

IS THERE REALLY A NEED FOR SAFE HOMES?



- The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been lead for over 20 years by Joseph Kony. Kony has claimed the Acholi (the people of Northern Uganda) *should be killed for rejecting God's anointed leader (himself)*. "If the Acholi don't support us, they must be finished," Kony told one child soldier. The Acholi were *attacked and abducted to serve Kony as soldiers, porters and sex slaves*. (pg 100)
- In the Gulu District, Kony's troops retaliated against the citizens with *unspeakable violence*. They kidnapped more than fifty men, women and children. *Soldiers cut off the noses, ears and hands of some of them. With others they bored holes through the lips and padlocked their mouths shut. Other were hacked to pieces with machetes*. (pg 101)
- As many as *90 percent of the LRA's soldiers are abducted children* and as many as fifty thousand children have been taken for this purpose by Kony since 1986. More than one hundred thousand other people, mostly civilians (Acholi) have been killed by the LRA. Almost the entire population (2 million) of Acholi land has been confined to internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. (pg 116)
- *When the LRA attacks, the parents and other adults often are killed immediately. Frequently they are hacked to pieces with machetes*, and their homes are burned. As terrible as these incidents are, it is better to die at the hands of a stranger than to *live long enough as a prisoner to see your child being forced at gunpoint to murder you*. This is a tactic Kony uses to dehumanize children. (pg 116)
- *After the abduction, the children are tied up and marched through the bush for days*. Their destination is usually the LRA's base camp in Sudan. They are forced to carry heavy supplies and the booty gained in the rebel's attack. *The children march from morning until night in their bare feet, without food or water*. While the commanders have drinking water, the *children are forced to drink urine or water from muddy ditches*. A child who becomes ill or cannot keep up is killed. *A child who tries to escape or is caught crying is killed*. The other children must carry out the execution. (pg 117)
- *LRA commanders often force children to kill their own siblings*, just to ensure that the children's loyalty will be to the movement, not the family. The leaders require every abducted child to kill another child within a week of being captured. (pg 118)
- *The children are regularly beaten* in order to harden them for battle, some so savagely that they are disfigured for life. A cycle of fear and guilt keeps the children captive until it is no longer needed. *Either the transformation to killer is complete or the child is dead!* (J. Carter Johnson, Christianity Today, January 2006, 31.)
- There is a dilemma about what is to become of children who are rescued or who escape from the LRA. *Northern Uganda lacks the proper conditions to bring healing and normality, particularly when those at home (in the camps) are still vulnerable to the LRA. No group has the resources to provide adequate therapy*. Without proper trauma counseling and spiritual and emotional healing, these children are in danger of further tragedy. (Joyce Neu, Report of the President's Peace Team, March 16, 2006, 6-7)