, if anything, about your approach in what you were focusing on?**
- 04:31 I began to keep records of everything I did. I opened a file for each of my patients and yeah. Actually, to tell you the truth, I think I was, kind of, to some extent, organized right from the very beginning. I’m a very organized person. I’m very, very good at administrat-, at organization. I don’t like doing things in a haphazard way.
- 04:52 DJH: Well then, why did you start an organization versus continuing to do it by yourself? Was there some reason you did that?**
- 04:58 I wanted to do things properly. I wanted to have it registered. I wanted to open a bank. I wanted to have a constitution, but when I tried to do that in the UK they told me you go and start first, and then you come back with evidence to show that you’re doing something, you know, yeah.
- 05:13 DJH: Tell us about forming the organization and what you did then while you were still in, in Rwanda.**
- 05:18 I decided, I decided that to give the organization a name – the first thing that came to my mind was sharing. I said well what I’m doing is just sharing the little resources I have, and eventually I decided to add the word “love” to it, and so that’s the, the organization was now given the name Sharing Love, and then I re-, I approached colleagues and people were very, very happy about what I was doing.
- 05:42 And I got – initially I used to do a-, “adopt a child” kind of thing. “Adopt a child” meant that you pay school fees for a child or when you adopt a mother, you pay rent. So I’ll talk to

people and I'll tell you these are – I'll give a list of all my prospective beneficiaries and then you select.

06:00 If you wanted to pay rent or if you wanted to pay school fees or – I don't impose anything on anyone. And, and I realized that that was a good approach, because somebody would look at the list and say, "I have a daughter called (____). I'll take this girl and educate her."

06:14 And somebody would tell me, you know, "I have an auntie who had problems, accommodation problem and I know what it is when you cannot pay your rent. She was eventually evicted." So people identified with various needs and, on the basis of that, selected people they wanted to help, which was very good for me. And, and because of that as well there was continuity.

06:35 DJH: Okay, and how did you – did others join your organization?

06:40 No, not really. People just gave me money. Yeah.

06:42 DJH: Okay. How did you raise money at that point?

06:46 I just approached people, and people were living in Rwanda and they knew what was going on in Rwanda, you know. And that was just it. And also not trying to blow my own trumpet or anything, people have a lot of confidence and trust in me, so getting money from people was not a problem.

07:05 DJH: Okay, and did there come a time when some people . . .

07:10 Yeah.

07:11 DJH: . . . became more interested and began to provide some ongoing help?

07:16 Yeah, yeah. Because sometimes like I said it's a child per family. I have people who will decide to pay for two, three children in a family and I have people who would tell me – like I had a colleague who was being transferred here and he said, you know, "I cannot continue this. Then why don't you find out from the woman what she wants to do?"

07:33 And I sat with the lady and she said, "Okay, just buy me a cow." You know in Rwanda, for them the cow, cows are a very, very big thing. She said, "Buy me a female cow." I can't remember if it was a female or male cow. Her neighbor had (____). I said, "They will come together and will share whatever comes out of it. I'll sell the milk and I'll slaughter the cow once in a while."

07:53 And we did that for her, you know. So I mean because I, I also, I, I also did not want this dependency thing to continue and that's why I only give people who were over 60 money. The rest of them, I try to teach them how to fish, yeah.

- 08:09 DJH: Go milk a cow, okay. Do you, do you follow up to see . . . okay.**
- 08:15 I do. I have a re-, a report from – I have a community worker in Kigali. I mentioned it in one of my newsletters. Somebody told me to hire someone and they would pay and she’s still there. Her name is Sharon.
- 08:25 DJH: Hire someone at the . . .**
- 08:27 A community worker who would help me, so she used to go around because I had a full time job as well. So she would go around and she would come and do it. And she still sends me reports, you know.
- 08:37 DJH: So that people you’ve helped, she follows up on (_____) . . .**
- 08:40 She follows up, yeah and then I also have orphans where – I worked with commercial sex workers who, who, I had one or two of them who died and left me orphans. I even have their photographs on the wall in my office and I still, I still buy them food. I mean, seven years down the line I’m still looking after those kids; three of them.
- 09:00 So Sharon takes care of that. At the end of every month she buys them foodstuff. She takes it to them. Compassion has taken one of them. I mean educat-, Compassion is educating one of them.
- 09:11 DJH: Comp- . . .**
- 09:12 Compassion, Compassion . . .
- 09:13 DJH: Yes, I know the word.**
- 09:14 . . . the NGO, yeah Compassion. (_____), they have an office in Kigali, so.
- 09:18 DJH: Oh, that’s the name of the organization?**
- 09:18 The na-, organization, yeah, Compassion. Yeah.
- 09:20 DJH: Ah okay, I understand now, okay.**

Part 5

- 00:00 DJH: And you said at a certain point you added some services or f-, or focus to your organization. For example, the AIDS situation . . .**
- 00:12 Yeah, yeah, yeah, in Kiga-, in Arusha.
- 00:14 DJH: Okay.**

00:14 That's the only thing I do in Arusha. But right now, sometime this year I started trying to help them set up some small-scale businesses.

00:22 DJH: In Arusha.

00:23 In Arusha because I told them the tribunal is leaving, closing and I'm leaving. You know, I said I'll do this for a while but then I need to wean them off what I'm doing. They're all, they're all on ARVs, and with the food they're kind of like strong and some of them can actually earn a living.

00:39 And I've been trying to do that, and last week Friday I went to see, I went to visit three of them. Friday I visited one, Saturday I visited two of them . . .

00:46 DJH: Two of them . . .

00:46 . . . just to find out.

00:47 DJH: Who, now who are them?

00:48 Two of the patients, two of the patients; my H-, the HIV patients.

00:51 DJH: HIV patients here.

00:52 Yeah, yeah, to find out what they are doing with the money I had given them and a follow up kind of.

00:57 DJH: How did you become familiar with that? With the HIV?

01:01 I had spoken about that a bit. When my friend came from the UK and I, and I put her in – we went to visit some lady who used to be in my church and that's what she does.

01:11 DJH: Okay.

01:11 But now I don't work with her anymore because I found out that she wasn't totally honest, so I just walked across the road here. There's a hospital here and I spoke to one of the nurses. I spoke, I had a small meeting, a short meeting with a doctor and a nurse, and I told them to just give me 30, 30 patients.

01:27 DJH: 3-0.

01:28 3-0, yeah, and she came up with a list and I've been doing that since January 2006 I think.

01:37 DJH: And sp-, specifically what do you do with the pa-, with the patients?

01:40 I just give them food; beans, sugar, rice, yeah.

01:46 DJH: And you've had some ongoing financial support.

- 01:50 Yeah.
- 01:52 DJH: Does, does it still come from colleagues or do you do events or how d-, how do you get . . .**
- 01:57 It comes . . .
- 01:58 DJH: . . . how do you pick up funding?**
- 02:01 Mostly from colleagues, mostly from . . .
- 02:02 DJH: Okay, here at the ICTR.**
- 02:04 At, here at the ICTR.
- 02:05 DJH: They know about you (_____) . . .**
- 02:06 And then, yeah, the newsletter, because I do a monthly newsletter and some people read the newsletter and I'm sitting in my office and somebody just comes and give me a hundred dollars, you know.
- 02:16 DJH: U.S. dollars.**
- 02:17 Yes, U.S. dollars yeah.
- 02:19 DJH: Okay. And you mentioned to me in our discussion the other day a pastor somewhere who . . .**
- 02:24 Yeah, he, he supports the, the, the program in Rwanda. Pastor Mike.
- 02:28 DJH: Tell us about him or what he does.**
- 02:30 He has a church in Geneva and they had a concert and they raised some money and they decided to give it to widows in Africa. And prior to that there's a lady who works with the International Court of Justice in Geneva. She had come to Rwanda and somebody had mentioned her to me.
- 02:49 I didn't even know, another colleague, (___), "Oh, this is, Lola does, she works with genocide widows and all that," and I think she just stored her, stored that something, somewhere in her head, so when this – they had the concert and they were looking for who to give the money to. The pastor bought a ticket and came to Rwanda just to meet me. And he met me; we talked and he saw what I was doing. I was able to show him I'm very, very organized like I said, all my files and all that.
- 03:16 And when he was leaving he left me \$3,000, and, and I, I think that I, I spent that over a period of six to eight months. And then I introduced him to another group. I also, I also

work with groups. If you look at the, the second news-, the newsletter in Rwanda, I go out and I talk to all those in genocide women who have come together to form groups and organizations.

03:37 So I took him to one of the groups, so he said I should give 1,500 to the group through, through the pastor, and keep 1,500 for my, for my group. And then another, he gave some money also to some street children and up till today he still supports me.

03:52 DJH: Sends you some money for (_____) . . .

03:54 Yeah, he still sends me, he still sends me money.

03:55 DJH: From the UK . . . ?

03:56 He does it – no he’s in Geneva, he’s based . . .

03:57 DJH: Oh from Geneva, I’m sorry.

03:58 He sends me quarterly because of the bank charges and all that, yeah. And then I now send it to Sharon in Kigali. She, she distributes and she does the report for me.

04:07 DJH: ‘kay, so Sharon is kind of your operational person in Kigali.

04:10 Yeah, yeah in Kigali. I’m, I’m really lucky she’s very honest.

04:14 DJH: Okay. So currently what you’re doing now is you’re, you’re sort of operating this AIDS assistance operation here in Arusha.

04:23 In Arusha.

04:24 DJH: And then you are overseeing Sharon’s work in, in Rwanda, in Kigali mostly.

04:27 In, yeah, in Rwanda, in Rwanda, yeah, in Kigali, yeah, yeah.

04:31 DJH: Are there some place, sometimes you help people from other places?

04:34 From other places, yeah.

04:35 DJH: In Rwanda.

04:36 Outside Rwand-, out-, yeah, outside Kigali, yeah.

04:40 DJH: And that’s ongoing now.

04:43 It is ongoing, yeah.

04:43 DJH: And you (_), you hope to, it will continue to be ongoing. Yeah.

- 04:46 Yeah, I, I love Rwanda. It's part of my – if I were to write an autobiography, Rwanda will feature copiously.
- 04:56 DJH: And I gather that if you could you would like to turn that activity into the major part of your, your life.**
- 05:07 Yeah, yeah, yes, yes. That's my dream.
- 05:11 DJH: Okay. And I, I, maybe this is hard for you. I don't know, but you know, I, I'd like to just ask you to express to yourself, for, for the people who are going to be looking at this in 25 or 50 years, a couple of things. Number one, how do you feel about what you're doing?**
- 05:37 It's a, I have a serious sense of fulfillment. I'm very, very happy because you know, you – like I have volunteers here who come to the house to bag and bottle what I distribute. One of them used to be just a (____) in the street, he used to be a street, a street boy and he's so brilliant, you know. At the end of the term, w-, w-, when my friend came from the UK, she decided to sponsor him to pay his school fees.
- 06:02 That's in one of my news-, newsletters as well. And the boy is so brilliant. I mean, just giving a child an opportunity to get an education is just so fulfilling for me. Maybe he's not second in class, then he's third. That boy will probably have turned into maybe an armed robber or appearing before your court, who knows. But today he's so focused. He's very happy. His parents are happy.
- 06:23 Giving somebody a chance in life, and then even the people I'm feeding here as well. I see the difference, because I have, I have children under ten, who are also positive, and from the time I started giving them food and now I can really see a difference. And I al-, also have photographs of that. You know there was a girl who came with scabies and all this all over her body.
- 06:43 But when she comes now, I'm really happy to see her. We hug. We play. We chat. There's a big difference and that really makes me happy. It's not much, but I mean, you know, just the little bit makes a big difference in somebody's life and I'm happy that I'm able to do that.
- 06:58 DJH: Can you tell us, what, what is your annual budget like now? How much do you raise?**
- 07:05 Last year, I think I raised about 3,000.
- 07:08 DJH: 3,000 . . .**
- 07:08 Dollars.

- 07:10 DJH: U.S. dollars.**
- 07:10 U.S. dollars, yeah.
- 07:11 DJH: And you've done that with these dollars.**
- 07:14 Yeah, yeah.
- 07:16 DJH: I take it your expenses, I mean administrative expenses and so forth are, are very little.**
- 07:21 (_____), all of that is on me.
- 07:24 DJH: Okay.**
- 07:24 I, I, everything is done in my house and then we have volunteers. We pay their school fees. I put petrol in my car, load the things on my vehicle and I just drive here and I distribute – because since there, there's a doctor and nurse who is aware of the program, we're just driving to the hospital compound there, and we distribute the food, yeah.
- 07:40 DJH: Okay. And what about in Rwanda?**
- 07:42 In Rwanda, Sharon runs around. And it's very little because she – at the end of every month she sends me like a breakdown of how much she spends; transport, it's, it's not a lot of money.
- 07:51 DJH: And I noticed in your newsletters at the end of each year you give an accounting, if you will . . .**
- 07:56 Yeah, for me that's . . . mm-hmm, yeah.
- 07:57 DJH: . . . to your readers and hope, hope for contributors of what you've done with the money that they've p-, that has been provided.**
- 08:03 Yeah, yeah. I believe that people need to know what I've done with – it's not my money. I'm spending their money and I believe that they need to know what I have done with the money they entrusted me with. For me it's very, very important.

Part 6

- 00:00 DJH: Now during the course of this, you mentioned earlier and that I'm going to turn – we're going to take a little break and I'm going to turn the rest of the interview over to my, my, my colleague – during the course of this you've mentioned that you've taken a bunch of courses.**
- 00:15 Yeah.

- 00:17 DJH: And what, what courses and why have you done that?**
- 00:20 I've done a lot of courses on gender, tran-, and then conflict transformation because when you look at what happened in Rwanda it was all about the war and the effects of the war. When you look at HIV/AIDS as well it's like women suffer a lot, they're most vulnerable in the society when war breaks out, they are raped. They have to go out to look for work and they're raped and all that.
- 00:40 So I just thought that these things were interrelated. So I've done a lot of courses, courses on conflict management, conflict transformation, gender and conflict, peace and gender.
- 00:50 And the last one I did – then I did just one classroom course in June this year which was on HIV project management and administration, so that if I had – if somebody gave me a whole lot of money and I needed to manage a project I would know exactly what to do.
- 01:04 I don't like dabbling into things. I don't – I want to be comfortable with what I'm doing, you know. And even in the newsletters as well, whatever information I put there, I have to be sure that it's correct. Those things are very, very important for me. I don't like inventing things and I have to be able to defend anything I say or write. So I like doing things properly.
- 01:23 DJH: Is there – I want to come back to the court just for a minute and I'm sorry to jump around . . .**
- 01:30 It's okay.
- 01:31 DJH: . . . but in your work for the court, is there, are there places where you've been particularly proud or pa-, places, places where you've been maybe a little disappointed?**
- 01:47 That's a big question.
- 01:48 DJH: Yeah.**
- 01:52 All in all I think I'm, I'm happy, it's okay.
- 01:57 DJH: If, if, if there was going to be a court in the future . . .**
- 02:00 Yeah.
- 02:00 DJH: . . . that they were going to start, hopefully we won't need one but I wouldn't bet on that at the moment. Would you have some suggestions as to what the designers of that court might do that would improve things?**
- 02:14 They should have a budget for this kind of thing that I'm doing.
- 02:17 DJH: For, for, for helping people . . .**

- 02:19 Yeah, for helping people, yeah, yeah.
- 02:19 DJH: . . . who are associated with, with the crimes . . .**
- 02:22 Because I, yeah – because I know that the people, colleagues who worked in Angola said they had to come together as well to help the street children. They used to donate like \$10 a month and hold parties for them and go out and see how they can help them, you know.
- 02:37 DJH: So you're not the only person – I mean you've done a marvelous job but you're not apparently the only person who's decided they have to find a way to help some of the victims.**
- 02:45 Yeah, some of the people, yeah. And I think the UN should be doing a bit more of that as well. I don't know that they – I don't know, for example, they have a gender officer in Rwanda. They have a gender officer here, but I think that there should be somebody on the ground there in Rwanda as well.
- 03:00 DJH: Okay. And, okay, any other suggestions for future tribunal designers?**
- 03:07 My focus is just on, on my passion unfortunately.
- 03:10 DJH: Yeah, and that's fine, that's fine. Okay, okay.**
- 03:14 I can't – off the top of my head I can't think of anything else, yeah.
- 03:17 DJH: All right.**

Part 7

- 00:00 Robert Utter: Let me introduce myself. I'm Robert Utter, U-T-T-E-R. I'm here with the project that Judge Horowitz is with as well and my background is somewhat similar to my friend Judge Horowitz. I was an attorney, a law clerk, law graduate from the University of Washington and a prosecuting attorney, and then became a judge quite young at age 28.**
- 00:26 Wow, wow.
- 00:26 RU: And began working with children for five years at a (_____) court and which is part of our (_____) court in Seattle. After that I was a trial court judge for five years, and Court of Appeals for two years, and then on the Supreme Court of our state for 24 . . .**
- 00:45 Wow.
- 00:45 RU: . . . where I'd served as Chief Justice for a while. I think most importantly, I was involved in a great deal of work with children with the YMCA, with starting a program called The Big Brother Program in Seattle with friends of mine, where men work with fatherless boys.**

- 01:05 Okay. Yeah, that's nice, good. Okay.
- 01:05 RU: It provided identification for them and I'm pretty much available for any good cause that comes along. I think that . . .**
- 01:14 That's good to know.
- 01:15 RU: . . . word is out. I, I admire you so much and listening to what you've done . . .**
- 01:20 Thank you so much.
- 01:19 RU: . . . that I want to ask first of all about your family. You have two boys. How old are they?**
- 01:23 Yeah, I have two boys. The first one is 23 and the second one is 20. (____) . . .
- 01:29 RU: What are they doing now?**
- 01:30 The first one is, he's studying media and advertising and the younger one is in law school.
- 01:39 RU: But they were still in their teens when you took your job post, weren't they?**
- 01:42 Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 01:44 RU: And where did you find the energy to do that and take care of teenage boys? That's not an easy job.**
- 01:49 You know when you have a passion for something you always find time.
- 01:52 RU: Yes.**
- 01:53 Yeah. You always find time.
- 01:54 RU: You apparently did a good job in the parenthood part, looking at what they're doing now.**
- 01:58 Yeah, thank you.
- 02:00 RU: Tell me about your faith. Has that been part of your concern for others?**
- 02:06 I think so, and also partly because of the way I was brought up. I was brought up to sh-, if you have, you have to learn to give. That's the way I was brought up. And it's also the, the issue of the faith, as well. I believe in sharing whatever I have.
- 02:20 RU: And did that come from your parents, (____)?**
- 02:22 Yeah, from my parents, from my mother in particular. She's from a – I'm from a very, very strong Christian background as well. I remember my mother used to drop us off at Sunday

school as far back as I'm, as far back as when I was maybe four, five years old. We'd just go out there and sing and I realized that some of those things they're just etched in the, in, in my memory.

02:43 They're things I don't, I've never forgotten.

02:45 RU: Yes.

02:46 And sometimes when I do, like the new-, the current newsletter now I have songs which I learned when I was in primary school and the guy who proofread the letter was like, "I cannot believe you remember these songs." I said, "I do, they're there."

02:58 RU: Well, you and my wife are very similar. My background was somewhat similar as was Judge Horowitz. We all are people who've had faith that has been . . .

03:07 Yeah. Okay, yeah.

03:08 RU: . . . shown us by our parents. (___) very fortunate. What do you find is the most satisfying part of your work?

03:17 Just when I see the smile on people's faces just gives me a lot of joy and I reali-, I, it makes me feel that I'm, I'm doing something good, you know.

03:30 RU: In listening to your discussion with Judge Horowitz, I heard you mentioned following up.

03:36 Yeah.

03:36 RU: Do you have a regular process for that?

03:37 Yeah. Yeah, I get, (___), one of, that's one of the reasons why I do the month, monthly newsletter, for me follow up – first of all, when I start something I have to follow through. I don't like to start – like in, in Rwanda for example, you can't put a child in school. The child is in maybe second or third grade and then you abandon the child, so for me you have to follow through.

03:58 And that's one of the reasons why I don't bite off more than I can chew. I could have 50, 40, 80 families but I won't do that. I just stick to the number of people I think I can cater for properly. And I'm able to follow up. It's ver-, for me, it's very, very important.

04:15 RU: I'm glad to hear that. One of my great concerns in being involved in social work with children and families is that you should not give the anticipation that you will do more than you actually can.

04:26 Yeah, no, no.

- 04:28** **RU: The greatest harm you can do is get into someone's life . . .**
- 04:30 Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's, yeah . . .
- 04:31** **RU: . . . and then step out when they're depending on you. But that puts a great deal of burden on you to organize . . .**
- 04:37 It does.
- 04:38** **RU: . . . not just properly but to find others to help. Because another concern of mine is for your health. And when you're driven by this concern for others and, and a passion for it which I sense on your part, how do you take care of yourself?**
- 04:54 I think I try to, I think I try to strike a balance. I get people – I'm able to mobilize people. Like when I was in, when I did the course in June, one – the, (___), they, people were, people came from different parts of Africa and they were here for a month. And I was able to mobilize the entire classroom on one of our food distribution days. And I have that in the newsletter.
- 05:16 It was that newsletter that somebody read and just came and gave me a hundred dollars, you know. I found out because there was a doctor, there were nurses and I took them all to the, on food distribution day and they were able to – the nurse was able to talk to the nursing mothers. The doctor was able to talk to the (___). I'll send you a copy of the newsletter.
- 05:32 So I'm able to do that. I'm able to mobilize people. I use my guard as well. He buys the foodstuff. I'm able to delegate, you know.
- 05:39** **RU: You use your what? I'm sorry, I didn't . . .**
- 05:41 I'm able to delegate assignments, you know. I know that I cannot do everything so if I feel that you are good in an area, in an area, I hel-, I make you do, I make you do something for me.
- 05:50** **RU: You appear to be in good physical health.**
- 05:52 Yeah.
- 05:53** **RU: But how do you maintain that with all the schedule of yours?**
- 05:56 I, I, I exerci-, I'm a very, very energetic person. I'm a – people call me hyper; very restless. I can't sit. I cannot sit and not do anything. If I have to go to the salon, I have to have something I'm reading. I'm, I'm, I'm ei-, either drafting a newsletter or proofreading something.

- 06:12 I mean that's the way I was brought up. My mother says, "Time never comes back. Time waits for no man." So if you have time, make sure you make good use of it. Once it's gone, it's gone.
- 06:22 **RU: There's a marvelous line from Shakespeare, "I wasted time and now time wastes me."**
- 06:27 Wow, that I didn't know. Okay.
- 06:29 **RU: He's saying the same thing you did.**
- 06:30 Yeah, time it's – once it goes, it goes. And I'm also very, very – I'm a stickler for time. I'm known for that as well, you know. I tell the people you come at nine. So by ten, ten thirty, eleven if we're not having a meeting I've done the distribution and I'm, I'm, I'm on my way back home, you know.
- 06:47 **RU: What's the most difficult part of your ministry?**
- 06:50 It's the inability to communicate with the people. That breaks my heart because I have to work through an interpreter, most times. Most of them – here it's Swahili. They don't speak English. In Rwanda it was Kinyarwanda. Sometimes you want to speak like – the lady I bought the cow for, she was raped and she really wanted to share what she was going through with me.
- 07:12 And she was raped and I think two or three of her children were killed. Her husband too was killed and you know, there's a lot of suspicion. Somebody wants to interpret and she wants to know if that person is a Hutu or that person is a Tutsi. She doesn't know if the, the message is being conveyed properly. So, you know I'm not, I'm, I'm not able to communicate with them and that's a problem.
- 07:33 I have a, my, the newest patient I have here, I think she's Somalian. She's in her late 50s and she finds it difficult to communicate with me because she doesn't want anybody, you know. When you're talking about HIV, AIDS and sex, it's very, very private and very, very personal. People don't want somebody – they don't want to discuss what is happening in their lives.
- 07:52 They don't want to go through an interpreter. And I would really love to touch their feelings and I'm unable to do that because I cannot speak directly with them. That's one of the things that really hurts me. I'm unable to talk to them.
- 08:06 **RU: Are you studying some of these other languages?**
- 08:08 I'm, I, in Kinyarwanda, not really. I, I, I, when I came here I didn't realize that I was going to be here for this long. The first time I came they gave me a one-year contract and I got a tiny

bit like this. And I've been here since '96. And then I keep telling myself "I'm going next year." I want to go and work with women and children on a permanent basis.

08:27 Then when I look at the stability, I have to think about my children as well, you know. There's some sta-, duties, places you work for in the UN that the families are not allowed to go visit you. And when I first got to Rwanda, for example, it wasn't a family duty station. A family wasn't allowed to visit you. So I think about all of that.

08:43 But I'm almost there. Once they finish school now, then I'll be able to move around as much as I want.

08:48 RU: You mentioned finishing school. What . . . ?

08:50 University.

08:51 RU: Oh, and you're doing that as well as your current job?

08:55 Sorry, I didn't get you.

08:55 RU: You're attending the university as well as your current job?

08:58 No, my children. I mean when my children finish school then I'll have more leeway to move around but right now, that's one of the reasons. The job security for me is very important because of the children, you know, so . . .

09:09 RU: And you anticipate this will end the end of this year?

09:13 This year, next year, especially if the first one graduates then I'll be fine. He'll be able to take care of his younger brother as well. Then I'll be able to move around, yeah.

Part 8

00:00 RU: What do you consider to be the most difficult situation you face in helping people?

00:09 I wish I had more money.

00:11 RU: More money.

00:12 Yeah, because when I went out on Friday and Saturday and I was interviewing the people, I realized that the food – first of all I noticed that when they get the food, they cook like almost everything. They are just so happy and they decided – they decide that, "For the next one week, we're just going to have a feast." That's what I deduced from the interviews I had with them.

00:33 So if I could just do a little bit more. That's number one, but the main thing that bothers me is the fact that, the dependency syndrome if I can call it that. I try to set up businesses for

them, but I realized that they don't want to do anything. They just want to come at the end of every month with their bags and take what I have to give. And I cannot continue doing that.

00:52 If you are strong enough, you have strong arms I think you should be able to look for something to do which is why I set up a business and I try to follow up last week to see how they were doing. And I was a bit disappointed by some of them.

01:04 The first place I went to, the guy was not even there. He told me – I had bought him two bags of coal, and he told me he had made from the, from the proceeds of whatever he sold he had bought an extra bag.

01:14 When I got there he was – I realized that he was lying and I was very, very disappointed. But on Saturday I went to visit another lady who had now – who said the coal business wasn't very, very good for her and has now diverted to selling chicken. And I saw the chickens there and I saw firewood as well and I was, I was really happy.

01:33 Then another problem I had – the third lady I visited has six children already and she just had a seventh baby. That's another problem for me. And sometimes I ask myself, "Is it because I'm giving them food? How far should I go? When do you stop? When do you say no to these people?"

01:53 RU: Are you able to refer these people to other agencies for care?

01:57 I want to start doing that now because when I – the course I did on the AIDS Program Management I met a few people who I, who might be able to help me, so I'm going to, I'm going to follow up on that as well and see.

02:11 But I – first of all, there, there needs to be a change of mindset. I think that is, that's very, very important. Because all they see is, "There's a foreigner in town and she wants to give us food." So.

02:24 RU: How are you going to get other people to help you? You can't do all of this by yourself.

02:29 No I can't, I can't. I think I'll do the same thing I did in Rwanda. I, I went to look for organizations who are doing something similar to what I'm doing and then I'll take it from there, because at the end of the day I have to live as well. And that's what, what I keep telling them.

02:43 And that's why I started – I think (___) with about ten people so far I have tried to set up businesses for. That's going to be in the January newsletter. That's why I went out last week, you know.

- 02:54** **RU: What do you find the most effective means of communicating with other people is? Through your newsletters . . .**
- 03:00 Yeah.
- 03:01** **RU: . . . personal contacts?**
- 03:03 50-50, 50-50. Some people don't have time to read the newsletter, but a lot of people read that's why I've gone from six pages to just one page.
- 03:12** **RU: Good, good.**
- 03:13 Yeah. One page, I, I try to fit everything into one page and I get a lot of responses. And the figures also, like in the one I did, "A million people live on less than a dollar a day," people came back to me and they said, "I didn't realize there were that many people in the world who don't have money." And that's why I try to put the figures in there so that people can see, you know, very catchy. (_____) . . .
- 03:35** **RU: Have you tried to – please go ahead.**
- 03:37 Also the newsletter has been very, very effective even for fundraising as well. Raising awareness, accountability and it also helps with fundraising.
- 03:46** **RU: Have you tried to get professional help in designing the newsletter?**
- 03:49 I want to do that because one of my lecturers at the last course I did told me that. He said I should go do, try to do it properly, desktop publishing, because I attach the photographs. And so I want to speak to the lady who does the ICTR newsletter. She also, she's also on my mailing list so I'm going to speak to her and...those are the things I, I'm going to start doing from next year.
- 04:11** **RU: The important thing I think is to realize you can't do it all by yourself.**
- 04:14 No, I can't. I can't.
- 04:16** **RU: But you can find other people who have a heart like yours who have skills that you can use and if a cause is good which it apparently is...**
- 04:27 Thank you very much.
- 04:27** **RU: . . . don't be afraid to ask.**
- 04:28 Yeah. I've realized that it's easy to connect with people who share the same vision . . .
- 04:33** **RU: Exactly.**

04:33 . . . who, yeah. (___), like my friend who's doing the website. She does the same thing. She has an orphanage in India and she travels a lot as well so she's ready to do anything for me. But she just called me up and she said you know, this thing – I'll ask what she does for a living but it would have cost me about three hundred pounds to have that website done.

04:49 She said, "I'll just do it for you for free. That will be my contribution." And she's paying school fees for two of my volunteers as well.

04:58 RU: That's a good start.

04:59 Yeah.

Part 9

00:00 RU: Do you plan to grow in terms of numbers of people who work with you?

00:04 Yes.

00:05 RU: How do you anticipate this will be done?

00:08 Everything I wanted – I just want to take it one step at a time. Like I said, I, I don't like biting off more than I can chew, because what happens is that I get overwhelmed and discouraged, so I'll just take it one day at a time, one day at a time, one day at a time. Like my, one of my goals for next year is to try to increase the food portions, the ration, especially the protein. I want to try and increase that.

00:30 And what is going to happen is that last, the last time we had about three, four people who haven't come consistently like for about four months, so we're just going to remove them from the register. I have a register and I'm not going to replace them, you know, so that people will have more food.

00:46 RU: Do you share your food ministry with people who are in that business who can provide food materials for you? Or do you raise the money and then go out and buy the food?

00:58 I raise the money, my guard goes out and buys the food and then the volunteers come. They bottle the oil, they bag the food and I load it in my car and I . . .

01:07 RU: In the United States we work not just by ourselves in these agencies but we have what we call a board of directors more (_____).

01:15 Yeah, I'm working on that, yeah.

01:16 RU: Well, I find it at least critically important . . .

01:20 Yeah . . . no.

- 01:20** RU: . . . because we can't do all these things by ourselves. If you find people with a similar passion . . .
- 01:27 Yeah . . . yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 01:27** RU: . . . who have the ability to do things you can't do, it just magnifies the amount of work you can do, the people you can reach. You'd be surprised. If the cause is good, you can easily find good people (_____).
- 01:41 Yeah. I have some people in mind and that's one of, one of the things I'm going to do. My constitution has to be ready before the end of the year. Then I'm going to try and register and then open a bank account. I have two, three names in mind. That is one of my goals. I will, I try to set myself goals and that's one of the goals for next year.
- 02:00 The goal for this year was to set the people up, make them start doing businesses and get the website up and running. So one of the things for next year is going to be what we just talked about – the board of directors, I mean, the proper structure, getting the proper structure in place. That's one, my main goal for next year.
- 02:16** RU: That sounds encouraging. I was going to ask you priorities, but I think as long as you are going to put the board of directors on your list. It's one of the most important priorities . . .
- 02:23 Yeah, it's very important, yeah it is. It is, it is.
- 02:26** RU: . . . I find. I've read your newsletter, which I found inspiring.
- 02:31 Thank you very much.
- 02:32** RU: But it also struck me that if you can tell stories of real people . . .
- 02:36 Okay.
- 02:37** RU: . . . even if you're just limited to one page, that always gets someone's attention.
- 02:42 I do that.
- 02:43** RU: Focus on what should be done. There's so many you deal with. I, I was touched by the thought of children raising children.
- 02:50 Yeah, yeah. A lot of that.
- 02:51** RU: What a heart wrenching situation that must be.
- 02:53 Yeah, childhood families in Rwanda, yes.

- 02:56** **RU: Childhood families as you call it.**
- 02:56 Yeah, yeah. I do that as well. I mean I've interviewed the, this year the home caregiver. I think that was in April or May. In some of my newsletters I do interviews of and somebody bought him a bicycle when he said in one, the interview that he has to go on foot. He doesn't have money for transport. Somebody read the newsletter and gave me money for a bicycle.
- 03:19 So I do things like that as well. And then that he mentioned also that some of the orphans sleep on the floor, and somebody gave me mattresses. I got two mattresses. So the newsletter is really very good. I do, I do one-on-one interviews.
- 03:31 I just move from, it depends on – and then I interviewed also the, the nursing mothers because I give them like a kilo of cereal for their children. So all of them came together once to thank me and that got me inspired to interview them. So there was another newsletter on them as well, an interview on how they are coping because they can't breastfeed and stuff like that. That was another. That was, that was, I think that was in May or June, my May or June newsletter, yeah.
- 03:58** **Note: Gap in Interview (Approx. 4 seconds in duration) Gaps occurred due to interruptions during the interview, technical issues, or corrupted data files.**
- 04:07** **RU: . . . and to watch your discussion with Judge Horowitz and to talk with you personally.**
- 04:12 Thank you very much.
- 04:13** **RU: I reiterate my personal concern, which is that you take care of yourself physically.**
- 04:17 Thank, thank you very much.
- 04:19** **RU: Because what you are doing is so emotionally draining.**
- 04:21 It is.
- 04:22** **RU: And challenging, even someone with your remarkable amount of energy and health must take care of yourself.**
- 04:29 Yeah, I agree.
- 04:30** **RU: But the obviously great job you've done with your two boys is I think the most impressive thing you've done; out of all these other things that you're involved in as well.**
- 04:39 Thank you very much.

- 04:40** **RU: Do focus on developing a board of directors, not just in name, but people who share your, your vision and have your heart. That way you can multiply your efforts, have your impact greater and expand other areas.**
- 04:57 Yeah, okay.
- 04:58** **RU: I have nothing else except to say thank you. It's been a privilege to talk (_____) . . .**
- 05:01 Thank you, thank you very much and thank you for the advice as well.