



Annual Review **2007**

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# From the Director

Thank you for your unconditional support over the last 10 years

While writing my 10th Annual Report, and preparing to step down as the Director of SURF to reflect on my work to date with survivors, the words that come to mind are 'thank you'.

Ten years of work for SURF has taught me a great deal, but it has been a stressful and pressured existence at times. While I am no less committed to continuing to support survivors and SURF, I have decided that this is the right time for me to step back and consider the lessons learned and challenges ahead for survivors.

In many ways I know that none of SURF's achievements would have been possible without the incredible public support that we have received over the past ten years, and that of SURF's remarkable staff and trustees. SURF has with your support worked to ensure that the silent victims of the genocide have received a decent burial, that survivors have been given a voice, and that the memory of genocide has been preserved. We hope that the world too, through the work and the experience of the survivors, has learned to respect dignity and humanity. Though the achievements are great, there is still a great deal more to do.

14 years after the genocide, Rwanda has made significant progress in rebuilding internally, but the many scars remain fresh. The legacy of genocide touches almost every aspect of life for the survivors. In addition to recurring trauma suffered by many from their experiences, survivors of the genocide face multiple difficulties. Many are impoverished and face complex health problems, such as HIV and AIDS, as a direct result of the violence perpetrated against them during the genocide. Survivors are still threatened with violence, attacked or killed by former perpetrators, and for many a climate of fear persists. Rebuilding their lives alongside individuals responsible for murder and rape is a difficult reality faced by all survivors in Rwanda.

There is an estimated 300,000 very vulnerable survivors: widows, young orphans with no family or support network, lonely elderly, many with no shelter or capacity to sustain themselves, often still traumatised, physically and emotionally wounded. Those requiring specialist medical care do not have the funds to meet medical bills. Day after day, many are still dying. Many children live in households headed by other children with no financial support and no moral guidance. Therefore they are exposed to drugs, abuse, rape, and HIV infection. Many of them are rejected by the educational system because they understandably underperform.

Besides support given to survivors through SURF over the last 10 years, the only other sustainable and significant funding for survivors has come from the Rwandan Government, which dedicates 5% of its budget for educational and healthcare needs. The support equates to an average of £20 per person per year. Thus, there is a real funding gap that must be bridged.

The lasting legacy of the genocide in Rwanda is still to be fully addressed. The importance of administering justice for survivors must be acknowledged. There is a need for collective responsibility to ensure that the rights of survivors at risk from the release of genocide perpetrators through *gacaca* are upheld. The challenges ahead are still great, especially in answering the call to protect the witnesses killed by prisoners given amnesty in the name of reconciliation.

But with your continuing support I have no doubt that together we will be able to restore and rebuild the lives of survivors. On behalf of all the survivors that have benefited from your support over the past ten years, thank you again.

May the years ahead be happy and healthy for all of us.

Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, OBE

# From the Co-Chair

I am writing to thank you on behalf of the team and volunteers at Survivors Fund (SURF), and all the survivors that we represent, and survivors' organisations that we help fund in Rwanda, for your generous support over this past year.

2007 has been an incredible twelve months for SURF, as we have seen the realisation of our vision to establish a survivors' centre in Rwanda, which was finally completed in April 2008. The Humura Research and Testimony Centre was named by Cherie Booth QC in February 2007, at an emotional ceremony on the site in Rwanda. It will now open its doors to all survivors that are seeking a safe and secure sanctuary, providing trauma counselling and a central repository for the memories of survivors. SURF, working with partners, has secured a partnership with the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, based in America, to assist in documenting, recording, cataloguing and archiving testimonies to preserve the memory of genocide.

In April, to mark the anniversary of the genocide we launched a new set of educational materials for teachers to inform and educate a new generation about the lessons of the genocide. We have made these freely available, alongside an array of media resources, through our new website at [www.survivors-fund.org.uk](http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk). For those of you who have not yet had the opportunity to log on to the site, I hope you will be pleased with its new look.

Programmes to rebuild the lives of vulnerable survivors continue. The British Government funded HIV and AIDS project last year provided holistic support to 1,114 households, delivering access to anti-retroviral drugs, general healthcare, and income generating initiatives to enable families to support household needs and education for their children. Over 2007, 4,581 people attended and received medical support at the 4 clinics SURF supports.

SURF also built 362 homes providing shelter for 1,810 homeless orphan heads of households and widows. SURF's education projects continue to reach more children too. In 2007 SURF provided fees for 200 primary school students, 80 secondary school students, 81 university students and 53 apprentices to access vocational skills training. Last year 11 students supported by SURF graduated from university, and now have job placements.

The highlight of the year was our celebration of 10 years of SURF's work. The most sincere thank you to all of you who were able to join us for our 10th Anniversary event at City Hall in July. It was a remarkable day, and a very special occasion, not only for me but hopefully for everyone who has played a role in building SURF into the organisation that it is today. We appreciate that not everyone was able to come on the day, so we have put a recording of the proceedings on the website, which we hope will be give you the opportunity to experience the event.

On behalf of all the trustees of SURF, again I would like to thank you, and all those who have helped SURF, whose support to survivors has been invaluable over the past ten years. I hope that this support will continue for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Westcott  
Co-Chair  
Survivors Fund (SURF)

# About SURF's Work

## Institutional Capacity Building

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After the 1994 genocide, almost 34% of the households were headed by women or orphans (usually female). This represents an increase of about 50% over the pre-genocide period. The majority of these women found themselves in great economic difficulties because of the loss of their male relatives on whom they had been brought up to depend for income and livelihood. In the unwritten rules of customs and traditions of Rwanda, females have been second-class citizens, thus making them worse off than the poorest Rwandan men.

SURF's work in Rwanda has expanded over the years, supporting nine local charitable organisations working with genocide survivors. Most of these organisations were established only after the genocide, as survivors needed support to reintegrate into 'normal' life. Amongst these organisations are IBUKA, AVEGA-Agahozo, Solace Ministries, AOCM and Uyisenga N' Manzi.

SURF has supported institutional capacity building for AVEGA, AOCM, Uyisenga and Solace Ministries. Remarkable amongst the success has been AVEGA Eastern Region which has built its capacity to generate its own income and thus a sustainable development programme. That said, other organisations have been slow to build their capacity or develop a self-sustaining model of growth, difficult though that is. SURF's challenge is to continue to work with these organisations to help them build a strong institutional base, so as to more effectively support survivors now and in the future.

## Access to Medical Healthcare

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The needs of survivors for access to medical healthcare can be roughly divided into two primary areas: a general need for basic

medical care and a more specific requirement for specialist medical care. In an immediate sense, the main challenge for survivors is HIV and AIDS. Since 1994, nearly 3,000 widows have died from HIV and AIDS as a result of being raped during the genocide. There are likely to have been more deaths that SURF has not been able to document.

Through SURF's campaign for access to free anti-retroviral treatment (ART) for women survivors raped and infected with HIV, the Department for International Development (DFID) pledged to support 2,500 women survivors with ART and home-based holistic care. Many women survivors, often responsible for caring for large families of their own children and in many cases orphaned children too, require support that extends beyond medical care, to provide assistance with housing, food and schooling of children. Such a holistic approach ensures that women survivors living with HIV/AIDS can at least look forward to a future.

Three of SURF's partner organisations are actively involved in the treatment of genocide widows and orphans living with HIV and AIDS: AVEGA-Agahozo (Eastern Region), AVEGA Central Region and Solace Ministries.

Between 2004 and 2007, the AVEGA clinics treated 3,800 HIV+ patients. The clinic which opened at Solace Ministries in 2004 has administered treatment to 1,760 HIV+ patients.

## Justice and Protection for Survivors

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Personal security for survivors in Rwanda is an ongoing concern, as many must live side-by-side with men who raped them and killed their families, as the perpetrators of the genocide are being released back into the community. The country no longer has the

resources to keep these men incarcerated, and so by admitting guilt at local *gacaca* (community-based) trials, the perpetrators are now free.

Survivors are requesting that the international community and the Government of Rwanda match funds invested into releasing those that planned the genocide with that spent on the rehabilitation of their victims. No funds were committed to support survivors to prepare their cases, to provide them with representation or to enable them to deal with the trauma of reliving the horrific experiences their families encountered, as recounted in detail by prisoners in *gacaca* courts. SURF has been working to raise this issue with governments, both in Rwanda and elsewhere.

## Shelter

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20,000 households of vulnerable survivors have no accommodation or a decent place to sleep, often having to live a transitory life, moving from place to place to seek shelter. Most of these families are very poor; left to deal with the consequences of genocide, and general ill health, with no support. Many of the needy have no skills to acquire jobs. Even those in employment cannot afford to build a house because building materials are too costly or they find it increasingly difficult to buy or to rent. Without shelter, security and rehabilitation becomes impossible; this results in high anxiety and hopelessness.

SURF has provided the most vulnerable survivors with affordable housing, ensuring their personal security and creating a safe environment in which to rebuild their lives. Through its shelter programme, SURF seeks to reduce poverty, improve the overall livelihoods of the survivors, and give them hope for the future. The support offered is targeted in particular at vulnerable

orphans, widows and widowers now living in destitute conditions. SURF has been especially successful working with local partner organisations, which apply for land on behalf of survivors and find resources to support shelter programmes. IBUKA has been at the forefront of advocating on issues affecting survivors and representing them on a daily basis.

A decent two bedroom unit costs £2,500 to build. There is a need to find financial help to build at least another 20,000 homes for survivors. The building of low-cost homes is more than just about improving the condition of shelter for the survivors - it has also become a catalyst for the further development of communities by helping survivors create local jobs, and by lobbying the government to provide materials and infrastructure that benefit everyone. Progress has been slow but steady with many communities forming support groups and directly lobbying for help from the local authorities, the church or other institutions. A classic example is the Kinyinya village where the community signed a petition and asked the government to provide water for the village – this is now in progress – or Niboyi children’s village where children collected signatures and presented them to Electro Gas – electricity and water has now been installed after three years of life in darkness.

## Education

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There are many young survivors who are orphans of genocide and head a family of their siblings. After genocide, many children in Rwanda found themselves suddenly assuming adult roles and responsibilities when they themselves needed parental care. Efforts to enable these children to go to school have met several challenges. Older students are expected to be at school for more than 10 hours a day, but have younger children to take care of at home. They need food and clothing, scholastic materials and

shelter. Although the Government of Rwanda set up a fund called FARG to facilitate orphans to study, the contribution is inadequate and many of this vulnerable group are unable to obtain support from FARG.

Children born in the year of the genocide are now reaching secondary school age. There are at least 50,000 children that each now require £150 a year financial support. With support from SURF, many organisations are now providing education fees for a significant number of orphans. For example, Solace Ministries has supported 250 children through primary, secondary and university education over the past three years. A similar number were provided with scholastic materials by AOCM and AVEGA. Across partner organisations, each year more than 180 young people orphaned by HIV and AIDS are given vocational training.

## Income Generating Activities

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About 50,000 families have no regular source of income. There is a need for funds to help this group start small income generating businesses.

Income generating activities are essential to raise the economic power of the survivors, many who still live in abject poverty. Most survivors are grouped into associations, enabling easy coordination and which serves a multiplier effect of building social solidarity. It also helps to fight stigma and isolation among the thousands of genocide widows and orphans.

SURF created a hardship fund to help survivors in urgent times of need such as sickness, death, damage to property from collapse and floods. With SURF's support, all the organisations supported are able to respond and support survivors in emergency cases.

## Advocacy and Lobbying

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SURF has continued to advocate for the rights of survivors in Rwanda. In the UK, we have increasingly garnered cross-party political support, helping to facilitate visits from MPs and Peers. Mrs. Cherie Blair visited SURF projects whilst on an official visit to Rwanda last year. SURF has paid particular attention to raising awareness amongst MPs of the reports of intimidation and assault against survivors as a result of testifying against alleged perpetrators at *gacaca* trials. A number of MPs have subsequently raised questions regarding witness protection for survivors at *gacaca* in the House of Commons.

SURF also organises visits each year to Rwanda for key donors and supporters. The trip enables participants to develop a first hand impression of life for survivors, through meeting partner organisations and beneficiaries. Participants find the trip a moving and highly informative experience and many step up their support and advocacy for survivors on their return to the UK.

SURF continues to support annual commemoration events marking the anniversary of the genocide. SURF's objective of giving survivors a voice through their testimonies will continue, especially with the completion of the Genocide and Testimony Research Centre in Rwanda last year.

## Genocide Memorial Sites

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Even today the remains of many victims of genocide are still to be buried. Many still lie in trenches, abandoned latrines, churches, on the hills and many other places - some known, some yet to be discovered. Many of these locations are disclosed by genocide suspects currently held in prisons that have confessed to involvement in the genocide (through *gacaca*).

Survivors still waiting to bury loved ones often feel haunted. That becomes an obstacle to rehabilitation and rebuilding life. A sense of closure often only comes with burial.

This past year, fourteen mass graves were developed, completed or rehabilitated by SURF. To date SURF has built 37 memorial sites, giving a decent burial and resting place to well over 390,000 victims. As prisoners given amnesty continue to reveal where bodies lie, SURF needs to build another 17 mass graves across the country, at the very least. These will provide a decent burial for the many thousands of skeletons in churches across the country.

## Living Testimony

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In 2007, SURF completed the Genocide Testimony and Research Centre in Rwanda, which will provide a focal point for healing, necessary to help survivors rebuild their lives. The centre will provide counselling services that can be easily and effectively delivered, within a safe environment. It will afford survivors an opportunity to begin the extremely difficult process of revisiting and communicating their traumatic histories and memory.

Survivors will be able to record their testimonies and receive the psychological support so vital when recounting their experiences. The main purpose of the Centre is to serve to document, record and preserve the eyewitness accounts and testimonies of the genocide. For many women survivors raped and infected with HIV and AIDS during the genocide, it is a race against time to record their testimonies. By undertaking this work, the Centre is serving as a proof of the genocide, critically important, as even today, some individuals and countries deny that genocide ever happened in Rwanda. (This is a growing problem. In March this year, an international conference was staged for the first time in Canada giving a platform to genocide denialists.)

As well as cataloguing eyewitness testimonies, the Centre will also collect and collate photographic records of the lives and histories of families who were killed in the genocide. This photographic archive will preserve the evidence of the genocide and the visual memory of those that did not survive.

Through the Centre, we hope to sustain the memory of the genocide, and preserve for posterity evidence that its victims did not die in vain. It will serve as a physical space for survivors to visit, consecrated to the memory of their families, relatives and friends. Ceremonies of remembrance will also be hosted too.

More importantly, the Centre will facilitate the expression of memory through the arts by giving a voice to young survivors to communicate their genocide experiences to others through music, drama and dance. Thousands of orphans witnessed genocide at an age when they could barely speak. Thus their interpretation of the experience is best understood, and expressed, through often non-verbal communication.

The Centre will also serve as a focal point for the teaching of the genocide, utilising the eyewitness accounts it is recording as the main tool for educating students across Rwanda and internationally. Exhibitions will be compiled and staged at the Centre too. It is hoped that this work will help new generations create a better future, by learning the lessons of our past.

Lastly, the Centre will serve as a resource for all those who want to research the genocide. The testimonies collected and archived at the Centre will be made accessible to scholars, as well as being made available online, providing a vital source of primary evidence for the study of the genocide.

# From the Treasurer

Ten years on from its establishment, SURF is proud of the contribution it has been able to make to honour those who were murdered in the genocide and to support survivors to move forward with their lives, campaigning for their rights and raising awareness in the wider community of the need for justice and reflection. This decade of work was only possible with the support of so many people – individuals, groups, trusts and foundations, schools, private donors and government, who have given their financial commitment and their time and energy for survivors. I thank all of you wholeheartedly for your solidarity and constancy.

In spite of all the contributions to our work and the progress made over the past ten years, there is still so much to do and we cannot be complacent. We must ensure continued attention to the needs and rights of 300,000 survivors, to remembering and to learning how to move forward. They need to know that we are still listening and ready to understand. With so many causes jostling for attention in the world, it is essential to stay committed to the survivors and to keep their cause high on the agenda.

Please stay with us in accompanying survivors as they re-build psychologically, physically and economically and do your best to bring others along with us to bolster support and funds.

David Lumley  
Treasurer  
Survivors Fund (SURF)

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st December 2007

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total 2007</b>	<b>Total 2006</b>
<b>Incoming Resources</b>	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Income	93,491	942,202	1,035,693	1,400,110
Investment Income	5,616	0	5,616	3,911
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<b>Total Incoming</b>	99,107	942,202	1,041,309	1,404,021
	=====	=====	=====	=====
<b>Cost Of Charitable Activities</b>				
Cost of Charitable Activities	60,077	1,027,510	1,087,587	1,379,502
Governance Costs	0	47,013	47,013	47,754
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<b>Net Incoming Resources</b>	39,030	-132,321	-93,291	-23,235
<b>Total Funds Brought Forward</b>	42,909	178,417	221,326	244,561
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<b>Total funds Carried Forward</b>	81,939	46,096	128,035	221,326
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The charity had no recognised gains and losses other than those included above. All the above results are derived from continuing activities.

Full Audited accounts can be obtained from Survivors Fund (SURF), 10 Rickett Street, West Brompton, London SW6 1RU. Tel: 0207 610 2589. Fax: 0207 610 3851.  
Auditors: R L Jackson & Co, Authorised Public Accountants & Registered Auditors, 370 Cranbrook Road, Gants Hill, Ilford, Essex IG2 6HY

# On SURF's Website

In 2007, Survivors Fund completed a major redesign of its website, online at [www.survivors-fund.org.uk](http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk). The new site now includes additional layers of new content and functionality. As the website is a key tool in SURF's efforts to build awareness, SURF has produced an extensive online library of resources and information about the Rwandan genocide and the ongoing plight of survivors to inform, educate and engage visitors.

Some of the more popular aspects of the website are:

## **Online donations through Google Checkout**

Working with Google, SURF can now accept donations via Google Checkout. This gives donors and supporters from outside the UK an efficient way to donate online. Of course, we are still working with Charities Aid Foundation to accept donations in the UK, increasing their value by 28% through Gift Aid.

## **Expanded Educational Materials**

The SURF website now boasts a range of education packets, lesson plans and other related materials for use in the classroom, both in the UK and abroad. In fact, many colleges and universities worldwide now link to the SURF website as an accurate and comprehensive resource of information on the genocide.

## **In-depth Media Library**

Over the years, SURF has recorded and collated a series of survivor testimonies and related documentaries. A selection of these are online for viewing. SURF continues to add to this online resource, please check back regularly to see what is new.

Of course, Survivors Fund welcomes your comments and feedback on the website. Please visit SURF online at:

**[www.survivors-fund.org.uk](http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk)**

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