

## 1. Founder and Executive Director's Message: Courage, Growth, and the Power of Starting



**Ms. Miriam Wachira- Founder & Executive Director**

When I launched Justice Nest, a friend called it a “bold, courageous move.” I smiled and thanked them, but inside, I knew the truth: what drove me wasn’t just courage—it was the simple act of *starting*.

Start where you are. Start with what you have. Just start.

And so we began.

Over these months, we’ve learned that some assumptions were wrong, and others were painfully right. Through our **Children and Mothers Restorative Justice Program**, we’ve

seen firsthand the devastation incarceration inflicts on families. When we sit with mothers, hear their stories, and listen to their children's cries for their caregivers, it fuels our resolve to divert every mother who doesn't belong in prison back to her family. Because every child deserves their mother at home.

The journey hasn't been easy. Launching our **Prison Paralegal Program** meant facing fears—of funding gaps, of permits, of the unknown. But we took the leap. And today, as I watch our first cohort of paralegal trainees dive into their training with curiosity and determination, I'm reminded why we began: to plant seeds of justice, even when the harvest feels distant.

None of this would be possible without *you*—our supporters, mentors, volunteers, and the incredible Justice Nest team. Building this organization has been a collective act of faith. There are lonely moments, yes, but far more moments of joy: seeing a mother reunited with her children, watching trainees light up with newfound knowledge, and knowing we're shaping a justice system rooted in compassion, not punishment. Our newest team member, said that this is the first time she is eager to wake up and report to work, sitting through the training with the trainees is just eye opening- Aisha.

Together, we're not just building an organization. We're building a movement.

Thank you for believing in the power of starting.

*"Justice is not a privilege—it's a right. Together, we're making it accessible."*

**With gratitude,**

Miriam Wachira

Founder & Executive Director, Justice Nest

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## 2. The Birth of Justice Nest: A Movement for Hope and Restoration



**Dedication during the launch of Justice Nest.**

In a vibrant celebration of hope and transformation, Justice Nest was unveiled, marking the dawn of a new era for Kenya's justice system. The event brought together distinguished leaders, advocates, and justice champions, all united by a shared vision: a justice system that is fair, family-centric, and accessible to all.

At its heart, Justice Nest is the brainchild of Miriam Wachira, a visionary leader whose unwavering passion for justice has ignited a movement. As Hon. Ann Claire Williams (Ret.) of Jones Day eloquently put it, *"Miriam is the kind of person who looks at what could be impossible and makes it possible. The light of justice burns in her eyes."*

Justice Nest's mission is bold and transformative, anchored in two groundbreaking programs: the **Mothers and Children Diversion Program** and the **Prison Paralegal Initiative**. These initiatives address critical gaps in the justice system, offering hope and restoration to the most vulnerable—mothers, children, and inmates.

This launch was more than an event; it was the spark of a movement. Justice Nest is a call to action for all who believe in a justice system that serves with compassion and dignity. Together, we can ensure that no family or child is left behind.

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### **3. Empowering Change: From Chains to Change: AW's Promise of a New Dawn**



**Mother and Child in Prison**

On a humid November afternoon in Nairobi, AW, a young mother fighting to feed her children, found herself handcuffed and tearfully got arrested with her two-year-old daughter for selling illicit brew on the street. Moments later, they were both taken to Lang'ata Women's Prison—AW unable to pay the Ksh 2,000 fine, and her toddler clinging to her side. For seven agonizing days, they endured life behind bars, AW's greatest fear being the toll it would take on her child. "I kept asking myself, *'What future will my daughter have here?'*" she recalled.

Hope arrived during a Children's Court Users Committee session at the prison. A magistrate, moved by AW's plight, referred her case to Justice Nest. Our team acted swiftly. A Justice Nest Social Support Worker conducted an urgent assessment, uncovering AW's determination to rebuild her life. Miriam, Justice Nest's Director, stepped in immediately: "We couldn't let a mother and child suffer for trying to survive," she said. By day's end, Justice Nest settled AW's fine, securing her release with her daughter from the prison gates.

Freedom was just the beginning. AW's talent in hairdressing became her lifeline. Justice Nest connected her to a salon in Kawangware, where she impressed during her interview. Today, she works at a salon in Thogoto, near her mother's home in Uthiru, earning a commission-based income. "Every shilling I make is for my children's future," AW shared. Her other daughters now attend school and the little one is still by her side, while she works—a dream she once thought shattered.

During a follow-up call, AW's voice brimmed with resolve. "Justice Nest saw me as a mother, not a criminal," she said. "*Mimi sitawahi rudia tena! Nitafanya kazi halali.*" ("I will never do that again! I will only do legal jobs"). Now living safely with her mother, she vows to stay on a lawful path, her gratitude echoing in every word: "You gave us more than freedom—you gave us hope."

AW's story is a testament to how compassion can rewrite futures. Your support fuels Justice Nest's mission to turn despair into dignity, one family at a time.

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#### 4. Our Progress

Justice Nest is transforming lives by reuniting families and advocating for restorative justice. Through our **Children and Mothers Restorative Justice Program**, we have

successfully reunited seven children with their mothers (two) after securing their release from prison. These women now receive counseling, economic empowerment, and job opportunities to rebuild their lives. We are also working to free two more mothers, ensuring their children regain a nurturing home. By prioritizing women and children’s rights, Justice Nest is not only restoring freedom but also fostering family reunification and reducing recidivism. We have secured partnerships with organizations that will provide social and economic skills training, further enhancing the chances of successful reintegration for those released.

In prisons, our **Prison Paralegal Program**, running from 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025, is creating lasting change. At Shimo la Tewa Prison, 33 inmate and officer paralegals are being trained to provide peer legal aid, with legal offices set up in the Maximum, Medium, and Women’s sections. This initiative is helping to decongest prisons, securing the release of 1,160 inmates while addressing systemic injustices.

Here’s a snapshot of Justice Nest’s progress so far:

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Number</b>
Paralegals Trainees Recruited ( Inmates and Officers)	33
Mothers Served	4
Mothers Released from Prison	2
Children Reunited with Mothers	7
Target for Clients to be Served in Prison 2025	3,500
Target for Clients-Inmates to be Released from Prison 2025	1,160

As we look ahead, our commitment remains steadfast. We will continue to expand our programs, advocate for systemic change, and empower individuals to rebuild their lives.

Justice Nest is more than an organization; it's a movement—one that believes in second chances, the power of hope, and the transformative impact of justice.

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## 5. Upcoming Event: 33 New Champions of Justice: A Milestone of Hope and Partnership

In February, Justice Nest will mark a historic moment in our mission to bridge gaps in access to justice. On **7th February**, we will celebrate the graduation of **33 paralegals**—a dynamic group comprising both **incarcerated individuals** and **prison officers**—who have completed intensive training to become frontline advocates for legal rights. Their dedication embodies the transformative power of collaboration, proving that justice thrives when communities unite.

To ensure these paralegals can serve effectively, we've transformed three prison spaces into **fully equipped legal offices**, designed to uphold dignity and efficiency. Each office will boast desktop computers, printers, and essential stationery, creating a professional environment where clients receive compassionate, people-centered support. But our commitment doesn't stop there: a seasoned advocate (attorney) will work alongside the paralegals, providing ongoing mentorship, supervision, and advanced training. Additionally, every paralegal will receive a **stipend** to sustain their critical work, ensuring they can focus wholly on empowering those who need it most.

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## 6. Volunteer Spotlight: Meet Magdalene, A Volunteer Advocate Transforming Lives at Justice Nest



**Volunteer Advocate: Magdalene Odhiambo**

At the heart of Justice Nest’s mission are dedicated individuals working tirelessly to restore dignity and hope. One such champion is **Magdalene**, a passionate volunteer advocate transforming lives with her dedication to justice and compassion.

With a background in litigation and a heart for human rights, Magdalene’s journey began through volunteer work at Gertrude’s Children’s Hospital and Malindi Law Courts. Witnessing systemic challenges faced by women and children ignited her resolve to advocate for justice. “Every person deserves dignity, protection, and a fair chance to rebuild their lives,” she shares.

In just over a week at Justice Nest, Magdalene has already made a profound impact. Her days involve **courtroom advocacy, legal research, and client support**, ensuring that vulnerable individuals understand their cases and have a voice in the justice system. One of her most eye-opening moments was meeting a client suspected of postpartum depression—a reminder of the need for **mental health awareness in justice**.



She has also seen firsthand the transformative power of Justice Nest’s work, such as helping a mother avoid incarceration and secure employment as a hairstylist. “Seeing someone go from the brink of imprisonment to rebuilding their life is incredibly rewarding,” Magdalene says.

Beyond her legal work, she balances her commitment through **yoga and a love for African literature**, which keep her grounded and inspired. But she knows she can’t do this alone—Justice Nest’s work thrives on **donors and partners** who believe in second chances.

“To anyone considering supporting Justice Nest, your involvement is a chance to change lives,” she says. “Your contribution can be the turning point for someone facing the justice system.”

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## 7. Come be part of Journey

At Justice Nest, we believe in dignity, second chances, and a justice system that prioritizes restoration over punishment. But we can’t do it alone—your support makes all the difference.

### How You Can Help:

- Reunite Families** – Help mothers reunite with their children through legal aid, counseling, and economic empowerment.
- Support Prison Paralegals** – Fund legal training for inmates and prison officers to advocate for justice.
- Provide for Vulnerable Children** – Ensure access to education, healthcare, and stability for children affected by the justice system.

**Ways to Give:**

- ◇ **Donate Online** – Visit [www.justicenest.org/donate](http://www.justicenest.org/donate)
- ◇ **M-Pesa:** Paybill **4699532**, Account: **Your Name**
- ◇ **Volunteer:** Email [hr@justicenest.org](mailto:hr@justicenest.org)
- ◇ **Spread the Word:** Follow and share our mission online.

**Your support is a lifeline. Together, we can restore justice, reunite families, and transform lives.**

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## **8. Gratitude from Us – Together, We Make Justice Possible**

Dear Valued Donors, Volunteers, and Partners,

At Justice Nest, our mission to empower communities and champion equity is made possible by your unwavering support. Thanks to our donors, families will receive vital legal aid this year, while our volunteers are impacting more individuals through mentorship and community education. With the support of our partners, we are expanding legal services, educating paralegals, and advocating for critical policy reforms. Your contributions are not just numbers—they are stories of resilience, dignity, and change. Together, we are building a future where justice is a right, not a privilege. Thank you for being part of this journey.

With heartfelt appreciation,

The Justice Nest Team

*P.S. Stay tuned for updates on our upcoming events.*

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