



RWANDA

THE PROBLEM SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

As Rwanda continues to rebuild after the 1994 genocide, a generation of children has grown up without adequate support and protection from the law.

Impoverished children are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence—and as Rwanda’s justice system rebuilds, IJM is supporting its efforts to stop powerful criminals from exploiting the vulnerable. Courts generally require hard forensic evidence, but few police have ever been trained to collect and properly store it. Victims and their families face strong community pressure to forgive acts of sexual violence. As a result, the victim’s voice is silenced, and impoverished families have little hope of getting justice on their own.



THE FACTS

Globally, an estimated **1 in 5 women will be a victim** of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.¹



In one study, **93% of street girls in Kigali** had suffered sexual violence.²

For many poor girls, **school is the most common place where sexual violence occurs**—and the fear of violence is a common reason girls leave school.³

IJM RWANDA PROGRESS SINCE 2011



60+

children rescued from sexual violence



180

children participating in aftercare and trauma-focused therapy



65+

criminals convicted for sexual violence against children

¹UN, ²John Hopkins University Study, ³UNICEF



“I thank God that he makes a way when there is no way.”

-Jamie; 14-year-old Jamie was raped by two men in her community and then badly injured when the house caught fire. Both men were convicted, and Jamie is healing in a safe community of support.

How IJM Rwanda Combats Violence Against Children

We rescue children from sexual violence by partnering with Rwandan law enforcement and social services to remove children from danger and bring them to safe places, providing immediate medical care or critical counseling.

We bring criminals to justice by helping prosecutors and other government officials to adequately pursue cases of sexual violence and present strong evidence in court. We support survivors who choose to share the truth in court so they are prepared to testify with confidence.

We restore survivors by providing trauma-focused therapy for children who have been victimized by sexual violence, and ensuring that their families have the strong foundation they need to thrive. This includes helping families start small businesses so they can afford their basic needs and keep children in school.

We strengthen justice systems by training police, prosecutors and judges on sexual violence at the local and national level. We empower local churches to respond to cases of sexual violence they encounter and to foster communities where children are protected.

IJM RWANDA MILESTONES

2008

IJM RWANDA OPENS

2011

FOCUS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE

To respond to a massive need, IJM focuses solely on cases of sexual violence against children.

2013

PSYCHOLOGICAL EVIDENCE CAN BE USED IN COURT

After years of IJM's advocacy, judges begin accepting psychological reports as evidence in child sexual assault cases.

2014

JUSTICE FOR IJM'S YOUNGEST CLIENT

Two-year-old Harriette* received justice when the local businessman who sexually assaulted her was convicted for his crime.



FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR SHAWN KOHL

Shawn joined IJM in 2009 as Deputy Director for IJM Cambodia. He then served as Director for IJM Kenya, and today he leads a team of Rwandan lawyers, law enforcement liaison officers, social workers and community leaders to bring justice to children who have been sexually abused. Shawn was previously a partner attorney at a Nashville law firm and served with the Peace Corps in Senegal.



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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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