



## **This is the testimony of Dotilla, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide**

I was twenty years old when the genocide started. Before the war began, there were nine children in my family and we had many relations throughout the country.

Both my mother and father were killed along with all eight of my brothers and sisters. With other children, I fled to another village hiding in a sorghum field for five days.

When I returned home and found that everybody had been killed I tried to find refuge. I did find two women who had survived but they were killed shortly after I found them. One was in fact thrown into a latrine alive, and drowned.

When I was found, I was beaten on the head and my right leg was broken. A chief of the interahamwe said, "Let us not kill her but marry her to the ugliest of all." This was done to bring humiliation. The Chief though changed his mind and decided to sell me instead. One interahamwe offered 2,000 Rwandan Francs. A second one offered 5,000. They were refused because the price was too low. I begged them to kill me but they would not. One said, "I want to tear her open and eat her heart. If you do not want her, let us kill her." I was then bought for 7,000 Rwandan Francs and raped in front of many people.

Days later, when the interahamwe who took me was away, I tried to hang myself on a tree with a cord. A Hutu girl saw me and asked me to go and be killed by killers instead of killing myself because it is a sin. The killers came back every day to check on me and finally they wanted to kill me. The interahamwe who bought me hid me.

Eventually, I became pregnant. Because of my sorrows and living conditions, the baby was stillborn. This was very hard for me as I wanted to see a child from my sorrows and my pains.

There were many consequences of the genocide for me. I am handicapped and I live in poverty because I cannot do anything for myself. I cannot fetch water or plough. I suffer greatly from trauma, sorrow and insomnia. I keep myself isolated from others. I am angry and bitter. I want to cry and I hate everybody. I have nowhere to live because my parents' house was destroyed. And worse still I have found that I am infected with the HIV virus. I am now just waiting for my death.

**Today's Reading of the Testimonies marks the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, in support of survivors like Dotilla.**