

Student Research Questions and Answers

What is IJM?

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.

What does IJM Do?

IJM is a global team of attorneys, investigators, social workers, community activists and other professionals at work in over 20 communities in the developing world to protect the poor from violence. IJM seeks 4 outcomes on behalf of those we serve:

1. Rescue Victims

IJM's first priority in its casework is immediate relief for the victim of the abuse being committed. IJM works with local law enforcement and other first-responders to actually go into brothels, slave facilities and other places of violence and brings victims of abuse out of danger and into safety.

2. Bring Criminals to Justice

IJM seeks to hold criminals accountable for abuse in their local justice systems. Our attorneys make sure that traffickers, slave-owners, rapists and others who violently oppress vulnerable people are charged and convicted for their crimes. Accountability changes the fear equation: When would-be perpetrators are rightly afraid of the consequences of their abuse, the vulnerable do not need to fear them. Not only does pursuing justice in court stop abusers from assaulting, exploiting or enslaving others, but it sends a powerful message that poor people have a defender, and that criminals will be held accountable for abuse.

3. Restore Survivors

IJM aftercare staff and trusted local aftercare partners work to ensure that victims of violence are equipped to rebuild their lives and respond to the complex emotional and physical needs that are often the result of abuse. Through the support of IJM social workers and partner agencies, survivors participate in therapy and can begin to develop a new life in stability-whether that's going to school or beginning a dignifying job. After care programs include: homes for girls rescued from commercial sexual exploitation when they are unable to return to their families; micro-enterprise opportunities for adults released from bonded slavery so that they can support themselves; post-trauma counseling for victims of sexual violence; and post-incarceration counseling for victims of illegal detention.

How long to aftercare programs last?

Aftercare programs vary based on the extent and type of abuse the survivor has faced. The only exception to varying lengths of care are in cases of bonded labor. IJM's Bonded Labor Aftercare program is limited to 2 years, while participants in aftercare programs for other case types, such as child sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation of children, or land right violations, receive care until they have achieved restoration. IJM defines restoration as a participant's ability to function satisfactorily in society and avoid re-victimization.

4. Justice System Transformation

This is IJM's unique model to drive maximum-impact and long-term change. We serve individual victims of violence and pursue dramatic improvements in the justice system to protect all people vulnerable to the crime.

We seek to prevent abuse from being committed against others at risk by strengthening the community factors and local judicial systems that will deter potential oppressors. What IJM wants most is not to respond to abuse after it happens, but stop it before it starts. When the justice system doesn't work, criminals know that there will not be consequences for robbing, raping, exploiting or enslaving the poor-so poor people are not safe. We're helping local police and courts to fix what is broken in the justice system. IJM comes alongside local law enforcement to seek justice. By pushing cases through a justice system from beginning to end, we build relationships for openness and trust in the local system. Through this unique knowledge and strong relationships, IJM help local governments actually fix what is broken in their system, so that the systems begins to work to protect vulnerable people from violence. When laws are enforced, the violence stops. For a recent example of the success of Structural transformation please visit: <http://www.ijm.org/news/ijm-guatemala-best-practices-become-permanent-reforms-justice-system>

To what capacity does IJM hold training for the local law enforcement?

The field offices coordinate training sessions with local police because they have a running relationship and know what kind of training the police in their region need. The training is often tailored to the type of casework in the region, the legal system, and the culture, but the trainings are generally applicable to all casework.

How does IJM secure justice for victims of abuse and oppression?

Today, millions of lives around the world are in the grip of injustice.

More children, women and men are held in slavery right now than over the course of the entire trans-Atlantic slave trade: Millions toil in bondage, their work and even their bodies the property of an owner.

Trafficking in humans generates profits in excess of 32 billion dollars a year for those who, by force and deception, sell human lives into slavery and sexual bondage. Nearly 2 million children are exploited in the commercial sex industry. The AIDS pandemic continues to rage, and the oppression of trafficking victims in the global sex trade contributes to the disease's spread.

In many countries around the world, pedophiles find that they can abuse children with impunity. And though police should be protectors, in many nations, their presence is a source of insecurity for the poor. Suspects can be held interminably before trials, imprisoned for crimes they did not commit.

The land rights of women are violated on a massive scale worldwide, but with particular ferocity in Africa, leaving widows and other women in vulnerable positions unable to care for themselves or their children. Around the world, women suffer the double trauma of rape - and seeing their perpetrators face no consequences.

Often lacking access to their own justice systems and unable to protect themselves or their families from those more powerful, it is overwhelmingly the poor who are the victims of these brutal forms of abuse.

IJM seeks to hold perpetrators accountable for abuse in their local justice systems. Our attorneys make sure that traffickers, slave-owners, rapists and others who violently oppress vulnerable people are charged and convicted for their crimes.

To read a story about a conviction visit: <http://www.ijm.org/news/ijm-kenya-witnessed-miracle-powerful-headmaster-found-guilty-rape>

What evidence do you have that your solution is effective?

In Cebu, the Philippines, after four years of IJM partnership with local law enforcement, outside auditors found a stunning 79% decrease in the number of children available for commercial sexual exploitation.

In 2012, IJM and trained partners brought relief from oppression to more than 2,400 children, women and men. IJM lawyers helped achieve 132 convictions against rapists, slave owners and other violent criminals. During the year, IJM provided aftercare services to more than 2,800 survivors of violence and their families.

For the past several years, IJM Guatemala has been responsible for more than one out of every three convictions for child sexual assault in Guatemala City increasing convictions by 1,000% from when IJM started.

IJM's largest rescue operation freed more than 500 people from an abusive brick factory where they were held in slavery. When IJM began work in India, they discovered that many of the government officials responsible for rescuing slaves had received no training whatsoever on the law or how to enforce it; some were unaware that bonded labor was even illegal.

For the past decade, we have partnered with Indian officials to rescue victims of forced labor slavery and provided trainings on how to respond to the crime. Today, IJM is seeing Indian officials respond to their training efforts with unprecedented mass enforcement actions against bonded slavery-on their own initiative.

We also know that the work of IJM is effective because others are recognizing IJM expertise. Please visit <http://news.ijm.org/> for coverage on the work of IJM.

For more news stories on the work of IJM please visit: <http://www.ijm.org/news>

How are investigations conducted?

By pushing individual cases of abuse through the justice system from the investigative stage to the prosecutorial stage, IJM determines the specific source of corruption, lack of resources, or lack of good will in the system denying victims the protection of their legal systems. In collaboration with local authorities, IJM addresses these specific points of brokenness to meet the urgent needs of victims of injustice.

Do police anti-trafficking operations/IJM interventions drive traffickers underground?

IJM agrees that successful operations will compel the criminals to alter their methodology, which will likely include moving "underground." That is why investigations leading to police intervention must also be followed up with prosecution and imprisonment of the perpetrators so they do not have this opportunity, and so others are aware of the increased risks of committing crimes. It is to be expected that with any significant law enforcement action, the criminal activity will morph and seek to move around law enforcement. In that sense, murder has not moved underground in the developed world because it cannot be committed openly in broad daylight without fear of accountability and prosecution. It is always an imperative of law enforcement to stay one step ahead of changes in tactics by criminals. Law enforcement must respond by changing its method and being offensive rather than reactive to the crime.

Why do you work where you work?

IJM's efforts to fight injustice are primarily limited by its financial resources. However, in certain countries, government or legal structures do not currently make IJM's casework methods feasible. IJM's casework model of repairing broken justice systems does not work in the absence of any justice system – this prevents IJM from being most effective in war zones, for example. However, there are many other excellent NGOs that do courageous and valuable work in such situations.

IJM's model of partnership with local authorities means that IJM can only be active in communities and countries into which we have been invited by the government. IJM comes alongside authorities to help them enforce their countries' own laws that are already on the books.

95% of our staff is from the countries in which they work.

IJM currently has ongoing operations in Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Rwanda, Guatemala, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and South Asia.

Please refer to <https://www.ijm.org/where-we-work> for specific locations of IJM field offices.

Outside Agencies that are working in the U.S.

- [The Polaris Project](#)
- [LawHelp.org](#)
- [Legal Services Corporation](#)
- [Findlegalhelp.org](#)