



Issue: JN26-06

Justice Nest June 2026 Monthly Newsletter

Paralegals as Catalysts for Justice

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Leading Change Through Legal Empowerment

Dear Friends,

Every month, I am reminded that justice is not simply delivered in courtrooms. It is built through people, knowledge, and communities that choose to stand with those who are often forgotten.

This month, that truth came alive in many ways.



:Miriam Wachira in a group session during 2026 Trial Advocacy Training, at Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison, Mombasa

At Shimo la Tewa Maximum Prison, we brought together pro bono advocates and prison paralegals for an intensive Trial Advocacy Training. Watching legal practitioners and incarcerated paralegals learn side by side was a powerful reminder that legal knowledge has the power to transform lives. It equips advocates to represent clients more effectively and empowers incarcerated persons to become active participants in their own pursuit of justice.

Our feature stories demonstrate what happens when we invest in people instead of giving up on them. Ann spent seventeen years behind prison walls yet chose to become a prison paralegal, helping fellow inmates

understand their rights and navigate the justice system. Varoline, a young mother, discovered that education and hope could give her a second chance despite the mistakes of her past. Their stories remind us that people should never be defined solely by the worst day of their lives.

June also gave me the opportunity to participate in the East Africa Philanthropy Network Conference in Addis Ababa. During one session, I asked how many people in the room had ever visited a prison. Only one hand went up. That moment reinforced something we experience every day at Justice Nest: prisons remain hidden places. Because they are hidden, they are often overlooked by funders, policymakers, and society. Yet behind every prison statistic is a mother, a child, and a family whose future hangs in the balance.

Our impact continues to grow because of your partnership. Together, we have trained prison paralegals who have supported more than 2,028 incarcerated persons and contributed to over 623 releases. Through our Mending the Nest Programme, we have reunite mothers with their children and restored hope to families navigating the criminal justice system.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains unchanged. We will continue investing in legal empowerment, strengthening families, and ensuring that justice is accessible to those who need it most. We believe that when people understand their rights and have someone to stand beside them, justice becomes more than an ideal. It becomes a lived reality.

Thank you for walking this journey with us. Your partnership is helping build a justice system that is fair, compassionate, family-centred, and transformative.

With gratitude and purpose,

Miriam Wachira

Founder & Executive Director
Justice Nest

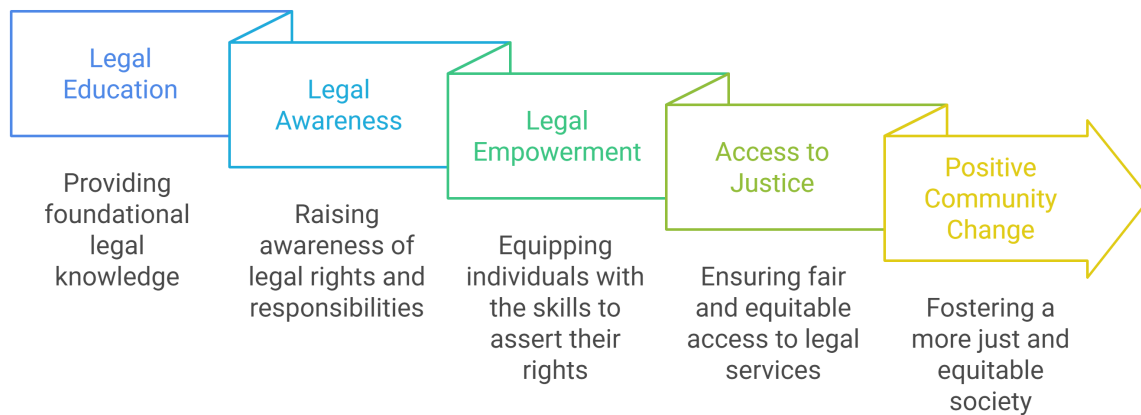


FEATURE STORY **How Paralegalism Expands Access to Justice**

Our model to justice focuses on a **holistic, client-centred approach** that strengthens access to justice. We combine legal education, legal representation, social support, and advocacy to empower individuals, particularly women, children, and other vulnerable populations affected by the justice system. We provide legal literacy, paralegal training, and quality legal services while addressing the social and economic barriers that hinder access to justice. We work collaboratively with government

institutions, communities, and strategic partners to promote restorative and family-centred justice.

The Justice Nest Model



One of the ways we achieve this is through our Prison Paralegal Programme, where legal education empowers incarcerated persons to participate meaningfully in their own pursuit of justice.



 **Technology Use to Educate (Online Training by NITA) During 2026 Trial Advocacy Training, at Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison, Mombasa**

Access to justice remains one of the greatest challenges facing justice systems across the world. In Kenya, despite the constitutional guarantee of access to justice under Article 48 of the Constitution, many people continue to encounter barriers that prevent them from effectively seeking and obtaining justice. Poverty, limited legal awareness, geographical distance from justice institutions, and the complexity of legal procedures often leave vulnerable populations excluded from the protection of the law. For women, children, persons with disabilities, prisoners, and

marginalized communities, these barriers are often even more pronounced.

Read the article: <https://www.justicenest.org/blog-details/20>

Author: Miriam Wachira- Justice Nest Founder / Executive Director

🎓 PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Strengthening Trial Advocacy at Shimo La Tewa

From 8th to 12th June 2026, Justice Nest in partnership with National Institute of Trial Advocacy- NITA(USA), and Jones Day, conducted an intensive Trial Advocacy Training Course at Shimo la Tewa Maximum Prison in Mombasa, bringing together paralegals and legal practitioners for a week of practical learning, skill-building, and professional growth.

The training was designed to strengthen participants' advocacy and litigation skills by providing hands-on exposure to the realities of courtroom practice. Through a combination of theoretical instruction, practical exercises, demonstrations, and simulated court sessions, participants gained valuable experience in the critical stages of trial preparation and courtroom advocacy.



📸:Class in Session, Group Discussion Sessions, Certificate Awarding and Cake Celebration During the 2026 Trial Advocacy Training, at Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison, Mombasa

📊 Trial Advocacy Training at a Glance

- 🎓 5 Days of intensive training
- ⚖️ 7 Core trial advocacy modules covered
- li>• 🌟 5/5 Trainer rating
- li>• 📚 Practical courtroom simulations conducted
- li>• 💬 Participants rated the training highly relevant and impactful

- 🚀 Recommendation: Regular advocacy trainings and monthly legal education sessions

Participants expressed high satisfaction with both the content and delivery of the training. The overall assessment was highly positive, with participants describing the training as useful, relevant, and directly applicable to legal practice. They noted that the skills acquired would contribute significantly to their professional growth and effectiveness in litigation.

The Trial Advocacy Training Course was successful in enhancing participants' advocacy and litigation skills. They demonstrated improved competence in case analysis, witness examination, courtroom presentation, and legal argumentation. The facilitators delivered the course content effectively, resulting in a positive and impactful learning experience. Continued investment in advocacy training, coupled with additional focus on legal writing and drafting, will further strengthen the capacity of paralegals and improve the quality of their work.



📷:Group Discussion with One of the Training Facilitators Legal Aid Advocate Wesley Waku During the 2026 Trial Advocacy Training, at Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison, Mombasa

🔍 Stories from the Field

From Incarcerated Mother to Paralegal Champion of Justice

For 17 years, Ann lived behind prison walls, separated from her family and carrying the weight of a long and uncertain journey through the justice system.

A mother of four and a Ugandan national, Ann faced challenges that would have broken the spirit of many. Yet throughout her years in

custody, she refused to surrender to despair. Instead, she chose a different path, one defined by resilience, learning, and service to others.



:Ann During the 2026 Trial Advocacy Training Session at Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison, Mombasa

In 2025, Ann joined the Justice Nest Paralegal Team within the prison. What began as an opportunity to learn about the law soon became a mission to help others access justice.

Through intensive legal training and mentorship, Ann developed the skills to understand court processes, identify legal issues, and assist fellow inmates in navigating the justice system. The training was further strengthened by the knowledge she gained through the NITA Paralegal Training Programme, which equipped her with practical legal skills and critical thinking abilities.

Read the Full Story From Incarcerated Mother to Paralegal Champion of Justice: <https://www.justicenest.org/stories-details/38>

Author: Asha Saidi- Justice Nest Advocate

Knowledge as a Second Chance: Varoline's Journey of Hope and Transformation

At only 22 years old, Varoline believed her life was over. Accused alongside her co-accused, Ngala, of stealing KShs. 200,000, Varoline found herself standing before a court, frightened, overwhelmed, and unsure of what the future held. On her very first day in court, she pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. For many people, two years may seem like a finite period. But for Varoline, a young mother with a two-year-old child, it felt like an eternity.

The hardest part of imprisonment was not the prison walls or the loss of freedom. It was the pain of being separated from her child during some of the most important years of the child's life. Every milestone missed, every birthday celebrated from afar, and every night spent wondering who would comfort her child weighed heavily on her heart.



📷:During the Miss Shimo Women 2026

When she entered prison, despair threatened to consume her. She feared that her mistake had permanently defined her future. But even in the midst of hardship, Varoline displayed something remarkable: resilience.

Read the Full Story: Knowledge as a Second Chance: Varoline's Journey of Hope and Transformation:

<https://www.justicenest.org/stories-details/39>

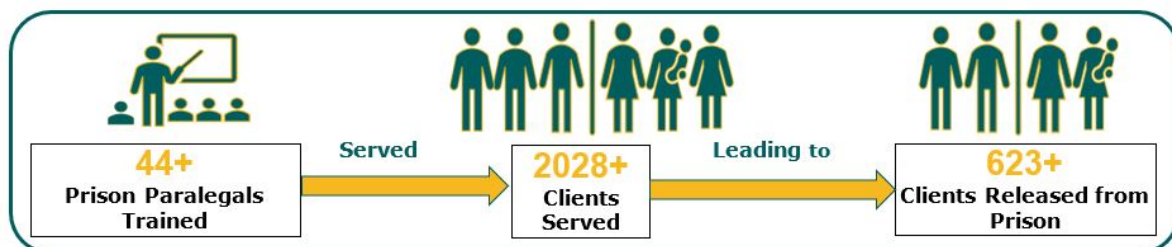
Author: Asha Saidi- Justice Nest Advocate



IMPACT AT A GLANCE

Prison Paralegal Program; Bridging the Justice Gap

Justice Nest's Prison Paralegal Training Programme equips incarcerated individuals and prison officers with legal knowledge and advocacy skills to promote access to justice within correctional facilities. To date, the programme has **trained 44 prison paralegals**, who have gone on to provide peer-to-peer legal support, helping **2,028 incarcerated persons** better understand their rights and navigate the justice system. Their efforts have also contributed to the **release of 623 clients**, demonstrating the transformative power of legal education in advancing justice, reducing case backlogs, and supporting prison decongestion.



Children and Mothers Diversion and Restorative Justice Program; Mending The Nest.

The **Mending the Nest** Programme supports mothers and children affected by the criminal justice system through legal representation, diversion, restorative justice, and family-centred reintegration. Since its inception, the programme has **served 224 mothers**, supported the **release of 128 mothers** from incarceration, and facilitated the **reunification of 242 children** with their mothers and families. By addressing the root causes of offending and prioritising rehabilitation over punishment, the programme is helping restore families, strengthen communities, and create pathways to lasting justice.



OUR PAST EVENTS

Transformative Investment are in Places Where Few People Ever See

At the East Africa philanthropy Network EAPN 10th conference on 16th to 20th of June in Addis Ababa. Our executive director Miriam Wachira asked a simple question: "How many people in this room have ever been to a prison?" Only one person raised their hand.

That moment stayed with her and reminded her that prisons remain some of the most hidden spaces in our society. Because they are out of sight, they are often out of mind. And because they are out of mind, they rarely receive the attention, resources, or funding needed to address the realities inside.

She had the opportunity to reflect on how funding moves from philanthropists and investors to organizations on the ground, particularly those working on issues that are largely invisible. Our work at **Justice Nest** has shown us that behind every prison statistic is a family, a child, and a community whose future is shaped by the justice system.

When we ignore prisons, we also ignore one of the ways poverty is created and sustained. Pretrial detention can cost people their jobs,

separate families, interrupt children's education, and leave lasting economic scars, even before guilt has been determined.

If we are serious about breaking cycles of poverty, we cannot afford to overlook the criminal justice system. Some of the most transformative investments are in places few people ever see.

She is grateful to **EAPN** and **Myriad USA** for creating space for these conversations. Her hope is that more funders will look beyond the visible challenges and invest in the hidden ones, because that is often where the greatest opportunity for impact lies.



📍:Our Founder and Executive Director Giving a Speech During the East Africa Philanthropy Network-EAPN, Ethiopia

👨👩👧👦💛 International Day of the African Child



📍:During the International Day of the African Child at Kamae Girls Borstol Institution.

Justice Nest joined the girls at Kamae Girls Borstal in commemorating the **Day of the African Child**, celebrating resilience, hope, and the rights of every child. The event strengthened our partnership with the institution, with the Officer in Charge expressing sincere appreciation for

Justice Nest's support and presenting the team with a letter of gratitude in recognition of our contribution to the day's success.

♥ JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Help Us Turn Knowledge Into Justice

Your support helps us:

- 📖 **Deliver legal education**
- 👩 **Train paralegals**
- 👩 **Support vulnerable mothers**
- 👨 **Strengthen families**
- ⚖️ **Expand access to justice**

Together, we can build a justice system that is fair, accessible, and empowering for all.

Share. Support: www.justicenest.org/donate

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