

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

My name is Angelique. I am 68 years old. I reside at Nyamirambo. Before the genocide I lived with my family in Kigali Rural, but now I can't bear to see or set foot in my home area.

I lived with my mother. My father died when I was 35 years old. I never married, working as a primary teacher I looked after my mother.

We were two sisters and two brothers and had many cousins and relatives. They all died except my brother who was badly beaten and injured with machetes. I tried everything to save his life but he later died. Over 50 members of my family perished during this tragedy. My mother could not be spared although she was very old. My sister and brother, their children cousins, nephews, nieces, everyone died. I am beginning to forget them, when I count them. My memory is failing and that scares me.

I grieve a lot for my brother and his wife because we have never found their bodies to give them a decent burial. I was told their bodies were left outside naked and were eaten by dogs.

I can't live a normal life, I am short tempered, and I have failed to continue teaching. I don't feel I am any good for children, although I have found 7 children from my relatives and live with them. Our house was destroyed and now I have to rent a small room for us to live in.

I came to AVEGA to seek support. I am going through counselling to help deal with my experience, especially sexual violence. I didn't marry. I was still a virgin at 53 years. Rape has left me empty and hurt beyond reasoning. At times I want to give up but I am a Christian and can't take my own life. Yet I have no life. I spend sleepless nights feeling like my head is going to explode.



When I speak to people my head gets lighter and I find consolation when I meet someone worse off than me.

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