KidsRights Report

No Small Sacrifice

Child Sacrifice in Uganda, in a global context of cultural violence

KidsRights

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Executive Summary

Every week, children in Uganda disappear when parents aren't watching. Later, children are found dead or alive, with blood or body parts missing. In many of these cases, parts were removed by witch doctors when the children were still alive, in a ceremonial ritual of sacrifice.

Such sacrificial rituals, and the subsequent wearing, burying or eating of a child's body parts, are thought to bring business success, personal prosperity and health. Middle-class clients often begin with standard herbal remedies and animal sacrifices, but are subsequently persuaded by witch doctors to part with a large sum of money for "Big Blood".

This practice is not traditional in Uganda; it has embedded itself within traditional customs in recent times, and cases continue to rise. It is also reported in Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, Swaziland, Liberia, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Most crimes go unreported, and despite Uganda's anti-witchcraft laws, most witch doctors act without fear of prosecution.

Many of the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are violated by the practice of child sacrifice. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which Uganda adopted in 1991, is also contravened. Uganda ranks 137th out of 165 countries in the KidsRights Index, a measurement for the national implementation of children's rights; it is noted that government resources allocated for children are "very limited and insufficient".

The Witchcraft Act makes witchcraft technically illegal in Uganda, but drafted during colonial times, the act lacks modern credibility and is rarely enforced. In 2009, the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce was created within the Ugandan police, but it lacks the resources and manpower to monitor and investigate cases of child sacrifice. According to UNICEF, it exists in name only. Witch doctors, favoured by the rising middle classes, have powerful links with those in positions of power in Uganda, and the lack of resources may also reflect a lack of political will.

Roughly 80% of people in developing countries depend upon traditional medicine for their primary health care needs. In Uganda, there are around 650,000 registered traditional healers, and an estimated 3 million in practice. Hidden among these are the unscrupulous witch doctors who perform vicious crimes in the name of healing. Due to insufficient data and thorough research, the real scope of the spread of child sacrifice is not yet visible. But is as such expected to be far more widespread in the Uganda society.

Change cannot come soon enough. There is an urgent need for additional research and data collection to disclose the probably widespread child sacrifice practices. The government of Uganda must ensure that child sacrifice is dealt with by an effective system of criminal prosecution. Traditional healers must be properly regulated, and the healers themselves encouraged to speak out against the crimes committed in their name. The Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce must be properly equipped to carry out its duties and to pursue every case of child sacrifice to prosecution. Finally, measures must be put in place to ensure that victims of child sacrifice are supported medically, emotionally, socially and materially, as they live with the consequences of the most unthinkable crime.

Section 1: Introduction

Violence occurs in many different forms across the world, at work, school, in the community and at home. Children are more often victims of violence than adults, because they are dependent on others for their daily care. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights gives every individual – including children – the right to a life free from all forms of violence.

Violence is defined in Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as: "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse".

Child sacrifice is a form of violence both physical and mental. It is not considered a global issue, but is rooted in the cultural and social practices of specific world regions. Child sacrifice is currently reported in African countries including Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, Swaziland, Liberia, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.[1]

Sacrifice is performed in order to reconcile with the gods. This is a widely known phenomenon all over the world, involving food, animals and other products. However, in some cases, humans are the subject of sacrifice. The purer the offering, the better; making children more vulnerable to sacrifice than adults. Furthermore, they are much easier to lure into danger.

Sacrificial rituals are performed to maintain good relations with the spirits. Ritual killings are believed, for example, to bring health and prosperity, or to settle quarrels. In this report, child sacrifice will be defined as the harmful practice of removing a child's body parts, blood or tissue while the child is alive. These can be worn, buried or consumed by an individual, who believes the practice will bring them wealth, good fortune, and blessings from ancestors.

Sacrifice requires blood and certain body parts, including organs, limbs, genitals, eyes, teeth, fingers, the tongue or the heart. The process of removing these body parts often happens while the child is still alive. The parts will then be used in medicines or mixed with herbs. According to Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, "Many of these child survivors are carrying with them serious and disturbing life scars and injuries which include complete genital mutilations, castration, deep wound stabs, missing tongues, ears, as well as emotional and psychological scars that need life time healing."[2]

Child sacrifice rituals are performed by witch doctors, who practice a combination of traditional medicine, religious rituals and medical procedures. It is believed in Africa that witch doctors can, through magic and spells, influence an individual's future. This gives them significant power within their communities.

Witch doctors operate in areas where people use traditional medicine, which is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as:

> "including diverse health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and/or mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to maintain well-being, as well as to treat, diagnose or prevent illness".[3]

Traditional medicine is generally available and commonly used in large parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America. WHO estimates that while the percentage varies from country to country, roughly 80% of people in developing countries still depend upon traditional medicine for their primary health care needs.[4]

Misfortune is regularly blamed by witch doctors on the spirits. First, herbal remedies and animal sacrifices are often tried. But if these do not bring about a change in circumstances, child sacrifice can be proposed. The client is persuaded that the body

parts of a child will make the magic ritual more powerful; the act of removing the body parts itself forming a part of the ritual. The witch doctor will arrange the abduction and sacrifice of the child in exchange for a large sum of money.

Most children are not given up willingly for sacrifice by their parents or carers. Instead, they simply go missing, abducted by the witch doctor or by his or her associate. The sacrificial ritual is not discovered until the body is found in a desolate place, or the child survives the sacrifice. Both boys and girls are attacked for their body parts; there is no clear gender preference.

The first chapter of this report looks at violence against children – and child sacrifice in particular – from a global perspective; outlining the legal framework, and key facts and figures. The second chapter addresses these with particular reference to Uganda. The report concludes with recommendations.

Section 2: Child sacrifice from a global perspective

2.1 Legal framework

In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations. This declaration, of 30 articles, is committed to protecting and promoting the human rights of every individual. That includes children, who are entitled to enjoy all the rights guaranteed by the various international human rights treaties which have since evolved from the original Declaration.

Although children are covered by these international treaties, the international community recognised the specific need for the protection and promotion of children's rights in 1989, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC applies to all children below the age of 18, and contains 54 articles covering almost all aspects of the life of a child. These articles are grouped in the following three categories:

- Provision: these are the rights to the resources, the skills and services; the "inputs" that are necessary to ensure children's survival, and the development of their full potential;
- Protection: these are the rights to protection from acts of exploitation or abuse, in the main by adults or institutions that threaten their dignity, their survival and their development;
- Participation: these are the rights that provide children with the means by which they can engage in those processes of change that will bring about the realisation of their rights, and prepare them for an active part in society and change.[5]

All States that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are bound to this convention by law. The only States that have not ratified the CRC are The United States of America, and Somalia. Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines the right to a life without violence:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 15
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence is enshrined in Article 19 of the CRC:

Convention on the Rights of the Child , Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children[6] addresses violence against children in five settings: the family, schools, alternative care institutions and detention facilities, places where children work and communities. These five settings illustrate the complexity of violence against children, which can happen in different settings and take various forms. There are various risk factors such as economic development, social status, age and gender which can contribute to an increased risk of violence against children. The most prevalent and occurring form of violence against

children is child abuse. The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act defines child abuse as "Any recent act of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation of a child".[7] The table below provides an overview of the rights that may be violated when children encounter violence.

Rights violated by violence against children

- The right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, including sexual abuse (Article 19) and from all forms of sexual exploitation (Article 34).
- The right to protection against all forms of exploitation affecting any aspect of the child's welfare (Article 36).
- Children who have been neglected, abused or exploited should receive special help to physically and psychologically recover and reintegrate into society. Particular attention should be paid to restoring the health, self-respect and dignity of the child (Article 39).
- The government should take all measures possible to make sure that children are not abducted, sold or trafficked (Article 35).
- The right of a child when he/she has experienced violence to receive special help **in** order to recover from this (Article 39).[8]

In 1999 the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) entered into force, adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union). The ACRWC builds on the same basic principles as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but pays particular attention to issues of special importance to Africa. Africa is in fact the only continent in the world with a region-specific child rights instrument.

2.1.1 Cultural violence and child sacrifice

Three articles in the ACRWC address violence against children, which is regarded as a key theme. The various forms of violence include physical, emotional, psychological, financial, and cultural. Cultural violence occurs when the child is harmed as a result of practices condoned by their culture, religion or tradition. The ACRWC contains provisions directed at the elimination of harmful traditional practices including female genital mutilation and scarification.

The protection of children against harmful social and cultural practices is addressed in Article 21:

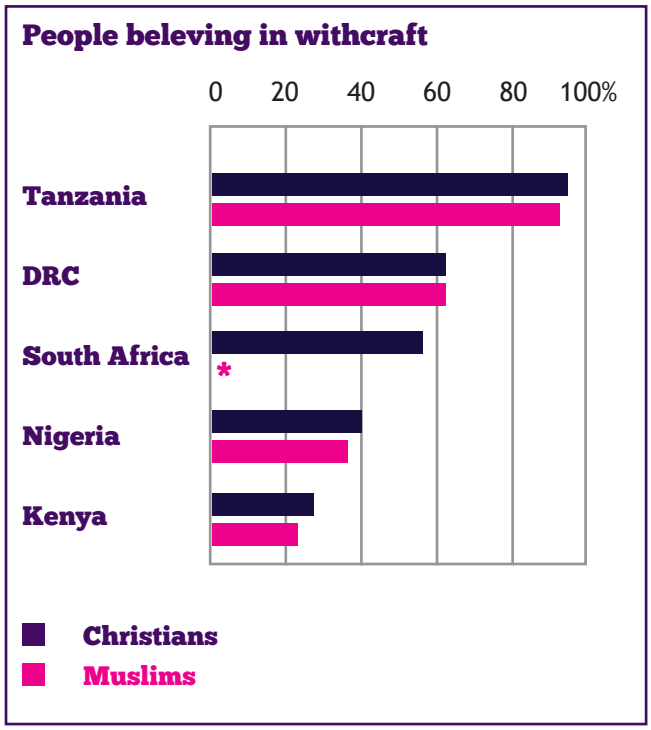
ACRWC, Article 21: Protection against Harmful Social and Cultural Practices

1. States Parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate harmful social and cultural practices affecting the welfare, dignity, normal growth and development of the child and in particular:
   (a) those customs and practices prejudicial to the health or life of the child; and
   (b) those customs and practices discriminatory to the child on the grounds of sex or other status.

The consequences for children who have been exposed to violence vary according to its nature and severity. Short- and long-term repercussions of violence can have a major impact on the child, and can cause social, emotional and physical problems. The practices of female genital mutilation, honour killings and child sacrifice are categorised as **cultural violence.**

2.2 Context of child sacrifice

Child sacrifice is currently reported in various countries in Africa, including Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, Swaziland, Liberia, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe.[9] The ritual of child sacrifice is, in most cases, performed by a witch doctor. Witchcraft is the art of invoking magical power or the practice of attempting to do so. The following figure shows its status in a number of African countries (BBC, 2010):



As the graph shows, witchcraft is most universally accepted in Tanzania, where 93% of the population believe it works. The body parts of people with albinism are believed to increase the power of witch doctors' magic potions, leaving albino children at most risk of ritual sacrifice. In Uganda, however, there is no such emphasis on albino children.

Reported cases of child sacrifice reveal that children are mostly ambushed on their way to school, or taken from the home while unsupervised. In neither case is the parent present. As a preventative measure, some parents choose to pierce the ears of their children, which is believed to make them less pure, and therefore less attractive to witch doctors.

2.3 Facts and figures

Violence against children can occur anywhere in the world. Some of those forms of violence are rooted in economic, social and cultural practices. Child abuse can be seen all over the world. Other forms of violence like female genital mutilation and child sacrifice are associated with specific regions. These are also referred to as cultural violence because they are perpetuated in the name of tradition and culture, and are associated with specific regions. There is a lack of reliable data on child sacrifice, but the statistics below give an indication of the scope of other forms of cultural violence:

- UNICEF estimates that in sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt and Sudan, 3 million girls and women are subjected to female genital mutilation every year[10]
- The Honour Based Violence Awareness Network estimates that there are 5000 honour killings internationally per year[11]

Violence against children can be hidden, and both children and perpetrators may accept physical, sexual and psychological violence as inevitable and normal. "Every day, millions of children are affected by conflict, suffer from violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation at home, in schools, in institutions, in the community and in places where they work" (UNICEF, 2006).

> "There is a large gap between what we know about violence against children and what we know should be done. We know that violence against children often causes lifelong physical and mental harm. We also know that violence erodes the potential for children to contribute to society by affecting their ability to learn and their social and emotional development. Given the importance of children to our future – we must place "preventing" violence against children among our highest priorities." James A. Mercy, Editorial Board of the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children (UNICEF, 2006).

That violence against children can be hidden, and even culturally accepted, makes it difficult to quantify. The 2006 UNICEF world report, "Violence against Children", states that **"Only a small proportion of acts of violence against children is reported and investigated, and few perpetrators held to account"** (UNICEF, 2006). In some cases of violence the perpetrators are strangers, but in most cases they are part of the child's direct environment; parents, neighbours, teachers and employers. In the case of child sacrifice, the witch doctor often works with an associate.

2.4 Government action and the role of NGOs

The CRC establishes the following relevant duty-bearers for guaranteeing children their rights (Save The Children, 2007):

1. The State (arts. 2.2, 3.2 and 37)
2. Parents, legal guardians and individuals legally responsible for children (art. 3.2)
3. Institutions, services and facilities for the care and protection of the child (art. 3.2)

The State has primary responsibility for ensuring that children are protected from violence. Article 37 of the CRC says that "State parties shall ensure that no child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." States are therefore required to take appropriate legislative and administrative measures, and to play a key role in providing treatment and rehabilitation programs for children who are affected by violence. Because child sacrifice is a regional rather than a global problem, the role of the state is even more crucial.

Almost all states have ratified the CRC, but few have given their legal framework a thorough review with regard to violence against children. Should the correct laws be put in place, there is still a question of their enforcement in practice. The independent expert who led the United Nations study on violence against children, Professor Pinheiro, has written:

> "The best way to deal with violence against children is to get at the source, before it is conducted. Everyone plays a role. But the government is primarily responsible. This will ensure that all violence against children is a criminal offence, regardless of where and by whom it is committed." (Pinheiro, UN Study Violence against Children, 2006).

Although the government's responsibility is paramount, other stakeholders have an important role to play. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) perform as watchdog, or as partner, in areas such as:

- Advocacy for improved legislation and adequate state budgets
- Campaigns of sensitisation, education and information
- Service provision to victims and perpetrators of violence, including case litigation, psychosocial and material support, medical and other treatments, as well as services to professionals (e.g. training)
- Research, including case studies and focus groups.[12]

In 2007 the International NGO Council on Violence Against Children was formed in response to the UN Report on Violence against Children. This demonstrates the central role of NGOs in monitoring cases of violence against children, providing direct aid, and identifying and transmitting information from local areas to the centres of power. Many NGOs participate actively in monitoring the CRC, and present their findings to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as complementary reports or shadow reports. With regard to cultural violence in specific regions, NGOs can play a crucial role in research and sensitisation.

Section 3: Child sacrifice from a country perspective: Uganda

3.1 Legal framework: Uganda

Uganda is a member of the United Nations and of the African Union. The Ugandan government committed itself in 1991 to protecting and ensuring children's rights, by agreeing to undertake the obligations of the CRC. In the same year, the government of Uganda also signed the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).

Currently, the following regulations make child sacrifice illegal in Uganda (ANPPCAN, 2010):

- The Constitution of Uganda, article 22(1), says that no person shall be deprived of the right to life. Further, article 24 requires respect for human dignity and protection from inhuman treatment: "no person shall be subjected to any form of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".
- The Children Act 2000 says that any person who is the carer of a child must maintain the child and protect him or her from discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect. Moreover, it makes illegal any social or customary practices that are harmful to the child's health.
- The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009 makes human sacrifice illegal. Any person who is convicted of child sacrifice can be sentenced to death by the courts.
- The Witchcraft Act 1957 prohibits acts of witchcraft that involve threatening others with death. Convictions lead to prison sentences of up to five years. The Witchcraft Act makes provision for the prevention of witchcraft, as well as the punishment of persons practising it.
- Article 19 of the CRC and Article 16 of the African Children's Charter (Protection from all forms of violence) determines the child's right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or by anyone else who looks after them.
- An Anti-Human Sacrifice and Trafficking Taskforce has been created within the Ugandan Police. This taskforce is responsible for investigation and prosecution, as well as sensitising the public to human trafficking and child sacrifice.

Witchcraft Act, Uganda (1957)
Any person, other than a person in authority acting in the course of his or her duty, in whose possession or control any article used in practising witchcraft is found, other than bona fide for scientific purposes or as a curio, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a period not exceeding five years (Uganda Legal Information Institute, 1957).

The Witchcraft Act was drafted and implemented during colonial times and needs to be revised and updated. The act is especially focused on protecting children, a group that has been particularly vulnerable to the practice of human sacrificing in Uganda.

3.2 Context of child sacrifice

Africa has a long history of traditional healing, which is still widespread across the continent and in Uganda. Most traditional healers use livestock for their sacrificial activities. A report by the Pulitzer Centre on Crisis Reporting states that "child sacrifice has slowly embedded itself within traditional customs, although it is not genuinely related to the local culture". According to the Jubilee Campaign's report, 'Child Sacrifice in Uganda', "child sacrificial rituals are employed by fraudulent traditional healers in a means to extort large sums of money from people with almost no risk or consequence for those involved in carrying out the crime." (Jubilee Campaign and Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, 2011: 36).

A combination of the following factors reinforces the practice of child sacrifice in Uganda;

- Anti-witchcraft law has rarely been enforced, reducing fear of punishment among witch doctors engaging in child-trafficking and ritual murders.
- The lack of differentiation between traditional healers and those impersonating them undermines the work of genuine traditional healers. Witch doctors exploit the general acceptance in Uganda of traditional medicine.
- People believe that sacrificing a child could bring good luck, wealth or health.
- There is a knowledge gap about child sacrifice and the dangers associated with it, as well as child rights issues in general.

The recent rise of child sacrifice is often linked to the economic development of Uganda. Pastor Peter Sewakiryanga, the founder of the Kyampisi Ministries church, stresses in an interview with the BBC:

> "Child sacrifice has risen because people have become lovers of money. They want to get richer. They have a belief that when you sacrifice a child you get wealth, and there are people who are willing to buy these children for a price. So they have become a commodity of exchange, child sacrifice has become a commercial business."[13]

Many people in Uganda believe that a witch doctor can bring them business success, good fortune or good health through the performance of a ritual. If this doesn't work, the witch doctor can convince them that the only way to please the gods is to sacrifice a human being. In Uganda this is known as 'Big Blood'; after the first sacrifice of chicken or goat has failed, comes Big Blood – child sacrifice. (Jubilee Campaign and Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, 2011).

ANPPCAN Uganda stresses the urge for government interven¬tion to counter child sacrifice. In 2009, due to the rising number of cases, the Ugandan government established the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce. The police taskforce was established in cooperation with the US government, in order to share specialist training and expertise (ANPPCAN, 2010). Unfortunately, in practice, the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce often lacks the resources to instigate investigations. Its nationwide preventative potential is also severely curtailed by available manpower and resources; it lacks transport, for example, to access remote areas of the country (Jubilee Campaign and Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, 2011). According to UNICEF, the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce effectively exists in name only (UNICEF, 2013: 93).

3.3 Facts, figures and a lack of data

Uganda is located in Eastern Africa; neighbouring countries include South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In July 2013, the population of Uganda numbered 34.7 million people, of whom 48.9% were children between 0 and 14 years old.[14]

Uganda ranks 137th out of 165 countries on the KidsRights Index overall score. The KidsRights Index is a global measurement tool which ranks countries on the basis of their adherence to children's rights. The index is based on five domains which are necessary for the implementation of children's rights: the right to life, health, education, protection and child rights environment.[15]

Child sacrifice is a growing problem in Uganda, according to the report 'Child Sacrifice in Uganda' (Jubilee Campaign and Kyampisi Childcare Ministries, 2011: 36). The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) confirms that child sacrifice has increased in Uganda over the last five years.[16] According to the 2009 Uganda Police Report on human sacrifice, 15 cases of child sacrifice were reported, compared with just three cases in 2007. But most cases do not find their way to police; the report notes that in 2009, out of 123 missing persons, 90 (73%) were children suspected to have become victims of human sacrifice.[17]

HumaneAfrica conducted research on the incidence of child sacrifice in 25 communities in Uganda's Central, Eastern and Western regions. They calculate

that "These weekly mutilations, confirmed with witness accounts make it possible to establish a baseline for incidents relating to child mutilation and sacrifice in Uganda" (HumaneAfrica, 2013). The research took place during four months between June and September 2012. During this period, 20 cases of child sacrifice occurred in these 25 communities. (HumaneAfrica, 2013). Furthermore, children between the ages of 3 and 18 years were the most vulnerable (HumaneAfrica, 2013).

Child sacrifice is a very severe form of violence, leading to major injuries or to death. If a child survives the ritual, the impact is enormous. The child can have major injuries caused by the removal of body parts, and the emotional consequences of abduction, followed by experiencing such a procedure, cannot be underestimated.

"I took one glance at my child and couldn't take another look. He didn't have arms and his legs had been cut off, the head was on the other side from the body. I was crying uncontrollably, I Imagined the pain he must have gone through. It made me sad as a mother that someone could kill an innocent child like that".
Victim's mother, Masaka District. HumaneAfrica 2013.

"I took one glance at my child and couldn't take another look. He didn't have arms and his legs had been cut off, the head was on the other side from the body. I was crying uncontrollably, I Imagined the pain he must have gone through. It made me sad as a mother that someone could kill an innocent child like that" . Victim's mother, Masaka District. HumaneAfrica 2013.

The reports of the Uganda Police (2009) and HumaneAfrica (2013) are just an indication of the 'top of the iceberg'. Due to insufficient data and thorough research, the real scope of the spread of child sacrifice is not yet visible. But could be huge, seeing it's correlation with wide-spread witchcraft practices.

3.4 Challenges and underlying causes

One challenge to the eradication of child sacrifice is the faith which people place in witch doctors. In order to perform a sacrifice involving the body parts of a child, the witch doctor demands a large sum of money. According to HumaneAfrica:

> "poverty is a strong driver when it comes to people consulting witch doctors. Individuals are desperately trying to evade poverty and the frustrations and poor life conditions associated with it. They are therefore susceptible to the witch doctors offers of improved health and/or financial situation" (HumaneAfrica, 2013: 29)

This also applies to the expanding middle class in Uganda, which looks to rituals to gain more prosperity.

Witch doctors are often highly respected by their communities and have strong ties with local and national politicians and governors. This creates a context in which witch doctors can operate with little or no risk of facing trial for their actions. In order to counter this, a working system of prosecution for reported cases of child sacrifice needs to be established. For this to work, a system of accountability is required, from the ground up. Sufficient resources also need to be made available; a major challenge in Uganda. The Kids Rights Index Domain 5: 'Child Rights Environment' notes of Uganda that it "is concerned that the resources allocated for children are very limited and insufficient to respond to national and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights".[18]

Furthermore, if a child survives a sacrificial ritual, there are insufficient resources to support him or her. This is conceded in Uganda's own initial report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child:

> "Existing children's institutions are inadequate, formal fostering is still not developed owing to cultural and economic limitations. The greater problem is that Probation and Welfare Officers have no resources, they are few and therefore

cannot adequately solve the problems of the child's family and those of the child."[19]

The dearth of prosecutions for crimes of child sacrifice are a major obstacle to the work of the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce. In order to increase prosecution rates, resources are required. Without prosecutions, instances of child sacrifice will continue to rise.

3.5 Government action and the role of NGOs

Resources and funding are required to enable criminal prosecution, and to raise public awareness. Registration of traditional healers has also been pinpointed by the NGO, Advocates for Human Dignity, as an area requiring attention. In 2013 there were around 650,000 registered traditional healers in Uganda, while in reality there are an estimated 3 million practising traditional healers (Advocates for Human Dignity, 2013) This discrepancy in registration makes it harder to trace the witch doctors among the traditional healers, and to establish whether they perform child sacrifice rituals.

There are various NGOs in Uganda which monitor child sacrifice and raise public awareness about the issue; reports which have been compiled about child sacrifice tend to be made with their cooperation. In 2009, Kyampisi Childcare Ministries (KCM) was established, and as well as providing children with health and education services, it campaigns vocally for an end to child sacrifice. KCM has established relationships with organisations, churches, the police, the government and victims of child sacrifice. It has also cooperated with the police force of Uganda to investigate the cases of children thought to be victims of child sacrifice.

Section 4: Conclusions and recommendations

Child sacrifice violates the most fundamental of human rights: the right to life, and the right to be protected from all forms of physical violence. Nonetheless, cases of child sacrifice continue to be reported. Those children who survive the ritual bear serious physical injuries, as well as horrendous emotional scars, both of which affect their future prospects in life and work.

Child sacrifice is both physically and mentally violent, and is rooted in cultural and social practices. Rather than being a global phenomenon, it is rooted in particular regions in Africa, where child sacrifice is a contemporary relatively unknown issue.
In Uganda the majority of people believe in the power of traditional medicine. Child sacrifice is often carried out by witch doctors for a fee, to increase the fortunes of middle class clients. HumaneAfrica has uncovered "weekly mutilations confirmed with witness accounts".
Due to insufficient data and thorough research, the real scope of the spread of child sacrifice is not yet visible. But is expected to be far more widespread in the Uganda society.

Global Recommendations:

- Data collection methods need to be improved, as most current cases of child sacrifice are unreported and therefore not properly investigated.
- National governments must establish clear principles and priorities for the elimination of child sacrifice.

Recommendations for Uganda:

- There is an urgent need for additional research and data collection to disclose the probably widespread child sacrifice practices.
- The government of Uganda must ensure that child sacrifice is dealt with by an effective system of criminal prosecution.
- Sufficient resources and manpower for the Anti-Human Sacrifice Taskforce is needed as well as strategic planning on analysis of systematic data.
- Appropriate regulation of traditional healers in Uganda is necessary, to provide protection for clients, and to hold healers accountable for unlawful acts, including child sacrifice
- Traditional healers must be encouraged to speak out against rituals of child sacrifice.
- Victims of child sacrifice must have access to adequate psychosocial and material support, and medical and other treatments, supplied by the government.

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15 The KidsRights Index is a joint initiative of the KidsRights Foundation and Erasmus University Rotterdam; Erasmus School of Economics and International Institute of Social Studies www.kidsrightsindex.org

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