



IJM

**INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION
THAILAND**

THE PROBLEM CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS ABUSES; SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Hundreds of thousands of people from ethnic minority groups (called hill tribes) in Northern Thailand are not recognized as Thai citizens—despite their legal right to citizenship.

Many hill tribes have been living in the mountainous regions of Northern Thailand for generations, long before modern country borders were drawn. Laws exist to give citizenship to hill tribes, but the application process is complex and difficult for people living in poverty to navigate. Without citizenship, these people are not protected by any law, are often denied access to medical care or education, and are unable work or travel outside their district. They are also left highly vulnerable

Sexual violence against children is a global epidemic that leaves millions around the world terrified in their homes, schools and neighborhoods.

Children who are victims of sexual violence face obstacles to receiving justice worldwide, but such obstacles are particularly devastating in the developing world. In Northern Thailand, child sex offenders often act with impunity, as they face little to no consequences for their actions. Due to the intense stigma attached to sexual abuse, it is not uncommon for victims to be pressured to remain silent, blamed for the abuse, or have their testimonies disregarded. For these reasons and more, even when cases are reported, they may never reach the final judgment stage.



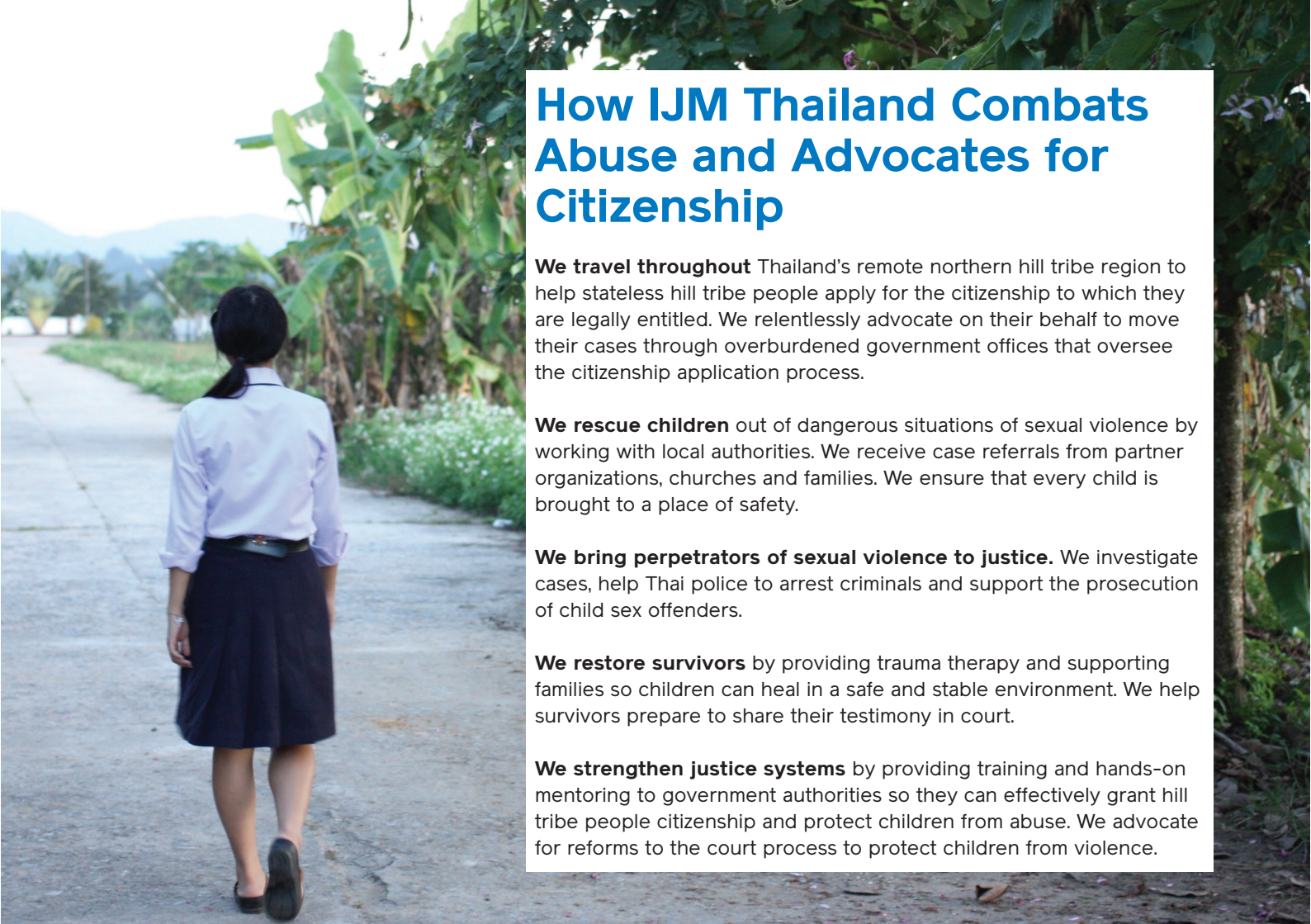
THE FACTS

There are **10 million stateless people** worldwide.¹

An estimated **20% of the world's stateless live in Thailand**—about 2.5 million.²

Lack of citizenship is the major risk factor for hill tribe women and girls for being trafficked or otherwise exploited.³

Children from ethnic minorities or migrant populations in Thailand are **especially susceptible to human trafficking**.⁴



How IJM Thailand Combats Abuse and Advocates for Citizenship

We travel throughout Thailand's remote northern hill tribe region to help stateless hill tribe people apply for the citizenship to which they are legally entitled. We relentlessly advocate on their behalf to move their cases through overburdened government offices that oversee the citizenship application process.

We rescue children out of dangerous situations of sexual violence by working with local authorities. We receive case referrals from partner organizations, churches and families. We ensure that every child is brought to a place of safety.

We bring perpetrators of sexual violence to justice. We investigate cases, help Thai police to arrest criminals and support the prosecution of child sex offenders.

We restore survivors by providing trauma therapy and supporting families so children can heal in a safe and stable environment. We help survivors prepare to share their testimony in court.

We strengthen justice systems by providing training and hands-on mentoring to government authorities so they can effectively grant hill tribe people citizenship and protect children from abuse. We advocate for reforms to the court process to protect children from violence.

¹UNHCR. ²UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. ³UN Interagency Project Newsletter. ⁴U.S. Department of State

WHO IS IJM?

International Justice Mission (IJM) is a global organization that protects the poor from violence throughout the developing world. With 18 field offices worldwide, IJM tackles a wide range of human rights abuses and secures sustainable justice and protection for victims of violence.

We are a team of lawyers, investigators, social workers, community activists and other professionals. We protect the poor from violence in nearly 20 communities throughout Africa, Latin America and South and Southeast Asia.

But we don't work alone. Our work would be impossible without the partnership of local law enforcement and justice system officials, aftercare professionals, NGOs, churches, students, parents, friends and scholars standing together to protect the poor from violence.



“Now that I have citizenship, I can be like other people. Before I was not a person, but now I am.”

– Athu, after receiving citizenship.



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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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