



For immediate release

SURF celebrates awards raising plights of survivors

(London - 7th November 2007) Survivors Fund (SURF), the international charity representing and supporting survivors of the Rwandan genocide, today celebrated two awards that have been dedicated to survivors of the genocide.

SURF's Co-Chair, Liliane Umubyeyi, was named as Campaigner of the Year by Cosmopolitan Magazine at its Ultimate Woman of the Year Awards 2007. Now 29, Liliane's entire family were massacred in the genocide in 1994, in which one million Rwandans were killed in just 100 days. Since settling in the UK she has worked with SURF, first as a trustee, and now as Co-Chair, helping survivors both in the UK and Rwanda to rebuild their lives.

Commenting on the award, and her work with SURF to give a voice to survivors like herself, Liliane said: **"I feel a responsibility to help the survivors. We need to tell these stories in the future. There are so many people who are traumatised and suffering. The only thing we can do is to talk about it so people do not feel alone anymore."**

Liliane's award was announced on the same day, that photographer Jonathan Torgovnik was named the winner of the National Portrait Gallery's Photographic Portrait Prize for his work "Joseline Ingabire with Her Daughter Leah Batamuliza, Rwanda." The portrait is one in a series entitled "Intended Consequences: Mothers of Genocide, Children of Rape", which tells the story of women survivors of the genocide, raped during the genocide.

SURF played an instrumental role in facilitating meetings between Jonathan and the women, a number who are also infected with HIV and AIDS, and are beneficiaries on SURF's antiretroviral treatment programme. SURF helps 3,200 infected women, and is continuing to lobby for additional funding to support an additional 11, 400 similarly affected women who are currently unable to access treatment.

Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, Founder and Director of SURF, commented on the awards:

"The awards to both Liliane and Jonathan could not be more deserved. Both have undertaken to utilise their skills and talents to raise awareness of the plight of survivors in Rwanda, though in very different ways. Liliane, through the empathy that she shows for survivors due to her experience as a survivor herself, has been instrumental in speaking out for survivors – and serving as a example to us all that however seemingly insurmountable the obstacles we face in life, with courage and effort they can be overcome. Jonathan, through his photographic expertise, is raising awareness of these women survivors; his remarkable images, ensuring that the world

does not forget the plight of these women and their children only thirteen years on from the horrific atrocities they endured.”

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Notes to editors:

For more information, on SURF, please visit: www.survivors-fund.org.uk

What is the Survivors Fund?

Survivors Fund, or SURF, is a charity dedicated to aiding and assisting the survivors of the Rwandan genocide. Since 1997, SURF has been supporting medical care and providing counselling for survivors, vocational training and home building. The work ensures that the:

- **Voices of survivors are listened to and heard**
- **Memories of the genocide are kept alive**
- **Victims of the genocide are never forgotten**
- **Survivors of the genocide are supported - in Rwanda and the UK**

Over the past year alone, SURF has:

- Supported **2500 women** raped and infected with HIV/AIDS with antiretroviral treatment
- Provided grants for **5000 households** for Income Generating Projects
- Built **70 homes** for child-headed households, giving shelter to nearly 400 young survivors
- Provided vocational training to **360 children**, and supported **370 children** with school fees
- Built **22 mass graves**, giving over **100,000 victims** of the genocide a decent burial

In 2007, SURF hopes to build 500 new homes for survivors and a further 23 mass graves. It has just completed work on a Resource and Testimony Centre – called Humura (“calm” in kinyarwanda), based just outside Kigali - to provide a place of sanctuary for survivor’s still under threat.

SURF is a registered UK charity (no. 1065705/5).