

# Survivors Fund

## Sectors:

Conflict resolution;  
Health & diseases;  
Markets, infrastructure & technology;  
Education

## Size:

£1m income

## Latest Stats:

Programme ratio: **93%**

Admin. expenses ratio: **6%**

Fundraising efficiency: **1p**

## Output '07:

>65,000 beneficiaries provided medication, housing, education, counselling and income generating opportunities

## Reasons for recommendation

- **Survivors Fund** (SURF, [www.survivors-fund.org.uk](http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk)) helps widowed and orphaned survivors of the Rwandan genocide to piece together their lives.
- In 1994, around **800,000 Rwandans were killed in 100 days**. Many women and girls were raped and deliberately infected with HIV to cause a lingering death and further trauma to children and families.
- **Widow and child-headed households (CHHs)** face issues related to health, property and housing, and supporting themselves and dependants in a **divided and ravaged society**. Many children lost their childhoods and lack the skills, experience and preparation to financially support their siblings. UNICEF estimates that, after the genocide, 70% of the population was female.
- SURF partners provide medical supplies for HIV/AIDS and other needs, homes, vocational training, income generating projects, trauma and stress counselling, educational subsidies, and activities related to the remembrance of the dead.
- In 2007, SURF provided homes for over **1,800 families**, medication for nearly **6,000 people**, and income generating activities for nearly **14,000 widows**. **Over 400 children & young people** received education or vocational training.
- 20,000 homes still need to be built to provide security for traumatised survivors.
- Improved welfare of CHHs impacts their potential to provide for their siblings.

## Main issues that Survivors Fund fights

- Society devastated by genocide
- Lack of education, medicines, housing, work training, trauma support, legal advice

## Survivors Fund's main country focus

- Rwanda

## Survivors Fund's solution

- Medical supplies
- Educational subsidies
- Housing
- Vocational training
- Income generation
- Remembrance centres
- Legal assistance

## Contact us

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## Background

Survivors Fund (SURF) was founded in 1997 by Mary Kayitesi Blewitt. She and several trustees lost many members of their families in the genocide.

Historically, the Tutsi minority were the ruling class over the Hutu majority. The Hutu/Tutsi distinction was based on class (from politics/occupation/ancestry). The distinction could change with individual fortunes. With colonisation, the Tutsi ruling position was reinforced. Classification became related to appearance, wealth and social status. Divisions acquired political significance. On independence (1962), rule passed to the majority Hutu party. Around that time, 120,000 Tutsis were killed and 200,000 fled abroad. Later, refugees wanting to return home were resisted by the ruling government. In 1990, this led to military conflict being launched from Uganda. An internationally brokered peace agreement was drawn up. While returning from the agreement signing, the Hutu president's plane was shot down on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1994. Those responsible are still being sought.

The genocide began on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1994. Around 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were systematically murdered over the next 100 days. Lists of those to be targeted first had already been drawn up. Machetes and clubs had been stockpiled. Hate propaganda had been broadcast on the radio. The international community did not intervene. Two million people fled Rwanda, many of them Hutus fearing reprisals. This created a further humanitarian crisis (and continues to destabilise Congo). Landlocked, densely populated and lacking natural resources, much of Rwanda's infrastructure and economy was destroyed in the conflict. Subsequently, political control was shared under the original 1994 peace agreement until the presidential elections of 2003. A broad-based and stable government is now in place. Official distinction between Tutsi and Hutu has been abolished. Released from prison due to overcrowding and the slow trial process, many of the accused killers now threaten the surviving victims again with physical harm if they testify in the *gacaca* traditional courts.

HDR 2007	Life expectancy at birth	Population living below \$2 a day	Population under 15	HIV prevalence (age 15-49)	Employment in agriculture	Net secondary enrolment
Rwanda	45	88%	44%	3.1%	90%	7%

Although other charities work in Rwanda, SURF is unique its size, scope and focus.

## Summary of activities and strategy

SURF aims to rebuild a sense of self, and of trust in humanity, among the survivors through enabling them to rebuild their lives. It does so through working with partners to provide:

- **Physical support:** SURF's work contributes to the medication 'basket' of the DfiD-supported HIV/AIDS Rwandan government programme. There are 25,000 widows suffering from genocide-inflicted HIV/AIDS, via rape or infected blood on weapons. SURF supports 2,500 surviving widows to receive free ARVs. In exchange, the rural clinics SURF has built provide the extra services and outreach that the government cannot. 260,000 children in Rwanda have been orphaned through HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections such as TB. SURF has acquired land rights for children, many having no inheritance or land to provide themselves a living or shelter. SURF builds houses for widows and children. Groups of homes (in a mix of widow-headed and child-headed households (CHHs)) work well by providing mutual support. Education grants are provided to help children continue with their schooling. SURF grants provide vocational skills training to increase job or entrepreneurial prospects for those children who have to drop out of school to support their siblings. Since 1997, over 18,000 widow and CHHs have received help with income generating activities such as animal husbandry. Three farms have been set up. Two centres have been built to support rural widows with counselling, legal representation, medical support, grants and loans to increase household income. Burial and memory sites have been constructed to house the remains of the victims.
- **Psychological support:** Particularly for child survivors, there is a need to document life histories to preserve the memory of the genocide and help with psychological healing. The Humura Testimonies Centre has been built to provide sanctuary and remembrance, and to document survivors' personal testimonies. Over 390,000 bodies have been located and reburied with dignity by SURF's partners.

SURF works with 9 local partners. Between them, they provide medication, clinics, house building, training, educational support, remembrance centres, legal advice, and trauma counselling for the widow & child genocide survivors. SURF's future strategy will focus on justice, educational subsidies (including university level), income generating projects, remembrance, and shelter.

The *gacaca* court system is an attempt to bring justice to the survivors. Witness testimonies and confessions of the accused result in a faster judicial system than the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The ICTR has spent over \$1bn over the past 14 years to successfully convict only 32 genocide perpetrators to date. However, some 120,000 accused perpetrators had been awaiting trial. Due to delay and prison overcrowding, many of the accused were released in 2004 and 2006, to return to their neighbourhoods. There have been intimidations and threats to stop survivors from testifying in the *gacacas*. The 2008 genocide anniversary was marked by killings and the bombing of a remembrance centre. Recently, an alleged war criminal was arrested in Germany under a French court order. SURF's view is that the problem is so complicated and highly charged that there will ultimately be no justice except social justice. To this end, it works to support the victims' rights to support themselves. Its programmes and activities are developmental, interlinked, and complementary.

## Input

Director/founder, Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, OBE, is of Rwandan origin (born as a refugee during a previous Tutsi/Hutu conflict). Fifty members of her family were killed in the genocide. Mary steps down in January 2009 after nearly 12 years running SURF. She hands over to David Russell. David has worked alongside Mary for five years as a consultant and has experience of financial and strategic management, evaluation, fundraising, and capacity building. He has contributed to the work of the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. Trustees include survivors of the genocide as well as professionals with NGO, finance, policy and strategy experience. Patrons include journalist Fergal Keane, several MPs and the Chief Rabbi.

Selected Financials					
Year end 31 <sup>st</sup> December (£000s)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008E*
<b>Income</b>					
Restricted income	642	732	1,327	942	500
Unrestricted income	78	80	73	93	200
Investment income	10	6	4	6	5
<b>Total income</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>1,041</b>	<b>705</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Project expenses	681	645	1,357	1,056	620
Costs of fundraising	15	93	15	8	15
Administration (governance + support)	60	50	55	70	80
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>715</b>
Balance of project restricted funds	132	194	178	46	80
Reserves	82	50	43	82	60
Employees	3	3	3	2	2

\* Development Ratings estimates

The 2008 income forecast has been revised down, partly due to the exceptional level of 2006/7 receipts and partly due to distractions during the year over staff changes. Finding Mary's replacement took a good deal of time and effort. In addition, time spent developing a new fundraiser was unfortunately wasted when she left after becoming overwhelmed by the extent and trauma of the tragedy. Although SURF under-utilises its fundraising efficiency, fundraising is essentially interlinked with programme work and advocacy. Efficiency remains strong with a lean UK office and high concentration on partner programmes and grants. The new director will put in funding proposals to again develop UK fundraising. Reserves coverage has improved a little.

Selected Financials					
Year end 31 <sup>st</sup> December (£000s)	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008E*
<b>Key ratios</b>					
Proportion of restricted income	88%	89%	95%	90%	71%
Proportion of income used on projects (proj exp/total inc)	93%	79%	97%	101%	88%
Programme ratio (project expenses/total expenses)	90%	82%	95%	93%	87%
Administrative expenses ratio (admin exp/total exp)	8%	6%	4%	6%	11%
Fundraising efficiency (cost to raise £1)	2p	11p	1p	1p	2p
Reserve development	74%	-39%	-14%	91%	-27%
Number of months of costs coverage	2	1	0.4	0.9	1.1

\*Development Ratings estimates

Best practice      Attractive feature

- SURF does not give an exact breakdown of expenditure by activity. All activities are overlapping and supportive, so it is not possible to determine the exact split between tangible and intangible activities. The costs of medical supplies provision, clinic and counselling centre construction, house and remembrance centre building, educational funding, vocational training, and income generation projects would very likely exceed the costs of trauma, psychosocial and legal support services.
- The number of beneficiaries is approximately divided as 60% orphans & children, 40% widows.
- The 26% drop in 2007 income is partly due to major grants receipts in 2006. However, several trusts also reduced their contribution, which was only partially made up by new trust donors. General individual donations increased by 28% to 9% of total income, however.
- Costs per employee were high at £34,000 due to the very small UK office. Rwandan staff are employed by the local partners. The new director will need to develop the UK office capacity further.

## Funding outlook

The 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide takes place in April 2009. SURF is planning a worldwide commemorative event. This will increase attention on Rwanda and SURF which should increase funds to help the survivors. SURF's fundraising is not a separate and specifically targeted function. In addition to trusts and institutional support, funds are raised through speaking engagements, word-of-mouth contacts, advocacy and awareness-raising activities, schools and community organisations, and through the trustees' various personal contacts and activities. In 2006, DfiD awarded £4.5m over 5 years to provide anti-retroviral therapy treatment for HIV/AIDS sufferers in Rwanda. The funding does not pass through SURF's accounts but is administered by SURF and a Rwanda-based charity run by the Office of the First Lady of Rwanda. The award will end in 2011.

A priority is to fund the estimated further 20,000 homes needed to house survivors. A sturdy and secure 2 bedroom house costs around £2,500 to build, and can house 4 or more people. There is a great need for more clinics. In addition, community, educational and vocational training centres are needed to improve earnings prospects. SURF provides funds to bridge the gap between government spending and what is required in order to be able to attend school – books, travel costs, etc. The theoretically free primary and secondary education is withdrawn if students fail to reach a 70% exam pass grade. SURF wants to support those children who marginally drop below this (partly due to working as well to support siblings). University level subsidies will be emphasised. Memory sites cost £9-25,000 depending on the number of victims, and many more are needed. As always, funding for core costs would allow the charity the flexibility to more efficiently support the survivors.

## Output

In 2007, the Humura Research and Testimony Centre was named and officially completed. There remains a need for equipment, books and furniture before it can be fully used by researchers and educators, and families seeking sanctuary and reconciliation. It is estimated that 65,000 survivors were helped by SURF's partners in 2007. 362 homes were built for 1,810 people and an additional 1,000 were rehabilitated. The sturdy houses provide security and an environment for an element of recuperation. An owned house releases funds previously spent on rent for food, clothing and schooling. 1,114 households were provided ARVs for HIV sufferers, and 4,581 other people received medical support from SURF's 4 clinics. 200 primary, 80 secondary, and 81 university students were provided fees to enable them to study; 53 apprentices were also supported. 11 of last year's graduates are now in employment. Three farms have been set up in 3 orphan/widow villages to provide a sustainable source of income for victims; they were stocked with an array of farm animals. Other income generating activities were also run, supporting additional families. To date, SURF has located and reburied over 390,000 victims of the genocide. The cost per beneficiary reflects the costs of construction of a range of different types of buildings and structures (a lower activity in 2007) as well as education subsidy costs.

Output 2007			
Number of survivor beneficiaries	>65,000	Total number of survivors in Rwanda	300,000
Number of houses built, rehabilitated, bought	1,362	Number of people in income generation projects	~14,000
<b>Cost per survivor beneficiary</b>	<b>£17.46</b>	Number of people supplied with medicines	5,695

The new director is emphasising outputs, evaluation and indicators. He notes that one measure of success is the capacity of local partners. Evaluation measures include changes to income, living standards, and clinic

visits (a reflection of overall health changes). Qualitative measures include surveying attitudes and levels of depression, as well as whether survivors return for food supplementation (a measure of whether basic needs are being met). A range of strong points have been noted about local partners, including tight cost control, and programme benefits for survivors, particularly housing. Staff and costs constraints, however, reduce the outreach to some geographic areas, and illiteracy reduces the effectiveness of some group approaches.

## Impact

- **Providing shelter/security:** Children orphaned, including by mothers infected with HIV/AIDS during the genocide, fend for themselves in a society that cannot properly provide financial or emotional security. SURF impacts their physical welfare via homes in villages of mutually-supporting CHHs.
- **Supporting widowed women:** Without male family members, widows face property and rights issues, gender inequality, and social and economic disadvantage. SURF impacts their security (through homes and legal representation), their health (through medications), their income (through income generating schemes), and their trauma (through counselling and remembrance centres).

*"The scars on my face and neck are a daily reminder of what happened ... Despite all the problems, I have survived. I have AVEGA [a partner] to thank. Giving me a house was the best gift. Whether I am sad, hungry, sick or grieving, I have a safe and secure space where I can put my head down and cry. And I know that I am not alone."* **Daphrose Mukangarambe, Rwanda. Her 5 children and husband were killed. Their killer confessed at a *gacaca* court.**

- **Providing vocational training:** The eldest child of orphaned households has to provide for his or her siblings. Vocational training impacts the young person's potential to increase earnings.
- **Supporting education:** Subsidies impact the potential for children to learn and develop skills.
- **Supplying medications for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections:** Some 70%+ of women raped in the genocide are HIV+ compared to 3-4% of the general population, extending the health crisis of the genocide. Support for healthy living, and therefore earnings, impacts society developmentally.
- **Supporting development:** The genocide will overhang Rwanda for multiple generations to come, but there is no choice but to work towards economic and social development.

## Key risks

- A change of leadership is a risk, but David will hit the ground running given his prior experience with SURF. He already has plans for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as well as for improved evaluation, and Mary will remain closely involved in the future. David may be able to re-energise and boost fundraising.
- The genocide may seem a long time ago to some donors. In Rwanda, the complications of a poorly developed country are far greater than 'usual'. Interest will rise as the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaches. House, clinic and remembrance centre construction work could be needed for many more years.
- Recurring violence would undermine the development impact of all the support given to date. However, the current government is having a stabilising effect.
- SURF's work may be seen as discriminatory, favouring Tutsis. Local partners' staff are diverse, however. They have a common aim for social justice and the recuperation of Rwanda as a whole.

## Summary

Survivors Fund has a tragically unique focus in Rwanda. It supplies a network of similar solutions to impact the development of individuals and society as several of our recommendations, however. Development support is the most effective way to locally sustain and galvanise the economy of a ravaged country.

Our recommendation rests on our belief that SURF has both dedicated management and the right combination of approaches to directly benefit the survivors and Rwandan society as a whole.

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