



Rwandan School, damaged during the genocide © HMDT

Genocide in Rwanda 1994

In 100 days in 1994 approximately 1 million Tutsis and some moderate Hutus were murdered in the Rwandan genocide. On 6 April 1994 the plane carrying Rwanda's President was shot down. The Tutsis were accused of killing the president and Hutu civilians were told, by radio and word of mouth, that it was their duty to wipe out the Tutsis. Although on a large scale, this genocide was carried out entirely by hand, often using machetes and clubs. The men who'd been trained to massacre were members of civilian death squads – the *Interahamwe*. The State provided supporting organisation – politicians, officials, intellectuals and professional soldiers incited the killers to do their work. Local officials assisted in rounding up victims and making suitable places available for slaughter.

Tutsi men, women, children and babies were killed in thousands in schools and churches. The victims, in their last moments alive, were faced by another appalling fact, their cold-blooded killers were people they knew – neighbours, colleagues, former friends, sometimes even relatives through marriage. On HMD, we can learn the lessons from the genocide in Rwanda to change the attitudes and language we use to others around us.

To find out more about the genocide in Rwanda visit:

www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/rwanda