1. Miriam's Message: Inside-Out Justice

Dear Friends,



Ms. Miriam Wachira & Hon. Ann Claire Williams (Rtd) getting their Trial Advocacy Training facilitators' certificates at Shimo La Tewa maximum prison.

I'm excited to share our June Newsletter. It's full of stories that capture the heart of our work but one moment stood out for me above the rest.

During our Trial Advocacy Training at Shimo la Tewa Prison, I was reminded once again of what I love most about these trainings. Beyond the incredible skills powerful stories, it's the people. Every time, I walk away with new friends, fierce allies, and passionate champions for the cause of iustice.

This past week was a living example of how powerful community can be. The dedication, humility, and brilliance of our faculty moved me deeply. The courage and hunger to learn from our prison paralegals and pro bono advocates inspired me even more.

Dive into the stories, meet the people, and feel the impact.

With gratitude,

Miriam Wachira

Founder & Executive Director, Justice Nest

2. **Example 2.** Example 2. Exampl

In June, Shimo La Tewa Maximum Prison in Mombasa opened its highsecurity gates to transformation.

A rigorous week-long Trial Advocacy Training was held inside the jail premises by Justice Nest in collaboration with Jones Day and the National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA). The training brought together an extraordinary mix of facilitators, and participants in the program that included **6-judges**, **14-lawyers/attorneys**, **12-local advocates**, and **paralegals who included 18-correctional officers and 13-inmates**, making for an unusual mix.



: Group Photo of the Participants

Each day was filled with active courtroom simulations, coaching, and critical skill-building on topics like:

- ♦ Developing case theory.
- Conducting examinations-in-chief and cross-examinations.
- Crafting powerful opening and closing statements.
- Effective interviewing of clients and witnesses.

The facilitators included legal professionals from Kenya and the United States, among them, judges like **Hon. Ann Claire Williams (Rtd)**,

seasoned trial experts from **Jones Day**, and trainers from NITA who offered real-time feedback and coaching using the NITA critique method.



: Class in session

The presence of **prison-based paralegals**, **inmates**, and **correctional officers** who actively offer legal assistance to their colleagues was what really made this program revolutionary. For many, this was their first formal courtroom skills course. It was a chance for everyone to **gain self-assurance**, **hone their legal reasoning**, and **regain their voice in the legal system**.



"Before this, I could read the law. Now I can stand and argue a case with clarity." Says Moses a Correctional Officer Paralegal.

<u>ional Officer</u>**

Laughter, resolve, and **discussion** filled the prison's training rooms during the week. What started off as a skills session swiftly transformed into a **space of justice, dignity,** and **conversation**.

Building capacity inside and beyond the legal system is still a priority for Justice Nest. A judicial system that genuinely listens is strengthened when we train the voiceless.

3. Staff Spotlight: Meet Wesley Waku - Advocate for the Unheard



<u>: Wesley Waku: Legal Aid Advocate.</u>

Justice Nest is thrilled to welcome **Waku Wesley**, a passionate Legal Aid Advocate whose life's mission is rooted in justice, healing, and humanity. His journey didn't begin in courtrooms or lecture halls, it began in the heart of crisis.

Born in Mombasa, raised in Nairobi, and originally from Vihiga County, Wesley grew up watching his mother, a social worker, serve women and girls affected by gender-based violence.

During the 2007/2008 post-election violence, teenage Wesley accompanied her to displacement camps where survivors shared stories of betrayal and brutality. Watching his mother advocate for them in court ignited something in him, a fire to speak for the voiceless and stand where others fall silent.

That fire carried him through years of legal practice, including one unforgettable case at Kamiti Maximum Prison. There, he met a man who had spent 13 years imprisoned under the outdated "presidential pleasure" rule, for stealing a phone worth Ksh. 5,000. Deemed mentally unfit, he had been forgotten by the system. Wesley helped him draft a revision application, and the man was finally released. The reunion with his children, Wesley recalls, was "more powerful than any court ruling."

At Justice Nest, Wesley leads with the same empathy and resolve. He's a key driver of our **Mothers and Children Diversion Program**, which works to keep women out of prison for petty offences often tied to poverty. He also delivers legal trainings to incarcerated individuals, transforming prison spaces into classrooms of hope. For him, legal empowerment is a radical act of restoration, giving people behind bars not just knowledge, but dignity.

Wesley's passion lies in criminal justice reform, human rights, and gender justice. This year, he hopes to expand the diversion program and deepen the daily reach of prison-based legal empowerment. His goal? A justice system that heals instead of harms.

But don't let the legal brilliance fool you, Wesley has a lighter side too. He's a proud pit master. His BBQ game serious, and his ribs too tender to prosecute, "Let's just say, if legal briefs were ribs, they'd fall right off the

bone" so he brags. A die-hard **Golden State Warriors** fan- "Go Dubs" (His chant), a master of FIFA, and locked in on NBA basketball. His fuel of choice? Strong black coffee, smooth and ready to make a case, "shaken, not stirred... but always caffeinated."

To those still waiting for justice, Wesley offers this: "Even in the darkest moments, hold on. Your story matters. We're walking with you."

Welcome to the Nest, Wesley. We're so glad you're here.

4. A With Gratitude: To Everyone Who Made June a Month of Impact

At Justice Nest, we think that achieving justice requires a **team effort** and a **communal display of bravery**, **kindness**, and **dedication**. We saw that belief come to life in significant ways in June, and it's all because of you.

We appreciate you sharing this journey with us, **donors and supporters**. Your kindness supports every **paralegal session**, every **legal service** we do, every **family reunification** and every instance of **redemption** we see behind prison walls. You enable us to keep filling the void for people whose voices are frequently ignored.

The foundation of our work is our amazing network of **advocates**, **prison** paralegals (inmates and correctional officers), volunteers, employees and contractors. Every day, we are inspired by your fortitude, discernment, and dedication to justice in the most trying situations. You don't only study the law; you also live it, teach it, and use it to change people's lives.

To our Trial Advocacy Training **faculty**, we are grateful that you brought brilliance, humility, and mentoring to an area that is sometimes disregarded. You helped people rediscover their voice, regained their dignity, and boosted

Issue: JN006

their confidence in addition to impacting them with skills. We appreciate the participation of everyone from United States, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

Together, we transformed a high-security jail into a courthouse of opportunity where judges, attorneys, and paralegals held each other up as equals with a same goal.

June taught us that pursuing justice is a team effort. We are really appreciative to be forming that community with each and every one of you, and it is a communal commitment.

January-June 2025 Impact Overview

Program	Trained		Clients Releases	Children Reunite d
Clients served by paralegals	-	569	96	-
Mothers Diversion Program	-	25	7	19
Paralegals	33	_	-	-

Thank you for supporting us, offering second opportunities, and for bridging the justice gap.

5. **Quick Reads Section & Features**

Title	Link
Understanding the Difference Between Civil Jail and Criminal Jail in Kenya	[Read More]
Diversion as a Means of Decriminalizing Poverty- by Eddy Kaddebe	[Read More]
Unlocking Redemption: A call for Parole in Kenya's Criminal Justice System- by Wesley Waku	[Read More]
The Star Newspaper Feature: Visionary Kenyan	[Read More]
Lawyer Frees Single Mothers from Prison and	
Shame; Justice	
Nest Founder Miriam Wachira Helps Jailed Single	
Mothers Reclaim Freedom and Dignity by Bird Story	
Agency	

Visit www.justicenest.org/donate to show your love.

6. \bigcirc **Upcoming Events /Announcements**

Name: Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD)

Date: 10th August 2025

Theme: Crossroads - What Next?

Justice Nest will mark **Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD)** with a powerful event honoring the resilience, humanity, and untold stories of incarcerated

individuals. Join us as we spotlight voices from behind bars, celebrate the work of prison paralegals, and advocate for a justice system that restores, not discards.

Stay tuned for the full program and how you can be part of this day of solidarity and transformation.

7. **Join the Movement**

- To Show Your Love Visit:
 - o M-Pesa Paybill **4699532** (Acc: Your Name).
 - o Website: Paypal, credit card through:www.justicenest.org/donate
- Subscribe to Our Newsletter for updates on our work, inspiring stories, and opportunities to support justice and equity.
- Follow Us on Social Media:

o LinkedIn: <u>Justice Nest</u> o X (Twitter): <u>@justiceNest</u>

o Facebook: <u>Justice Nest</u> o Tiktok: <u>Justicenest1</u>

o Youtube: Justice Nest o Instagram: @JusticeNest

o Threads: @thejusticenest

Thank you for standing with us as we fight for justice, dignity, and hope.

Issue: JN006