

## Resistance by the Abasesero and consequences of the genocide

Name: David Kayizabo  
Cellule: Wingabo  
Sector: Bisesero  
Commune: Gishyita  
Préfecture: Kibuye  
Age: 32 years  
Profession: farmer  
Marital status: married

The war started in our area on 9 April 1994. We saw d'Amayaga Tutsis (from Musenyi and Mpembe sector) who had fled to our area, telling us that their homes had been burnt down and some of them had been killed. After they revealed to us that this was an ethnic problem we fled to Mugira.

On Monday 11 April 1994 the *interahamwe* militia who were in Ruzindana and Mika's car, invaded us. We fought them until we realized that we had lost a large number of people. We then fled into the bush. The *interahamwe* militia continued their massacre by hunting in the bush. People did not stop dying. Two brothers of mine fell victim to the massacres. My mother, who was blind, did not leave the house, and it was burnt down with her still inside it. In the end we heard that some French had arrived at the office of the commune in Gishyita. We saw their cars going towards Gisovu. One day they approached us, we explained our situation to them. They told us they had come to protect us. News reached us that the RPF army was near to us. We joined them in Kivumu, Kibuye préfecture, having been evacuated by the French soldiers.

The FPR soldiers greeted us warmly. They gave us food and soap. I was with my older brother and we led a happy life. We went back to our commune. We installed ourselves in the office of the commune in Gishyita because our homes had been destroyed during the genocide, and the many genocidaires in our village had not yet been arrested.

Life in Gishyita was very hard. We didn't have enough subsidies and there was nothing in our fields. That is why we preferred to go back to our homes after we had rebuilt them with sheeting.

As soon as we returned we had security problems because of the genocidaires who were still at large, and not happy about our return. The insecurity increased significantly with the large-scale return of the refugees. A lot of people died. The infiltrators' goal is to kill all the survivors of the genocide. We took refuge in the bush at night.

We were a large family before the genocide. We made our living from agriculture and cattle-raising. We used fertilizer in order to obtain an improved harvest. We got this fertilizer from our cattle. Now, however, all of the cows have been stolen, and I no longer raise cattle.

As my ribcage was hit with a stone I am handicapped. I can no longer go into the fields everyday. Because of these problems my revenues are mediocre and they do not satisfy my needs.

Justice is proceeding as it should do. However we still fear the genocidaires in other areas of the country who have not been arrested. We are not in a position to bring them to justice even though they come here and threaten our security. The government shows concern for our problems and tries to find solutions to them, but today we need people in charge of maintaining our security so that we can bring the genocidaires to justice.

All of my belongings were stolen and I have no means of buying others. I need cattle which will help me with my farming.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interviewed in Bisesero, 12 February 1997