RECONNECTING AND REBUILDING RESILIENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY

QUARTER TWO 2021 Newsletter
CEO’s Statement

Dear Clean Start Friends and Partners

I hope we find you and yours healthy and hopeful.

As we come to the end of the first half of 2021, and usher in the second half with continued commitment to tackling the criminalization of the poor and most marginalized, we are reminded of how privileged we all are - to serve and transform the lives of our constituents - the imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women, girls and their children.

It has been such an eventful second quarter of 2021! From our Chief Operating Officer working on our internal enterprise resource planning ERP system, to the research team being on the ground with paralegals supporting as research assistants for our ongoing research project, to launching and graduating the first cohort of our UFUNUO program in prisons, investing in the formerly imprisoned women businesses and holding a unique Beyond the Bars conference, and so much more, we have been in the frontlines executing and implementing with excellence our strategic objectives and goals.
It has been remarkable seeing our team members at Clean Start and the formerly imprisoned women Circles of Healing leaders’, team up to pick the imprisoned women, on their BIG day of release from prison. No woman is coming out of prison and not finding a sister at the gate to receive her back into society.

This has been the biggest gap systemically and for our team to be there for the women and offer that continued support through their journeys of re-integration is inspirational and sets the reintegration and aftercare tone. You can’t be what you can’t see. The Formerly imprisoned women are lighting the path for each other, holding each others hand in the spirit of true sisterhood and this is what will create sustainable interventions, owned by those impacted.

The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust a number of injustices and inequities into our consciousness and we have seen incredible support from fellow Kenyans with a lot of Food packs, Dignity packs for the imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women, girls and their children. We are forever grateful as we need every person’s support.

The new Board Directors meeting the team was a highlight for the second quarter. The team were encouraged and inspired with bold ideas, bold action and new voices, to keep showing up for the women we work with and their children. They attest that the meeting transformed their mindset and shifted their attitudes towards life and work.

In this second half of 2021, its time for audacious actions. We are aware that for us to solve the great challenges of economic inequity amongst those we serve and systemic change, we not only need rights, we also need the power and voice to lead lasting change, reimagine and transform systems and we will ensure our constituents have the representation to make this a reality. As we continue investing in the lives of women, girls and children impacted by the criminal justice system in Kenya, I ask you to join us in this critical work and use your power, resources and networks to empower our signature programs which build equitable systems, based on inclusion and rooted in a stable environment with sustainable practices.

When you partner with us, you will enable us to continue championing and transforming the lives of the most vulnerable in Kenya and to create a better future for us all. May the detailed updates in this newsletter inspire you. Thank you.

In Solidarity,
Teresa Njoroge
CEO
COO’s Statement

Reconnecting and Rebuilding resilience in our communities aptly captures what the Clean Start fraternity has been up in sleeves working on for quarter two. The Government of Kenya lifted the COVID 19 movement restrictions which allowed the team to connect and engage with the women, children and girls who had been zoned off.

Some of the lessons we learnt with the activities carried out, is the significance of creating platforms whereby our community can interact, learn and support each other for impact and sustainability. The digital space offers an opportunity to connect safely and interact while learning and growing.

We saw the launch of the Ufunuo Circles of Healing program virtually connecting three prisons in Kenya, and appreciate and welcome additional support to invest in the necessary infrastructure to make this possible in the remaining 43 prisons.

We continue to invest in the nurturing of the agency and wellbeing of the Formerly Imprisoned Women, and having their voices represented and heard in the various spaces for change is key. Deliberate campaigns and forums were hosted with key messaging of addressing stigmatization, creating second chances and advocating for non-custodial sentencing for petty offences being at the heart of the campaigns. We thank you for spreading the word and joining in our webinars, watching our media interviews for engagement and reach.

Building Collaborations and partnerships continue being our approach in expanding our bandwidth and capacity for our work. On this front we saw leadership learning forums hosted with Leaders Quest for the Google team, Chris Mureithi on Change Management as well as Dr. Patricia Murugami on How to Rise and overcome barriers during the COFIW Inaugural conference. We look forward to learning as we grow in our work and sharing what we are learning using our various media learning platforms.
For the quarter ahead, we focus on building the capacity of the women, children and girls that we work with as well as internally – both mentally, physically and emotionally; working with our volunteers, donors, partners and well-wishers. We appreciate you – we see you, we hear you, we feel you.

Thank you.

Susan Kihara- Nguu COO

Volunteer Program

It’s only when we are able to expand our bandwidth that we can make a bigger impact. In this second quarter our volunteer program came to life and we welcomed our first three volunteers from various backgrounds. We are extremely honoured to kick off our program with these passionate women.

New Team Members

Audrey Masitsa – Communication, Media and Advocacy Assistant

Audrey’s passion for digital communication coupled with her desire to empower women was fired up by the need to educate the world on the plight of imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women, girls and children. She hopes to help fill in this gap and illuminate these often neglected members of our society.

Rosemary Ndinda Ndivo

She is an experienced business development professional with expertise in cultivating sustainable business across East Africa with proven success in business strategy and initiatives. She is a collaborative leader with a reputation for building and mentoring high performing teams.
Edna is a penologist, passionate about prison reforms in Africa, starting with her home country Kenya. She believes in and is an advocate of understanding the underlying issues that contribute to criminal tendencies.

Edna is an ardent volunteer who enjoys interacting with the women, children and girls in the prison system to offer hope and assist in the re-integration of those who are released into society.

Mahatma Gandhi once said that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. If you would like to volunteer your skills and time to the cause, please drop us an email on support@cleanstartkenya.org.
With Challenges came opportunities

It has been an incredible and eventful quarter for Clean Start and our beneficiaries. While the challenges due to the pandemic continue, we have identified opportunities that ensure that we keep changing and improving the lives of women, girls and children impacted by the criminal justice system.

For starters, we are now able to communicate and train women in prison virtually. Through computers, internet and tools such as Zoom we have been able to conducts circles of healing and an entire 5-week Ufunuo program training. We were able to conduct a whole food drive reaching over 200 formerly imprisoned women in the month of May while celebrating mothers who make the broken look beautiful. Our children were well represented on the Day of the African Child where we took part in national conversations in media.

This was a month of great progress, achievement and learning. Last quarter we featured all our program leads, this quarter, we thought we should introduce you to our program assistants. Without them, none of this work would have been done so well.

Enjoy the journey

Njambi Mungai - Editor
May is internationally marked as Mother’s Month as Mother’s Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of May. This year, Clean Start took this occasion to celebrate the courageous formerly imprisoned women who, despite the impact and challenges they have faced as a result of going through the criminal justice system, have stood tall against all odds to take care of their families.

We held a food drive, calling for donations of foodstuff and toiletries which were later presented to the women from Nairobi, Machakos, Nyeri and Murang’a counties. Observing the laid out Covid-19 protocols, the women met, had a moment to interact with the Clean Start team and get to know how each department is set up to work with them and for them for successful reintegration.

Sarah Odima, Program Assistant – Circles of Healing

Sarah has made it her passion to work with women who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. She applies the very skills she got while imprisoned to empower and inspire other imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women to achieve their full potential. To know that they have a choice and that their mindset and attitude will make all the difference.

Our interventions
Circles of Healing
The women were also given the opportunity to share their stories: how they are working towards rebuilding their lives and the impact Clean Start has had on their journey. They were then presented with food packs which contained dry foodstuffs like maize-meal, rice, sugar, wheat flour and toiletries such as petroleum jelly, sanitary towels, hand sanitizer and face masks.

We also paid a visit to the women’s prisons in Busia, Nairobi, Machakos, Nyeri and Murang’a counties where we presented the officer-in-charge as well as the prison staff with handwashing stations, hand sanitizer, hand soap, face masks and thermo guns.
The imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women as well as their custodians were grateful for the help that Clean Start accorded them.
There was jubilation as 32 trainees from 3 prisons graduated from our inaugural Ufunuo Program. The five-week Ufunuo Training Program ran from the May 26, 2021 and culminated in a beautiful virtual graduation on June 4, 2021. The trainees who are all imprisoned at Thika, Nyeri and Machakos women prisons were issued with a certificate during the event which was attended by local and international guests.

The Ufunuo Program is a journey of self-discovery, breaking old habits and limiting beliefs by creating new pathways and beliefs that enable us unleash our potential. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the trainings were conducted virtually. The success of this program was made possible by collaborating with the prisons’ wardens and officers. We are eternally grateful to them.
Following the training and graduation, three trainees have gotten a mentor to journey with them. One of the trainees has secured a catering and hotel training position in one of the businesses run by a formerly imprisoned woman.

Here are some of the lessons learnt by the trainees:

“Change before change changes you”
Fridah - Thika Women prison

“Don’t waste your pain. Be positive with the pain to help you know where you went wrong.”
Opich – Machakos Women prison

“Don’t store anger, it’s not an investment.”
Susan – Nyeri women prison

“Do the right thing at the right time and the right place”
Ruguru – Thika Women prison

“We will change our mind, change our life then change the world.”
- Evelyne - Machakos Women prison

You can watch the virtual graduation here
Part 1
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=545420726622282&ref=watch_permalink

Part 2:
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=4204998126226221&ref=watch_permalink
New releases

Juliet Ndanu from Machakos Women prison and Veronica Wairimu from Thika Women prison, were recently released and members of the COH on the outside were at the prison gates to receive them.
Nancy has tirelessly crisscrossed the country working with the women, identifying their needs and advocating for their reintegration back to society. She is keen on fighting self-stigmatization among the formerly imprisoned women as well as stigmatization from the society towards them as she identifies with them and knows where it pinches most.

As part of Clean Start’s work in providing formerly imprisoned women with small business training and access to business opportunities, the Tables of Support has been walking closely with the formerly imprisoned women, guiding them as they work towards establishing their small businesses. This quarter we have continued boosting formerly imprisoned women with skills and capital. We are also in the process of setting up hubs across the country where these women can carry out their trade and learn new skills. This will be in partnerships with local administration and of course the donations from our well wishers. The hubs will ensure that we reach more women who will now have direct access to us from the county level without having to deal with extra travel and communication costs on their ends.

In this newsletter, we feature two women who have set themselves apart in finding their feet after release from prison.
Evaline Mashirima is a 35-year-old formerly imprisoned woman from Tanzania. She had been sentenced for 15 years at Langata Women’s Prison. She served time with a new born baby who was later released to her grandmother on the outside.

During her sentence, she actively participated in prison private activities where she gained a lot of skills and knowledge. But that was not all she gained. Since prison clubs pay small tokens to the inmates who participate in club activities, Evaline was able to accumulate a good amount of money to enable her start a small business post release.

When she completed her term on July 2021, she was received at the gate by the Clean Start Team. She plans to start a shoe business after three months. Clean Start is walking with her in her reentry back into society. Evaline is a hard working lady who if supported well could be a success story of foreigners who serve behind bars and build back in countries away from home.
CASE STUDY 2: FLORENCE MUGURE

Florence Mugure was sentenced for five years in prison and served time while pregnant with a baby girl. She managed to give birth in prison and nurtured her through her sentence. After her release seven years ago, she has struggled to make ends meet especially for her children. As a single parent with four children looking up to her, Florence really needed a lifeline.

Clean Start supported her with capital to start a business which led to the establishment of her groceries shop. That proved to be the helping hand she needed as she has poured herself into making the shop a success. Florence is now able to support her children and even during the low season, she struggles to ensure that they attend school and have access to basic items. She is grateful to Clean Start for holding her hand when all seemed lost.
Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

Gene Amondi
Program Assistant- MEAL

As a research assistant at Clean Start, Gene is passionate about gender and equality while supporting causes that are meaningful to the lives of women and girls.

Tables of Support Baseline Report

At Clean Start, we bridge the gap between prison and the community by ensuring successful reintegration for women and children leaving prison. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) department is responsible for the measurement, monitoring, and evaluation of all projects and programs undertaken by Clean Start. It ensures that there is consistency in the objectives and success indicators of programs and spearheads the development and timely delivery of relevant reports against outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation helps in working out what difference we make through the projects. Clean Start and its partners can then go on and learn from this to improve its performance in the future.

As the effects of the pandemic continue to bite the world over, we have continued to support our community and come up with solutions that best suit the needs of the community of women we serve.

40 formerly imprisoned women were interviewed over the last few months to get findings on their livelihoods, functional literacy and life skills, community participation, and engagements.
Findings on functional literacy and life skills

80% of the women could read and write and do simple arithmetic. This means that the majority of the FIW went up to secondary level of education.

30% of the FIW can use computers. 50% of the women have smartphones. 90% of the women have simply basic skills that they got from prison, for example knitting, sewing, farming, cooking, hairdressing and small businesses baking cakes, making soaps, shampoo, bleaches, yoghurt. The women also got several training opportunities while in prison including theology, paralegal training, counselling skills among others.

Findings on functional literacy and life skills

The survey revealed that 90% of the formerly imprisoned women are the primary caregivers, heads of households, and could provide at least two meals a day to the members of their households. 80% of the FIW depend directly on their small businesses to support their families.

Inasmuch as a good number of the FIW run small businesses as their main source of income, 100% of the women are struggling to keep their businesses afloat.

In various households, 50% of the households have two or more adults and children who aren’t engaged in any income-generating activities. This means that a good percentage are not able to meet their household needs.

Key findings on community participation and engagements

The survey showed that of 95% of the FIW, none of the women assessed shared any problems with the community where they reside. Stigma is still a silent issue but the women have coping mechanisms. The women shared that they go to church/the mosque.

Circles of Healing Baseline Report

The objective of conducting the Baseline survey was to:

- Inform Clean Start on the level of mental wellness and coping pathways of the FIW post-release
- To inform the Ufunuo program on the interventions and activities to take for the mental well-being of the FIW
- To show the impact of the Ufunuo training program to the FIW
Key findings on family and self-well-being (Reconciliation/Unification with family)

In Muranga, 40% of the formerly imprisoned women have reconciled with their families and have started their journey to self-knowledge with self-confidence embodied in the second meeting. 60% are still struggling to fit back to the family. They need more counselling support and legal aid.

In Nyeri, 75% have been reconciled with their family and are engaged in small businesses and casual work to support themselves and their families. However, they still need counseling and intense coaching and follow-ups.

In Machakos, 95% have reconciled with their families and are participating in small business, casual work and farming to support themselves and their families.

In the Blessed Circle of Healing Group, 98% have reconciled with their families and are doing small business and casual work to support their families.

Key findings on functional literacy and life skills

80% of the women faced challenges reading and writing and filling in the baseline survey forms without assistance. This was due to the high school drop rate due to a lack of school fees.

80% of the women are able to portray their psychosocial competence in taking on challenges and dealing with the impact of imprisonment, communicating by sharing their stories, and engaging in learnings offered on the Clean Start platform.
Key findings on community participation and engagements

In Nyeri, 90% of the women are either doing small businesses or doing casual work within Nyeri county to support themselves and their families. They are also going to church within their area while in Murang’a they work in their shambas and operate small kiosk businesses to support their families as well as attend church services.

In the Blessed and Machakos women’s groups, 90% of the women are running small businesses, doing casual jobs to fend for themselves and their families. They also attend church in their locality and participate in opportunities offered on the Clean Start platform.

Research

Divergence in access to justice and human rights violation

With the ongoing research on the divergences in access to justice and human rights violations, Clean Start will highlight the differences in access to justice among the poor and the rich in Kenya.

The majority of the imprisoned are the poor and those in the marginalized communities who are charged with petty offenses. Due to the imbalance in the socio-economic status, most of the poor people who are arrested are women who are sole providers of their families and are arrested for petty offenses that involve them looking for options to tend for their children.

The findings in this research will be used in:

1. Clean Start advocacy
2. Establishing the impact of imprisoning a woman
3. Highlighting why women end up committing these petty offenses
4. Finding out what are the offenses that most women are arrested for

The research brought on board different partners like:

i. Global Alliance for Legal Aid (GALA)

GALA is looking into eradicating debtor incarceration and debt relief. They came on board to find out, among the women we work with, how many are in prison because of debt issues. They are also looking forward to supporting women who are in prison because of debt.

ii. Legal Resource Foundation (LRF)

LRF will be offering paralegals from their organization and also from the Paralegal Society who will be supporting in data
collection. The paralegals will be partnered with a formerly imprisoned woman during the fieldwork.

iii. Micro-Justice Kenya
They provide standardized legal services to those in marginalized communities. They will be coming on board to help the FIW get National Identification Cards (IDs) and those with children in prison to get birth certificates.

Pretesting of research tools
In this quarter, the team carried out the pretesting and training of the research tools with the formerly imprisoned women who will be going to the field.
Girls and Children

Terry Bii
Program Assistant
Children and Girls

Terry Bii works with girls in conflict with the law held in the rehabilitation schools and children who accompany their mothers to prison. Terry remains passionate about ensuring swift transition and reintegration for women from prisons back into the society by applying her coaching and mentorship skills.

KCPE results

It was exciting to have one of the girls we support scoring high marks in the recent KCPE National Examinations. This year, 12 girls sat for the 2020 KCPE exams. The top student had 340 marks while another six scored 250 out of a possible 500 marks.

They performed despite missing out on teaching for much of 2020 since they had no access to online classes. The 12 girls were selected into secondary and high school during the national selection process. This means that they have the opportunity to continue with their education.

Clean Start has been supporting them financially with educational fees as well as other items required for school. We would like to invite you to support these girls in the following areas.

Support a girl through school at Ksh 50,000 per year or donate laptops, books or sanitary packs for the girls. https://cleanstartkenya.org/donate/
This year’s theme for the Day of The African Child was “30 years after the adoption of the Charter: accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2040 for an Africa fit for children”. At Clean Start we are aligned with Aspiration 8 of Agenda 2040 which states that children benefit from a child-sensitive criminal system.

Children between 0-4 years accompany their mothers to prison. Their development, crucial at this stage in their lives, is thus influenced by the non-conducive prison environment. Some prisons lack an age-specific diet. They are often housed among inmates exposing them to bad language and fights among inmates.

Lack of daycare centres reduces chances of early learning opportunities. This year’s celebrations of the African Child were held virtually due to the Covid-19 restrictions. 20 girls in rehabilitation schools received sanitary pads courtesy of Girl Aid Foundation. The foundation also pledged to give these girls six months’ supply of sanitary pads. The girls also received menstrual health and hygiene education as well as mentorship.

The team also published an opinion piece in The Standard and was interviewed by Queenter Mbori of Her Standards, a show aired on KTN Home. This gave us the opportunity to talk about the challenges faced by children who accompany their mothers to prison.

**HER STANDARDS | Day of the African Child PART 1**

**PART 1:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jO7Tkig6lQ&t=494s

**PART 2:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS8nNHxHk7M
Article 30 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child addresses the welfare of children of imprisoned mothers. Among other provisions, it urges State parties to the charter to ensure that a non-custodial sentence will always be first considered in sentencing expectant mothers and mothers of infants and young children who have been found guilty of a crime.

State parties are also urged to promote measures alternative to institutional confinement.

In 2020 the government put in place measures to curb the spread of Covid-19. Among the measures implemented was the move to decongest prisons. Most petty crime offenders got non-custodial sentencing while others who had already been jailed found themselves pardoned. This move brought a reduction in numbers in the women prisons of expectant mothers and mothers accompanied by children to prison.

Madam Jostinah Mwang’ombe, Officer-in-Charge, Busia Women Prison, has gone beyond her call of duty to ensure that children do not find themselves behind prison bars as they accompany their mothers to prison.

Her passion in child protection service has seen her volunteer in community forums in collaboration with other state departments and non-state actors in advocating for the protection of children from delinquency through community participation and collaborative strategies amongst all stakeholders.
Being a member of Court Users Committee in Busia Lower Court, she approached the committee and informed them that Busia Women Prison does not have separate quarantine centers for the expectant inmates or those accompanied by children. Madam Jostinah pushed for alternate dispute resolution to avoid jailing women with children as there was simply no room for children in the prison. Through her efforts and with the collaboration of other criminal justice agencies in Busia County, the last child left the prison in March 2021 and there has not been another child accompanying their mother to prison since.

She has also worked with the local Catholic Church in reconciliation in efforts to achieve alternative dispute resolution. A woman who was jailed while expectant and also gave birth in the prison to twins was reconciled with her mother-in-law due to Madam Jostinah's efforts. The woman is now released and able to raise her twins in freedom.

Madam Jostinah has also approached local CBOs and partners working in the prisons who have assisted in paying fines of some of the women who cannot afford the fines. Under her guidance, paralegals working in the prison have advised inmates to apply for a review of their cases and some women have had their cases reviewed and the qualified inmates are now out on bond.

Madam Jostinah is a two-time winner of the Annual Makini Awards in the institutional category: Best in Environment and Living Conditions in Prison when she was the officer-in-charge of Machakos Women Prison and superintendent-in-charge at Kamae Girls Borstal and the State Department for Correctional Services Award as the best in-charge in promoting Girl Child Education.
She has a rich experience with UN peacekeeping work as a correctional officer with Monusco Field Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo and a seasoned child protection training officer with the International Peace Support Training Center, Kenya.

Madam Jostinah’s efforts and impact is proof that other forms of resolutions can be effective without using prison as a first resort. This not only reduces the rate of imprisonment for undeserving women, it also ensures that children are not jailed with their mothers or left behind.

2020 Annual Report

It is an understatement to say that 2020 was a year unlike any other. From our COVID-19 response to our community both in and out of our correctional institutions, our team was in the frontlines of the pandemic ensuring the much needed support was accorded and that we all came through, healthy and successfully. Learn more in our newly released 2020 annual report. Here is the link:-

Clean Start Kenya was proud to hold the first ever Beyond the Bars Conference on June 18, 2021. The main objective of the conference was to bring together formerly imprisoned women from all over Kenya to be part of the first ever National Conference.

COFIW-Africa is a social movement that responds to issues of imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women and their children. Through COFIW we are raising formerly imprisoned women to be the lead voices and actors who possess the requisite individual and collective voice to contribute to systemic change.

This conference brought together 82 Formerly Imprisoned Women from Nyeri, Muranga, Thika, Nakuru and Machakos Women’s Prison. We also had formerly imprisoned women from Bomet, Nandi, Mumias, Nanyuki, and Isiolo Counties join us for this inaugural Beyond the Bars Conference.

Among the speakers were Clean Start’s chief operating officer (COO) Susan Kihara, Clean Start chief operating officer (CEO) Teresa Njoroge and Clean Start chair of the board Dr Patricia Murugami. The women were encouraged to visualize, unlearn, creatively learn and...
adopt with agility (VUCA) post imprisonment, and to be at the helm of for change in the criminal justice system at both local and national levels and to advocate for alternative means of dispute resolution as opposed to imprisonment of women. The women were also urged to continue engaging in advocacy efforts that include visibility and challenging social cultural perceptions that propagate the cycle of poverty, criminalization of poverty and stigma against women leaving prison. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) department is responsible for the measurement, monitoring, and evaluation of all projects and programs undertaken by Clean Start. It ensures that there is consistency in the objectives and success indicators of programs and spearheads the development and timely delivery of relevant reports against outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation helps in working out what difference we make through the projects. Clean Start and its partners can then go on and learn from this to improve its performance in the future.

Watch the conference highlights here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39gAGVC409E
Access to Justice: Justice Defenders

The Country Director of Justice Defenders, Miriam Wachira, shared the work they do with the Kenya Prison Service to ensure that imprisoned women have access to justice. She added that, in partnership with University of London, Justice Defenders trains women to be paralegals and lawyers so that they can support women who are behind bars.

She also encouraged women who require legal assistance not to be afraid, but to step forward so that they can get legal assistance.

Special guest from the US

In this years’ Beyond the Bars Conference, we were honored to have a special guest from the US, who for the first time shared her experience being behind bars and how that affected her and her family.

One of the formerly imprisoned women stated that, after she heard the story, it really does not matter your race, colour or where you come from, “a mother will do anything for her children”, however this doesn’t justify the mistake. It shows the love that women have for their children and that most of the women are in prison not because they wanted to, but because they were fending for their children.

The conference was such a huge success the formerly imprisoned women enjoyed the sessions and most of all meeting one another. It was clear, from the interactions we had that...
day, that many of the women are ready to support one another. The circle leaders have taken on the role of leadership to support those leaving prison meet them at the gate and support them in their reintegration journey.

C.O.F.I.W Monthly Meetings

In the month of April, we had the inaugural C.O.F.I.W monthly meeting. This meeting took place online via the Zoom platform. Our speaker for the month of April was Ms. Mary Thuo, CEO and Founder of City Scape, an organization that advocates for the rights of low-income earners in Kenya.

Mary shared her story of starting from humble beginnings and how she managed to grow her organization from scratch. She encouraged the women not to look back but to believe in themselves, that they can achieve anything that they put their mind into.

In the month of June, we had online panel discussions with formerly imprisoned women who are making a difference in the society. Sheila Kinothia a formerly imprisoned woman is the founder of the Phoenix Half-Way Home that supports not only women who have left prison but also those who are affected by gender-based violence and are in abusive relationships.

Phoenix half-way house offers counselling for the FIW for a period of two months, thereafter the women are given tools to start off small businesses. Other formerly imprisoned women on this call shared their experiences and stories of resilience of how over the years they have been able to rebuild their lives.

Watch the session here: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=506447507155985&ref=watch_permalink
New partnerships formed between March – June 2021

The Fundraising and Partnerships department works to build a reliable and sustainable revenue base and linkages to strategic partners to support Clean Start’s mission and programs.

Legal Resources Foundation

We are working together to provide paralegals for the research we are doing on divergences in access to justice supported by the Ford Foundation.

Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN)

We have partnered with AfECN to bring together CSOs providing childcare services in women’s prisons to engage, share experiences and expertise in a bid to develop strategies and identify solutions and opportunities for collaboration that would help improve service provision in the women penal institutions.

Global Alliance for Legal Aid (GALA)

We are partnering with GALA to support women who are imprisoned due to debt. GALA’s mandate includes legal aid and prison reform as well, including advocacy to improve the prison conditions as well as programming for the incarcerated while inside. Globally, GALA endeavors to prevent persons who have defaulted on loans from ever being incarcerated.

This incarceration doesn’t resolve their underlying debt and it is a violation of human rights, and possibly their constitutional rights in many instances.

Microjustice4All

We are working with Microjustice4All to help women access legal representation and access to justice. Microjustice4All has worked in Kenya since 2011 with local MJ4All partners: Micro Justice Kenya and Haki Mashinani. The work has focused on the slum population in Nairobi and on the workers in the flower farms in Naivasha. The legal services and legal education/awareness raising relate to:

- Providing civil documentation (i.e. birth certificates, death certificates and affidavits) to its beneficiaries
- Inheritance and succession (family law), property and land rights
- The registration of businesses and social groups.
Judicial Training Institute (JTI)
Through Dr. Alice Macharia, we are partnering with JTI to access various training programs and seminars, public lectures, research, and other forms of discourse targeting the women we work with.

BuildHer
We have partnered with BuildHer to support formerly imprisoned women have access to training opportunities so that they can make an income in the construction industry. BuildHer works to see women across Kenya actively contribute towards urban development to create safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable cities. They work on promoting urban development with women, for women, by women. They equip women in Kenya with accredited construction skills leading to greater financial prosperity, changing male attitudes and promoting gender equality within the construction industry.

Mending Minds
We are partnering with Minding Minds to support the women and girls we work with in and out of prison to access mental health support and counselling. Mending Minds Foundation teaches the society how to identify, understand and respond to signs of anxiety, mental illnesses.

eMentoring Africa
We are partnering with eMentoring Africa to mentor and support girls in the juvenile justice system at Kamae Borstal Institution. eMentoring Africa is a not-for-profit organisation is registered (2009) by National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) as a trainer in mentorship and soft-skills. eMentoring Africa blends mentorship with guidance, values and personal development to school-age/adolescent children (upper primary and high school level) and skills transfer and employment linkages to youth who have attained employment age.

Justice Defenders
Clean Start is pursuing a collaborative partnership with Justice Defenders to equip the Clean Start team with training in paralegal and access to justice. Their mission is to equip defenseless communities with legal training to defend themselves and others.
Other events

Mother’s Day Webinar

In celebration of Mother’s Day and Month, Clean Start held a webinar whose theme was ‘Mothers who make the broken beautiful’. Held on May 7, 2021, brought to light the gap in the judicial system in terms of the punishment of women and mothers for non-violent crimes. This year’s theme, ‘Mothers who make the broken look beautiful’, was captured beautifully by the panellists who spoke on various aspects on the imprisonment of women such as the nature of crimes and dated laws for which they are jailed, the need to readdress sentencing, how imprisoning a mother affects her family as well as a piece of advice for any mother who finds herself behind bars.

The session was moderated by Dr Patricia Murugami, Board Chair, Clean Start and the Chief Executive Officer of Breakthrough Leadership Transformation Group. There was a call for systemic change that would bring about alternative punishment for non-violent crimes and bring an end to the cycle of children who are brought up within the prison system or whose mothers are imprisoned and so are left motherless. Emphasis was made on changing the laws, for instance, those pertaining to brewing which would see the issuance of licenses for traditional brews. This would greatly reduce the number of women charged with illegal brewing and give them a source of livelihood lowering poverty levels within the society.
Poverty eradication will also help reduce the number of children who are forced to accompany their mothers to prison. Of those who do end up in prisons there is a need to create an environment that boosts brain development with the help of day-care centres and training of caregivers in the proper care of children. The government is the duty-bearer of children who are left behind when their mothers are incarcerated and so, once the government imprisons the mother, they need to take care of the children she leaves at home.

Increasing the punitive weight of non-custodial sentences would also reduce the number of women sentenced to prison. These include probation, community service, order to pay fine, and compensation order.

A change in mind-set for mothers who do find themselves in prison or recently released can go a long way in psychological healing and consequently empower them to rebuild their lives. Forgiveness is a key ingredient in healing as is maintaining a positive outlook in life. Creating a plan of action, starting small, celebrating big and small wins as well as having a circle of support will help these mothers make positive social change.

We need to ensure that the objective of sending a woman or girl to prison is not for retribution but to restore, rehabilitate, empower and ensure that those who come out of the prison system can contribute to the society and move it (the society) forward, bringing an end to the life-sentence that is stigmatization.

Addressing the root cause of the imprisonment of women and girls will help purge the judicial system of dated laws and create laws that reflect who we are as Kenyans, bring the judicial system into the 21st Century.

Watch the webinar here
https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=296923411917231&ref=watch_permalink

Clean Start in collaboration with Leaders Quest hosts Google Team

In June, Clean Start, in collaboration with Leaders Quest hosted a team from Google in a session on leading through adversity, standing up for your values and challenging the status quo.
It was an interactive session where the teams from Clean Start, Leaders Quest and Google got to share ways in which they led through adversity, stood up for their values and challenged the status quo.

The Clean Start team had an opportunity to talk about our work with imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women and highlight the resilience with which these women are rebuilding their lives. The session illuminated the work we have to do in educating the public about issues facing women, girls and children impacted by the criminal justice system. We have a huge opportunity to raise regional and global awareness on the issues of imprisonment of women.

We learned that when leading, we need to be cognizant and self-aware of the 3 C’s: character, conviction, and courage for change. The session spurred and propelled us to embrace the unity of purpose and mobilize our tribe to push forward as we work towards overall systemic change within the criminal justice system.

The Google team uniquely brought to light the need to be aware of the important things in life. It was humbling to see the value they have placed on spending time with family. They are intentional about it even as they work from home.

Clean Start meets Wubanachi from Ethiopia
The Clean Start team had the opportunity to meet and interact with the new board comprising of Dr Patricia Murugami, chair of the board, Renee Ngamau, Board Director and Helen DeVane, Board Advisor.

It was an eventful day where the entire Clean Start team got to mingle, learn more about each board member. The board also gave talks which fired up the team, giving them even more fire to continue carrying out the work of advocating for our beneficiaries, imprisoned and formerly imprisoned women. The day culminated in celebrating the birthdays of Dr Patricia and Renee.
Clean Start participates on the KPA ECD Advocacy Conference

The Kenya Paediatric in conjunction with the American Academy of Pediatrics are working towards implementing an Early childhood development (ECD) Advocacy Project. The project seeks to leverage clinical expertise, patient experience and an expansive network of pediatricians to ensure national and sub-national health care systems are responsive and inclusive of nurturing care for early childhood development. As part of the project implementation, KPA held a 3-day advocacy workshop to train ECD champions and identify national and sub-national priorities.

Clean Start took part in the workshop where we had the opportunity to showcase the issues facing children who accompany their mothers to prison.

Press and Media

TV Appearances

FORMER BANK MANAGER ON IMPACT OF RAISING DAUGHTER IN PRISON: - The Wicked Edition episode 219
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1c06p3AVgw

LIFE AFTER PRISON: Women trying to break the shackles of social stigma and employment discrimination
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4l-GDFjsRtM

HER STANDARDS | LIFE AFTER PRISON FOR WOMEN
PART 1:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEVADZnnVMc&t=511s
PART 2:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSFZOh5WXcQ&t=199s
HER STANDARDS | Teresia Njoroge, Founder & CEO Clean Start
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzwGMEXvT64&t=409s

TERESA NJOROGE: I THOUGHT I HAD DIED AND GONE TO HELL
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doG537ndSpc

Print and Digital
Standard Newspaper
Children in prison with their mothers – not their crime yet their sentence

Radio
Spice FM
Life After Prison For Kenyan Women ~ Teresa Njoroge, Founder & CEO of Clean Start
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTIVRYItr5m8
How you can help

- Advocacy
- Influencers
- Radical Collaboration

- Sponsorship
- Women capacity building
- Team capacity building

How professional associations can help

- Counselling and psycho-social support of women and their families
- Legal aid
- Apprenticeships / mentorships
- Sponsor a girl/child
- Team capacity building

How corporates can help

- Sponsor events: Conferences, expo, training programs
- Donate: laptops, foodstuffs, dignity packs for women, girls and children
- Provide financial training and mentorship for women
- Sponsor the building of Clean Start Center
- Sponsor a child/girl
- Team capacity building
Support a woman in the circle of healing KSH 12,000

Support a child living in prison with the mother at KSH 1,200 for three months

Support a girl through school at KSH 50,000 per year

M-Pesa Paybill - Business No. 53268 A/C No: Put Your Name / Cause you are supporting i.e Children or women

Paypal: cleanstartkenya@gmail.com

Bank Account Details
Bank Name: ABSA | Branch: Karen
Kshs. A/C Number - 2037885455
GBP A/C Number - 2040015399
USD Account Number - 2041690421
GET INTOUCH

School Lane 31, house number 3, Westlands Nairobi

+254 797535164
+254 735535164

www.cleanstartkenya.org

support@cleanstartkenya.org

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@CleanStartKenya