

20121030-0004 Karangwa François

Name: Karangwa François

School: College Karambi Masango

Class: 1 A

Year: 1999

Subject: Exercise book about the 1994 genocide

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Karangwa François

Ecole Secondaire College Karambi Masango

Secteur: Nyakogo

Commune: Masango

Cellule: Buhanda

Class1 in 1998-1999 academic year.

I am going to join 2nd year of secondary school

Exercise book about the 1994 genocide

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Dated: 30/9/1999

We left our home on 21st April 1994 and spend the night in a rocky place at Mubuga which is not far away from our home. On 22nd April 1994, we woke up in the morning and went to Padre Muyoboke's residence. He chased us away and we left the place at 6.00pm where I was in the company of my mother and my younger sister.

We went to Gitwe and on our way to Kabgayi, we reached at Byimana as one family although in two teams. I and my family were in the first team and after crossing the roadblock at Byimana, the people manning the roadblock stopped everybody from passing through the roadblock. When the second team reached the roadblock, they got arrested. The team I was in continued and when we reached the entrance to the church, we saw a gang of people dressed in uniform. We were not able to enter the church because the gang we had seen came chasing after us. We ran in the direction we had come from although we spent that evening in a church after we had been told to first get permission from the Conseiller [Head of a Secteur].

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The conseiller allowed us to spend the night at the church and when we woke up, we were told to leave. We went to seek refuge in someone's home in Kigoma and we were eight people at the time. We stayed in that person's home and we used to give him money to buy us food that we cooked and all the eight of us ate together including the people in that person's family. After staying for a week and two days at that person's home, very many members of MDR Pawa came in the evening dressed in uniform and burst open the door of the house we were in. The door fell

in front of us and some of the people we were with in the house hid under the bed while others were forced out of the house. Members of the MDR Pawa gang returned into the house to search for more people in case they were still hiding in the house. Those hiding in the neighboring room managed to escape but the gang chased after them. Among those who managed to escape was my paternal uncle whom they chased after and when he reached a trench and jumped over it, the gang had almost caught up with him and when they tried to slash him with a machete, the machete sliced part of the coat he was putting on.

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He fell down but managed to get up and run till he vanished from his attackers. The attackers returned to where we were and made us walk in a queue and took us to a place called Kiruri. I was the second one in the queue while the attackers were at the end of the queue. Because I was a child, I tried to escape by trying to lie in a trench. My mother was the fourth in the queue and she told me to get up as the place I was trying to hide in was very open and was along the path we were using. She told me that had the attackers seen me trying to hide by laying in the trench, they could kill me. She told me that instead of hiding, we should die while we are together.

I was very worried and kept asking myself why the attackers could not forgive us. We continued with the walk and reached a place where people had roasted a whole cow. The people gave us some of the meat and told us to consume it and get a taste of it as it had come from a cow belonging to our fellow Tutsi.

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We refused to eat the meat and told them that we are vegetarians. They threatened to kill us if we refuse to eat the meat. After moving slightly further from where the feasting on the meat was taking place, our captors told us to sit down. After sitting, they took away all the money each one of us had and it all added up to 8500 FRW. Afterwards, our captors started beating all the men we were with and it reached a point they killed one of the men. The rest of us were also beaten to a point we nearly died and that is when our captors released us to go and die in our homes. They escorted us for a long distance before leaving us alone. Some of the people they had beaten were almost dying and when we reached Murama, we came across a place where people were being killed. The killers asked where we were from and we responded that we were from Buhanda. They let us proceed but told to Masango but told us that they were conversant with what was happening there.

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When we reached Buhanda there was no one who stopped us and when we reached very close to our home, we met young men from the nearby town. At the time, we were together with some

girls and the young men told the parents to those girls to let the young men look after the girls and nothing will happen to them. The parents responded that the girls are still very young and once they are fully grown up they would give these girls to the young men. The parents to said that they were going to the Commune and requested the young men to accompany us. The young men were also going to the commune and they escorted us. In the morning, we went to get avocados that we had hidden in a millet farm and on reaching the farm, we saw people tilling land. These people chased us and even beat us and I managed to hide but the people continued to chase the child I was with.

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They caught up with the child a distance away. That gave me the chance to come out of my hideout and I went to hide in a trench where I laid down. The people brought the boy to where we had been and forced him to give them \$1000FRW or else they kill him. After the child had given them the money, they thoroughly beat the child and took him on top of the trench that I was hiding in but they never saw me. After some time, one of the people told us to go away so that we do not die in front of him. I went to Buhanda at Mr Burahamu's verandah and when he came in the evening, he took me into his house because he knew our home. He gave me food and told me that, "Tomorrow I will take you to my friend's house and you will be fine.

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You will be looking after his his calves at a place called Gitinda." We went with Mr Burahimu and when we reached a small shopping center where a roadblock had been erected, the people manning the roadblock asked him, "is this your child?" Burahimu asked them how did they know that the child was his? Those who knew Burahimu asked him, "how come the child does not have hair that looks like yours? And where did he get those cheek bones?" Burahimu responded, "from my wife". Once we reached the man's home, he welcomed me and gave me some milk to drink till I got full. When I tried to refuse more milk, he said that there is no Tutsi who does not drink all the milk he is given. After some time, a few members of the killer gangs came to check on civilians and used to say that no one should harm Burahimu's child. One day, interahamwe from Buhanda came in the evening to search for any Tutsi that was hiding and they found that I was asleep. They asked, "Where is this child from?" Someone in the house responded that it was Burahimu's child. Before leaving, they searched the entire house and never found another child. After some time, Inkotanyi reached the home of the man that was giving me refuge. The owner of the house and Mr Burahimu came and checked on me and I escaped with them to a place called Muryoryo in Kibuye. We stayed for some time at Kibuye before returning coming back. Burahimu told his son to take me to my home and when we reached Buhanda, I

met two of my paternal aunts who took me to stay with them. To this date, I still live with them in a village close to Karambi.

I am currently a first year student at College Karambi Masango