

SYNOPSIS :

## UMUGUDU, a Rwandan family

Photo story from

**Yann CASTANIER**

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Fifteen years have come to pass. We have forgotten the genocide. The heart of Kigali appears strangely new and organized. Beneath the façade of the reconstruction lurks the genocide and its pernicious effects. Social links and the family structures are completely destroyed.

Martin, Alice, Françoise, Jean Baptiste... have no parents. Widowers have adopted orphans, couples have taken charge of children born of rape and families of orphans have been created to fill in the void.

Despite these substitutes (from mother to child, from brother to sister, from an individual to a group), there is a vivid feeling of absence. There are no adults to keep an eye on the children during mealtimes. This hollow feeling is hard to describe. There is nobody to give advices or simply be there, to show how to correctly cook the « indodo\* », to build a traditional cowshed to protect the goats from the rain, or to wipe away a child's tears at night.

At first, « Umugudu » meant « town ». Nowadays, this term is used to refer to the districts created by the government and the NGO to accommodate the widowers and orphans of 1994.

These umugudu, as in Kamonyi, are sometimes real villages inhabited by hundreds of young people from 14 to 24 years old. They live meagerly (with a few crops of coffee, manioc and sugar cane). They get married to other survivors. They go to church every Sunday. A great number of them haven't seen a psychologist in the last 15 years. The only way to manage a post-traumatic crisis is to keep a teenager in a closed room until he is in a state of complete exhaustion.

In the last few years, Evangelists, Adventists, Pentecostalists, etc... have appeared and try to fill the void in their own way...

\* Food-producing plant usually grown and used by poor people.