

## Alternative to prosecution as a means of decriminalizing poverty

**1. Message from the Director**

Dear Friends and Partners,

This April, our work at Justice Nest has brought us closer to the heart of why we do what we do: to restore dignity, protect families, and reimagine justice with love at its core.

One of the most moving experiences this month was my visit to the paralegals inside Shimo La Tewa Prisons. I was deeply inspired by their zeal to serve and eagerness to learn. In just under three months, these 33 dedicated individuals—most of them incarcerated themselves—have served **416 clients**, leading to the **release of 58 people** from pretrial detention. Their work is a testament to the power of second chances and the role of legal empowerment in transforming lives from within the system.



*"When is Mama coming home?"*

Their innocence carries a profound plea for justice that reunites, not separates. Every story—like that of BW, LM, and LN—reaffirms our mission to advocate for alternatives to prosecution that heal instead of harm.

This month, we also partnered with the University of Notre Dame Club of East Africa for #NDGlobalDayOfService. Together, we stood in solidarity with children in correctional facilities, reminding them that they are seen, heard, and worthy of justice.

Meanwhile, our **Pendo la Mama** campaign continues to shine a light on the hidden impact of incarceration on families—especially children. We met young ones who only had one question:

As we head to Mother's Day in a few days and the end of our **40-Day Mother's Day Challenge**, I invite you to act with us—donate, share, and speak out. Every action helps

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bring a mother home, keeps a child in school, and moves us toward a justice system rooted in love.

Let us keep going. For every mother still waiting. For every child still asking.

**With gratitude,**

Miriam Wachira

Founder & Executive Director, Justice Nest

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**2. #PendoLaMama | #MamasLove Campaign Update**

Justice Nest delivered a care package of school supplies, and groceries to our client BW's children who are living with her sisters. Her daughter asked us question we couldn't yet answer, but one that fuels our fight- "*Mom, atakuja lini?*" (When will mum come home?). The children gave us a letter to deliver to their mother. When Justice Nest delivered the letter to BW, she trembled with a mixture of joy and trepidation as she crumpled the letters from her children hanging on to every word in her children's letters. These letters revealed the heartbreaking toll of separation.



**Miriam seating with BW's children**

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Meanwhile, in our Nairobi office, another one of our client LM and her sister RM were full of joy while unpacking another care package. LM sister, a single mother herself, explained the struggle of now caring for LM's five children alongside her own two. LM lost her job upon her arrest. Her struggle mirrors that of countless families driven to deeper poverty by the criminal justice system.



**Miriam with LM and RM having an emotional one on one talk.**

Yet amid the pain, hope persists. Another one of our client **LN**, a mother arrested for stealing USD 100 (KSh 13,000) to pay her twins' hospital bills, is now home, reunited after Justice Nest negotiated with her employer, covered bail, and secured legal aid. *"I chose my children's health over my freedom," LN said. "Now I pray no mother faces that choice again."*

**Why This Campaign Matters:**

- **92%** of jailed Kenyan women are mothers imprisoned for poverty-related crimes (KNCHR 2023).
- **KSh 5,000** funds a care package with essentials for children like BW's, who miss school to shoulder adult burdens.
- **Every day apart** deepens trauma—for mothers like BW, who tapes her children's drawings to her cell wall, and for kids who whisper their prayers into the night.



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### For Our 40-Day Challenge: #MamasLove Mother's Day and Beyond

**OUR GOAL:** to raise \$35000/KSH 4,500,000.

To ensure no child is forgotten and is cut off from a mother's love. This helps us to:

♥ Reunite mothers with their children by offering:

- ✦ Legal Services.
- ✦ Restorative Support.
- ✦ Child-Centric Interventions.

#### If you would like to join us to:

- **Show your love:** MPESA Paybill 4699532 (Kenya) or <https://www.every.org/justice-nest/f/every-child-deserves> (global).
- **Share:** #PendoLaMama | #MamasLove to amplify these stories.

"Pendo la Mama halipaswi kukatika." (A mother's love must never be severed.)

**Act now—because no child should ask when their mother is coming home.**

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### 3. Together for Justice: Honoring #NDGlobalDayOfService with the University of Notre Dame Club of East Africa ♥




Members of the University of Notre Dame Club of East Africa with the Justice Nest Team

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Justice Nest had the privilege of joining hands with the **University of Notre Dame Club of East Africa** to mark the global #NDGlobalDayOfService on the 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2025. In a powerful act of solidarity and compassion, we visited the **Kamiti Youth Corrective and Training Centre** and **Kamae Girls' Borstal**, engaging with children who are navigating the justice system far too young.

 We shared moments of prayer, encouragement, and meaningful dialogue—creating space for the children to speak openly about their realities.

What we heard reaffirmed our mission: too many children still face trial **without legal representation**, or **without being meaningfully prepared**. Their voices carried pain, resilience, and a plea for fairness. At Justice Nest, we remain deeply committed to standing in that gap—to ensure that **every child receives the legal, emotional, and spiritual support they deserve**.

We issue a special call to lawyers: when you take on a child's case, **go beyond the courtroom. Visit. Listen. Prepare them. Serve with empathy**. This is how justice begins to feel real for the most vulnerable among us.

We are truly grateful to the **Notre Dame alumni community** for their warmth and unwavering support. Their presence reminded us that when communities rise together in service, we edge closer to a world where justice is not a privilege, but a right. 

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#### **4. Alternative to Prosecution as a Means of Decriminalizing Poverty.**

A mother sits in Lang'ata Prison, jailed for allegedly stealing clothes worth KSh. 3,000 to keep her children warm. Another awaits trial because she couldn't pay KSh. 5,000 bail after accidentally breaking a 32" TV at work. Their stories expose how Kenya's justice system criminalizes poverty, punishing desperate acts of survival with family separation.

## decriminalizing poverty



Over 80% of incarcerated women in Kenya are mothers, many detained for petty, poverty-related offenses. While the wealthy negotiate restitution, the poor face automatic remand—unable to pay even minimal bail. The consequences are devastating: children left without caregivers, families pushed deeper into hardship, and taxpayers footing the bill for unnecessary incarceration. Read the whole story here: <https://justicenest.org/stories-details/8>

### 5. Meet Our Paralegal Leader At Shimo La Tewa: 🌟 *Upholding Dignity Through Law*



**Corporal Juma Karoyo**

For **23 years**, Corporal Juma Karoyo has been a cornerstone of justice and rehabilitation within the Kenya Prison Service. Trained in **security management and inmate rehabilitation**, he brings unparalleled expertise to his role as **Team Captain of the Paralegals at Shimo La Tewa Medium Prison**.

#### 🌟 **Specialized in Human Rights Advocacy**

Juma ensures compliance with **international standards** (including the **UN Mandela Rules**), safeguarding the dignity and rights of incarcerated individuals.

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### Paralegal Leadership

As Team Captain:

- Guides inmates through **complex appeals and bail processes**.
- Pioneered the prison's **legal awareness program**.
- Believes "**Fair treatment today prevents crime tomorrow**."

His mission? To uphold **equity and justice** while rehabilitating individuals to reintegrate as **law-abiding citizens**.

*"Justice isn't just about custody—it's about restoration."* — **Corporal Juma Karoyo**

## 6. Celebrating You Our Supporter And Our Impact

"I am happy to donate for the Mother's Day Challenge! I have been blessed with a wonderful mother and mother-in-law and I had wonderful grandmothers. My life is so much better because I was connected to them. I hope all children can share the same connections." Rhani Choi, Justice Nest dedicated supporter. This is the true spirit of Justice Nest - **where gratitude becomes action, and personal blessings transform into collective justice**.

### January-April 2025 Impact Overview

Program	Trained	Clients Served	Releases	Children Reunited
Clients	-	416	58	-
Mothers Diversion Program	-	19	3	-
Children Reunited With Their Mothers- From The Diversion Program	-	-	-	10
Paralegals	33	-	-	-

Impact Table

### To Rhani and all our partners:

Your gifts do more than pay bail or send care packages. **You're weaving a new inheritance** - one where no child questions if they're loved or when their mother will come home from prison. People in pre trial detention are receiving critical legal services.



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**7. Join the Movement**

**Subscribe to Our Newsletter** for updates on our work, inspiring stories, and opportunities to support justice and equity.

**Follow Us on Social Media:**

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| • Youtube: <a href="#">Justice Nest</a>   | • Instagram: <a href="#">@JusticeNest</a>   |
| • Threads: <a href="#">thejusticenest</a> |   |

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

Visit [www.justicenest.org/donate](http://www.justicenest.org/donate) to show your love.

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