

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

When genocide started I was in South West Rwanda. I had just moved to the area, and hardly knew anyone. The place was peaceful until the 11th April when the killing began.

Groups of *interahamwe* collected all those they labelled Tutsis in one place. They then separated men from women. Hundreds of killers surrounded us armed with machetes, guns, and clubs. They hacked all the men to death.

Day after day, many more people were brought to the site. The head of *interahamwe* would select people to kill, and women and girls to rape. I will never forget the pain and fear on children's faces. There was no-one to save them. They cried and screamed until their last breaths. It was a long painful death. Those who were lucky were shot dead; I witnessed thousands of people killed.

Those who survived are still living in the same neighbourhood where their families were killed. They have no family to support them. Orphans look after younger brothers and sisters. Children have problems because of trauma. Widows infected with HIV through rape have to live with the legacy of genocide. They hang onto life waiting for justice, before they die of AIDS.

Ten years on, it feels like yesterday. I try to move on, but I can't, because of the horrific death my family suffered. I remember my brother who was burnt alive to the point we could not identify him. We buried his ashes.

The killers still have families; they have parents, children and homes to go to. Survivors have nothing to go back to. Without justice, no healing will ever happen for survivors.

We have to try to rebuild our lives, and remember the dead victims, because if we forget them the killers will win again. We have to use Rwanda's suffering to stop genocide from ever happening again.

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