



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, corrupt officers pin crimes on innocent men and women and throw them in prison. These victims can spend many hopeless years in prison awaiting trial, often without any evidence against them. Their families often fall deeper into poverty, as necessities like food, education and medicine slip out of reach.

## OUR IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD



**267**

Women and men freed from illegal detention in Kenya with IJM's help since 2006



**80**

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



**2014**

The year Kenyan police begin using a new screening system to weed out false charges, developed with IJM

## QUICK FACTS



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

Every year, about **11 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>



## NAIROBI, KENYA IJM & PARTNER STUDY, 2012

In 2012, IJM and our partners estimated that **15–30% of prisoners awaiting trial** in Nairobi's Industrial Remand Prison alone may be innocent victims of police abuse.



“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 neighborhood 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.org/josephs-story](http://IJM.org/josephs-story)

**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. IJM will have trained 100% of DPP prosecutors on this system in 2015.



**JOIN US**

Use your time, talents and passion to help protect the poor from violence today. Join us at [IJM.org/Get-Involved](http://IJM.org/Get-Involved)



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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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