



IJM CASEWORK SERIES

# POLICE ABUSE OF POWER

**In many places, police not only fail to protect the poor from violence, but they are violent predators themselves.**

Millions of the poorest people in the developing world live in fear of police who extort bribes and brutalize innocent citizens. Parents often teach their children to run away from police, rather than going to them for help.

In Kenya, it's easy for a corrupt or incompetent police officer to falsely accuse and imprison, or even kill an innocent person who can't afford to pay a bribe. Without a lawyer, the innocent person will often wait years for freedom. In the case of extrajudicial killings, surviving family members have started speaking out, demanding an investigation and the delivery of justice. For years, police could expect to get away with these crimes.

## OUR IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD



**256**

Women and men freed from illegal detention in Kenya with IJM's help since 2001



**80**

Age of IJM's oldest client, who was declared innocent after three years wrongfully on death row



**3**

Police officers convicted for violent crimes in IJM cases

## QUICK FACTS



**1 in 3 people** in Kenya experienced police abuse or harassment in the last year.<sup>1</sup>

Every year, about **10 million people** worldwide enter pre-trial detention—held in prison without any proceedings to determine their guilt or innocence.<sup>2</sup>

In nearly **2 out of every 3 felony cases**, police never gathered enough evidence to charge an alleged offender.<sup>3</sup>



## FIRST CONVICTION OF A SENIOR POLICE OFFICER FOR MURDER IN KENYA

In December 2018, a senior police officer was convicted for the murder of a prisoner in his custody. This is the first time in history that an officer of this rank has been held accountable for murder in Kenya.



**WHERE WE WORK:**  
**POLICE ABUSE OF POWER**



**AFRICA**  
Nairobi, Kenya

**JUSTICE SYSTEM  
TRANSFORMATION**  
*Kenya*

In 2014, Kenya's Director of Public Prosecutions adopted a new case screening system for all police, developed with IJM's help, that will stop cases with weak or no evidence from moving forward. In 2015, the DPP recruited 540 new prosecutors and IJM trained all of them.

**“When I walked into court and saw my lawyer ready to advocate for me, my heart was happy and felt at ease.”**

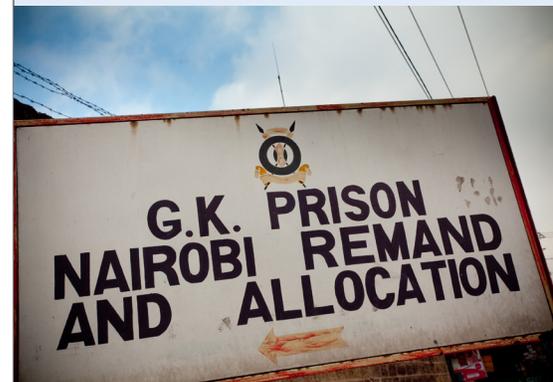
*–Joseph, Declared innocent after being wrongfully imprisoned for 16 months by Kenyan police*

## Meet Joseph

**JOSEPH WAS SHOT IN THE ARM** when a riot erupted in his impoverished neighbourhood in Kenya. But later at the hospital, a police officer pinned the violence on *him*, without any evidence at all. Before he knew it, Joseph was arrested, charged and facing life in prison. He was locked in a cell with dangerous criminals, too scared to eat or sleep. Joseph remembers, “I thought I was going to die.”

Worst of all: Joseph feared for his pregnant wife and five children at home. He could not protect or provide for them. They had no money for a lawyer, and the court would not provide one. After two months, Joseph was losing hope, and his family was suffering.

Our team in Kenya learned of the false charges and quickly took on Joseph's case. We stood up for him relentlessly in court, until he was declared innocent 14 months later. At last, Joseph was able to go home to his family and his new baby boy. He says gratefully, “When I was released, I was filled with joy because I knew, on this night, I was going to sleep in my own house.” Watch his story at [IJM.ca/police-abuse-of-power](http://IJM.ca/police-abuse-of-power)



### JOIN US

Help us prove justice for the poor is possible. Use your time, talents and passion to help protect the poor from violence today. Join us at [IJM.ca/Get-Involved](http://IJM.ca/Get-Involved)



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**INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION CANADA** is part of 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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