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. In northern Uganda, this crime has been exacerbated by the Lord’s Resistance Army, which forced millions to flee their homes. Families returned after having spent years in temporary camps only to discover that their homes had been stolen by more powerful neighbors who threatened violence. Police and courts are ill-equipped and often slow to respond to the needs of these vulnerable families, particularly widows and orphans.

**THE PROBLEM: PROPERTY GRABBING**

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**IJM GULU PROGRESS SINCE 2012**

- **245+** restored to their homes and land
- **325+** survivors and family members receiving aftercare services from IJM
- **50+** criminals restrained from committing more violence

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**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

In Northern Uganda, **78% of the population** were either forced to leave their land altogether or were unable to access it due to threats of violence from the LRA.²

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

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¹Sylvia Ondimba, *Civil Society Organizations for Peace in Northern Uganda*, World Bank
We rescue widows and orphans from violence and help Local Council leaders (the community-level representatives of the justice system), police and courts restore the vulnerable families to the homes that have been 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 counseling, 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. We also work with the media and churches to train communities on their rights.

“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

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