

# GHANA

## THE PROBLEM

### FORCED LABOR SLAVERY

**Ghana's Lake Volta is the world's largest man-made lake. Thousands of children work in its massive fishing industry—and many of these children are held in slavery.**

Children as young as 3 years old are abused and malnourished. Their work is dangerous; drowning and other hazards are a constant threat. Victims are forced to rise before dawn to go out on the lake, diving down into the dark water to untangle fishing nets. IJM is working with partners in the criminal justice system to ensure that law enforcement and prosecutors have the training and support they need to identify victims, launch rescues, arrest suspects, and bring criminals to justice.

### IJM GHANA PROGRESS SINCE 2015



**164**

victims rescued from  
Lake Volta's fishing  
industry



**4**

age of the youngest  
child IJM has rescued  
off the lake



**31**

suspected traffickers  
restrained

## THE FACTS



Nearly **50,000** children work in Ghana's fishing industry, with tens of thousands working at Lake Volta alone.<sup>1</sup>

An IJM investigation in 2013 revealed that more than half of **nearly 800 children** we observed on the lake may be slaves. Of those, the majority were under the age of 10.

**25 million people** live in Ghana, and more than 9% of the population lives on less than \$2 per day.<sup>2</sup>



“What struck me was how small and tiny they were, how young. And they had been expected to do this hard work! These children don’t know there is something else they should or could be doing.”

—Anita, Director for Aftercare, IJM Ghana

## How IJM Ghana Combats Forced Labor Slavery

**We rescue children from slavery** in the fishing industry by helping law enforcement locate children being held as slaves, and work with Ghanaian police and anti-trafficking forces to rescue them and bring them to a safe place.

**We bring criminals to justice** by supporting law enforcement partners to collect evidence and by assisting public prosecutors as they take traffickers and criminals to trial for slavery crimes under Ghanaian law.

**We restore survivors** by helping them heal from the trauma and finding a safe place where they can thrive—either back home with their families or in a shelter where they will receive an education or job training. We work with aftercare providers and other NGOs already on the ground.

**We strengthen justice systems** by equipping Ghana’s Anti-Human Trafficking Unit and law enforcement agencies to investigate and respond to child trafficking, and strengthening the coordination between law enforcement and social services that is essential to successfully prosecuting traffickers.

### IJM GHANA MILESTONES

- 2014**  
**IJM GHANA OPENS**
- 2015**  
**FIRST RESCUE OPERATION**  
Ten children rescued
- 2016**  
**FIRST CONVICTION**
- 2017**  
**A POWERFUL ALLY**  
Ghana’s Second Lady, Samira Bawumia, Becomes a powerful advocate for prosecution of child traffickers



### FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR WILL LATHROP

Before joining IJM, Will served as a deputy district attorney in Oregon for nine years, where he prosecuted child sexual abuse, child abuse, online sexual exploitation, sexual assault, domestic violence and homicide. He joined IJM in 2015 to lead the Gulu, Uganda office. After leaving Gulu, Will spent time in Washington DC heading IJM’s Intern and Fellow program before moving to Ghana with his family in 2018. He has been with IJM Ghana since January 2018, seeking justice on behalf of children trafficked into the fishing industry.



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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.

\*A pseudonym. Children pictured are not actual victims; Images taken with consent.  
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