

GULU, UGANDA

THE PROBLEM

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

A poor woman in Uganda not only has to contend against the challenge of eking out a living in harsh conditions, but also with the threat of violence to her and her family if she attempts to stand up for her rights.

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. When a man beats his wife, it is often seen as a personal matter. Police and courts are not always equipped and can be slow to respond to women who desperately need protection from land theft or domestic violence. 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, and in 2018 IJM Gulu began responding to cases of domestic violence.

IJM GULU PROGRESS SINCE 2012



595

restored to their homes and land



45

criminals convicted for land theft or domestic violence



230

prosecutors, local leaders and community members trained on land rights or domestic 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

28% of women in sub-Saharan Africa reported experiencing violence in the past year at the hands of their partners or family.²

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



“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 Violence against Women and Children

We rescue widows and children from violence and help Local Council leaders (the community-level representatives of the justice system), police and courts restore vulnerable families to the homes that have been stolen from them, and ensure that men who abuse their partners are held accountable. 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 for land theft and domestic violence crimes.

We restore survivors by providing counseling, ensuring that children can go to school, and helping women begin income-generating projects. Once families are safe, 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 and domestic violence so women and children are safe. We also work with the media and churches to train communities on their rights and how to report crimes.

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.
- 2018
FIRST CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
 IJM took on the first domestic violence cases in March, resulting in the first conviction three months later.



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.



PO Box 58147
 Washington, DC 20037
 P 703.465.5495
 F 703.465.5499
 IJM.org

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.

All text and images © 2019 International Justice Mission