

Invisible Children: Rough Cut

Movie Synopsis:

What started out as a film-making adventure in Africa, transformed into much more, when the three young American's (Jason Russell, Bobby Bailey, and Laren Poole) original travels took a divine turn, and they found themselves stranded in Northern Uganda. They discovered children being kidnapped nightly from their homes and subsequently forced to become fight as child soldiers. This film is dedicated to exposing this tragic, and amazingly untold story.

Even at this moment, in Uganda, Children as young as 8 are methodically kidnapped from their homes by a rebel group called the "Lord's Resistance Army" (LRA). The abducted children are then desensitized to the horror of brutal violence and killing, as they themselves are turned into vicious fighters. Some escape and hide in constant fear for their lives. Most remain captive, and grow to maturity with no education other than life "in the bush" and fighting in a guerilla war. Of the many ramifications that a 20 -year-long war can cause, the film "**Invisible Children: Rough Cut**" highlights what the community refers to as "NIGHT COMMUTERS." We watch thousands of children "commute" out of fear, from their villages to nearby towns each night in order to avoid the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) abductions. They sleep in public places, vulnerable, and without supervision.

This film focuses in on 4 young boys: Jacob, Thomas, Tony, and Boni. Through their eyes, we relive the terror of abduction, courage of survival, the heartbreak of losing a brother, and the innate joy- found only in a child. The three filmmakers (Jason, Bobby, and Laren) were amazed to find many things in common between these kids and kids in America, themselves included.

As the three left Northern Uganda, they were appalled by what they had seen, and yet, in awe of the resilience and hope they found in these children, and this community. The filmmakers thought: How could such an atrocity exist for such a long time, without the world knowing?

Believing that the "invisible children's" story could inspire others to do something, as it did them, they created a documentary, which we now know as the "**Invisible Children: Rough Cut**".

They originally screened the film in June 2004 for friends and family and soon expanded to high schools, colleges, and organizations. After audiences viewed the movie, one question repeatedly surfaced, "what can we do?" And so, a non-profit was birthed out of a film.

THE UNITED NATIONS ESTIMATES 300,000 CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 ARE CURRENTLY FIGHTING IN CONFLICTS AROUND THE WORLD AND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS MORE ARE MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES - EITHER BEING TRAINED FOR COMBAT OR USED AS LABORERS. PHYSICAL, SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE IS COMMONPLACE. MOST OF THESE CHILDREN WERE FORCIBLY CONSCRIPTED OR ABDUCTED BY FIGHTING FORCES TO BECOME INSTRUMENTS OF WAR, TO KILL OR BE KILLED. WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE EXPERIENCE HAS DEVASTATING EFFECTS ON THEIR PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.