



## **This is the testimony of Godiose, a survivor of the genocide**

I was 11 years when the genocide happened.

It was the 7<sup>th</sup> April 1994, early morning, when news broke that the President of Rwanda had been killed in a plane crash.

My father woke us up and told us the news. We (Tutsis) were going to die too. My mother had broken her leg, and she couldn't walk. After an hour we heard people singing, "We should massacre them!" Mother told us to go and that she would stay behind. We begged her to come with us, but she refused; so we left. However, I hid near home where I would be able to still see her.

After a few minutes, I saw people with headgear made of leaves carrying clubs. Some entered the house, while others attacked my mother. I watched what took place. I started crying. It was raining hard during this time, and there were wails, moans, and screams everywhere, with homes burning. It was a scene from hell.

I spent the whole day in the bush, hidden, without food or water. The killers found me, because they were using dogs to hunt people down. They had with them other people, whom they had captured. It was morning and we were all made to sit down in a field, as more people were brought. Then using machetes, they started the killing.

The men were killed first. I was kept alive with other women and children. I knew what I had witnessed, but my mind refused to believe it. I had no more feelings. I was just in a nightmare that refused to go away. It came to a point where I had no desire to live.

I was fortunate. I managed to escape and was found by the liberating army.



It is now 14 years since the genocide, but to me, it is just like yesterday. What happened, happened within such a short time, but it was long enough for the killers to enact a genocide in which over a million people were killed. Those who survived have nothing to forward to. We live in the shadow of the genocide. Many of us are scarred for life - physically, mentally and psychologically. And if that is not enough, many of those who survived were infected with the HIV virus through rape.

People are hurting. They are crying out for help! Crying out for justice!

THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN!

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