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Teresa Njoroge is a Director, Co – founder & CEO of Clean Start Solutions, a social enterprise that seeks to restore hope, dignity, self confidence and self respect to those leaving prisons, enabling them to break the cycle of poverty and prison, by empowering them to have decent sustainable means of livelihood, in Kenya.

In 2009, Teresa was arrested, maliciously prosecuted, and was wrongfully sentenced to and served one year in Langata Women’s Maximum Security Prison, the largest women correctional facility for women in Kenya, in 2011. In 2013, two years after serving her sentence she was exonerated of any wrong doing, by the High Court of Appeal and the experience in Langata inspired her to devote her life to helping former inmates make the transformation from incarceration to free society and advocating on their behalf.

Teresa set up Clean Start to address the needs and gaps she witnessed first hand. She learnt that close to 70% of the women she served time with were victims of poverty. Due to the cycles of poverty, these women had neither a proper education nor vocational opportunities. As a result, they took up survival crimes as a way to support themselves and their families and found themselves incarcerated.

Teresa seeks to positively impact and transform those caught up in the criminal justice system, marginalized and in need of a genuine second chance, via coaching, character development, personal development services and transitioning them into education, entrepreneurship and employment.

In turn the beneficiaries, support each other through peer mentoring “overcomers” groups that Clean Start holds regularly and an annual Beyond Bars conference for those rebuilding their lives on the outside.

In her commitment to social justice change, to cut the high rates of recidivism, help reduce systematic legal and societal barriers and grow the nations restorative justice programs, Teresa has been in the forefront through her advocacy work. An ardent advocate against social injustices in Africa, with focus on how imprisonment disproportionately affects individuals and families living in poverty, she is also an active Discharge Board member of various Prisons in Kenya, through the Ministry of Interior Coordination – State department of Correctional services and Rehabilitation.

Teresa is an accredited Psychometric and Leadership coach, which she uses to build partnerships with Corporates, SME’s, Faith Based Organizations, Individuals, NGO’s and other government departments, in turn advocating for Clean Start’s cause, gaining mentors, internships and employment opportunities for their graduates.

A former professional banker with over a decade of progressive experience in premier banking with some of the International Banks in Kenya, she is a graduate of the University of Pune, a Vital Voices Lead Global 2015 Fellow, Acumen EA 2016 Fellow, Metis Fund Fellow 2017 and a TEDWomen 2017 speaker. Women and Girls Lead Global have recognized Clean Start efforts as outstanding advocates for marginalized groups.