

UNBRIDLED

COALITION OF FORMERLY IMPRISONED WOMEN MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2020



OUR COMMUNITY REBUILDING LIVES TOGETHER

Features:

- Children of Imprisoned Mothers
- International Day of The Girl 2020
- Wings of Hope; Support from the Skies
- From our County Chapters
- Opportunity in Crisis

QUOTABLE!

"Kujuana ni Kujengana" -

(Your network is your network)
A beneficiary:

Agnes Nyawira



02	Editor's Note
04	CEO's Statement
06	A Webinar- IDGC
07	Research: With FORD
08	Research: Girls in JJS
09	Wings of Hope
10	From the Chapters
11	Karibu Nyumbani
12	Little is Much
13	SuperCircles with Renee
14	An Expo!
15	Wakili Wetu
16	Powerful Advocacy-OSF
17	Totos' Corner
18	Google- a Partnership
19	KPA
20	We Remember...
21	For Daily Updates
22	Support us

EDITOR'S NOTE



Nyambura Kogi

Communications and Advocacy

That you are here...

The social justice scene and reintegration requires innovation. Innovation demands fluidity and new tools. We are happy to have the second edition of 'Unbridled', our in-house magazine. Here we communicate both intent and the progress of our work.

In this new space, we will continue to push the agenda for reforms in the criminal justice system, service to our constituents that offers dignified re-entry and building a strong organization with strong governance and management structures.

This magazine will also provide advertisement space, to complement our sources of revenue, channeled towards sound reintegration pathways for the women, girls and children. Please write to us, with your enquiries on this. We will also use it, to laud the milestones we and the women in our community have made.

May our words and work spur in you the hope that one day, we shall establish a just society that cares, even for the least among us.

If you want to go fast walk alone, if you want to go far, walk together - African proverb.

We invite you to walk with us.

“

AGNES NYAWIRA

KUJUANA

NI

KUJENGANA

Implying: "(Your network is your net worth)"

”

Agnes sells second-hand bedding at the largest second-hand clothing market in Kenya, called Gikomba Market located in Nairobi. She is an overcomer - one of our champions of change. Agnes is one of our leaders in the Nairobi Chapter. She supports other women leaving prison in her Circle of Healing (COH).

With her experience in business, Agnes is a key link for peer-led mentorship in the Tables of Support (TOS) which are the income generating structures.

CEO'S STATEMENT

Dear Friends, Funders and Partners of Clean Start,

If we have learned one thing from 2020 - it is this: when imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women, are given a platform to voice the injustices affecting them and their children, when they are empowered by building their confidence and support towards decent means of livelihood and can influence and innovative ways of addressing their challenges, they not only move their households forward but their communities and the society. They build back, better and stronger.

After a year that has brought the world to its knees, we are emboldened by the resilience of imprisoned, formerly imprisoned women and our team at Clean Start, rising, to achieve our objectives despite the changing circumstances.

2020 has made it clear what we at Clean Start have always known - those closest to the problem are closest to the solutions, but furthest from the resources. When the crises from the global pandemic hit, combined by the hardships of being impacted by the criminal justice system, together, we responded, adapted and led to achieve and own our solutions. We did not do it FOR them, we did it WITH them. The lessons we carried with us from the tough experiences of imprisonment and injustice, continue to enable us approach challenges with complex and creative solutions to overcome the obstacles.

In every crisis, there is an opportunity. When the first Corona Virus case was announced in Kenya, in mid-March, we had just finalized the process of formulating our three-year strategic plan. Despite the global pandemic, which necessitated the closure of entry into the prisons to offer our interventions, the continuity flowed so well as we were able to achieve the much needed consolidation of our activities on the outside that would guide our theory of change with those released from the correctional institutions.



Teresa Njoroge
CEO and Founder

**"2020 has
made it clear –
those closest
to the problem
are closest to
the
solutions..."**

CEO'S STATEMENT

The pandemic offered us time to focus on the formerly imprisoned women and girls, whom we had invested in, while they were serving their time in correctional institutions around the country. We created the much-needed pathways of transition and successful reintegration back into society, by bridging the gap between imprisonment and release back into society which has never been done in Kenya in a structured manner.

We now have ongoing Circles of Healing, Tables of Support and the Coalition of Formerly Imprisoned Women to absorb women and girls leaving correctional institutions, thereby curbing recidivism.

We are confident of our theory of change as we have practically tested it and look forward to preparing new cohorts in the prisons where we work in 2021, for successful transition back into society.

This year we have inducted and supported 210 formerly imprisoned women under our Coalition of Formerly Imprisoned Women (C.O.F.I.W). We have successfully formed eight Circles of Healing (CoH) on the outside, each with between 12 - 15 women. We have also inducted 120 women into the Circles of Healing. We have four Circles of Healing (CoH) in Nairobi county, one in Machakos County, Kajiado, Thika & Muranga combined and another one in Nyeri County.

These Circles of Healing (CoH) will not only offer a soft landing for our beneficiaries coming out of prisons, but also form the structures within which we offer our programs and interventions post-imprisonment, follow-up and monitoring and evaluation of the impact our interventions have.

Through our lauded partnership with Kenya Women Microfinance Bank (KWFT), we are looking forward to progressively invest in the women who are in our Circles of Healing, through our Tables of Support. KWFT will hold our revolving fund for investment in the women businesses. This will not only offer our beneficiaries Bank accounts, but will also enable us jointly mentor, equip and monitor the success of the women businesses.

In the course of 2020 we have managed to begin the investment in seven Income generating activities for our women as a pilot on the Tables of Support.

As we review the first year of our 2020 -2023 Strategic Plan, we remain committed to our grand vision of "Re-imagining futures and Reclaiming destinies". It is time to strengthen our cords and together, imagine a future that is better not only for our women, but also for us all. Every one of us must be part of the solution; using their power to empower the women, girls and children impacted by the Criminal Justice System. This starts with getting everyone to do their part, in achieving a more just world.

This reset year, is coming to a close, and what better way to celebrate a fresh start than by offering the women and girls opportunities to join the Circles of Healing and giving the gift of bringing their dreams to life through the Tables of Support for their income generating activities.

Looking forward to stepping out more, with courage and boldness to invest in more of our constituents with your support.

Read our Strategic Plan here:

<https://cleanstartkenya.org/media/css/2020/11/CleanStart-Strategic-Plan-final-29-May-compressed1.pdf>

Teresa Njoroge
CEO and Founder

A WEBINAR: INTERNATIONAL, DAY OF THE GIRL

2020

Our first JJS webinar!



A snapshot of the webinar

We celebrated The International Day of the Girl, 2020 on 8th October 2020, through a webinar. Albeit on short notice, we were graced by 6 Panelists, each a leader in their field.

We had Susan* a former pupil of Dagoretti Girls Rehabilitation School, Supretendant of Kenya Prisons Madam Jostinah Mwang'ombe - Officer-In-Charge Busia Women's Prison, Ms. Wambui Kahara, the Regional Youth Advisor East Africa at UNODC, Angi-Yoder Maina, The Executive Director of Green String Network, Mr Samuel Muniywin of African Institute for Children's Studies and Jeniffer Kaberi of Mtoto News as our Moderator- hosted by our CEO, Ms. Teresa Njoroge.

Watch the recording here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/c075WowRYxgWznR8Ging_DVWxKkgXE_PViZGKMRBHIGHRw1aKJ2yOTZkLIHW1Fob.i51OHhkP65rkcRZ2

We used this forum to champion for higher standards of education in Juvenile Justice institutions and improved parent-child relationships, that safeguard girls from dysfunction and abuse.

We also saw the need to address the mental health issues in our communities and in the children, thus establishing facilities in the Juvenile Justice Institutions that are trauma-responsive. We saw the need to expand and update the training curricula in these institutions to allow the provision of training for girls in modern courses. Modern training empowers these girls to become equal competitors. In comparison with other children, being in the Juvenile Justice System disadvantages them.

RESEARCH: THE DISPARITIES IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE



Lack of access to Justice and Rights violations in Kenya have led thousands of the poorest and most- marginalized to languish in dilapidated detention centers. This has resulted in adverse socio-economic impact.

Whereas access to justice and justice remedies are indispensable means for the citizenry to protect their socio-economic, cultural and political wellbeing, we see massive disparities in the administration of justice, among various economic statuses in Kenya, more so, for women and their children.

75% of all the imprisoned are young poor people charged with petty offences and state regulated offences. Imbalances in the socio-economic dynamics in society lead to abuse of power, police brutalities, violation of human rights and failure by the state to meet its international obligations as enshrined in various international Human Rights treaties.

Lack of data inhibits targeted strategic approach in our interventions and advocacy plan to enable us achieve the highest impact possible with our resources.

One woman impacted by the criminal justice system has a direct effect on her immediate family and even worse on her children.

Funded by the Ford Foundation, we have embarked on a crucial research project to investigate: the disparities in access to justice and violation of rights for women and their children within the Kenyan Criminal Justice system. This will enable us have the much needed data in our ecosystem that will be a useful resource in this space.

We will explore the relativity of the administration of justice, some of the effects of imprisonment as a means of retributive justice, while seeking to advance alternative dispute resolution that averts mothers from imprisonment for poverty-petty offenses.

In the future, we hope to integrate this with our programming on reintegration , citing a glaring gap in the availability of data on successful or unsuccessful reintegration.

GIRLS IN KENYA'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ABOLITION AND REFORM



Leitner Center
for International Law and Justice
AT FORDHAM LAW SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY



Clean Start



Clean Start was part of a joint research initiative alongside Leitner Centre for International Law and Justice, Wakilisha, and Strathmore Law Clinic, about girls in the juvenile Justice System in Kenya, with recommendations for abolition and reforms.

Part 1 of this research discussed social and economic vulnerabilities of the girls, conceding that prison is not one an answer to the challenges facing these girls and their families.

Part 2 explored experiences of abuse through the process of imprisonment, beginning from arrest. It also discussed the inhumane conditions in police detention facilities, alongside other excesses and denials these girls experienced while in custody.

Part 3 of the report, the conditions post-sentencing, reflecting on the availability of trauma-healing and counselling or any form of psychological therapy while at the Juvenile Justice Institution were highlighted.

This report also explored the challenges of reintegration of girls who have been through the Juvenile Justice System and the available reintegration services and the challenges like trauma, lack of housing, further education and the difficulties these girls face in family reunification.

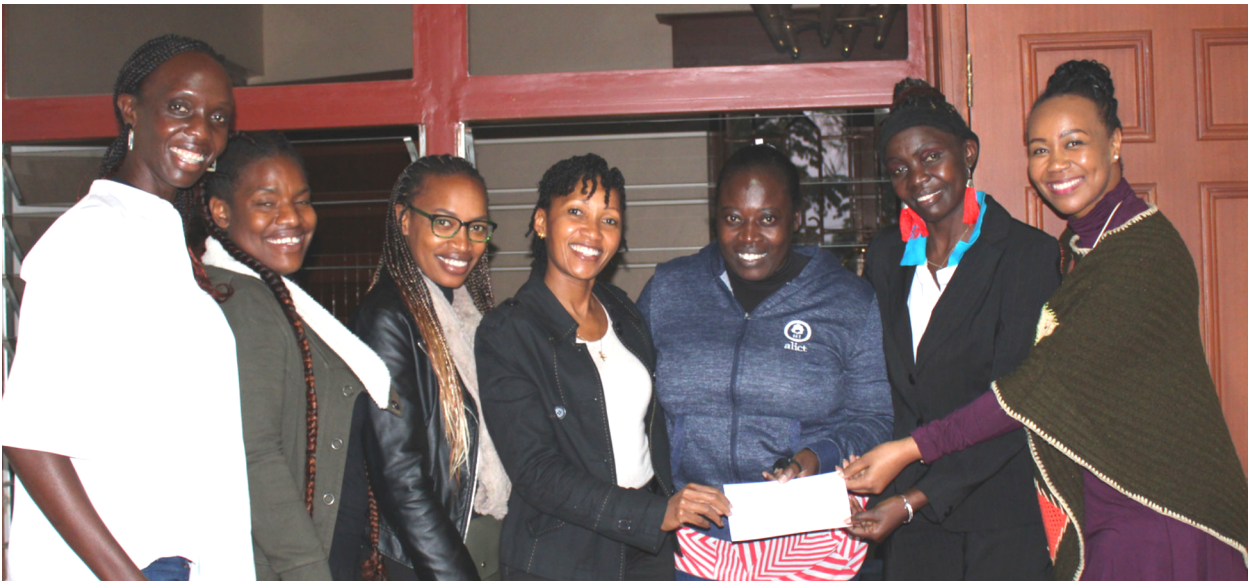
Please read more here: <https://cleanstartkenya.org/media.css/2020/11/Report-from-Strathmore-law-school.pdf>

WINGS OF HOPE: SUPPORT FROM THE SKIES

11 years ago, 15 friends came together. They are women pilots. They opened a bank account which won them a car in the first month. That is when they realized that they would use this and their friendship, to give back to the society.

**They opened
a bank account
that
won them a
car!**

Led by Captain Eva Nyawira, four lady captains arrived at our office one late afternoon in quarter three of 2020. The Clean Start team members were at the office for the monthly food distribution exercise, donated by the Chandaria Foundation for our constituents and to capture the voices of Girls from Dagoretti Girls Rehabilitation School in preparation for the International Day of the Girl 2020.



Lady Captains from Wings of Hope with some of Clean Start Team members

We had the best opportunity to give each of our incarceration and post-incarceration stories and how each of them represents the thousands of women who have been through the Criminal Justice System, who have received no support this far.

The Lady Captains wrote us a cheque, for which we are truly grateful. The monies have been put into running two Circles of Healing (COH) for three sessions.



FROM THE CHAPTERS



To launch a chapter and its Circles of Healing (COH) means to sit down first and discuss



The women too need to know each other and slowly grow their trust among themselves and in us.



When they trust each other then they can sit together and design solutions that work for their context



Solutions to the challenges faced by formerly incarcerated women are with them. We only support them to harness them and in humanizing each story.

KARIBU NYUMBANI

(Welcome Home)



After 19 years behind the walls of Langata Women's Maximum Security Prison, Bennie can now enjoy her freedom and be reunited with her family. The Clean Start team was at the gate to receive her too. She joins one of the Circles of Healing and becomes a member of the Coalition of Formerly Incarcerated Women (COFIW) as we collaborate in her reintegration journey back to society; reconciling within herself, with her family and with the community. Our strategic planning is bearing fruit, one woman at a time.



LITTLE IS MUCH



During some of the food and sanitary material distribution exercises

For women leaving Prison, little is much. When we come together, we share what we have; foodstuff and sanitary materials. We have been fortunate enough to receive tremendous support this COVID-19 period in dignity packs and the alleviation of hunger.

We are grateful to Bethel Network, Hital Muraj Of Cisco, KEPSA Foundation, Chandaria Foundation, Kingdom Business Solutions, Kenya Pipeline, our many friends both locally and internationally who have supported us both in cash and in kind, to respond directly to the impact of COVID-19 on our constituents. The book of Psalms 112: 5 says that *"Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice"*.

Your support has enabled our constituents withstand the unprecedented challenges that the pandemic caused. From us to you are prayers and good thoughts, same as the women in our fraternity. We give with our hearts, even to those who may never thank us, but in us is the faith that no good deed remains unrewarded.

Read our 2019 annual report here:

<https://cleanstartkenya.org/media.css/2020/11/CLEAN-START-2019-ANNUAL-REPORT-FINAL-VERSION-1.pdf>

SUPERCIRCLES WITH RENEE NGAMAU



Courtesy of:
A candid handbook for
Women in Business

From the description provided by "A Candid Handbook for Women in Business", "A SuperCircle is a safe space where women entrepreneurs meet other women entrepreneurs like themselves, who are at various stages of the entrepreneurial journey. This spurs across pre-start up to recently established business.

The SuperCircles provide information & tools necessary to start business and build skills for those who have recently started their business start, to help in overcoming the challenges in the way of the vision of the entrepreneur.

Two cohorts of ten women in the Clean Start Circles of Healing were privileged to be a part of a 15-weeks' training with Kayana's Super Circles.

The training comprised of storytelling for business, branding, making wealth and shaping attitudes towards wealth, Kenyan tax environment and legal framework surrounding the business tax in Kenya, among others.

It culminated in an expo, to showcase women's business concepts and products. The training was tailored for Trainers of Trainers.

These women shall share this knowledge in The Tables of Support (TOS) meetings and in the chapters. We are truly grateful to Kayana and Candid Conversation Circles for Women in Business in Kenya.



AN EXPO!

The intention of our Tables of Support (TOS) is to provide a platform for Formerly Incarcerated Women to access decent income generating activities.

We are honored each time the women in our community get the opportunity to showcase their products and to interact and learn from other women in the Kenyan entrepreneurial space.

Women from Three Clean Start Chapters got an opportunity to showcase their products during the 2020 Kenya Cottages Industries Expo

During the Expo, the women engage with and learnt from entrepreneurs, suppliers, and key players in the cottage industry in Kenya. They also marketed and sold some of their products.

We appreciate the support and introductions we have been receiving from Kayana's Pat Okelo, Renee Ngamau in the SuperCircles and from Candid Conversations.

This helps us to keep refining and in re-defining our Tables of Support (ToS), to be an outstanding platform through which formerly incarcerated women can achieve economic sovereignty as productive and equal members of the society.



WAKILI WETU

(Our Lawyer)



We have a new advocate in the Clean Start team and in our community!

Leila's journey to becoming an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya began 8 years ago. It has not been easy. She is the daughter to Fatia Jasho, a formerly incarcerated woman in (COFIW) - Coalition of Formerly Imprisoned Women.

Her journey has been one to build character, resilience and even more, her love for service to humanity and to others like her whose mothers were taken away from them in their formative years.



To her, the loss of her mother for two years was heartbreaking; but she feels that it also did bring out the best in her. Leila is but one of the few children of imprisoned mothers who can testify that.

On the contrary, so many other children of mothers in prison have lost their destinies simply because they were shunned and lacked caregivers who would help them to access the opportunities available to children who had their parents with them.

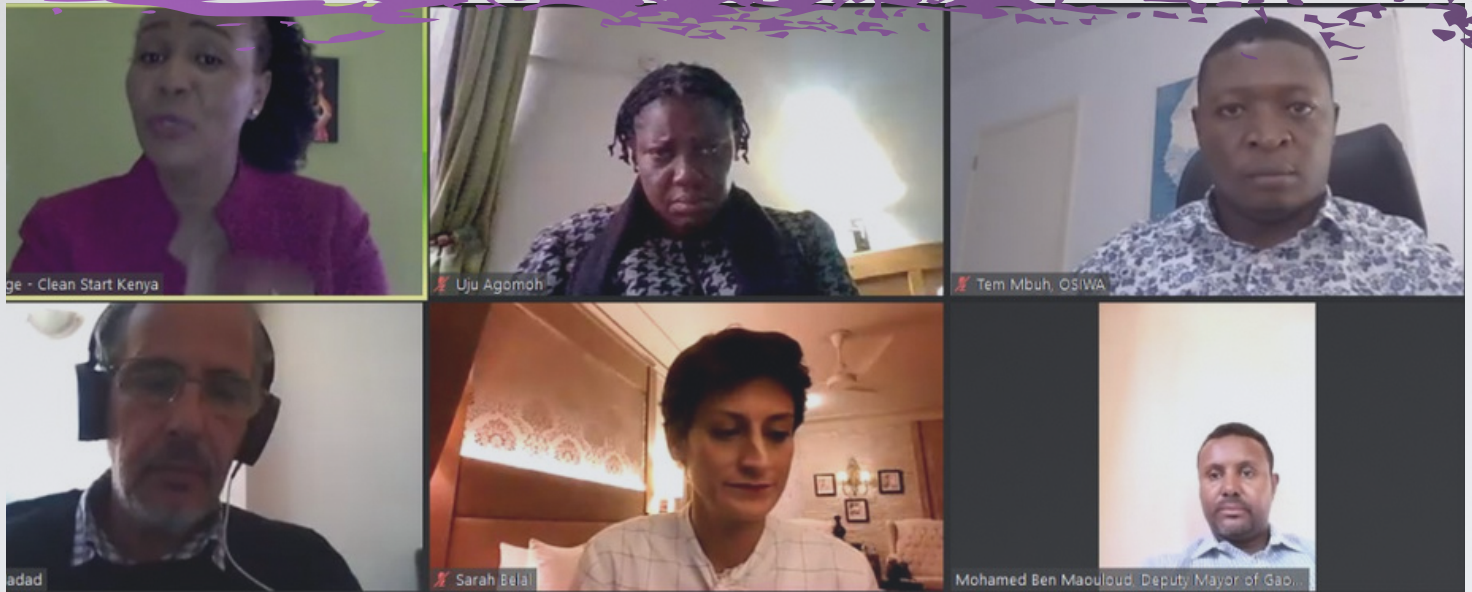


Leila believes that anything worth having or doing, requires steady effort. She will use her expertise and knowledge of the Law to be a voice for the voiceless, defending their inherent rights as human beings.

We are incredibly proud of her!

TOWARDS A FUTURE WITHOUT MANDATORY

DETENTION



Between 17th and 19th November 2020, Open Society Foundations, United Cities and Local Governments convened three panels with leading activists from across the world. The panelists led dialogues around the topic: "Towards a Future without Mandatory Detention. Our CEO, Teresa Njoroge was in the second panel on Wednesday 18th November 2020. The second panel title was "Taking Stock: Mandatory Detention Today.

In her submissions, she emphasized the need for an alternative future that keeps women -mothers- out of prison especially if they are neither a danger to themselves nor to society. The number of women imprisoned globally is growing at an alarming rate, whilst we ideally should be moving towards a world doing better at mitigating imprisonment. 90% of women in prison are mothers, sole caregivers and breadwinners in their homes... if they do have a home.

We have laid too much emphasis on what the law says is the punishment to a certain crime or nature of crime, at the expense of everything moral and systemic surrounding the execution of a crime. These women have the role to feed their children, take care of medical bills and educate their children. Most of these women have primary school education, which may have never been completed. They are barely literate. They were unable to access secondary school education out of lack of funds.

So many other factors affect the completion of education for girls in Kenya. This includes community perspectives towards educating girls. Without mentorship, the alternative becomes marriage or entanglement at a young age that results in the birth of children.

Uneducated, they can only perform menial tasks and low wage labour in domestic households or worse, hawk goods on the streets. Arrests are made, they cannot make bail. The children do not know where their mother is, because one day, she just left and did not return home.

Teresa also raised concerns about the ad hoc releases of prisoners during the COVID-19 period, asking, "what will happen to them at the end of the pandemic? We do not want women unnecessarily put back into detention. We need to help people reintegrate back to society.

TOTOS' CORNER

On 20th November, we celebrated World Children's Day. We shared gifts with the children living in the 5 prisons we work in, with the help of our community volunteers who delivered the goods to the officers and the mothers inside these prisons.

Earlier this year, the government released a directive to halt prison visits to curb the spread of COVID-19. These children found themselves locked out from well-wishers who they are dependent on for their essentials. These items are a way for the children to access a little piece of heaven, in a place they were sent, to be forgotten.

In our programming, the Clean Start-Kidogo Partnership Programme on responsive caregiving has progressed to sensitization of Senior Prison Officers, prison welfare officers and the daycare officers, who are responsible for "mama Watoto- the caregivers of the children inside prison.

During these sessions, the officers share their highlights and challenges in working with children in prison with their mothers. These virtual sessions have provided a platform for learning, with the participants sharing best practices and learning from each others' context. They have also understood the prominence of the role of a caregiver in a child's development.

The officers have committed to incorporate play, singing, dancing and conversation with these children; which contribute to a child's holistic development, and promote responsive care-giving.

The next phase of the exercise will target the "Mama Watoto", who are inmates assigned to watch over the children at the daycare.



PARTNERSHIP WITH Google



We have an average of 500 children living in prison with their mothers in Kenya. Inside prison is an environment that is neither conducive for learning and development, nor for responsive care-giving and the fullness of life that every child deserves.

We were invited to share stories of our constituents by Google for their Holiday Giving Campaign. It coincided with our in-house two-week campaign meant to raise funds that would support girls from the Juvenile Justice System continue with their schooling in the mainstream schools and provide women and children inside prison with basic essentials in the five women prisons where we run our programs.

We are so grateful to the Director Global Partnerships at Google - Sandra Whitney, her colleagues Karoline O'Sullivan and Tom Bruno for the incredible support they have accorded us to offer humanity, restore dignity and offer sound livelihood options and opportunities to our girls, women and children.

Children living in prison with their mothers only access the basics from well wishers. Our hearts swelled with joy as we delivered packs of new clothes, to the children, made better by the beaming smiles of the mothers as they received them. Many thanks Sandra, Karoline and Tom for making this possible. We sincerely appreciate all the tremendous support we have received from different individuals for children accompanying their mothers to prison and our community.

We continue to offer support to the most vulnerable as we navigate the global pandemic.

KENYA PAEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION (KPA)



We have recently partnered with Kenya Paediatric Association (KPA) to offer Health Services Support for Children who accompany their mothers to prison. KPA hopes to offer an oversight role on what the children need in partnership with Clean Start and other strategic players and also look into the holistic wellbeing of the children.

Kenya Pediatric Association introduced Clean Start to their network that looks into Early Childhood Development (ECD) and we are collaborating to strengthen ECD in correctional facilities in Kenya - in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics AAP and Kenya Pediatric Association AAP/KPA / Clean Start in ECD.

WE REMEMBER...



The first meetings of what is now Clean Start were held at Uhuru Park, Nairobi's sole mass of vegetation.

This photo taken in 2014, takes us back to the vision. It reminds us of purity in the deliberations of formerly imprisoned women, determined and ready to seek the pathways for our own reintegration first.

Whenever we feel discouraged or want to walk in conceit, then we look back and appreciate every effort, contribution and steadfast faith that successful reintegration is collective effort and collaboration. It sure does take a village.

Thank you for being a part of it.

Together we can achieve so much more.

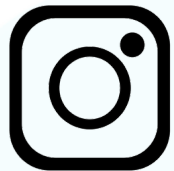
FOR DAILY UPDATES



www.cleanstartkenya.org



Clean Start- [@Cleanstartkenya](https://www.facebook.com/Cleanstartkenya)



Clean Start Kenya [@cleanstartkenya](https://www.instagram.com/cleanstartkenya)



CleanStartKenya [@CleanStartKenya](https://twitter.com/CleanStartKenya)



support@cleanstartkenya.org



+254 797 535 164

+254 735 535 164

For Ksh
1200
Only

Donate a



Kiddies Pack

for Children living in prison
with their mothers.

With:

**Diapers | Baby hat- boshori | soap | arimis | tissue | toys |
learning materials | baby clothes**



M-Pesa: +254759099914

Paybill: 543268

✉ **cleanstartkenya@gmail.com**

Account: Children

Paypal:

www.cleanstartkenya.org

For Ksh
1140
Only



Dignity Pack

to an Imprisoned Woman & Girl

Give a

With:

**pads | Toothpaste | Toothbrush | Bar soap | Arimis |
Tissue Paper | Canvas Shoes**



M-Pesa: +254759099914

Paybill: 543268

Account: Women

Paypal:

✉ cleanstartkenya@gmail.com



cleanstartkenya.org