

The Country Where Sacrificing Children Is a Thriving Business

Editor's note: This story discusses very graphic practices. Please read with discretion.

Each year, hundreds of Ugandan children are kidnapped and murdered as part of a thriving human-sacrifice business.

A Christian pastor is now teaming up with police and politicians to stop this brutal practice.

It's a little after 2 in the morning, about an hour's drive south of Kampala.

CBN News has joined undercover detectives, armed police and a pastor hunting for a witch doctor accused of kidnapping and killing children

"Witch doctors believe that when you kidnap a child you get wealth, you get protection."

Brutal Ritual of Child Sacrifice

Pastor Peter Sewakiryanga leads the search. He runs Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, a Christian effort to stamp out child sacrifice in Uganda. He describes the witch doctors' brutal ritual.

"When they get the child, most times they cut the neck, they take the blood out, they take the tissue, they cut the genitals or any other body organs that they wish that the spirits want."

A few hours in, the trail for the killer goes cold.

Pastor Peter says these gruesome crimes happen almost each

month.

“The problem is increasing and many children are killed, and there are very few actually that survive; most of them die.”

Rachel Kaseggu knows the heartbreak of losing a child.

“I had high hopes and dreams for Clive,” Kaseggu told CBN News as she sobbed uncontrollably.

Kaseggu’s 3-year-old son Clive disappeared June 2, 2015 while playing in the backyard of their home.

“It was around 10 in the morning when we noticed he was nowhere to be found,” Kaseggu said.

CBN News met Kaseggu the day police told her what happened to her son.

“I’ve never even heard of child sacrifice; I didn’t even know what that phrase meant.”

Superstition and Desire to Get Rich Drive Child Sacrifice

Detective Emmanuel Mafundo took us to the spot, not too far from his home, where they found Clive’s remains in this pit toilet.

Mafundo said the key suspect turned out to be Kaseggu’s neighbor, a wealthy businessman who allegedly hired two men to kidnap and mutilate Clive’s body, believing the act would bring “good luck” to his new hotel project.

Detective Mafundo said the suspect paid the equivalent of \$1,400 for Clive’s life. “I found it so queer how someone, because of superstition, can be able to sacrifice a 3-year-old kid,” Mafundo, a Uganda police superintendent told CBN News.

Child sacrifice in Uganda is such a serious and widespread problem that the government has even set up an anti-child sacrifice and human trafficking task force.

Chief investigator Moses Binoga heads up the agency.

He says that in addition to decapitation and genital mutilation, witch doctors often slice the child's tongue and mix it with herbs for special powers.

"The tongue is used, they believe, to silence enemies," Binoga said.

Mike Chibita is Uganda's top law-enforcement official, the equivalent of America's attorney general. He says superstition and the desire to get rich quick contribute to high child sacrifice rates in his country.

"The connection is that these witch doctors come and tell people who want to get rich that in order to get rich you need to sacrifice human blood," said Chibita, who serves as Uganda's director of public prosecutions.

Three Boys Who Survived

Best friends Kanani Nankunda, George Mukisa and Allan Ssembatya are fortunate to be alive but bear the physical and emotional scars of their past. The three are child-sacrifice survivors.

A few years back, Kanani and his 7-year-old sister were attacked in the bush.

He has a 10-inch scar on the back of his neck, where the witch doctor tried to drain his blood.

"I fainted, and when I regained consciousness, I found my sister dead with her head missing," Nankunda told us in a low voice.

Two men attacked Allan Ssembatya on his way home from school.

"I tried to scream for my parents, but my voice was not strong enough for them to hear me," Ssembatya said.

They stabbed his neck, sliced his head with a machete and then castrated him. He remained in a coma for two months after his miraculous rescue.

George Mukisa's mother found him lying in a pool of blood after a man castrated him with a blunt knife.

Doctors had to reconstruct his genitals with skin grafted from his forearm.

The boys say they encourage each other to look past their physical challenges.

"God is helping us in many different ways," Ssembatya said. "When we think about what happened to us, we just pray and ask God that this would never happen to anybody else."

The three boys are now under Pastor Peter's care.

Long-Term Care for Survivors

Kyampisi Childcare Ministries is the only organization in the country providing long-term financial and medical care for survivors of child sacrifice.

"We want to see that the life of a child who has survived is supported, that they are socially able to stand and heal from the injuries, and that they can have a life after that," said Pastor Sewakiryanga. He also works with Ugandan lawmakers like Komuhangi Margaret to help draft specific laws targeting perpetrators of child sacrifice.

"Every Ugandan must wake up and say, 'No to sacrificing our children'," said Margaret, a member of Uganda's parliament. "Our children are the future of this country."

Rachel Kaseggu says life without Clive will never be the same. Still, she has a message for the men who brutally murdered her 3-year-old son:

“Because of my faith in Jesus, I believe in second chances, and I would give it to them because there’s nothing I can do to bring Clive back. My message to them is: Confess your sins and come to the Lord. Because when you come to the Lord, he will forgive your sins!” {eo}

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