



KAMPALA, UGANDA

THE PROBLEM PROPERTY GRABBING

For a family living in poverty, a house and a small patch of land are crucial sources of shelter, food and income.

But 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—a devastating crime commonly known as property grabbing. Local authorities lack training or simply do not view property grabbing as a crime. Land records are not readily available, making it nearly impossible for a woman to prove her rightful ownership (and making it easy for perpetrators to forge documents).



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



An estimated 90% of rural sub-Saharan Africans have no proof of ownership for land where they live and work—leaving them vulnerable to violent land grabbing.²

Nearly 1 out of 3 widows in Mukono County reported experiencing property grabbing in her lifetime, and nearly 1 in 5 victims reported a murder attempt on her life.³ as part of chasing her from her home.³

IJM KAMPALA PROGRESS SINCE 2006



1,140+

restored to their homes and land



260+

survivors and family members receiving aftercare services from IJM



65+

perpetrators arrested for property grabbing crimes



“I couldn’t send my kids to school before, and now I can send them to school and be safe in my home.”

–Rose, restored to her home with IJM’s help

How IJM Kampala Combats Property Grabbing

We rescue widows and orphans from violence and help Local Council leaders (the community-level representative of the justice system), police and courts restore the vulnerable families to the property 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 counselling, 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 property grabbing so women and children are safe. IJM has helped establish and train specialized property grabbing prevention officers in local police stations, and we raise awareness through media and radio campaigns.

IJM KAMPALA MILESTONES

2004

IJM KAMPALA OPENS

2008

FOCUS ON PROPERTY GRABBING

We shift our focus to property grabbing in Mukono County, a poor community near Kampala with a high prevalence of the crime.

2012

PROJECT EMPAANYI

We launch a partnership with local authorities to end property grabbing in Mukono through collaborative casework and capacity building, called Project Empaanyi.

2014

6000TH PERSON TRAINED

We train our 6000th community member on how to prevent and report property grabbing.



FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR KATHRYN WILKES

Kathryn joined IJM Uganda in 2012 as Deputy Director, and became Field Office Director in 2014. She leads a team of Ugandan lawyers, social workers, community activists and others to defend widows and orphans. Prior to IJM, Kathryn was an attorney in Pittsburgh, PA, and she has previous experience in ministry and social work.



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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. International Justice Mission Canada shares in this mission.

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