



GULU, UGANDA

THE PROBLEM

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

A poor woman in Uganda not only has to contend against the challenges of eking out a living in harsh conditions, but also with a culture that routinely denies her rights.

Widows in particular are seen as an easy target for abuse. In Uganda, when a man dies, it is common for neighbors, relatives and other community members to steal the home and property from his widow and children. Police and courts are ill-equipped and often slow to respond to the needs of these vulnerable families. Since 2012, IJM has been working on behalf of widows and orphans in Gulu who have lost their source of shelter, food and income because of land theft.

IJM GULU PROGRESS SINCE 2012



540+

restored to their homes and land



600+

survivors and family members receiving aftercare services from IJM



90+

criminals restrained from committing more violence



THE FACTS



More than **115 million widows** live in extreme poverty around the world—with half a billion children depending on these widows for survival.¹

In Northern Uganda, **78% of the population** were either forced to leave their land altogether or were unable to access it due to threats of violence from the LRA.²

65% of the land in Northern Uganda is currently disputed.³

¹Sylvia Ondimba, ²Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda, ³World Bank



“Because of IJM I can now look at my two sons each day. They are alive and well because of IJM’s intervention.”

—Benedetta, restored to her home with IJM’s advocacy

How IJM Gulu Combats Land Theft

We rescue widows and orphans from violence and help Local Council leaders (the community-level representatives of the justice system), police and courts restore the vulnerable families to the homes that have been stolen from them. This can mean moving women and children into safe houses while we work to stop the threats.

We bring criminals to justice by working with police and prosecutors to take them to court. IJM attorneys help build strong cases by gathering evidence that proves a widow’s rights and will expose the criminal’s actions.

We restore survivors by providing counseling, ensuring that children can go to school, and helping women begin income-generating projects. Once families are safe on their land, we empower them through training and by providing resources to rebuild their lives.

We strengthen justice systems by working with police, courts, land authorities and other local leaders to dramatically improve the justice system response to land theft so women and children are safe. We also work with the media and churches to train communities on their rights.

IJM GULU MILESTONES

2012

IJM GULU OPENS

2012

OUR FIRST CASE

We intervene to help a widow being threatened and forced off her land by her late husband’s family.

2013

FIRST SUSPECT ARRESTED FOR LAND THEFT

Police arrest and charge the brother-in-law who was harassing our first client and taking her rightful land.

2014

FIRST IJM CLIENT FULLY RESTORED

We measure a client’s “restoration” through rigorous metrics to ensure survivors are equipped with the tools and long-term plan they need to thrive.

FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR CHRIS MARSHALL

Chris leads IJM’s work defending widows and orphans in Gulu. Before joining IJM, he worked as the Global Head of Justice for the British Council in Dhakar, Bangladesh. As a lawyer from the UK, he formerly worked for a number of prestigious UK law firms in London and established Advocates for International Development, which provides global pro bono services for NGOs and other non-profits.



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INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION is a global organization that protects the poor from violence throughout the developing world. IJM partners with local authorities to rescue victims of violence, bring criminals to justice, restore survivors, and strengthen justice systems.

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