

**AFRICAN  
PRISONS  
PROJECT**

**Bringing justice, dignity  
and hope to prison  
communities across Africa**



**Become a *changemaker***  
Help bring transformation to the most  
unlikely places.

Charity Registration No. 1121764  
Company Registration No. 06260329 (England and Wales)

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PATRON

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**“African Prisons Project is doing absolutely and utterly extraordinary things... going to the most unfashionable places and trying to make people’s lives half decent.”**

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**SIR RICHARD BRANSON**  
Founder of the Virgin Group

**I**f you’re reading this, I believe it’s because you and I share a common goal - a desire to see the world a better place for those it would rather forget. African Prisons Project is making this a reality, accomplishing what seems impossible in the most unlikely places.

APP is dedicated to the dignity of each person and inspiring hope where there is none. In their story, you’ll see how passion and persistence is transforming lives.

I am overwhelmed by their extraordinary work and what they’ve achieved over the last ten years. They began by helping a few men and women in one or two places. Now, in 2017, more than 60 students – prisoners and prison staff – are studying law through the University of London in a learning environment that poses enormous challenges.

APP’s vision is to see the people they educate becoming agents of change themselves, participating in and reforming the justice system from inside the prison walls.

The impact of their work speaks for itself, men and women they train succeeded in overturning their own and others’ death sentences, changing the fabric of the law in Kenya and Uganda in the process. Through APP’s work, I’ve seen people society has written off becoming instruments of change in the very system that disempowered them, using legal knowledge to give back to their communities.

Join me in helping APP make their vision a reality for all in Kenya, Uganda, across Africa and beyond – so that for men and women facing imprisonment without trial or possibility of rehabilitation, APP can bring hope, and a fresh start.



**Jon Snow**  
Journalist and News Broadcaster  
*APP Patron*



**Peter Ouko** spent 18 years in prison, mostly on death row, where he studied law and helped those around him, obtaining a Presidential Pardon for his release.

Read his story on page 16



**63** prisoners and prison staff are studying law with APP's support under the University of London International Programmes

## TRANSFORMED LIVES

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**T**he story of African Prisons Project starts with a dying man in a Ugandan hospital. He had no visitors to care for him during his last days, or any kind of support. And despite the palliative care we were able to offer him, he died alone, six days later.

Many of the patients in that hospital were prisoners. When I visited the prison I saw the same experience repeated again - the forgotten men and women, many sick and dying in terrible conditions. This time it was a young man - 18 years old - the same age as I was at that time, sewn into a blanket to be buried. The building was dark and grey, and the conditions were miserable. I thought that no-one - no matter how they had lived their life - deserved to die in this kind of environment.

After returning to the UK to raise some support, I went with £5,000 to refurbish the prison hospital, so that even if the prisoners were going to die there, they would die in a dignified and hope-filled environment.

Caring for the dying wasn't enough. I wanted to see transformation in the lives of the living.

I founded African Prisons Project to provide access to justice, for the men, women and children, hidden away in these dark places, many for years on end, even as they await trial.

APP believes in the power of transformation and the benefit to all when a life is transformed.

People like Peter Ouko, the pioneer student of the APP Leadership Programme. He spent 18 years in prison, mostly on death row, where he studied law and helped those around him, obtaining a Presidential Pardon for his release.

These people are *changemakers*. Men and women who have succeeded against the odds in changing their own lives and their communities.

But they cannot do it alone, we are asking you to become a *changemaker* too. By supporting their efforts, you will make a real and lasting difference, helping to transform forgotten lives and create the *changemakers* of tomorrow.

We are a community of sinners and saints. We are lawyers, prisoners, ex-prisoners, prison officers, judges and allies. Some of us have killed, some of us have tortured, some have stolen, some have been wrongly sentenced to death, some are innocently imprisoned, some have been tortured, some have been to the best universities, some haven't been to school at all. We are united by a desire to bring dignity, hope and justice to all.



**Alexander McLean**  
Founder and Director General

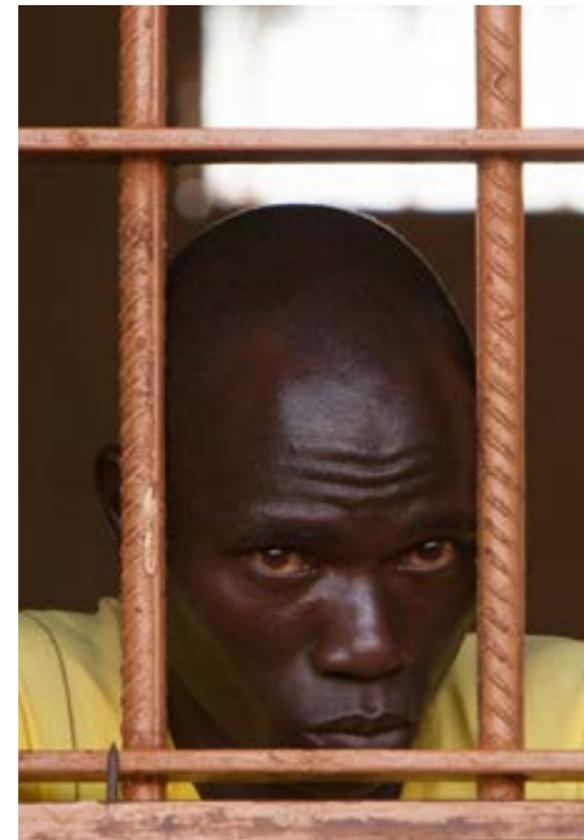
# THE REALITY

The United Nations office on drugs and crime states that “a large number of prison systems around the world are at a stage of crisis, the serious effects of which harm prisoners, their families and societies as a whole.”



## PRISONS IN KENYA AND UGANDA

In the places we work, criminal justice systems are a maze of complex bureaucracy where the accused struggle to obtain justice. Many prisons operate at around 300% capacity and – in Uganda and Kenya – around 80% of people cannot afford the most basic access to justice. With high levels of illiteracy and little formal education, the majority of detainees are ill-prepared to defend themselves in the intimidating environment of the courts.



## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Once charged, most people are held on remand and can remain so for years - up to a decade in some cases - whilst their families suffer the economic and emotional consequences.

Having the money to pay for a lawyer is, in any case, no guarantee of a fair trial. Many of those we serve tell us they met their lawyers only once, on the day of the trial, for one brief meeting that may have determined their future.

While no one has been executed in Kenya since 1987, penalties are harsh and even an accusation of military cowardice can carry the death penalty. APP's work has contributed to the near total reduction in the number prisoners held in limbo on death row in unsanitary conditions, with limited access to medical care.

Challenging a wrongful conviction is equally fraught. Without access to the knowledge or materials needed to mount an effective appeal or a sufficient number of judges and magistrates to hear their appeal, many wait helplessly, facing an uncertain future.



## REHABILITATION

Opportunities to engage in rehabilitative activities like APP's are rare. Imprisonment is more likely to exacerbate crime rates than act as a deterrent and with juveniles often imprisoned with adults, some are affected for life.



## SUSAN'S STORY

**“The first time I set foot outside the prison gates as a free woman, it was like I was walking on the moon! I could not believe what was happening to me. What I felt was a mixture of feelings.....anxiety and excitement! But excitement ruled it all. I thank God for giving me the opportunity of seeing the outside world again.”**



Susan at the ICPA Conference 2016 in Bucharest



Susan graduating with her Diploma in Law

**In 2016 Susan Kigula won her freedom, after beginning a death sentence 16 years ago. Susan entered Luzira Women’s Prison, in Uganda, at the age of 21, after a conviction for murder. Through our Leadership Programme, she took the opportunity to study law and gain the tools she needed to fight her case in court.**

*“It is very difficult to keep on hoping when you are sentenced to suffer death. Not forgetting that I had left my one year old daughter behind with no parents. I had to rise up beyond my pain, drawing from my little inner strength remaining, to live and hope for her, if I was to see her again.*

*“I was the first female inmate to study and graduate with a Diploma in Common Law followed by a Law Degree (LLB) from the University Of London, sponsored by APP.*

*“Studying the law empowered me in many ways. It helped to improve my relationship with the prison staff as well as to assist my fellow inmates with their legal problems which enhanced my relationship with them as well. I became a leader in prison. I started a legal clinic in prison*

*to help my fellow inmates with their bail applications, writing for them their memorandums of appeal, teaching them how to mitigate their cases, and self representation in courts as many could not afford paid lawyers.*

*“With 417 other death row inmates, I led a death penalty petition in the Ugandan Constitutional Court challenging the death penalty and mandatory death sentences. This case took several years to be decided in the Supreme Court but it gave me hope that one day we shall see the light again. When the mandatory death sentences were abolished, I realised my hope had not failed me. Seeing the lives of these inmates gradually changing for the better, increased my energy to do more, in anticipation of one day having and living in a harmonious and transformed society.”*

**Susan now works with APP representing us worldwide to share her story, drawing from her experiences in leading a petition on the abolition of the mandatory death penalty in Uganda, to inform the on-going debate on the abolition of the death penalty in Africa.**



Susan with former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, at a conference held at Strathmore University



**Having seen for myself some of the valuable work that the African Prisons Project is doing in prisons in Kenya, and knowing how much that is appreciated by the prison authorities, I have no doubt that the same is true in the other countries in which it is contributing so much to the rehabilitation of prisoners.**

### LORD RAMSBOTHAM

Former Chief Inspector of Prisons  
APP Patron

**77** prisoners' convictions were overturned in 2015 and 2016

“The scholarship to study law at the University of London has literally rekindled my life.”



## WILSON KINYUA

“I was born in 1976 in Kenya. One year after graduating from high school, I faced a charge of robbery. My parents could not afford a lawyer for me. At such a young age, ignorance and naivety notwithstanding, I was given a death sentence which was later commuted to life imprisonment.

This appeared like the end of my life. Nothing that I or other people did gave me the desire to live another day. I was bitter. This was until the African Prisons Project came into my life. The scholarship to study law at the University of London has literally rekindled my life. I now see an opportunity to influence change in the justice system. Instead of hating myself, I experience immense potential and self-worth. Instead of seeing myself low, I now pride myself in using my legal skills to help

those around me. I use my time to give voluntary paralegal services to my fellow inmates. I have drafted written submissions and court applications and represent clients as an intermediary in court.

Recently, I had the chance to speak on behalf of myself and 11 others in the High Court. The experience of using my legal knowledge before a judge is a major success to me. It might well be the gateway to my own freedom after 18 years’ incarceration at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison.”

# OUR VISION

 **125** prisoners received non-custodial sentences in 2016

Our vision is to develop *changemakers* within prisons who can use the law to bring justice to the most vulnerable in society.



- To assemble world-class law teachers, law makers and practitioners to aid the training and development of our people; and to plan our expansion as we look to establish a law firm and college, offering legal education and legal services in Africa and beyond.
- We will build on the success of our Prison Human Rights Advocacy work, providing quality legal services to less complicated magistrates’ court matters.
- For legal education to be offered to the widest possible audience a pre-university legal qualification will be developed providing a way into LLB studies.
- We will provide pathways to allow our students to apply their gifts to their wider communities and impact their nations upon their release.
- Facilities of the highest standard will be established to support *changemakers* as they serve their communities. These will include libraries, classrooms, mock courts and legal service centres.
- By empowering those who have been most disadvantaged, we can harness their talent and passion for a fairer world and see genuine systemic change.



 **2,371** prisoners were supported by APP students in 2015 and 2016



“African Prisons Project shines a light into some of the darkest places on earth. Many of the men, women – and children – who find themselves incarcerated are guilty of no crime but even those who are, deserve to have their basic humanity recognised.

I am proud to support African Prisons Project because of their exceptional record of achieving real change, because I see the scale of the problem we need to tackle and because I believe they are the most effective vehicle to achieve that change.”

**RICHARD REED**

Co-founder of Innocent and JamJar Investments  
APP Patron

 **454** prisoners' cases were dismissed due to advocacy efforts by the PHRAs in 2015 and 2016

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In 2016 APP supported 27 prisons across East Africa. Now 63 prisoners and prison staff are studying law with APP's support under the University of London International Programme.

Uganda with many death sentences overturned as a result of their actions.

One of our students, a soldier, was released and taken back by the Ugandan army where he was given study leave to complete his law degree. He's now working as a prosecutor in Ugandan military courts, helping to make decisions about how soldiers in those courts are dealt with.

As well as the number of prisoners who receive distance learning, we also train prison staff in basic legal knowledge and human rights. At one prison in Northern Uganda, three prison staff helped to release 40 prisoners on bail within three months.

Two of our students - Susan Kigula and Wilson Kinyua - led successful constitutional challenges to the mandatory death penalty in Kenya and

## APP IN NUMBERS

*In 2017 the following will occur as a result of work done by our justice changemakers:*

**50,000**  
hours of legal services offered

**5,000**  
clients served

**2,000**  
years of prison time avoided

**50**  
death sentences avoided

*By 2020*  
**30,000**  
people released from prison by changemakers

The APP Team

KE  
**10**

UG  
**15**

UK  
**9**

# BECOME A CHANGEMAKER

## OUR PLANS ARE AMBITIOUS AND UNPRECEDENTED

Over the next three years we plan to educate and equip many more people in Kenya, Uganda and beyond. These individuals - our *changemakers* - will have an exponential impact in the prisons where they live and work. As well as when they return to their communities empowered and enabled to work for change all around them.

## ACROSS AFRICA

Longer term, we want to expand geographically, where there is a wider need. So we will take this model - which is working so effectively in Uganda and Kenya - and implement it more widely across Africa.

## ACROSS THE WORLD

We will begin the process of assembling a world-class cohort of visiting and associate lecturers and practitioners who are leaders in their fields working with respected institutions and pioneering organisations.

We will begin the process of bringing together law teachers, law makers and practitioners to aid in the training and development of our people.

We will continue to share the impact of our work and the possibilities for transformation within the criminal justice system, where there is the will to affect change.



 **2,110** prisoners released on bail with the support of the PHRAs in 2015 and 2016

We have a vision of a world where no-one need face injustice alone, but we can't do it without your help. That is why we are inviting you to become a *changemaker* too, and help us support those who are making change happen on the ground.

## PARTNER WITH US

Our ambitious goals of bringing justice to the most vulnerable, establishing a law firm and law college, building facilities of the highest standard to support our *changemakers* and bringing transformation within the criminal justice system will require significant resources and long-term commitments.

**Will you partner with us today and join our *changemakers*?**  
*With your help we can implement the dreams we have for strategic development, equip changemakers who are leaders in their communities with the resources they need and achieve our long-term goals of expansion.*



APP law student, Benjamin Kamugisha receiving his Diploma in the Common Law



## PETE'S STORY

On the morning of 25 October 2016 Pete Ouko was released from Kamiti Prison in Nairobi where he had spent the past 18 years of his life. Pete's dedication to his prison community, and his desire to make an impact on the world in spite of where he found himself, ultimately won him his freedom.

Initially sentenced to death in 2001, Pete refused to be contained by the razor wires, the security towers and high walls of Kamiti prison, instead he was driven by a strong passion to change the circumstances of not only those around him, but those beyond the prison walls. He was APP's first student to gain a Diploma in Law, he initiated an anti-crime advocacy group 'Crime Si Poa' (Crime Is Not Cool) and spoke eloquently of his work and experiences at APP's Kamiti TEDx event.

### 23 HOUR LOCK-UP

Before his death sentence was reduced to a life sentence in 2009, many of Pete's early

days in prison were spent locked up for 23 hours a day in a cramped death row cell, yet he still had the determination to complete his Diploma in Law, later going on to study for his LLB Law Degree. His desire to assist those in need was seen daily in his leadership of our Paralegal Clinic at Kamiti where he supported many in navigating the complex legal system and often turbulent path to justice.

### THE WAY TO FREEDOM

Pete's leadership and commitment to make his time in prison a positive encounter is something that broke through the prison walls. Having heard Pete's story, President Kenyatta exercised his Constitutional Power of Mercy and signed for Pete's release. Having spent decades behind bars Pete can now enjoy the freedom that he sought for so many others.

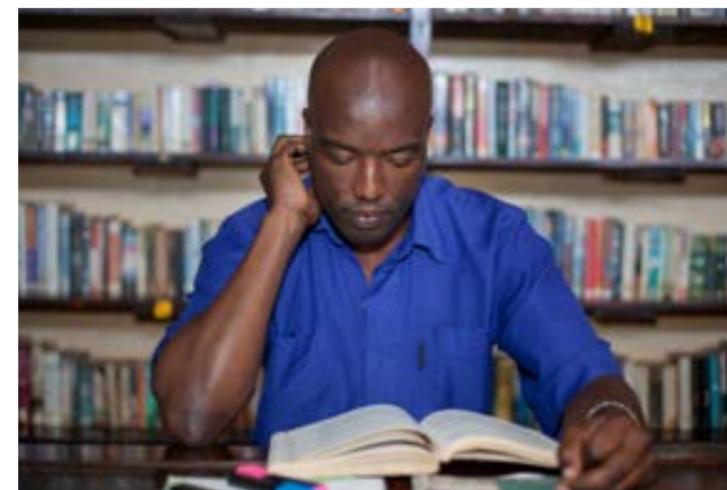
Walking free from prison often means joyful reunions, meeting grandchildren for the first time or enjoying a long dreamed of celebratory

meal with family and loved ones. Years behind bars can make the mundane feel miraculous and great joy can be found in the simple things in life. In the words of Benjamin Kamugisha, another death row prisoner and APP law student who won his freedom earlier this year, simply 'walking down the road, using a mobile phone or eating fresh fruit' take on new meaning.

Pete's first stop on leaving prison was the APP office in Nairobi where he was received by staff and congratulated by our London and Kampala offices via Skype. He introduced the staff to his mother and other relatives, excited to have

him a free man once more. Pete spoke for a few minutes with the team, but quickly excused himself to go and have a cup of tea – no doubt the best cup of tea he's had in some time.

A man of great leadership, tremendous heart and hard work, many thought that Pete shouldn't have been in prison. As word came out on the eve of his release many people held their breath whilst others cried for the loss of such a courageous leader leaving them behind. We celebrate this extraordinary milestone with Pete and look forward to what freedom will mean for him.



Pete studying law in the prison library at Kamiti Maximum Security Prison



Pete walking free from prison accompanied by family and friends

 **27** prisons supported by APP in 2016



**“My proudest moments in this work are when I manage to secure bail for inmates. Some do not deserve to be here, but due to ignorance and intimidation within the court environment, they find themselves in prison. I always go the extra mile because that’s what it takes to keep people from ending up in prison unnecessarily.**

**Tomorrow it could be me and I would hope to receive such assistance. So for as long as my work is putting a smile on prisoner’s faces, I will keep the hunger and fire burning.”**



**KIZITO OTIM**  
Prison Human Rights Advocate and Prison Officer at Arocha Prison

## GET IN TOUCH

For more information about how you can join us as a *changemaker* and help us achieve our vision of transformation, providing access to justice to the most vulnerable people in society – please contact us.

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[info@africanprisons.org](mailto:info@africanprisons.org)

TELEPHONE  
**020 8408 1548**

## PATRONS AND TRUSTEES

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