

Heroes of Our Time: Rwandan Courage & Survival



SURF's Exhibition 2006 is entitled Heroes of Our Time: Rwandan Courage & Survival. It presents a history of the genocide and focuses on the plight of survivors today through the stories of four heroic survivors – Siméon Karamaga, Daphrose Mukangarambe, Cassien Mbanda and Ange Cendrine Mukayitesi.

Rwanda: the country

Rwanda is a landlocked East African country of 9 million people with Kigali as its capital.



The mainly rural population is primarily engaged in subsistence agriculture.

The country has few natural resources, but the fertile land has always yielded coffee and tea as the main cash crops. The genocide destroyed Rwanda's fragile economic base, but since then significant progress has been made in stabilising the economy and in positioning itself as a science and technology hub in the region.



Rwanda is an equatorial country; its high elevation (on average 9,000 feet above sea level) makes the stable climate temperate. The average daily temperature is 20°C (70°F).

Rwanda's countryside is covered by undulating grasslands and small farms, giving the country its name as the "Land of a Thousand Hills." There are also areas of rugged mountains that extend from a chain of volcanoes on the northwest border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Rwanda is considered the lightning capital of the world, due to intense daily thunderstorms during the two wet seasons (February-May and September-December). Annual rainfall averages 83 centimetres (31 inches) but is generally heavier

in the western mountains than in the eastern savannas.

This climate makes for a fertile land, with 90% of the working population in farming and 75% of the population living below the international poverty line (of \$1.25 a day).

To diversify its economic base, the post-genocide government implemented a new investment code to create an enabling environment for foreign and local investors. An autonomous revenue authority was established, improving collections and accountability, funded primarily by the British Government.

As security in Rwanda improves, the country's nascent tourism sector is beginning to grow.

Centred on the mountain gorillas in the north of the country (where Diane Fossey was once based), more tourists are putting Rwanda on their travel map.

The development of leading academic institutions in Rwanda, in particular the success of the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), is producing a new generation of leading graduate students in the region.

The country has invested heavily in developing its telecommunications and transport infrastructure, with broadband internet expected to be available nationwide by 2010. As result the future of the economy in Rwanda looks ever brighter.

History: an overview

Prior to European colonisation, Rwanda was the site of one of the region's most complex monarchical systems. The earliest known inhabitants of the region were the Twa, a Pygmy people.



Rwanda is one of the few states in Africa to closely follow its ancestral borders. The Kingdom of Rwanda, controlled by a Tutsi royal family, ruled the region throughout recorded history. While the upper echelons of this society were largely Tutsi, ethnic divisions were not stark. Many Hutu were among the nobility and significant intermingling took place. The majority of the Tutsi, who made up 15-18% of the population, were poor peasants, as were most of the Hutu.

In 1895 Rwanda became a German province. The Germans, however, were at first completely dependent on the existing government. The German authority kept the indigenous administration system by applying the same type of indirect rule established by the British Empire in the Ugandan

kingdoms. After Germany's loss in World War I, the protectorate was taken over by Belgium with a League of Nations mandate. Belgian rule in the region was far more direct and harsh than that of the Germans. However, the Belgian colonisers did realise the value of native rule. Backed by Christian churches, the Belgians used the minority Tutsi upper class to rule over lower classes of Tutsis and Hutus.

Belgian-forced labour policies and stringent taxes were mainly enforced by the Tutsi upper class, whom the Belgians used as buffers against people's anger, thus further polarising the Hutu and the Tutsi. Many young peasants, in order to escape tax harassment and hunger, migrated to neighbouring countries. They moved mainly to Congo but also to Ugandan

plantations, looking for work. After the Second World War, Rwanda became a UN trust territory with Belgium as the administrative authority. In 1959 King Mutara III, who was baptised into the Catholic faith and renamed Charles, was assassinated despite allowing Hutus greater access to positions of authority in his 28 years of rule. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Jean Baptiste Ndahindurwa, known as King Kigeri V. He was overthrown soon after in the Hutu revolt, encouraged by the Belgian military, of November 1959 and fled into exile to Uganda.

Through a series of processes the Hutu gradually gained more and more power until, upon Rwanda's independence in 1962, the Hutu held virtually all power.

Independence

In 1961 the victorious Hutu-led Parmehutu party, having been elected to power, proclaimed a republic and abolished the Tutsi monarchy.

In the following year, 1962, Rwanda achieved independence and Grégoire Kayibanda was elected the first president of the Rwandan Republic. Tutsis became the victims of official discrimination in virtually all public services and in political involvement.



Kayibanda was overthrown by his National Defence Minister Juvénal Habyarimana in a coup in July 1973. Habyarimana's Second Republic claimed to be sympathetic to Tutsis; but this was not borne out in fact. In the years that followed under the leadership of the one party system, the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), Tutsis continued to experience violence, arrests, intimidation and abuse.

Violence was never far from the surface in these times. In 1959 King Rudahingwa of Rwanda had died in mysterious circumstances while under the care of a Belgian doctor. The outbreak of violence that followed marked the beginning

of a Rwandan 'social revolution', with a peasant revolt that left 20,000 Tutsis dead. Thousands more were forced to flee as refugees, and an estimated 200,000 settled in Uganda. In 1963-67, 100,000 Tutsis were butchered with machetes and dumped in rivers, and in 1973, Tutsi students were massacred in their thousands.

Habyarimana's regime used ethnicity as a political strategy in order to hold on to power at any cost. Regional divisions increased, with northerners (the president's henchmen) taking over virtually all economic and political power.

Meanwhile, Rwandans living in exile were pressing to return home,

but were met with no response from the government. Finally, in 1990 the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) launched an invasion from Uganda.

A series of agreements backed by the international community was signed between the RPF and the government of Rwanda to ensure a peaceful settlement of the Rwandan crisis.

On 6 April 1994, President Habyarimana signed a final agreement with the RPF, but on his way back from Dar-es-Salaam to Kigali his plane was shot down and he was killed.

Genocide

The Rwandan Genocide was the slaughter of an estimated 1 million Tutsis and some moderate Hutus, during a period of 100 days from 7th April to 16th July 1994.

The genocide had been in planning for a number of years, and was mostly carried out by two extremist Hutu militia groups, the Interahamwe and the Impuzamugambi, against Tutsi and some moderate Hutus across Rwanda. Nowhere was left unaffected.



For many, the Rwandan Genocide stands out as historically significant, not only because of the sheer number of people that were murdered in such a short period of time, but also because of the way many Western countries responded to the atrocities. Despite intelligence provided before the killing began, and international news media coverage reflecting the true scale of violence as the genocide unfolded, virtually all first-world countries declined to intervene.

The United Nations refused to authorise its peacekeeping operation in Rwanda at the time to take action to bring the killing to a halt. Despite numerous pre- and present-conflict warnings

by Canadian Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire, the UN peacekeepers on the ground were forbidden from engaging the militias or even discharging their weapons.

In the weeks prior to the attacks, the UN ignored reports of Hutu militias amassing weapons and rejected plans for a pre-emptive interdiction. It has been claimed that this failure to act became the focus of bitter recriminations towards individual policymakers, such as Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, as well as the United Nations and countries such as France and the United States more generally and President Clinton specifically. It has also been suggested that Clinton was kept informed on a

daily basis by his closest advisors and by the U.S. Embassy of Rwanda.

The genocide was brought to an end only when the Tutsi-dominated expatriate movement known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front, led by Paul Kagame, overthrew the Hutu government and seized power. Trying to escape accountability, hundreds of thousands of Hutu “genocidaires” and their accomplices fled into eastern Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo).

The violence and its memory continue to affect the country and the region.

After the Genocide

On 4th July 1994, Kigali fell to the RPF. The genocide finally ended in mid-July.



This site at Imbazi is a gravesite for the more than 16,000 people killed there.

In the resulting refugee crisis over two million Hutus fled the country.

Most have since returned, although some Hutus remained in the Democratic Republic of Congo,

including some militia members that became involved in wars in the Congo. Incursions into the

country by the exiled Hutu radical militia remains a concern for the government of Rwanda.

Following the end of the genocide, the RPF organised a coalition government similar to that established by President Juvénal Habyarimana in 1992. Called The Broad Based Government of National Unity, its fundamental law is based on a combination of the constitution, the Arusha accords, and political declarations by the parties. The MRND party was outlawed.

The first post-war presidential and legislative elections were held in August and September 2003, respectively. Paul Kagame received 95.1% of the vote in the national election which had a voter turnout of 96.55%. The Coalition, which includes the RPF, received 73.8% of the vote.

The biggest government pre-occupation has been the reintegration of more than two million refugees returning to Rwanda, some for the first time since 1959; prosecuting more than 40,000 individuals detained for crimes relating to the 1994 genocide; prosecuting the many more individuals scheduled to be tried under the gacaca system; preventing the recurrence of insurgency and counter-insurgency among ex-military and Interahamwe militia; and the shift away from crisis to medium and long-term development planning.

The prison population continues to be an urgent problem, and the release of prisoners back in to the community today is causing more and more problems for survivors

who are facing intimidation, and in some cases even murder, in reprisal action against them giving evidence at gacaca trials.

The year 2009, the fifteenth anniversary of the genocide, was marked with a commemoration in Kigali but today, Rwandans continue to struggle with the legacy of genocide and war. Rwandan genocidal leaders are on trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in the Rwandan National Court system, and, most recently, through gacaca traditional courts.

The current government prohibits any form of discrimination by ethnicity, race or religion. The government has also passed laws prohibiting emphasis on Hutu or Tutsi identity in most types of political activity.

Who is a Survivor?

We understand by “survivor” a person who has escaped a planned extermination of a group of people to which they belonged (genocide).



Charles Seromba and Siméon Karamaga are two survivors of Bisesero, where 143,000 were killed in the genocide.

A survivor can be also a person who escapes a natural catastrophe, calamity or an accident. A person or group of people will

be called survivors when they are part of “little that remains” of a bigger group of their initial number. In all cases, survivors

are a minority in comparison to the initial group that was targeted.

In the case of genocide, a survivor is in general a person stripped of everything and everybody. Most survivors are widows, orphans or widowers without biological relatives.

In the context of Rwanda, the government in place before and during the genocide of 1994 had sensitised and mobilised one group of the population to exterminate another based on ethnicity. The policy was a radical extermination and was called a final solution. The targeted group was that of Tutsi. A Hutu who opposed this policy was also killed, but in most cases his family was spared. So, here we understand that the term of survivors applies to Tutsis and moderate Hutus opposing genocide.

The survivors are usually deeply traumatised. They are witnesses of horror scenes that cannot quit their minds. Many women who survived have been raped and infected with HIV. A mother becomes childless; a child becomes a sole survivor, an orphan.

Children live on their own, and in this way they have no rights to be children at all. They must live as responsible adults.

Survivors of the genocide in Rwanda are alone, suffering feelings of rejection. They live in continual fear with great mistrust, although they are usually not afraid to die.

Survivors have visible and invisible scars, and permanent infirmity.

They have deep wounds in their hearts and may also develop psychosocial problems.

Despair, disgust of life, suicidal feelings, lack of interest in material things are common. If no one approaches them with love and understanding, many end up committing suicide. Numerous cases have been recorded.

Survivors never had time to mourn for their loved ones, let alone to bury them. I am reminded here of a child who kept going to the marketplace looking in the eyes of every man, asking him if he is her father.

This definition is provided by Jean Gakwandi, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide.

Survivors in Rwanda today

The 400,000 survivors in Rwanda today continue to face many challenges.



Cecille Mugeni and her 2 brothers, reunited together in a house constructed with funding from SURF

However, young survivors are building a brighter future.

Justice for survivors is the priority most often flagged up by our partners. Post-genocide justice

in Rwanda takes many forms, but SURF is working specifically to deliver restorative justice to

address education, healthcare, shelter and livelihoods for survivors.

A landmark report on survivors and post-genocide justice in Rwanda was published in November 2008 by African Rights and Redress, concluding that for most survivors “in addition to their daily struggles to merely exist, and to live, they continue to struggle, mostly in vain, for some measure of justice that is meaningful to them.”

Thus, SURF in partnership with IBUKA is campaigning for restorative justice to restore the lives of survivors as far as possible to how they were before the genocide, in light of a 2007 census on the living conditions of survivors, which reported that 40,000 survivors were without shelter, 27,500 were disabled due to injuries inflicted in the genocide, 15,000 young survivors were without access to school, and 8,000

survivors with no access to higher education.

It is a call for survivors to be given shelter in those cases where houses were destroyed during the genocide. It is a call for survivors to receive antiretroviral treatment for HIV and AIDS contracted due to rape during the genocide. It is a call for survivors to be supported through education and with income generating activities to compensate for their loss of schooling and livelihoods as a result of the genocide. In particular, it is a call for the legal rights of survivors to be protected, particularly as they are threatened by the release of the perpetrators of the genocide.

Remarkably, despite a UN General Assembly resolution (62/96) requesting the Secretary-

General to encourage UN programmes to provide assistance to survivors, survivors still receive little financial support from the international community. The Government of Rwanda has made a commitment to construct 20,000 houses for the most vulnerable households of survivors – but it does not have the funds to deliver this commitment.

One sign of hope is the generation of younger survivors which have received support and are now providing support to more vulnerable survivors – both the young and old. GAERG, the survivor’s association of university graduates, is a case in point. With the support, young survivors can rebuild their lives though there is a need for the foreseeable future to help those survivors too old or too isolated to help themselves.

Supporting Widows

Women suffered terribly during the genocide, particularly because sexual violence was exploited as a weapon of war. Many were left widowed, as men were targeted first in the killing.



Chased, beaten, brutalised, maimed and raped, after the madness of the 100 days women are still struggling to rebuild

their shattered lives. SURF plays a vital role, with its partner AVEGA, to support widows in Rwanda.

Poverty is a major constraint upon widows' ability to rebuild their shattered lives after genocide. Their collective predicament is to be drowning in a series of crises, none of them completely solvable. But unless they can find some economic security, they remain utterly dependent upon government or charitable aid in every aspect of their lives. Not only does this destroy their confidence and self-esteem on a daily basis, it is a profoundly insecure existence.

SURF helps provide funding for income-generating projects for widows, for example by giving grants to buy farmyard animals.

The animals provide vital sustenance and when money is needed, can be taken to market and sold. Such projects, often undertaken by groups of widows as co-operative ventures, also help build confidence, trust and a sense of ownership.

Trauma is a problem for survivors, exacerbated by the fact that there are so few trained counsellors. SURF spearheads a project that trains survivors to help each other and to listen to each other. This reduces isolation, creates space to speak, and enables survivors to share experiences. SURF helps these groups to form

formal organisations with legal responsibility and a vision to improve the lives of survivors, and helps them recruit and train qualified trauma counsellors.

SURF also aids widows in rural areas and runs two main centres, supporting over 7,000 widows to access trauma counselling, medical support, legal representation, as well as grants and loans. By paying lawyers to train women in their rights; SURF is helping women survivors to enforce their land rights and to reclaim property lost in the genocide.

Supporting Orphans

Of all survivors, the most needy are the children. Many of them are orphaned, left without the guidance and support of loving parents to raise and care for them.



260,000 children have been orphaned in Rwanda through HIV and AIDS, many forced to watch their parents die and face the possibility that they too could be infected. But many are too scared to get tested, do not understand why they are ill or are unaware that they have been at risk. SURF has set up a home-based care project, which reaches out to these orphans. Counsellors and carers together provide a “family” set up for children experiencing isolation and loneliness, with nowhere to turn for medical support, hospital costs, information, advice or counselling or protection.

These children and orphans are often left to fend for themselves. They are forced to quit school, join the workforce and care for younger siblings.

SURF is also helping young adults who have dropped out of school to look after their siblings. By helping them acquire vocational skills enables them to set up businesses and increases job opportunities. In addition, over 2000 orphan-headed households have received grants from SURF for income generating activities such as farming and animal husbandry.

Many children have no inheritance from parents – neither money nor land; they have had to fend for their basic needs including the provision of shelter for their siblings. SURF helps by working with local communities to acquire land rights and allocation for children. Over 200 children were

Often they are the caregivers, sometimes to more than ten siblings. They are disadvantaged in every sense of the word.

recently housed in Gitarama in 40 houses built through efforts coordinated by SURF.

There is also a vital need to educate child survivors on the roots of the genocide, as often they do not have anyone to ask questions or anywhere to find answers. These children have had no psychosocial support. Yet they need to be reassured that the genocide was not their fault and that it will not happen again. They need to be listened to; to be encouraged to speak; to be allowed to ask questions; and to be told the truth about what really happened. SURF provides that support and education.

Memory

About 400,000 women and children survived the genocide. It is vital to ensure that their memory of the genocide is preserved, as well as the memory of the one million victims.



This memorial site in Rutonde is sited near the new Kamonyi Survivor's Centre.



SURF funded the construction of the Never Again Memorial in Kamonyi, and has built over 50 others throughout the country.

An important component of survivors' healing is 'remembrance' - to sustain the memory and the lessons of the genocide. Incredibly, even today, some individuals and countries still harbour the notion that genocide never happened in Rwanda. And survivors are so focused on just surviving that for many preserving the memory of genocide is difficult.

In light of the numbers of survivors that are dying, it is now vital to ensure that the testimonies of survivors are recorded and preserved; and that all survivors

In the midst of the difficult circumstances affecting survivors, there is a fear that the world will forget and lose interest in the genocide. Over the years the importance of preserving memory, protecting mass graves and ensuring visible statements to the horrors endured has become increasingly important.

are given access to healthcare, shelter and education.

SURF facilitated a partnership between IBUKA (the national umbrella body of survivors' organisations) and the Shoah Foundation, which will aim to preserve the memory of genocide through the recording of survivor's testimonies. This work will be supported by the Kamonyi Survivor's Centre, constructed by SURF, in a partnership with the National University of Rwanda (Butare) to establish a historical archive of pre-independence Rwanda. The facts and lessons of pre-genocide life and of the

genocide era will be used to create a better future.

The Centre will serve as a living testimony of the genocide and as a resource to scholars who want to learn the lessons of the genocide. The end result will be the perpetuation of the memory of the victims and survivors of the Rwandan genocide. Future generations in Rwanda, and across the world, will access these shared memories as evidence of what happened during the genocide and the Centre will be a living testimony to the crime that was committed against the entire human race.

Memorial Sites

A key element of the work of Survivors Fund is the building of memorial sites in Rwanda.



Memorial sites, like the Isimbi, dot the Rwanda landscape everywhere. They are a constant reminder of pain and trauma suffered by the genocide victims. The Isimbi Memorial Centre is a grave for 25,000 people.



This simple memorial site serves also as a mass grave in Nyamashekye and is testament to the scale of the killing. There are 40,000 people buried here.

Many genocide victims were never given a formal burial. In confessions during gacaca trials, killers have admitted where bodies were dumped. SURF is working with survivors to locate the bodies and to give victims the dignified burial so important for allowing survivors a sense of closure.

Memorial sites are often built atop mass graves, and serve as a permanent testament to the events of 1994. They stand as reminders of the genocide for future generations and all people trying to belittle, rewrite or even worse, deny, the genocide.

As well as sheltering remains of the genocide victims, memorial sites often have recordings of testimonies by survivors and perpetrators, clothes and photos documenting the genocide. Others have pangas, machete and tools used by the killers on display.

In some instances, the mass graves remain open, as bodies continue to be discovered and buried. However, a number of mass graves have been sealed, as the coffins stored reached capacity.

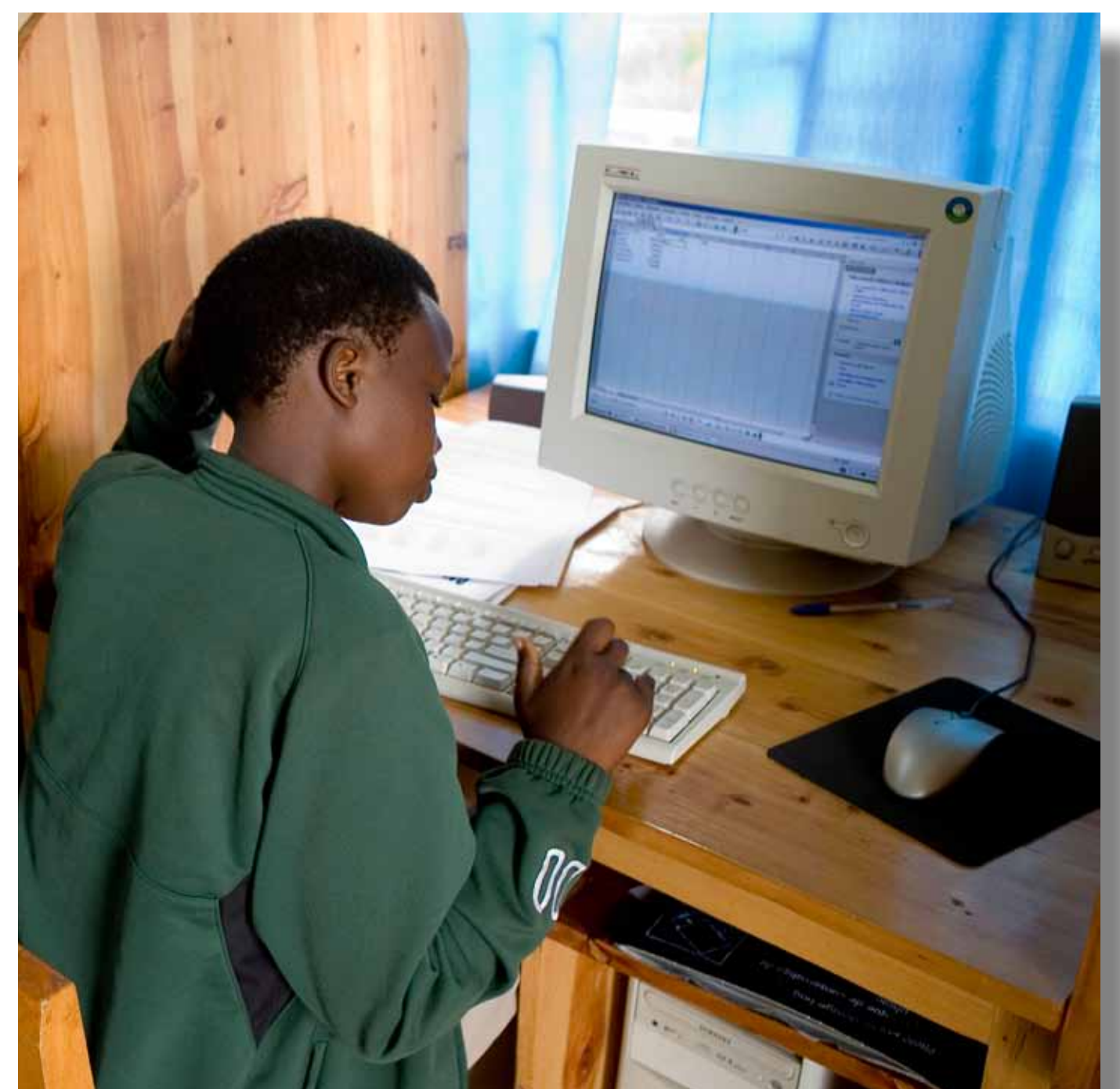
SURF, with its grassroots partners, has helped to build over 50 mass graves and memorial sites. Each one is vitally important, for local survivors to pay their respects to family and friends killed in the genocide – whether or not their bodies have been found. As well, the sites give survivors a place to meditate and reflect on their loss.

The burial programme has been made possible largely through funding from Comic Relief. In total SURF has helped to give a decent burial to over 300,000 victims of the genocide.

Even today, many bodies still remain undiscovered in ditches, toilets, bushes and unmarked mass graves. But survivors have not given up hope that eventually they will be able to lay to rest all the victims of the genocide.

Education

For young survivors, education is their only hope for the future, the best chance to give meaning, restore order to and ultimately rebuild their lives.



Young survivors receive IT skills training at the AVEGA Eastern Region Computer Centre, a project funded by SURF



A cow purchased with a grant from the Good Gifts provides income for dependents of survivors to attend school

Survivors face innumerable challenges today, in particular accessing education. Orphan heads of households are forced to choose between attending school or sacrificing their education, and thus their future, to enable their younger siblings to do so. The Government Assistance Fund for Survivors (FARG) provides educational support to orphans through secondary school. Even in that aim its funding is limited to support just one-in-four applicants that meet the criteria for receiving support. Thus the decision is made on the basis of merit, and inevitably the most vulnerable orphaned heads-of-households are those that miss out – because due to manifold responsibilities, in

For the children who escaped the genocide, securing access to education invariably means overcoming crippling economic problems, trauma, disability or ill-health and facing prejudice, fear and loneliness. Sometimes the difficulties are insurmountable.

particular caring for dependents, they may not perform academically as well as they do not have the resources or time to commit to the study. However, this does not mean they are any less intellectually gifted. As a consequence, despite well intentioned efforts by the Government of Rwanda, assistance to survivors is inadequate. Survivors are left to struggle on by themselves, many so traumatised and impoverished that they see survival itself as a burden almost too great to bear.

Many are prepared to attend classes although they are hungry and lack any of the necessary equipment, including notebooks and pens. Family members will make considerable sacrifices to help finance education; despite the fact that they are poor themselves. Many survivors are denied access to school due to lacking uniform

and shoes – mandatory for attendance.

Since 1997, SURF has helped over ten thousand orphans into school, and over 100 orphans into university. Primary school is today universally free in Rwanda, though the cost for tuition at secondary school is over £100 a year, rising to nearly £1,000 a year for university. In a unique programme with our US-based partner Foundation Rwanda, SURF is extending its support to fund secondary school education to over 200 children born to women survivors raped during the genocide.

Education is a route out of destitution for survivors, significantly impacting life chances. It provides survivors with the confidence and the skills to ultimately become independent. There is no greater gift that a donor can give.

Justice

Despite efforts, survivors are still waiting for justice. Thousands involved in perpetrating the genocide have been released from prison and continue to harass, and even kill, survivors.



The gacaca court system has proven less than adequate when meeting the needs of survivors



Survivors of the Rwandan genocide are not protected or provided for in the legal process.

In particular, tougher measures must be taken against those who commit reprisals against survivors for giving such evidence. Security is paramount to the physical, as well as psychological, wellbeing of survivors. However, that is just one aspect of justice that is vital to survivors.

Compensation for all that the survivors lost during the genocide, is a critical issue too, and still a subject of political debate. Though money can never be any substitute, it can at least alleviate the poverty resulting from lost livelihoods. For many of the widows and young girls raped during the genocide,

The country no longer has the resource to continue to keep all involved in the genocide incarcerated, and so by admitting guilt at a local gacaca

especially those infected with HIV that have no access to vital antiretroviral treatment, they have little left to live for except death. That is why access to treatment, in a survivor friendly environment, respecting confidentiality and other psychological requirements, must be availed.

The question remains, how will survivors continue to survive? The international community owes a responsibility to the survivors, due to their inaction before, during and immediately after the genocide. But on the whole, with a few notable exceptions, UK included, few countries have been willing to meet the challenge to help support

(community-based) trial they are now free. Action needs to be taken to protect survivors who serve as witnesses at these trials.

the survivors. To ensure justice, the international community must play a more active role in supporting survivors, more than just bankrolling the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha.

With an annual budget of \$178 million – one quarter of the national budget of Rwanda – the ICTR in 10 years has convicted less than 50 people. With the ICTR set to conclude in 2010, the same commitment must be made to ensure the same level of funding is diverted to the survivors in Rwanda that so desperately need the support.

Gacaca

Gacaca courts in Rwanda have heard over 1 million genocide cases since their establishment in 2001. The ongoing release of genocide prisoners has left survivors vulnerable.



The repercussions of the genocide continue in Rwanda today, as the remains of victims continue to be identified

Due to the backlog of genocide cases, the Government reestablished a traditional system of community courts

nationwide to try to achieve truth and reconciliation and expedite the trial of the 130,000 incarcerated

genocide suspects and to determine the punishment for those guilty of genocide crimes.

Personal security for survivors in Rwanda is an ever more pressing concern today than at any time since the genocide due to the release of genocide prisoners. The country no longer has the resources to keep these men incarcerated, and so by admitting guilt at gacaca courts, the perpetrators are now free.

Those who confess are ‘forgiven’ and serve a reduced sentence, half of which is community service, while those who refuse can face 25 to 30 years in prison. Over 50,000 low-level category perpetrators of genocide have been released.

Through an ongoing monitoring project, IBUKA has documented 100 survivors that have been killed as a direct result of giving evidence

at gacaca. Very little funding has been available to support survivors to prepare their cases at gacaca, to provide them with representation or to enable them to deal with the trauma of reliving their experiences during the genocide, as recounted in detail by prisoners as well as conveyed by themselves in giving evidence.

Rwanda’s challenge is that there is no viable alternative but gacaca to deal with the unsustainable population of imprisoned genocide suspects. Though the process has brought some benefit to survivors, in particular in resulting in the identification of the location of victims of the genocide enabling SURF to provide a proper burial for them, it has also created manifold problems.

The Government of Rwanda provided funding to IBUKA, matched by the Belgian Government, to retain 48 paralegals to provide legal support for survivors at gacaca. However, as gacaca is wound down in 2009, this funding is due to come to an end – but the threat to survivors remains.

In many cases, prisoners have admitted their guilt to secure more lenient sentencing, but without any genuine remorse. Gacaca has helped to establish a greater truth about who was involved in the genocide and what atrocities were committed, however it has yet to deliver reconciliation and justice will never be served for survivors through the process.

Survivors in the UK

There are estimated to be 1,500 survivors of the Rwandan genocide dispersed across the UK, many continuing to endure trauma, isolation and poverty.



SURF Co-Chair, Liliane Umubyeyi, speaking at the 10th Anniversary of SURF at City Hall in 2007.



SURF Trustee, Jean Louis Mazimpaka, speaking at the 15th Anniversary Commemoration of the Genocide in April 2009

The main regions of concentration of survivors in the UK are in the West Midlands, Merseyside and London, though many are isolated from one another due to the policy of dispersal adopted by the Home Office. Most are the sole survivors within their families, and thus lack any social support structures; the only network they have is the solidarity of other survivors.

Survivors largely are educationally disadvantaged and economically deprived. Those in employment are most often in low-income jobs as their education was disrupted or did not progress due to the genocide and their move to the UK. This is compounded by trauma,

Following the genocide in Rwanda, survivors sought asylum in the UK. A disproportionate number were young orphans, victims of sexual violence. Since its inception SURF has provided support to UK-based survivors, providing solidarity and access to mental health services, legal representation and hardship grants.

which SURF has helped to address in a partnership with the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture.

Even today, survivors are still awaiting their claims for asylum to be resolved. Redress is one of a number of organisations which legally represents survivors. However survivors continue to be deported despite the very real threat that awaits them in Rwanda due to the ongoing release of prisoners of the genocide.

This injustice is exacerbated as perpetrators of the genocide live openly in the UK, resulting in a great sense of insecurity amongst the survivor community. Only in 2009 has legislation been changed to allow for the deportation of a number of genocidaires for whom there are arrest warrants in Rwanda.

With the right support, UK-based survivors can rebuild their lives. SURF Co-Chair Liliane Umubyeyi exemplifies the fact, arriving in the UK barely speaking English, orphaned, and a victim of sexual violence, Liliane is now a leading advocate for the survivor community and is herself a young mother.

In partnership with Hope Survivors Foundation, an organisation led by and for survivors in the UK, SURF is working to empower the survivor community to deliver holistic support to survivors. Directed by SURF Trustee, Jean Louis Mazimpaka, Hope is modeling its work on the Holocaust Survivors Centre in Hendon to address all the needs of Rwandan survivors in the UK.

Survivors Fund

Survivors Fund, or SURF, is a charity dedicated to aiding and assisting the survivors of the Rwandan genocide.



Mary Kayitesi Blewitt OBE, Founder of SURF, with the survivors of Bisesero.

Since 1997, SURF has been supporting survivors to rebuild their lives and to meet post genocide challenges. Whether

providing medical care for women survivors with HIV and AIDS or home building for orphan-headed households,

SURF strives to help survivors rebuild a sense of self and trust in humanity.

Programmes are delivered through partner organisations, including AVEGA, IBUKA, GAERG and Solace Ministries in Rwanda. SURF also provides psychological support to survivors residing in the UK.

SURF was founded by Mary Kayitesi Blewitt at the behest of survivors. She herself lost 50 family members during the genocide in 1994. Her support for survivors started back in 1995 after returning to the UK from eight months working for the Ministry of Rehabilitation in Rwanda.

In 1997 Mary formally established SURF to continue to aid, assist and support survivors in the UK and Rwanda too.

SURF is working to ensure that Rwanda's genocide:

- Victims are never forgotten
- Survivors are always heard and supported – in Rwanda and the UK

SURF has achieved a great deal since its inception:

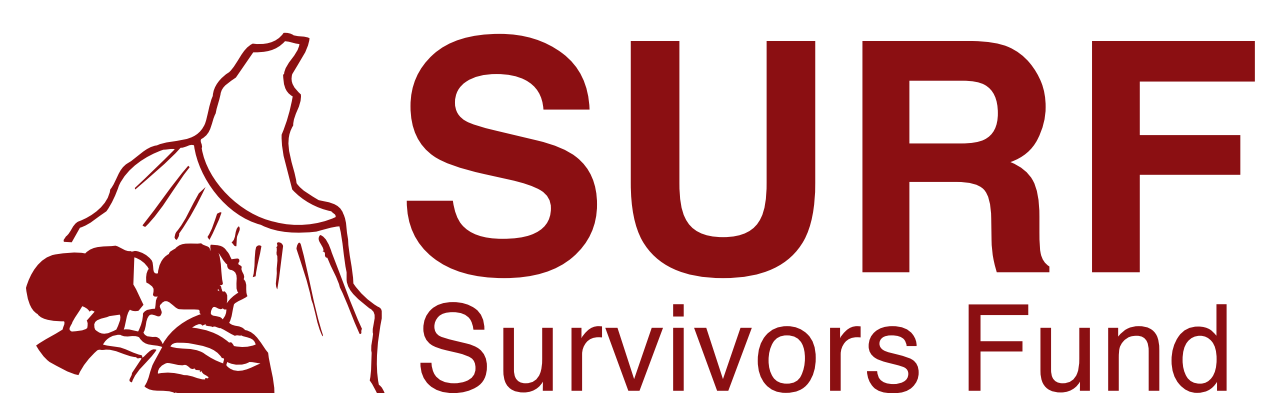
- 17,500 survivors today receive medical treatment through health clinics established by SURF
- 40,000 survivors are now self-sufficient through income-generating activities funded by SURF
- 300,000 victims of the genocide have been buried in mass graves constructed by SURF

Over the years, SURF has helped:

- Opened a new health clinic and community centre in Ntarama to serve 3,000 survivors
- Distributed livestock to over 15,000 survivors through a programme funded by Good Gifts
- Provided educational support to over 5,000 orphaned survivors and dependents of survivors

Through funding from the UK DFID, SURF supports 2,500 women survivors raped and infected with HIV during the genocide through a Care and Treatment Project.

Survivors Fund (SURF) is a registered charity number 1065705.



www.survivors-fund.org.uk

Remembering the Dead

These are the names of just some of the victims of the massacre at Bisesero. They are from Commune Gishyita, Cellule Nyarutova. In all,

there are over 70,000 individual victims of the genocide buried at the Memorial Site in Bisesero. Siméon was one of the few who survived.



The Bisesro Memorial Site is a tribute to the more than 143,000 people who were killed there.

Stephanie Abarikumwe
Oscar Ibitonga
Jean Abiyigoma
Bernard Atazari
Mukanama Ahishakiye
Madellene Akayezu
Andree Ahowenda
Chantal Akimana
Esperence Akimana
Sammuel Akimapyaye
Alphonsina Gasigwa
Innocent Ayabagabo
Agnes Ayingeneeye
Immaculle Ayingeneeye
Dativa Ayinkamiye
Veneranda Ayinkamiye
Joseph Ayinkamiye
Gaspard Ayirwanda
Madeline Ayuruvugo
Cyprien Bacungu
Viarey Badege
Alphonse Bagema
Dativa irinka
Anne-Marie Bagiriwabo
Sylvestre Bahimana
Laurent Bakinahe
Claire Bakunde
Leonadas Bakundukize
Marie Louise Bamurange
Francoise Bamurange
Samuel Banamwana
Damascene Bandora
Martin Bandora
Julida Bankundiye
Zacar Banyanga
Jafeti Barayibaze
Marc Baributsa
Cyprien Baritonda
Stefanebasabose
Cecile Basaninyange
Theresse Basaninyange
Tereza Basaninyange
Rutaremera Baseke
Daniel Bashimiki
Pierre Basomengera
Oreste Batsinda
Eugene Bayagambe
Eugene Bayingana
Leo Bayingane
Albert Bayingana
Aphrodis Bayingana
Emmille Bayingana
Seph Bayinana
Syrarque Bayingana
Theresse Bayingana
Marie Rose Bayiringire
Esther Bayiringire
Richaard Bayiringire
Samuel Bazambaza
Anastassie Bazarama

Gerald Bazasagwa
Rose Bazibagira
Leonard Bazira
Zaburi Bazimaziki
Daudi Bazirunge
Agnes Benimana
Marie Pierre Benimana
Zacherie Bideri
Athanase Bikorimana
Athanase Bikorimana
Innocent Bikorimana
Martin Bikorimana
Nyandwi Bikorimana
Pascal Bikorimana
Agnes Bimenyimana
Aile Bimenyimana
Amoni Bimenyimana
Augustin Bimenyimana
Emmanuel Bimenyimana
Jean Bimenyimana
Jonas Bimenyimana
Paul Bimenyimana
Simon Bimenyimana
Pascal Binyura
Dieudonne Birara
Pierre Birara
Thomas Birara
Uziel Birara
Thomas Birara
Aminadabu Biraro
Augustin Biraro
Beatrice Birasa
Emmanuel Birasa
Samuel Birasa
Amon Biregeye
Adela Birinka
Venant Bisamaza
Sathierie Bisanana
Joseph Bisengimana
Michel Bisengimana
Sostene Basengimana
Thomas Bisengimana
Paul Bitega
Thomas Bitega
Emmille Biterisenge
Eduard Bitotori
Rodomoro Bitwayiki
Augustin Bizimana
Celestin Bizimana
Deo Bizimana
Erick Bizimana
Francoise Bizimana
Francois Bizimana
Jean Biziman
Joe Bizimana
Justin Bizimana
Narcisse Bizimana
Ngezayo Bizimana
Paul Bizimana
Rahabiya Bizimana

Sylvestre Bizimana
Thimothee Bizimana
Thomas Bizimana
Angrebert Bizimungu
Athanase Bizimungu
Baziri Bizimungu
Boniface Bizimungu
Edithe Bizimungu
Elamu Bizimungu
Joram Bizimungu
Matieu Bizimungu
Venuste Bizimungu
Margarite Bizuru
Apolinari Boyi
Boniface Boyi
Eliezel Bucari
Xaverie Bucinkeri
Rosarie Buciringa
Celestin Bucyana
Ezekiyasi Bucyana
Alhonsine Bucyedusenga
Bikorimana Budori
Deus Butundi
Jean Bugenimana
Leonie Begenimana
Valens Bugenimana
Martin Buggingo
Elias Buhanga
Laurence Buhigiro
Elieli Buhigiro
Martin Buhigiro
Pascal Buhigiro
Immaculee Bukedusenge
Damien Bunjuru
Aphrodis Bunyenzi
Isaie Burasa
Athanase Buregeya
Eliazar Buregeya
Yuriya Buregeya
Gahizi Burimuntu
Evariste Buringongo
Pauline Busasa
Marc Busizori
Simon Busoro
Deo Busugugu
Filmen Busugugu
Pascal Busugugu
Kanyenzi Busurira
Alphonse Butaza
Leonidas Butaza
Erick Butera
Casimir Butera
Emmanuel Butera
Aphurem Butera
Ephraham Butera
Ezekiyasi Butera
Helson Butera
Francois Butera
Eustache Butokoli
Jean Butorano
Xavera Butorano

Mugenga Butitsi
Emmanuel Buyenzi
Innocent Buyuki
Veredyana Buzagwra
Joseph Buzizi
Athanazi Bwana
Bwanakweri
Bernard Bwanakweli
Charlotte Banakweli
Dismas Bwanakweli
Francois Bwisore
Laurent Byamenyedwa
Christine Byukuseke
Jeanne Byukuseke
Desire Candali
Damascene Celebataire
Bernard Coline
Evariste Cyamajanja
Estoli Cyubahiro
Gaspard Cyuma
Ntagara Cyuma
Alphonsine Cyurinyana
Theresse Cyurinyana
Kazimir Dimoroso
Emmanuel Dukuze
Louise Dulinker
Martin Dumiri
Raphael Dusade
Laurence Dusabirema
Kolini Fille
Bebe Manasse
Adriya Fille Anselme
Felicite Fille Anselme
Pascasie Fille Anselme
Immaculee Mukamazimpaka
Gerturida Fille Mukankusi
Yudit Segatarama
Samuel Gatorana
Xavear Mukashema
Gaudence Fitina
Jacques Fundi
Jeremie Fundi
Francois Furere
Frederic Furere
Canisius Gabiro
Silas Gacumbitsi
Francois Gafayire
Martin Gaturafura
Alphonse Gahogo
Amosi Gahamanyi
Amoni Gahiga
Francois Gahiga
Simeon Gelesti
Celestin Gahima
Ntagara Gahinja
Zacarie Gahirigiro
Helson Gahizi
Joram gahizi
Patrice Gakara
Asiel Gakeri

Bujiya Gakimane
Elie Gakimane
Simon Gakimane
Aimerence Gakirage
Francois Gakuba
Gerevase Gakuba
Jean Gakunzi
Prosper Gakuru
Edouard Gakwandi
Tharcisse Gakwandi
Wellars Gakwandi
Claudien Gakwavu
Ladislav Gakwavu
Bernard Gakwaya
Casien Gakwaya
Eduard Gakwaya
Eudisie Gakwaya
Nery Gakwaya
Damascene Gakweri
Leocadie Gakwisi
Madeste Gperu
Aminadab Gasagara
2Euphem Gasagara
Kazimir Gasagara
Philippe Gasagara
Antoine Gasakindi
Claver Gasamagera
Raphael Gasambi
Edmon Gasamunyu
Paul Gasamunyu
Adimon Gasamunyu
Paul Gasamunyu
Vianney Gasamunyu
Amon Gasana
Canisius Gasana
Daniel Gasana
Evariste Gasana
Felecion Gasana
Gaspard Gasana
Innocent Gasana
Leo Gasana
Manisemi Gasana
Narcisse Gasana
Christophe Gasarabwe
Claude Gasarabwe
Joram Gasarabwe
Philippe Gasarabwe
Viateur Gasarabwe
Anastate Gasarasi
Bonaventure Gasarasi
Casimir Gasare
Apolinarie Gasasira
Dominque Gasasira
Eduard Gasasira
Gaspard Gasasira
Joseph Gasasira
Epimake Gasesero
Idnace Gashabizi
Paul Gashabizi
Zambya Gashabizi

Augustin Gashaka
Petit Gashaka
Thomas Gashakamba
Gratien Gashanana
Aime Gashema
Pascal Gashema
Samuel Gshema
Paul Gshema
Charles Gasherebuka
Marthe Gasherebuka
Virginie Gasherebuka
Narcisse Giswika
Simeo Gashirabuke
Jeanne Gashonga
Athanase Gashugi
Beata Gashugi
Boniface Gashugi
Charles Gshugi
Damien Gashugi
Musabyimana Gashugi
Narcise Gashugi
Li Gashugi
Simon Gashugi
Jean Gashumba
Anastase Gasiga
Elidad Gasigwa
Felicien Gasigwa
Jean Bosco Gasigwa
Deo Gasinga
Emile Gasingwa
Phillipe Gasore
Grvais Gasurubebe
Martin Gatabarwa
Amon Gatabazi
Andree Gatabazi
Ignace Gatabazi
Athanase Gatana
Gaithan Gatana
Thomas Gatana
Eliyezeri Gatanazi
Martin Gatarayiha
Samuel Gatare
Aluphred Gatayisire
Charles Gatayisire
Calixte Gatara
Austache Gatara
Aimable Gatete
Jean Gatorano
Titus Gatoto
Emile Gatre
Berina Gatsama
Suzana Gatsama
Tabeya Gatsama
Gaspard Gatsitsi
Mathias Gatwa
Alphonse Gatwaza
Bernadette Gatwaza
Emmanuel Gatwaza
Mathias Gatwaza
Venuste Gatwaza

Bunzinya Gatwaza
Mugirwanake Gena
Caneziyo Gahinira
Francois Gihirira
Antoine Giruwonsanga
Abraham Gisoma
Thomas Gitongana
Celestin Gombanro
Charles Gtaysire
Samuel Gumiriza
Eugene Habamungu
Thomas Habanabakize
Yasoni Habarurema
Pascal Habayona
Charles Habayo
Charles Habayo
Ezekiel Habayo
Afrodis Habimana
Alias habimana
Alphonse Habimana
Augustin Habimana
Celine Hababimana
Cyliver Habimana
Danier Habimana
Deo Habimana
Emmanuel Habimana
Fidele Habimana
Frouduardo Habimana
Innocent Habimana
Jean Habimana
Leonard Habimana
Marcel Habimana
Pangras Habimana
Samweri Habimana
Selge Habimana
Sostene Habimana
Sephano Habimana
Uziyeri Habimana
Aaron Habimana
Esiraheiri Habineza
Seth Habineza
Thomas Habineza
Jean Habiyaambere
Aminadab Habiyaambere
Charles Habiyaambere
Clemence Habiyaambere
Damascene Habiyaambere
Emmanuel Habiyaambere
Ignace Habiyaambere
Pascal Habiyaambere
Simon Habiyaambere
Antoine Hakizima
Augustine Hakizimana
Claver Hakizimana
Damien Hakizimana
Elidade Hakizimana
Emmanuel Hakizima
Geral Hakizimana
Kibwa Hakizimana
Martin Hakizimana
Pascal Hakizimana

Ange: Growing Up

Ange Cendrin Mukayitesi was born in 1983 to Etienne Habiyambere and Acassilde Kabagwira in Cyangugu Prefecture, in Murambi Commune, the district of Giheke.



“ I was eleven years old when the genocide began, and in primary 4 at school. All three of my siblings, one sister and two brothers

survived the genocide. But my parents did not. We were lucky, but I did sustain severe injuries when I was cut with a machete.

Before the 1994 genocide, my father had a job at a local tea factory in Shagisha and my mother was a farmer. My father's job provided for the family. My mother was able to grow enough food, not only to feed the family but also to have surplus produce to sell on for money.

We lived close to my father's relatives, who I always enjoyed seeing. We lived in harmony with our neighbours, and I enjoyed a normal and happy childhood. The only exception was at school. My teacher used to separate Tutsis from the rest of the class who

were Hutu. We were often sent out of the classroom, made to stand outside whilst the rest of the students were taught and able to get on with their work.

I didn't really understand the implications of being a Tutsi. My parents never discussed it with me so when the teacher filled the registration form and put me down as a Tutsi, I didn't mind.

It was only when the genocide began that I learned what it meant to be a Tutsi. Until then, I had been sheltered from hate and discrimination. Because we

lived close to my father's relatives, I always had the comfort of a strong family. The only people I ever encountered, apart from my teachers, were my relatives. I felt safe and protected all the time.

My name Mukayitesi translates into English as 'one who deserves spoiling'. That definitely was the case growing up as my family treated me as a princess. But when the genocide arrived, it shattered my dreams. ”

For Ange's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Cassien: Escape

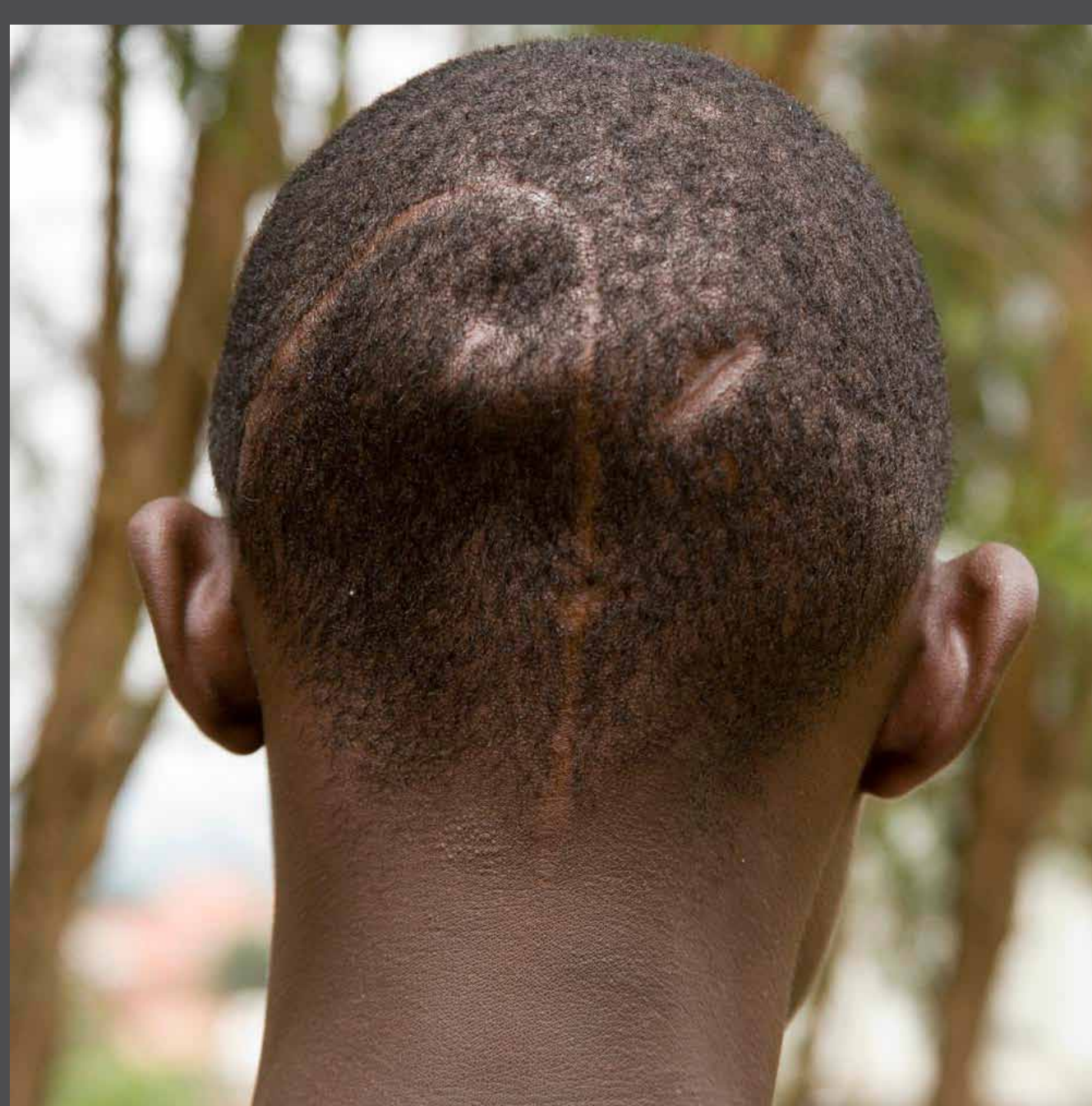
Cassien Mbanda was 10 years old at the time of the genocide, and lived in Kigali. He had two sisters, and a brother.



“ I was in Bicumbi visiting my grandmother and cousins when the genocide began.

We hid in a nearby farm but were found by a group of local men. I managed to escape, and hid in

the bush, but when I returned I found my grandmother and three cousins dead.



But my youngest cousin, Kayiranga, only 4, was still alive. We joined the masses fleeing to Ruhanga hill. All night we walked, finally approaching the swamp at Rugende. But the *Interahamwe* had set up a roadblock. Immediately they began shooting at us. We ran and struggled through the swamp.

machetes and clubs as dogs were used to smoke us out. We managed to stay hidden and would forage for food, but one day were met by three teenagers armed with pangas and machetes. They chased us, and caught my cousin. He was killed. I managed to escape. I still see those boys today. They never faced justice.

I was alone. I decided seek refuge in the home of a family friend. But they informed the *Interahamwe* so I was forced to flee again. But I was caught and taken to a cesspit to be killed. I was hit on the head with a club and sticks till I was at the point of death and then thrown into the pit. They then threw stones down at me to ensure I was dead. They then threw other bodies atop

of me.

But I survived. The group's leader ordered for me to be pulled out of the pit. They then took me to a clinic, where I was treated. I had a broken leg, broken arm, and my head was covered in wounds too. But it was too dangerous to stay. Under the cover of darkness I escaped to my grandmother's house.

I collapsed, and awoke to find a soldier standing over me. He led me into the bush. I did not know if he planned to kill me. But when I saw other soldiers and they gave me some ripe bananas to eat, for the first time since the genocide had started, I began to feel safe. ”

We hid in the bushes, and saw many people slaughtered with

For Cassien's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Ange: The Congo

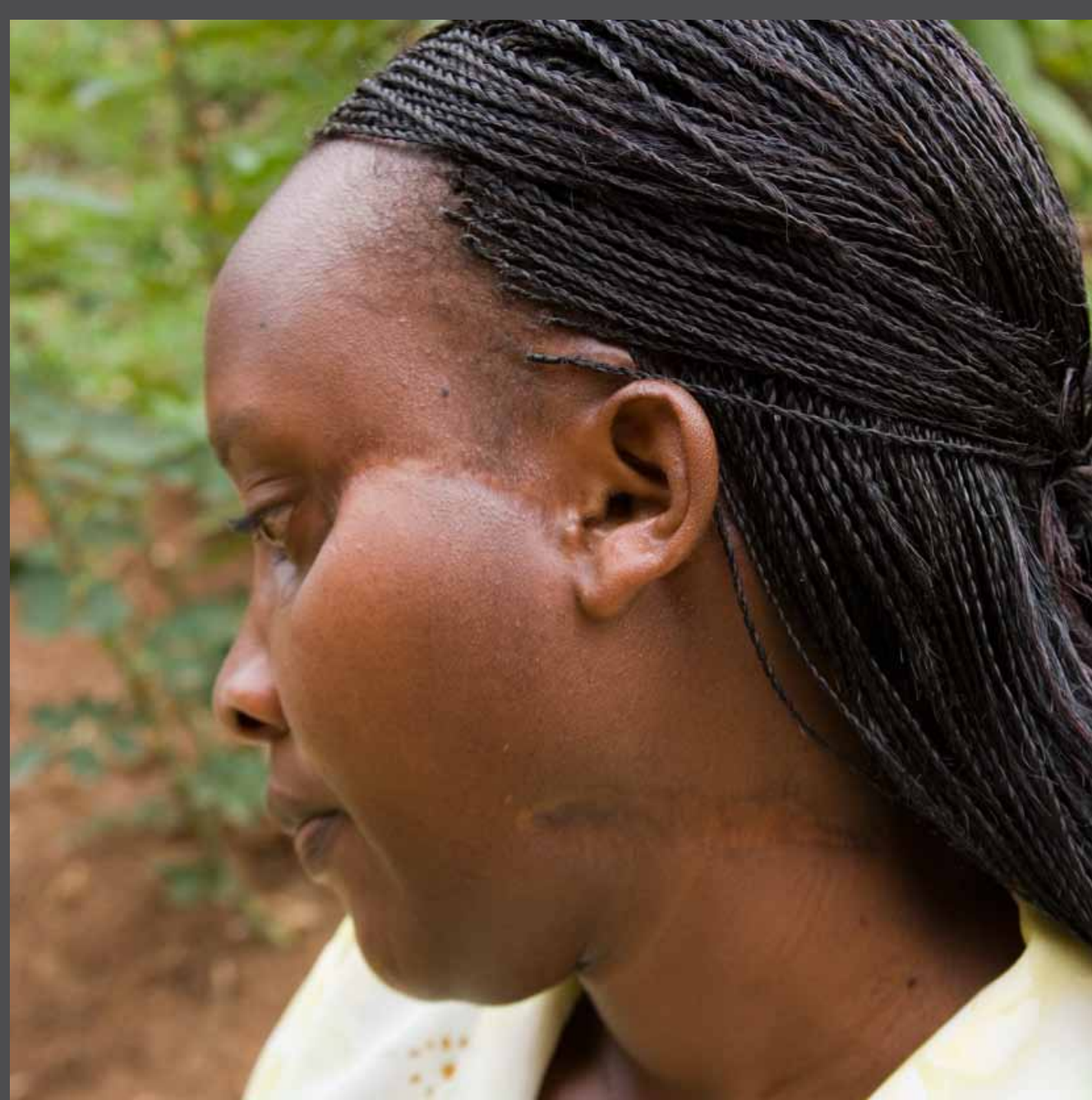
“ My godmother’s family escaped to the Congo, taking me with them because they said the cockroaches were killing all people they found.



When we got to the roadblock, the *Interahamwe* killed all people that they suspected of being

Tutsi. Even for being tall, you were cut down. I had seen my father murdered, so was immune to all

the killing. But the noises and cries seem to come from another world.



We eventually reached the Congolese border. The killings intensified. I saw many people cut with machetes thrown in Lake Kivu. There were so many people at the border crossing that I could not make sense of who was killing whom. We managed to pass, as my godmother’s son was known and feared by everyone as he was head of the *Interahamwe* in his district.

We made it to a refugee camp, where there was a mobile clinic treating people for free. I asked permission to go and get treated but I was told I would be killed if I went there. But when I couldn’t take the pain anymore, I went there secretly. They cleaned and dressed my wounds.

The family decided to move further into Congo to another camp in Bukavu. Slowly my speech returned, for the first time since I had been raped and my face and neck had been slashed. Sometimes I got jobs with Congolese farmers and they would either give me food to take home or money.

There were meetings at the camp where they would discuss the Tutsis hiding among us. An order was put out to kill any Tutsi

they found. One night a group of men came to our plastic sheeting shelter, but my godmother’s son was a known *Interahamwe* so we were left alone.

Soon after, he gave me an ultimatum, to marry his brother or to hand me over to *Interahamwe*. I had no choice. I was now an official wife, with the support of the family.

One day I was spotted by a man who claimed he knew me as a Tutsi and informed the camp leader. I knew it was no longer safe. I met a Hutu girl who worked for the Red Cross. She was nice to me and secretly took me to register. The next day, I was driven back to Rwanda as they had information on my father’s sister. I was reunited with her. ”

For Ange’s full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Siméon: Resistance

Siméon
Karamaga fought
in the resistance
at Bisesero, but
lost his wife and
eight children in
the genocide.



“ I am a cattle breeder from the Abanyiginya tribe. Bisesero was a strong, united community and had been

attacked during previous troubles in 1959, 1962, 1973 and 1990. Nothing though could prepare us for the killings in 1994.

Many Tutsis came to Bisesero from other regions because they thought that the area was safe. Everyone thought that the military would be unable to attack the Bisesero area because we were warriors, and we had defended ourselves so ably in the past. However, this time was different. The militia attacked us at the very beginning of the genocide.

The militiamen launched their attack on Gishyita on Friday and Sunday. We were still in our homes. We could hear our neighbour call for help that people were dying. We then decided that whoever tries to kill us, we will kill them first. Otherwise there was no hope of survival, as we were

surrounded. It was the militia that were doing the killing, but our neighbours were still frightened of us. They began to mix with the soldiers.

We fought back, but were increasingly forced into a corner. That morning we took our clubs, machetes and spears and tried to drive back the attack that the militiamen had launched on us. We succeeded, but only after having lost nine of our people. This was because the militia had such an advantage, being armed with guns. But despite this, they ran away.

Only after they had retreated, did we realise how serious things were

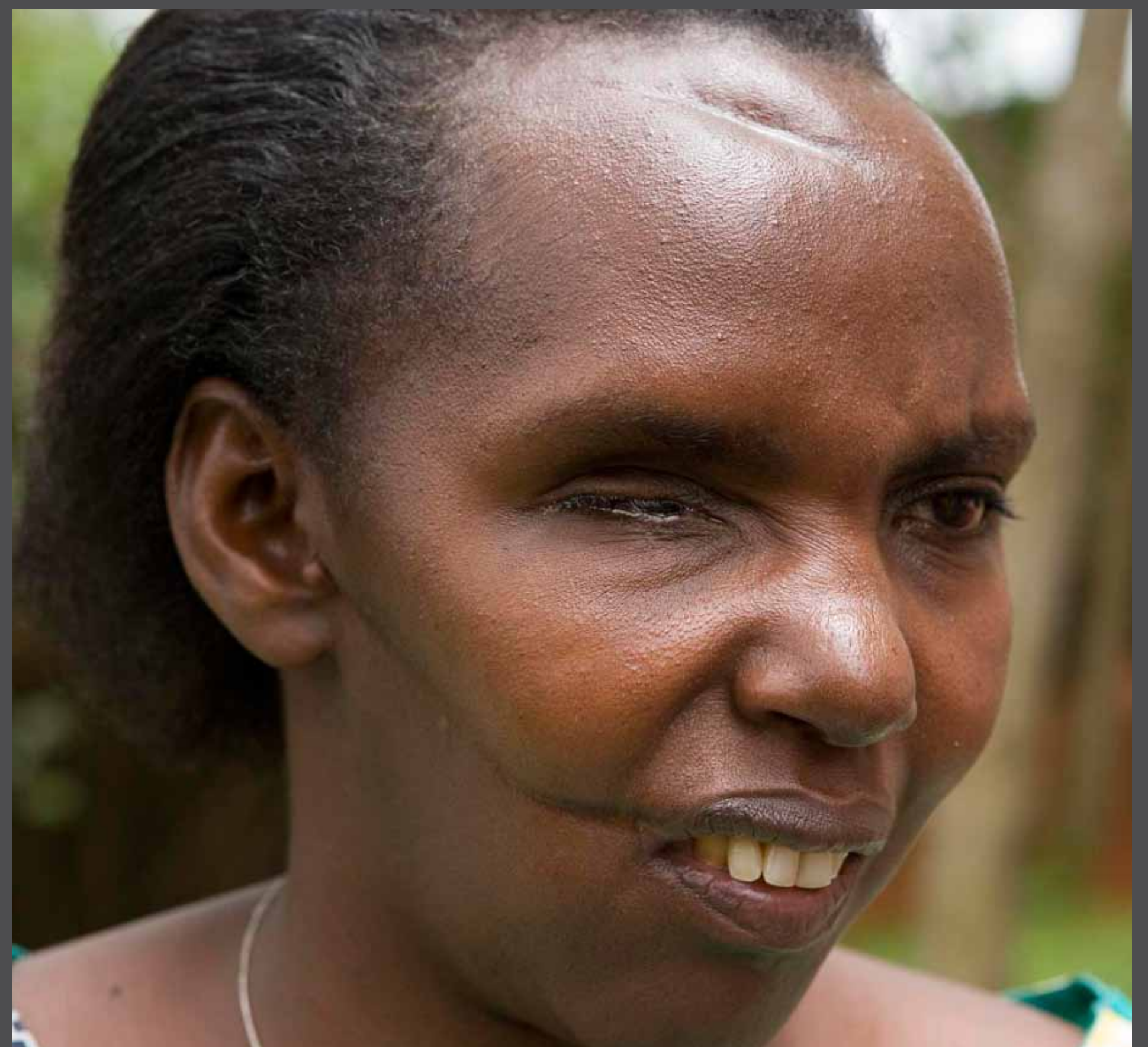
becoming. We decided that we should seek protection in numbers, so we barricaded ourselves in with our children, our goods, and our cows, to fight from one hill known as Muyira.

Muyira was a high and steep hill with many stones. We fought for two months in the same location, with only spears, clubs and stones. We hid our families in the bushes. The militia would find us and push us towards Lake Kivu. If we attempted to jump into the Lake, they just pushed us back. There was nowhere to escape, so we decided to fight and to kill them as they were trying to kill us. ”

For Siméon's full testimony, please visit
www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Daphrose: Survival

Daphrose Mukangarambe lived with her five children, and her husband, in Ruhango. They lived comfortably and in peace, as farmers, until the genocide.



“ When the genocide started I was at Ruhango, and my family and I decided to seek shelter in a local school. Many Tutsis’

flocked there thinking there would be security in numbers. Despite resistance for a week, 16,000 corpses were counted later.

The Interhamwe burnt the school down and the church next door. Many people were killed by machete trying to flee the burning buildings. All night you could hear children crying, mothers yelling. It was not of this world.

I don’t know how my husband died but I think he had joined the barricade to protect us and was shot. I was hiding with my children in some water pots. The Interhamwe were killing everything that moved, and throwing grenades into rooms. My eldest child was killed. I managed to escape carrying my two youngest children, but in the confusion lost my two other children.

We sought shelter in the home of an old man who lived nearby. He could shelter us for only one night because his home was full of many other Tutsis in hiding. We then hid in a banana plantation but our thirst forced us to seek water. That is where we met our fate. I think I was deaf or confused, but I didn’t see or hear the killers coming. My baby was killed with a machete by a man called Sebuyinja. He was our neighbour.

I was hit and beaten until there was no life left in me. Then my last child was hit with a club on the head. She died. I saw dogs

drag away her body. I was hit with a machete on my forehead. I fell unconscious. When I came to my senses, local children were hitting me and calling me names.

I was helped finally by local Twas, who took me to the RPF who admitted me to hospital.

The entire episode is beyond imagination. When I think about it I feel ill. I sometimes call out to God to take the thoughts away. Words cannot explain the reality of that time. ”

For Daphrose’s full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Ange: Hiding

When the genocide began, 11 year old Ange Cendrine Mukayitesi hid with her family in the bush: her mother, three siblings, three uncles, their wives and children.



“ People were starting to be killed and houses were being torched, so we had to constantly keep on the move. Though

we would sneak back home at night to get food. Then one day we saw a group of men looting the house, then set fire to it.

To our surprise someone tried to put out the fire, but part of the house fell on him and collapsed. It was my father. He broke his leg and suffered burns, he couldn't move.

My mother and her cousin returned to help my father. They hid him in the banana plantations, and every day would smuggle food to him. But he was in such great pain that at his request my mother told a local leader that he was asking for forgiveness or a quick death.

I went to see him, but when we heard chanting he forced me to hide. I then saw a group beat him with clubs and sticks, then amputate his limbs one by one with machetes until he finally died. My

mother and I later returned, and buried him in a shallow grave. We later heard that women were not being targeted, now that all the men had been killed. So with my mother, and two brothers who had been in hiding, we returned to our destroyed home. We stayed in the only room left standing.

One day soon after, there was a knock on the door. It was two men looking for cockroaches. They forced their way in. My brothers managed to escape, but my mother and I did not. We were raped. Again, and again.

We asked them to kill us, to escape this torture. My neck was slashed

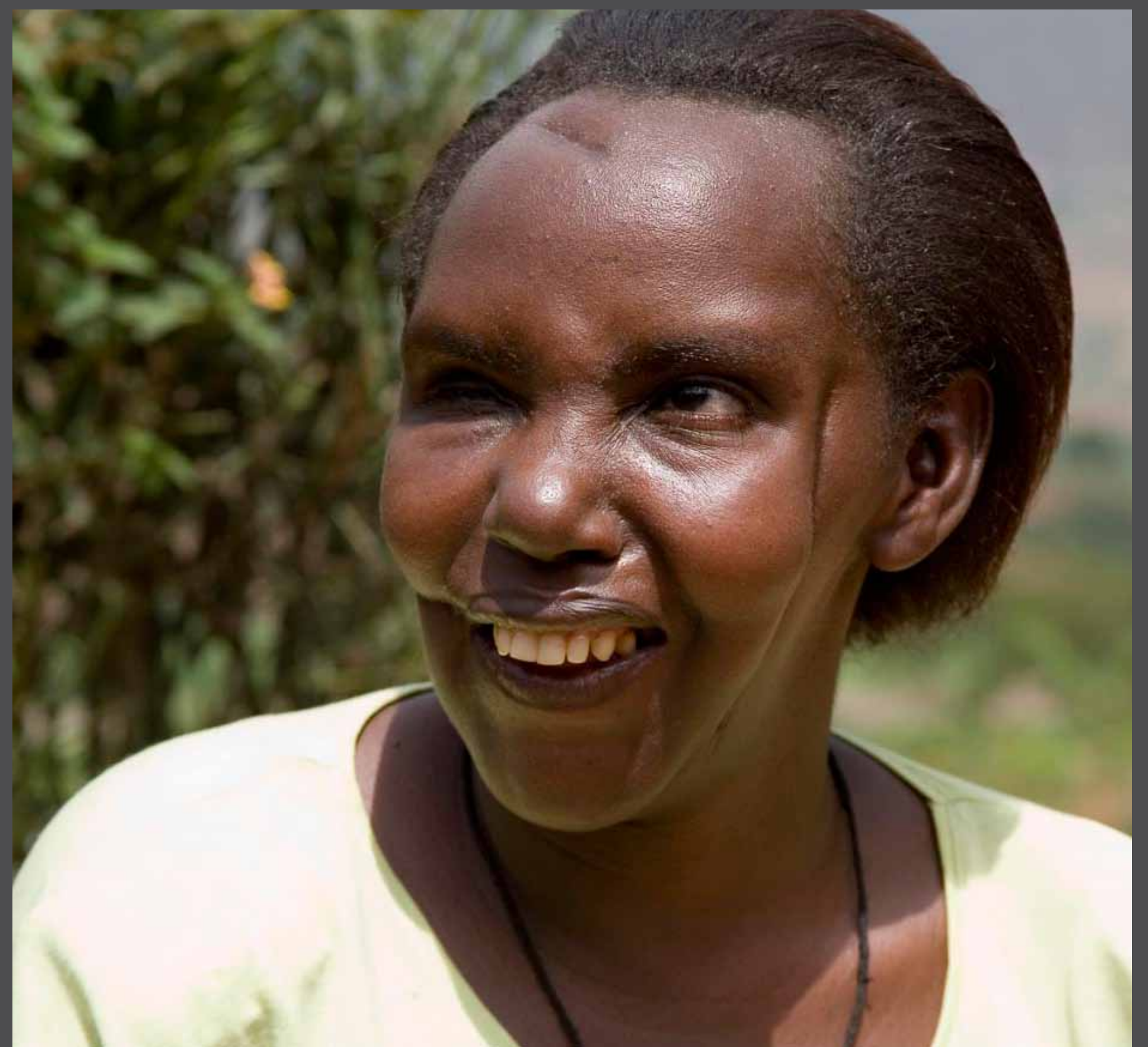
with a machete, and my face too, cutting through my eye. I fell unconscious, and when I came to my senses, my brothers were back. They told me, mother had been killed. They then took me to our cousin's house, where we had previously hidden. They tried to treat me with medicines they found, but to no avail. I was not aware, but my neck was badly infected.

Word of my state reached my godmother, who was Hutu, and she sheltered me. But then when the genocide ended, she fled with many others, to Congo. My troubles sadly were not yet over. ”

For Ange's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Daphrose: Sorrow

Daphrose Mukangarambe lost her five children and her husband in the genocide. Of her entire immediate family, only her nephew survived.



“ Ruhango School, where Daphrose and her family were sheltering, was attacked. She managed to escape

but was caught whilst hiding in a banana plantation. She almost died of machete wounds at the hands of the

Interahamwe, but was helped by local Twas and the RPF. Her family were not as lucky.

The RPF took me to hospital, where I weighed just 29kgs, so thin that I looked no older than a nine year old. Fellow survivors saw to it that I received food and soon I started to learn to walk again. My nephew stayed with me in hospital, and he gave me shelter. I still relied on big sticks to move around, but I managed to gain weight. I still could not chew hard food, until I had an operation on my jaw.

One of my eyes is still damaged and I cannot see at all with it. I do not have teeth on my lower jaw, but I am slowly beginning to hear again.

I live now on the AVEGA estate in Nyagasambu. Joining AVEGA has helped me a great deal because I now realise that I am not alone in enduring the consequences of genocide. I must live with the damage, and by accepting my new circumstances I will live longer.

Recently released *gacaca* prisoners who confessed to killing in my hometown told me where they buried my two older children. We found many bodies, which we buried. I can't get over the grief and sorrow of losing my children.

I try not to think about my life because it hurts so much. I only have to look at myself in the mirror to see the legacy of the genocide. The scars on my face and neck and the scars in my heart are a daily reminder to me of what happened.

Despite all my problems though, I have survived. I have AVEGA to thank. Giving me a house was the best gift. Whether I am sad, hungry, sick or grieving I have a safe and secure space where I can put my head down and cry. But I know I am not alone and I thank God that I have made it this far. ”

For Daphrose's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Siméon: Fighting

Siméon Karamaga fought in the resistance at Bisesero, but lost his wife and eight children in the genocide.



Siméon was second-in-command in the armed resistance of Bisesero as the local community staved off attack for two

months before the French belatedly arrived to provide protection. Alas, for many, the help came too late ...

“ Prior to the genocide, Abasesero was full of strong men. The few men who remain today will die of sorrow. We cannot foresee the future of Bisesero. Communal houses were built for us and we were given a few cows to begin our lives, but we have no families, no children, no wives to have children with so that we can carry on the name of Abasesero. We no longer have the strength in numbers to feel safe.

We have tried to accept that our life will be difficult without family, but what hurts us deeply, is that the militiamen still want to kill us,

even now. We are unable to sleep. In early 1997 the militiamen killed some survivors. They were killed with machetes, just like in April 1994. We lost all faith in life.

After genocide everything is a struggle. I am disabled due to the genocide. I just survive somehow. I spend my days grazing the one cow I still own, getting soaked when it rains. I see no new beginning, or end. That's my life.

We have a memorial site, but it is unfinished. Meanwhile we keep the skeleton and bones of our families

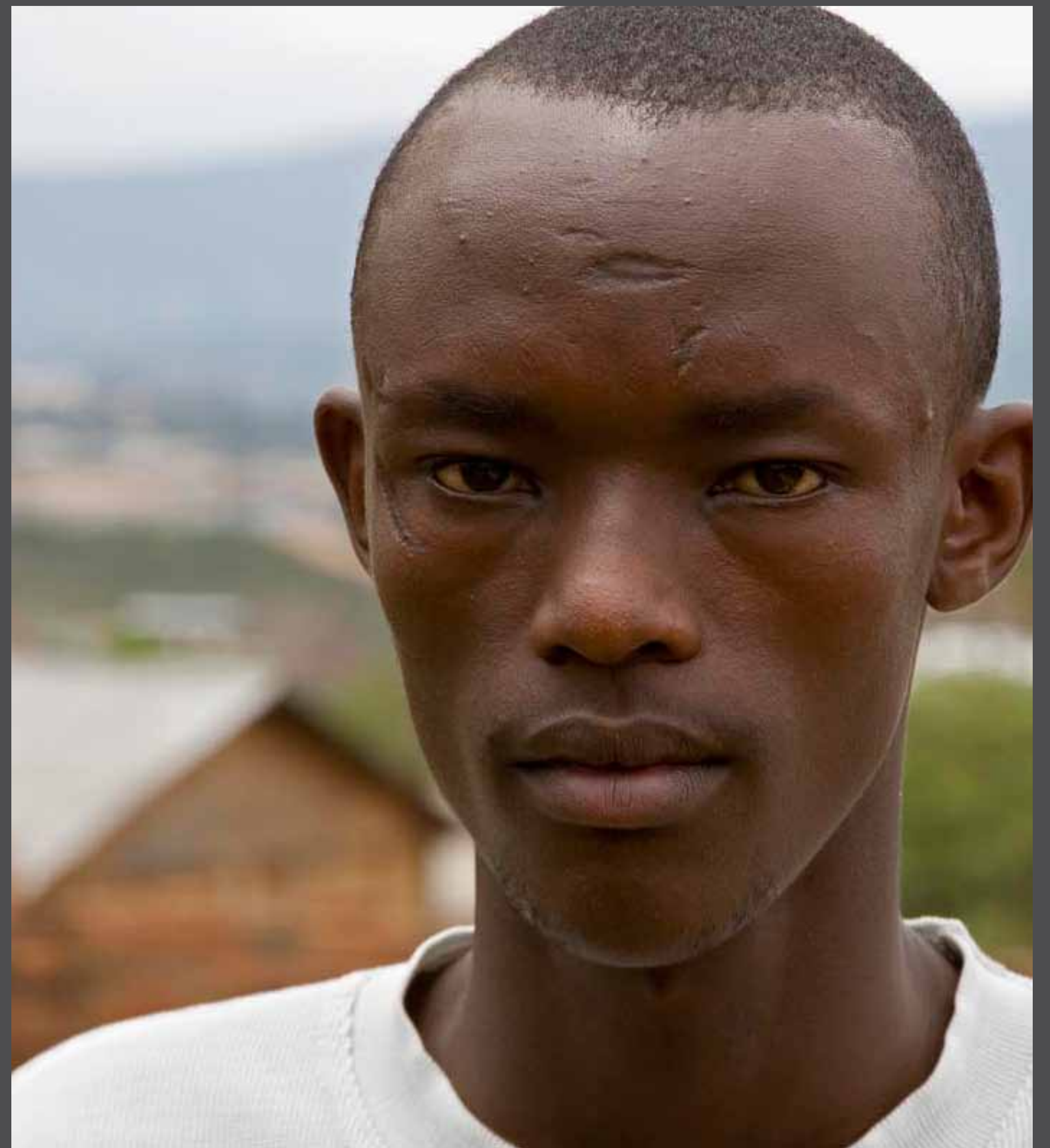
in a hut made of iron sheets. We clean them and use a special chemical to preserve them. The keepers of our memorials are our people. One is my younger brother and two sons of my older brother. At least we have that, our remains to visit.

But Bisesero is still Bisesero. Our aggressors are still frightened of us, they don't attack or kill survivors easily. Although they killed many of us, we who survived still protect each other. ”

For Siméon's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Cassien: Home

Cassien Mbanda was just ten years old at the time of the genocide, and at school in Primary 3.



Cassien was one of four children and lived with his parents in Kigali. At the time of the genocide,

he was staying with his maternal grandmother in Bicumbi, and managed to escape

by hiding in swamps and bushes then pretending to be Hutu but was seriously injured.

“ I started attending school when one day two European women came for children who were severely ill. They took us to a nunnery at Byumba, from where we travelled to Kampala and then on to Italy.

I was put in a military hospital. After three months, I was taken to another orphanage with only Rwandan children. Altogether I was there for almost a year. By this time I could speak fluent Italian. I returned to school at the orphanage and completed my primary education.

The turning point happened one Friday afternoon. Someone told me I was due to return to Rwanda.

I was told my aunt had survived and that they had found her. Part of me was happy and wanted to go back to Rwanda. But it happened so suddenly I didn't even take any addresses of my friends and have not heard from anyone since. It still hurts that all the preparations were done without my knowledge.

I was happy to see my aunt and my surviving siblings, who had begun to attend school thanks to Government Fund for Survivors (FARG) who paid their fees.

One day I started to get headaches. I couldn't read or concentrate, and despite painkillers the headaches wouldn't go away and I had to drop

out of school. I wished I could go back to the doctors who treated me in Italy because they knew how to help.

Before the genocide I was happy, but now I am worried about life. As FARG can no longer support us, how do I pay school fees for my siblings? I don't have a job, but what can I do with no skills?

Sometimes I feel angry for being returned to Rwanda and missing out on an incredible opportunity to rebuild my life. But I also feel happy to be back in Rwanda and at home, having been able to find my siblings and just to be there for them. ”

For Cassien's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition

Ange: Justice

“After the genocide I began suffering severe headaches, and was admitted to hospital where I spent 5 months.



Agne suffered severe injury to her eyes during the genocide and often wears sunglasses to reduce the pain she feels in the bright Rwandan sunlight.

When I came out of hospital, a widow who had lost her children invited me to stay with her in Kigali. I tried to

return to school but I could not cope. I decided to do a catering course, which I have now completed.

Meanwhile I found out that my three siblings had survived, and were living in Cyangugu. The Government Fund for Survivors (FARG) pays the school fees of two of my siblings, but my elder brother has turned to drinking and dropped out of school.

Before the genocide life was good to us. I always told my mother everything. She was there for me, always. Now I am on my own. I can't even afford to look after my siblings. Life is very hard and unpredictable and I worry about the future.

I have been left disabled by the genocide. Headaches continue to bother me. The left side of my face is still numb, and I black out

often. I am told there is a problem with my veins and Rwanda has no means to cure me.

My health is continuing to get worse. I am anxious about getting a proper job to enable me to get a house and bring my siblings to live with me.

Most of those who killed my family, fled to Congo after the genocide. But the man who killed my father, known as Concorde, still lives in the community. He confessed in gacaca courts to the crime. He still has a life and a family. How is that justice?

I heard about Solace Ministries and went to see them. They have tried to help me cope with my situation. Recently when I was feeling unwell, I was tested and found to be HIV positive. The only way this could have happened is through rape.

I was a child, only 11 years old when the killers struck. Today I am 23 years old. I am suffering still from the cuts on my face and neck. What hope or future do I have? ”

For Ange's full testimony, please visit www.survivors-fund.org.uk/exhibition