

This is the testimony of Teddy, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide

My name is Teddy and I am 19 years old. Our family had an alright life before the genocide.

Just after the death of the President there were lots of rumours, that people were being killed. We stayed at home that night. But the next night we saw someone's house being burned so we ran to the bushes to hide. The killers came to our house but couldn't find us so stole many of our things. When they had gone we returned, but only to take our remaining things and move to another place. All together there was my mum and dad, brothers and sisters, some uncles and their families too.

The killers found us the next day and we had to go on the run again, but my uncle was blind and could not keep up with us. There was a neighbour to whom my father had given a cow. He told my uncle that he could hide with him, saying he would watch over him. Being a good neighbour, there was no reason to suspect him, so my blind uncle stayed behind. We learnt later that when the killers came he was the first to attack him. He died.

At first, in the place where we were, we threw stones at the killers as a defence and means to give ourselves cover to run. By day we would run, and at night we hid in houses. But the killers had machetes and guns. I saw many people killed, their throats cut or their bodies riddled with bullet. One was hung at the school so that anyone passing would see him.

We kept running and fighting and hiding. There was one man with us who was a hero. He would fight at the front and when he saw people at the back being killed he would go back and help them. More *interahamwe* were called to where we were. When they came we were eight children. By the end of that day we were only three.



The next day the killers came again. I told my elder brother to hide in a pit but he was shot in the jaw as he climbed in.

We split up into two groups and ran for our lives, the killers spraying us with bullets as we scattered. There were roadblocks and they would shoot at us as we tried to pass but we had to push forward because there were killers behind us. Some died and some lived. On the radio in the evenings we would hear that the Rwandan Patriotic Army had reached a certain point. The radio told the killers to finish their work quickly. Eventually the French soldiers came and they protected us, giving us food and clothes.

After the killings had finished I told my brother that we must work hard, be united and forgive those who did us wrong. I went back to school three years after the genocide. My brother and I both have physical problems and I have problems paying my school fees and buying materials for school. Now I want to complete my studies and help my brother. I want to work towards unity so what happened in 1994 does not happen again. I want to be able to build my own house without begging

The biggest problems facing Rwanda now are AIDS and poverty. Also, the killers are not accepting responsibility for what they have done. If the killers ask for forgiveness and return what they took from us, I can forgive them.

I want people to know our problems, to remember what happened and to help us so that we may have a better life.

Today's Reading of the Testimonies marks the 15th Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, in support of survivors like Teddy.