



## FOOD ECONOMY CASE STUDY: RWANDAN RETURNEES HOW FOOD ECONOMY ANALYSIS CAN HELP TO COMPARE THE RESPECTIVE NEEDS OF RETURNEES AND RESIDENTS

### The Context:

Poor households in Byumba, north-eastern Rwanda, with very small farms to cultivate, have always been heavily dependant on employment as a source of income for purchasing food. Following their mass return in November 1996, refugees were able to find employment alongside the residents, on local farms and on tea plantations successfully rehabilitated since the war. The main difference between the two groups was that the refugees, arriving too late to cultivate, did not have access to their own crop production. They required two months of food to prevent hunger over the period January-June 1997, not the full 6 months food ration that had been programmed.

**High quality analysis of the respective needs of returning refugees and residents can help to ensure the equitable treatment for both groups, promoting a process of reconciliation where this is needed.**

**It is often assumed that refugees will be....**

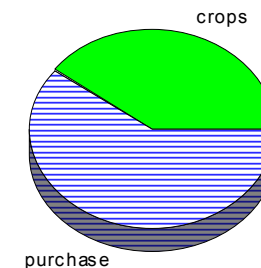
exclusively dependant upon external assistance for some time after their return home.

**But food economy analysis showed that:**

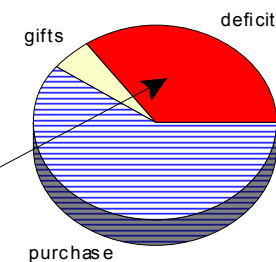
Rwandan refugees returned to, and were rapidly integrated into, a functioning economy. The difference between returning refugees and the resident population was not as great as many thought: targeting assistance exclusively to the refugees would have been inequitable.

Returning refugees did not require 100% of food aid needs to be met.

### *Sources of food for residents*



### *.... and returnees*



*The pie represents 100% of annual food needs for a typical family  
Source: Save the Children Fund-UK*