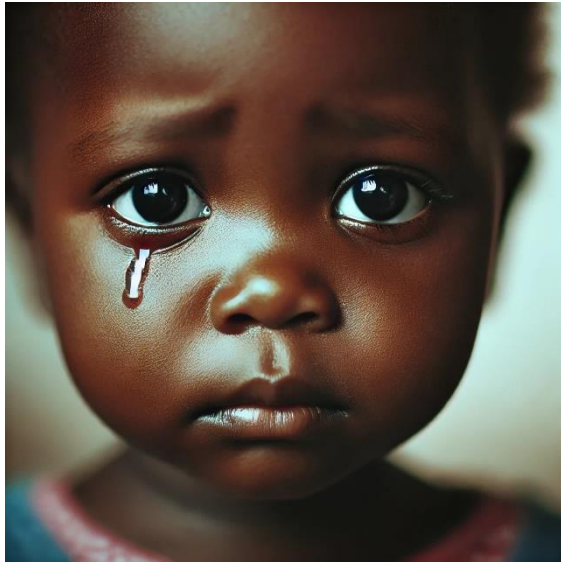


The Forgotten Population: The Silent Crisis of Children of Incarcerated Mothers

1. The Forgotten Population: The Silent Crisis of Children of Incarcerated Mothers

Dear Friends,

Every child deserves their mother's love. Yet, for thousands of children in Kenya, this love is disrupted when their mothers are incarcerated—often for minor, poverty-related offenses. The trauma, stigma, and uncertainty these children face is profound, but together, we can change the story.

Towards this year's Mother's Day, Justice Nest is launching #PendoLaMama, #Mama'sLove, a 40-day challenge dedicated to reuniting families and providing critical support to incarcerated mothers and their children. Your support can help pay legal fines, send care packages, and advocate for systemic reforms that keep families together.

In this edition, we also highlight our International Women's Day celebrations, the inspiring journey of our paralegal captain, Ms. Halima Jarso, and the incredible impact of your generosity in recent months.

Join us in keeping families together—because Pendo la Mama haipaswi kukatika.

With gratitude,

Miriam Wachira

Founder & Executive Director, Justice Nest

2. IWD2025: Accelerate Change

This International Women's Day, Justice Nest celebrated the strength, resilience, and beauty of women in two powerful ways: a beauty pageant at Shimo La Tewa Women's Prison and a team building walk at Karura Forest. This reflected this year's theme of Accelerate Change. Let us change the narrative.

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At Shimo La Tewa, our paralegal Ms. OMN won Second Runners-Up, showcasing the transformative power of hope and empowerment. The event was a celebration of individuality and the unbreakable spirit of women.



Ms. OMN



Our Team

At the same time, our team in Nairobi walked through Karura Forest, reflecting on empathy, compassion, equity, justice, collaboration, and partnership—values that drive our mission at Justice Nest.

These events reminded us that every woman has a story worth celebrating, and every step forward is a step toward a more just and equitable world.

3. When Mama is Taken Away: The Silent Crisis of Children with Incarcerated Mothers

This month, we're shining a light on a heartbreaking reality: the thousands of children left behind when their mothers are incarcerated for minor offenses like unpaid fines or non-violent crimes.

These children, often too young to understand why their mothers are taken away, face emotional trauma, instability, and stigma—all while longing for the love and care only their mothers can provide.

The first night was the hardest. AW held her 2-year-old daughter close, feeling the tiny heartbeat against her own chest as prison walls loomed around them.

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The child's innocently clinging to her and calling her “Mama, mama, mama” several times, nearly shattering what remained of her strength. Just days before, she'd been a hairdresser in Huruma, her skilled fingers weaving braids to put food on the table and keep her 8-year-old in school. But life had other plans.

Desperation led her to make one terrible choice—selling illicit brew to cover her daughter's school fees. When the police came, she begged them to take the 1,500 shillings she had, promising to bring the remaining 500 the next day. They refused. In that moment, her world collapsed. Not just for her, but for her children.

As AW sat in that cell, her thoughts raced to Uthiru, where her eldest daughter waited. Who would tell her why Mama didn't come home? Who would braid her hair for school? The pain of imagining her child's confusion was worse than any prison sentence.

Then came the miracle. During a routine prison visit, Justice Nest heard her story. Within hours, the fine was paid. The gates opened. AW stepped into the sunlight, her baby girl blinking against the brightness, both free.

But this story isn't just about AW. It's about the thousands of mothers sitting in cells right now for crimes of poverty, not violence. It's about the children who cry themselves to sleep, wondering when—or if—Mama will come home.

This Mother's Day, as we celebrate the bond between mothers and children, remember those for whom that bond is being tested by cold prison bars. Your love can write a different ending to these stories—one where love triumphs over despair, where no child has to grow up wondering why the system took their mother away over a few thousand shillings.

Mothers are the emotional anchors in their children's lives. When they're taken away, the impact is profound:

- Children are **6 times more likely** to enter the criminal justice system themselves.

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- They're **twice as likely** to suffer from mental health issues like depression and anxiety.
- They're **50% more likely** to struggle academically.

At Justice Nest, we believe no child should pay the price for their mother's mistakes, especially for minor offenses. **These children have a right to their mothers**, and their mothers deserve a chance to rebuild their lives.

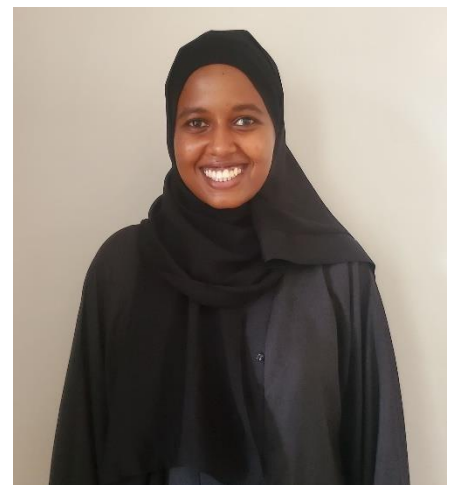
Every child deserves to grow up feeling loved, secure, and supported. This Mother's Day let's honor the bond between mothers and their children by helping to reunite families. Together, we can break the cycle of trauma and create a brighter future for the next generation.

Every gift is a key that unlocks a cell door and a reunion waiting to happen. This Mother's Day, give the gift of freedom. Because no child should have to visit their mother in prison. No mother should have to explain to her child why she can't come home due to poverty.

4. Meet Our Paralegal Captain Ms. Halima Jarso: *Captain, Shimo la Tewa Women's Prison Justice Nest Paralegals*

Halima Jarso is a dedicated prison officer and peacebuilder with a deep commitment to serving incarcerated women. A graduate of Mount Kenya University with a Bachelor's degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution.

Halima joined the Kenya Prison Service (KPS) in 2022. After completing 13 months of rigorous middle-level management training, she was posted to the documentation office in 2023, where she has been instrumental in streamlining inmate records and processes.



Halima has always been driven by a desire to empower inmates with legal knowledge. "Many women in prison cannot afford lawyers," she shares. "I wanted to help them understand their rights and navigate the system." This passion led her to Justice Nest's

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paralegal training program, where she gained the skills to guide inmates in self-representation and legal literacy.

Today, Halima serves as the **Captain of the Shimo la Tewa Women's Prison Justice Nest Paralegals**. In this role, she:

- Oversees the daily operations of the paralegal office.
- Acts as a vital bridge between the prison administration, inmates, and Justice Nest.
- Mentors' fellow paralegals to ensure quality legal support for incarcerated women.

Her leadership has been transformative, ensuring that women in prison have access to justice, dignity, and hope.

Halima believes in a justice system that uplifts rather than punishes. "Every woman deserves a fair chance," she says. "Through our paralegal work, we're not just helping with cases—we're restoring hope."

5. Upcoming Events: 40-Day Challenge Celebrating Mother's Day 2025: Pendo La Mama | Mama's Love

Close your eyes. Remember your mother's embrace, smell, touch, smile. The sound of her laughter. The safety of her arms.

Now imagine a child who only knows their mother behind bars.

From **April 1-May 11** We are running a **40-Day Fundraising Challenge** to reunite incarcerated mothers with their children using the following hashtags **#PendoLaMama** and **#Mama'sLove**.

Theme: "Every Child Deserves Their Mama's Love".


Goal: **\$35,000 (Ksh. 4,500,000)** to reunite families and provide critical support.


This Mother's Day, Justice Nest is:

 **Reuniting mothers with their children by offering:**

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- ❖ **Legal Services:** Providing pro bono legal services to mothers and children to ensure fair treatment and prevent unnecessary incarceration.
- ❖ **Restorative Support:** Addressing the root causes of legal conflict through counseling, economic empowerment, and rehabilitation for mothers, in partnership with trusted community providers.
- ❖ **Child-Centric Interventions:** Offering life skills training, psychosocial support, and alternative pathways that prioritize the well-being of children and prevent further entanglement with the justice system, in partnership with trusted community providers.

 **Sending "Care Packages"** (soap, books, baby essentials), with essentials for mothers and children in prison, children left at home, and those mothers who have just left prison.

 **Building a "Hall of Love"**—where you can leave a tribute to honor your mother and in doing so reunite a child with theirs.

How you can show love:

◆ **A little goes along way:** Giving towards the **Children and Mothers Diversion and Restorative Justice Program**

◆ **Sharing is caring:** Sponsor a **Care Package** for KES. 5,000 a mother and child will get their dignity.

◆ **Spread your Mama's love:** Leave a tribute on our **Hall of Love** for your mother/mother figure for a **gift of Ksh. 5,000** for a period of 6 months, and help another child hold on to theirs.


◆ **Share this message** so no child forgets their mother's love.


 **Give love here:**

Website:

 Go to the website: <http://www.justicenest.org/donate>

M-Pesa:

 Go to Mpesa Menu > Lipa na M-PESA > Pay Bill

 For Business no. enter the Paybill Number 4699532

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- ✚ For Account no. type your phone number.
- ✚ Enter the amount you would want to send to Justice Nest.
- ✚ Enter your M-Pesa PIN and hit send.

👉 For the Hall of Love:

- ✚ Give \$40 (Ksh. 5,000) or more through any of the above methods.
- ✚ Email your full names as per the payment details with the following details to halloflove@justicenest.org:
 - 1-5 best Photos of your Mother / Mother Figure, include some that you have taken with her.
 - Name of your mother
 - A short message to your mother would like to accompany this (max 50 words).

👉 Share the Campaign

- Use **#PendoLaMama** or **#Mama'sLove** & tag **@JusticeNest!**

👉 **Campaign Launch:** April 1st! Stay tuned for social media challenges & live updates.

"Pendo la Mama halipaswi kukatika." Let's keep children and mothers together.

6. Gratitude That Moves Mountains: Celebrating YOU, Our Champions!

Because of *you*, hope finds its way into the darkest corners—breaking chains, reuniting families, and rewriting futures. Every number below represents a life touched, a second chance earned, and a brighter path forged. Here's what **YOUR** support made possible in March:

January-March 2025 Impact Overview

Program	Trained	Clients Served	Releases	Reunited
Clients	-	247	35	-
Mothers Diversion Program	-	19	3	-

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

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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.

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- Youtube: [Justice Nest](#)
- X (Twitter): [@justiceNest](#)
- Tiktok: [Justicenest1](#)
- Instagram: [@JusticeNest](#)

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

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