



STAGING HOPE

ACTS OF PEACE IN NORTHERN UGANDA

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

produced by MELISSA FITZGERALD and KATY S. FOX
executive producers CINDY LANDON, JOHN PRENDERGAST and MARTIN SHEEN

THE STORY

Imagine you are a teenager who is abducted in the middle of the night and forced to become a child soldier or sex slave. Imagine trying to sleep, as your friends go missing everyday, wondering if you will be next. Now, imagine many of the people you know and love will soon die and most of the world has no idea what is happening to you...

Teenagers like Scovia and 13 others don't have to imagine, this is their life. Having escaped their rebel abductors, these teens and their families are now living together in camps for internally displaced persons (IDP.) At the height of the insurgency in northern Uganda, these camps were in such deprived conditions that approximately 1,000 people died each week.

Their stories of suffering and resilience have never been told...until now.

THE FILM

Staging Hope: Acts of Peace in Northern Uganda is a documentary film that follows a team of actors, playwrights, and activists who use theater to help these children explore the traumatic events they have been through. Through dramatizing their stories, the teens are able to share their voices with the community and the world.

The film captures the incredible humanity and emotion between the children and adults as they construct dramatic theater performances based on their lives. The short plays address HIV/AIDS, peace, and reconciliation. It poses the taboo question; "When an escaped child soldier returns home, are his parents able to accept him?"

Staging Hope is an authentic feature length documentary with personal accounts, live performances, music, and dance. It shows how actors, playwrights, and children collaborate to tell a personal story of suffering, resilience, war, forgiveness, and hope. The film gives us a strong glimpse into the vulnerable moments and powerful bonds that connect all of us as humans, no matter where we live or what we have gone through.

"I pray that this drama will help Francis in his future life and that it will give him courage to teach others the skills he learns."



THE IMPACT

The mission of this program and documentary was to connect vastly different cultures and experiences through theater and advocacy. The goal was provide a platform for the Ugandan teens to share their voices with the world.



The final stage performance gave these teens the opportunity to share their voices and their stories with over 1,000 people in their camp.

Currently, these plays are reaching American audiences as students, professional actors, and volunteers across the United States are performing the readings. Parts of these plays have been performed by former "West Wing" actors Dulé Hill, Allison Janney, Janel Moloney, and Martin Sheen.



Alfred

"I signed up for the drama program because "I thought it would make people in our area change. Basically, drama is about peace and reconciliation. The main factor in this area is peace. We are not peaceful in this country. And I thought when we make this drama very well, I will play it, people will pick something from it and it will bring peace."



John Prendergast, Executive Producer

"The film will bring these stories to audiences worldwide, not only illuminating the situation in northern Uganda but giving tools and opportunity to become involved and to act to bring the atrocities to an end."

More than just building a stage, Staging Hope provides a platform for these teens to share their stories, hopes and dreams. In addition to discovering talents, they find the courage to share their voices.

The Voices of Uganda team has been engaged in a grassroots awareness and advocacy campaign throughout the U.S. For more information and to view the trailer, please visit the film's website.

<http://www.staginghope.com>

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Scovia

"What I like about the drama about HIV/AIDS is it can educate people how to protect themselves against the disease."