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RWANDA: LESSONS FROM A HERO

VIDEO

AERIAL VIEW OF RWANDA'S
CAPITAL CITY

SCHOOLCHILDREN AT THE
PLAYGROUND
CHILDREN PLAYING SOCCER

DAMAS GISIMBA W/ ANOTHER
MAN

DAMAS AT PLAYGROUND

BLACK & WHITE FOOTAGE OF
RWANDA DURING GENOCIDE

AUDIO

NARRATION

In the heart of the capital city of Rwanda stands an orphanage. (4.5")

Children fill the playground. Laughter fills the air. (4.5")

These boys and girls here are the responsibility of this extraordinary man: orphanage Director, Damas Gisimba. (9")

It's a job he's never taken lightly and one that was never more dangerous than fourteen years ago when genocide swept this nation. (8.5")

In 1994 ethnic Hutu militia, armed with machetes, clubs and spears, took over the streets of Rwanda, slaughtering minority Tutsis. (10")

ARMED HUTUS IN THE STREET

Hutus, like Gisimba himself, were faced with an unimaginable choice – join the mobs or dare to protect their countrymen... even if it meant risking their own lives. (11”)

GISIMBA AT HIS OFFICE
MOVING CAR

Gisimba made his decision. He would defend the vulnerable...no matter their ethnicity. (5.5”)

BOY CRYING
FOOTAGE OF RWANDA
STREETS DURING GENOCIDE

GISIMBA: (French) **M**
“I see all people in my own image. They have the same blood that I have. They can suffer as I can suffer. If we had to die, it was necessary for us to die together.” (10.25”)

FOOTAGE OF CHILDREN
SEEKING REFUGE TO THE
ORPHANAGE

NARRATION

Tutsi children, women and men began flooding into the orphanage. (4.25”)

As news of this haven spread, within weeks the number of people in his orphanage swelled to some four hundred. (6.5”)

GISIMBA ON CAMERA
MS. DOUBLE DECK BEDS

GISIMBA: (French) **M**
“There were so many people we would put them everywhere. Five to six children were put on one mattress. People couldn’t breathe.” (9.5”)

BLACK & WHITE FOOTAGE OF
THE ORPHANAGE
EXTERIOR SHOTS

NARRATION

But they could not be allowed out – Hutu attackers came to the orphanage every single day. Most times they demanded payment. (7.5”)

GISIMBA ON CAMERA

GISIMBA: (French)

“In the beginning they wanted to take vehicles and items. I would give them things like money and food and they would go.” (6.65”)

GISIMBA ENTERING THE ORPHANAGE

NARRATION

But they came back... (1”)

MAN LOOKING UNDER THE BED

GISIMBA: (French)

M

“The women the militia were searching for we hid them under the beds. For the men, I hid them in the ceiling.” (6”)

GISIMBA POINTING AT THE CEILING

NARRATION

GISIMBA LEADING THE CAMERA INTO THE BATHROOM

Still other Tutsis hid here...in this bathroom in the orphanages infirmary – just a few feet away from their would-be killers, many of whom came here when injured. (10”)

MS. GISIMBA TELLS THE STORY ON CAMERA

GISIMBA: (French)

M

“Those inside would listen as the militia would talk...saying that they were going to kill all the Tutsis. They lived in torture.” (9.5”)

WS OF CAPITAL CITY
VAR. SHOTS OF ARMED MILITIAMEN

NARRATION

Nearly three months passed and time was running out. With little left to bribe the marauding militia, they prepared to attack. (7”)

BLACK & WHITE FOOTAGE OF MILITIA OUTSIDE ORPHANAGE

GISimba, once again risking his life, left to seek help, but was forced into hiding (4.7”)

STILL PHOTO OF AMERICAN
RELIEF WORKER, CARL WILKINS
TALKING TO HUTUS MILITIA

And just when it seemed all hope was lost, an American relief worker, Carl Wilkins, appeared at the orphanage and saw some 50 militia men swarming outside. (9.5")

SHOTS OF RWANDA
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE CITY
CENTRE

With the clock ticking, Wilkins found help and on July 1st, 1994, a group of Rwandan police raced those in the orphanage to safety in a church in the city centre. (11.25")

ARRAY OF CANDLES LIGHTED
ARMED MEN

There they found Gisimba...and there they remained until the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front seized back control of the country days later. (8.5")

FOOTAGE OF MASSACRED
TUTSIS INSIDE A BUILDING

By then, some 800,000 Rwandans had been massacred. All but eight of the people Gisimba hid were saved. (7.6")

GISIMBA PLAYING W/ THE BOYS
WS. GISIMBA MEETING THE
HIGH OFFICIALS OF RWANDA

In 2006, Gisimba was awarded the Presidential Medal of Honor for his heroic actions during the genocide. (6.5")

He's hoping his own experience inspires others. (3")

GISIMBA TALKS ON CAMERA

GISIMBA: (French)

M

"I think that in order not to abandon someone, someone like yourself, someone in trouble, you must above all have love. And we must teach our children only good." (15")

UN LOGO

This report was prepared by Andi Gitow for the
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