



**For immediate release**

## **SURF THANKS THE PUBLIC FOR SUCCESS OF DECEMBER APPEALS**

**(LONDON, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2006)** Survivors Fund (SURF) thanked the public today for its overwhelming support for its past two December Appeals, both that exceeded their target.

This year's December Appeal "*One Month to Support One Orphan's Village*" raised £13,700 which will be used to support the educational and training needs of a village of orphan headed-households in Rwanda. The Gitarama Orphan Village, a community of 36 homes providing shelter for over 200 children orphaned through the genocide, will use the money for school and university fees, as well as exam entrance fees, vocational training, and to help pay for books as well as electricity to enable the children to study at home in the evenings

Through the generous support of the British public, in 2004 SURF's "*One Month to Save the Life of One Woman*" raised over £12,000. The money has been allocated to an HIV+ widow of the genocide, to provide critical access to antiretroviral drugs. This has enabled the beneficiary to lead a healthy and economically active life again and provide care for the children she supports.

Survivors Fund Founder and Director Mary Kayitesi Blewitt, said on the success of the appeals: "The support of the British public, and SURF supporters around the world, for our December appeals has been overwhelming. Each year we have been able to generate more support, and engage more people to help make a difference to the lives of survivors in Rwanda. We look forward to now supplementing the donations committed by the many individuals who have engaged with our work, to drive greater funding from our institutional supporters. The survivors, and all of the team at SURF, are immensely grateful for the incredible positive response. The challenge now is to do more, and raise more, to help the many more widows and orphans reliant on SURF's support."

- END -

**For further information, please contact:**

David Russell

The Survivors Fund PR Office

Tel: 020 7383 3623

Email: [survivors-fund@theproffice.com](mailto:survivors-fund@theproffice.com)

## **Notes to editors:**

### What is the Survivors Fund?

SURF works to improve the lives of the Rwandan Survivors of Genocide. While the genocide destroyed victims by inflicting excruciating physical pain and terrifying mental abuse, the goal of SURF is to rebuild a sense of self and trust in humanity.

SURF was founded by Mary Kayitesi Blewitt and other Rwandans based in UK. Mary founded SURF at the behest of survivors after losing 50 family members during the genocide in 1994. Her support for survivors started back in 1995 after returning to the UK from eight months working for the Ministry of Rehabilitation in Rwanda and in 1997 Mary formally established SURF to continue to aid, assist and support survivors in the UK and Rwanda too. SURF is supported amongst others by Comic Relief; The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund and the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

SURF continues to build a meaningful and lasting positive effect to the lives of those widows and orphans who survived the tragic events of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The continued attention, effort and success on behalf of the genocide survivors have been possible because of the commitment of individuals and partner organisations in Rwanda and UK who have supported our work.

Despite the challenges that we continue to encounter, SURF has confidence that our supporters will stay with us in the long term to help make a difference to the lives of the Rwandan survivors of genocide.

Survivors Fund (SURF) is a registered charity number 1065705 and a company limited by guarantee.