Our work in numbers:

- 93 indigent unjustly incarcerated inmates released
- 43 students/lawyers trained
- 10 female inmates empowered
- 1470 face masks produced by inmates
- 3000 inmates and officials reached with COVID 19 palliatives/IEC materials
- 3 Capacity Building Trainings
- 25 new volunteers
- 5 ex-inmates supported
- 7 correctional facilities
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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report covers all the activities Hope behind Bars Africa engaged in from January to December 2020 under our different program areas- Access to Justice, Empowerment for Rehabilitation and Education for Justice. We were able to strengthen projects in our death penalty niche whilst ensuring that our primary target audience were catered for during the lockdown and subsequently in the fight to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

In spite of the pandemic, we were able to carry out many of the projects and activities planned for the year. We increased the reach of our work to new states and welcomed new set of volunteers. While we were unable to access new funding sources, we leveraged on relationships with previous partners to get the work done.

We commenced a number of partnership that changed the tide of things for us, one of which is our partnership with Flemer Project Initiative which created the trajectory for the launch of Access to Justice for 1000 pre-trial detainees. We were also able to move to other core areas of our mission which is empowering our beneficiaries for life after prison.
When I began taking up cases of indigent pre-trial detainees in May 2018, My goals were centered on inspiring several lawyers to join this vision of decongesting the correctional centers and all holding facilities for pre-trial detainees in Nigeria. Two years in pursuit of this vision, has convinced and strengthened my resolve that, to deliver hope behind bars, we must have recourse to the systematic root causes of injustice and delay in criminal justice administration before any meaningful change can be seen. The rise of global movements (Black Lives Matter and End SARS) advocating for a fairer criminal justice system in 2020 is proof of the need for systemic action.

In year 2020 we pre-launched/launched programs that deal with systemic issues. The COVID-19 pandemic came with its unique challenges but our team rose above the struggles of the year to carry out our programs. The year 2020, also marked the year we went hard on collaboration, we pre-launched our Back on Track Project, which is aimed at reducing recidivism through re-intergration and re-orientation activities targeted at re-incorporating inmates back to the society.

We did so much and the pages of this report aptly summarizes our activities.

I deeply appreciate the commitment of my team, all of whom selflessly made themselves available when duty called. To all our advisors and senior friends, thank you for everything.

My sincere gratitude goes to everyone who donated to Hope behind Bars Africa in cash and in kind.

For trusting my team and I, I feel indebted to every partner who has continued to work with us year in year out. Thank you LEAP Africa, Accountability Lab, Cornell Center on Death Penalty Worldwide, Flemer Project Initiative, Youth Rise Networks and the German Embassy.

Ubuntu!
Nigeria’s criminal justice system is discriminatory to the poor. In our work, we find that largely, wealth determines culpability. With the excessive use of pre-trial detention even for the smallest crime, our correctional facilities are clogged. Rehabilitation and reformation of inmates are at it’s lowest. Since 2018, we have been actively providing pro bono (free) legal services to indigent pre-trial detainees. Our priority is to provide adequate legal presentation for inmates who are wrongfully accused of a crime and to actively push for speedy trial for indigent awaiting trial inmates who have suffered long incarceration.

In August 2020, with support from Hill Innovation for Justice and Partners Nigeria, we partnered with Flemer project Initiative to carry out Project 1000. An access to justice project that ensures the provision of access to justice for 1000 indigent pre-trial detainees who had committed minor offences. We increased our reach to 8 states but due to the pandemic, we have been more functional in the nation’s capital-FCT, Kano, Edo and Nasarawa state.
C.O.P v Aminu Mansir  
**Offence:** Fraud  
**Location:** Edo State  
Aminu is a person living with hearing and speaking impairment who had spent 8 months in prison without arraignment for an offence that his co-accused persons had been released for because they could afford the services of a lawyer. We stepped in and facilitated his release.

**Cop v Abdulraman Shaiuba**  
**Offence:** Act Of Gross Indecency  
**Location:** Kano  
The Defendant was arrested sometime in September, 2019 for an alleged act of indecent involvement with another male partner. Both parties involved in the act were reported to the police to have engaged in the act of homosexualism. HBBA took up the matter and prayed the court to enter an oral No Case Submission pursuant to section 303 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Kano state 2019. The court in her ruling agreed with the submission of the defence counsel and the Defendant was discharged on the 10th of December, 2020.

**State v Paul Osunde & 15 Ors**  
**Offence:** Curfew Violation  
**Location:** Edo State  
The Defendant and 14 others were arrested on the 21st of October, 2020 on the allegation that they disobeyed an order of the Edo State Government to observe curfew following the #EndSARS protests as at 5th of November, 2020, all the defendants were lodged in a congested police cell because they could not perfect his bail. With the efforts of our lawyer, Emmanuel Okorie and the Ministry of Justice the Defendants were released unconditionally on the 4th of December.

**Cop v Chiamaka Better Sunday & 1 Or**  
**Offence:** Conspiracy To Steal And Stealing  
**State:** Edo State  
The 12 year old girl who is the first defendant confessed to have given sums of money to the second Defendant to send to her step father in the village. The first Defendant having pleaded guilty to the offence and found guilty by the court, a plea of allocutus was made by her lawyer, Emmanuel Okorie. She was cautioned by the court and discharged.

**Parties: Cop v. Helen Agbowonba.**  
**Offence:** Receiving Stolen Property  
**Location:** Edo State  
The Defendant, Helen Agbowonba was charged for the offence of receiving stolen property. The matter was adjourned for hearing for more than three times on the instance of the Prosecution because the nominal complainant was absent. At our lawyer’s behest, the court struck out the matter for lack of diligent prosecution.
Prior to the pandemic, we perfected plans to launch a social enterprise behind bars known as Made in Corrections. The idea was to empower indigent women and young persons with vocational skills and then begin to work with them to produce items that could be exchanged for value. The COVID-19 Pandemic hindered the implementation of these plans at the beginning of the year, as most of the Correctional facilities in Nigeria were closed to visitors but eventually, the same pandemic opened doors of opportunity to us. In August, we entered into partnership with German Embassy and SESCI who were interested in working with female inmates to produce reusable facemasks that could be distributed to persons in low income communities and to inmates in the Correctional center.

We bought and donated 4 sewing machines and other tailoring equipments to the prison’s vocational center. Prior to our donation, only one sewing machine served a total of over 700 inmates. We deployed experts to refine their skills and after 5 days, 10 female inmates sewed and produced 1470 face masks that were distributed for free to their fellow inmates and people in low income communities.

We also trained inmates on how to make throw pillows in preparation for our activities in 2021.
Back on Track is a rehabilitation and re-entry project that addresses some of the factors that cause recidivism and provides solutions that will equip the head, the hands and the heart of selected women and young men who have been in past contact with the criminal justice system.

Although, the plan is to launch Back on Track fully in 2021, we have carried out some pre-launch activities with some of our beneficiaries. The Goal of our Organization is to ensure that our continuous contact improves the live of released inmate as they are reintegrated into the society.

We supported Christian John with funds to refresh his driving classes and to procure his drivers license. We had facilitated his release in 2019 after he had spent 6 years awaiting trial for a capital offence he did not commit. Christian was an Engineering student, schooling in Kaduna State, before his incarceration.
The mandatory death penalty which is adverse to International Human Rights Law is still very prevalent in Nigeria’s statute books, a country which has a dearth of specialized capital defenders. In 2020, we took up 4 capital cases. We also leveraged on our relationship with Cornell University Centre on Death Penalty worldwide and organized an intensive introductory training for young lawyers and law students, so they will get a hang of the intricacies of the capital punishment and issues relating to persons charged with a capital offense. For the mini trainings, we had 35 participants and for the in-person training, we had 20 participants. Eight (8) students of whom were University Undergraduates students and Twelve (12) were lawyers. We had facilitators from Nigeria, Cornell University Centre on Death Penalty worldwide and from other parts of the world.

The feedback we received shows that the training was beneficial and insightful to the attendees. For most of the students, it helped them to rethink their participation in extracurricular activities that bothers on issues relating to human rights. 80% of the lawyers present shared their excitement about the prospect of volunteering with HBBA.

Miss Biu (pseudonym) was married off as a child at age 13 to a man almost 3 times her age. After suffering all forms of abuse including spousal rape and flogging, Biu had resigned to a life of pain. Her pain worsened when she was falsely accused of killing her step child and was remanded in prison for the offence of homicide, a capital offense that carries the death penalty in Nigeria. Biu spent close to 3 years awaiting trial until we met her in prison and took up her case. In June 2020, Miss Biu was released on bail.
LEADING IN A PANDEMIC

With the pandemic, the statistics of pre-trial detainees in Nigeria increased and the reason was obvious. Court sittings were at a stand-still during the first quarter of the year. Prison visits were also put on hold and we had to find more innovative means to represent our clients.

In Edo state for instance, in April, we wrote advocacy letters to the Chief Judge with respect to 8 of our clients who had spent more time in prison than they would usually do because of the pandemic. We eventually secured the release of 5 of our clients after advocating for them during a prison decongestion hearing at the correctional facility.

With support from LEAP Africa, Dow Chemical and Citi we provided palliatives and sanitary products to 250 inmates of Keffi Custodial Center and also gave out sanitary products to the officers.

With support from Youth Rise Networks, we provided palliatives to prison inmates of Oko Prison, Benin-city, Edo state and also COVID-19 IEC materials to inmates of Oko and Keffi Custodial centers.
Meet Emmanuel Okorie, a legal practitioner of excellence. He joined HBBA in 2020 with a passion for helping indigent inmates. As the coordinator of our activities in Edo state, he has successfully, together with his team secured the release of 69 persons from the correctional facilities and police stations in Edo state.

Not all heros wear caape some are Volunteers.

We celebrate all our Volunteers

- Nkechi Dim
- Winnie Ishaku
- Esther Akhigbe
- Yemisi Ojo
- Emmanuel Okorie
- Samson Onuche
- Benson Imoh
- Idunnu Ajina
- Oluwadetaen Ibironke
- Rebeca Igwebuike
- Chimindu Onyedim
- Adadu Ogebe Obande
- Emodoye Paul Galumje
- Eugenia Ihongu
- Halleuyah Oluwadara Afon
- Gabriel Emmanuel
- Jeremiah Ternenge
- Victoria Mopelola Akintola
- Elohor Tuwere Kika
- John Edjeba
- Amen Osagie
- Nelson Ehizoba Irevbude
- Patrick Ofor Maduabuchi
- Abiola Ayodele
- Edwin Ewaoche Ochojila
- Haruna Fatima Zakari
- Ifeanyi Obikili
- Akuda Ephraim Ojogbami
- Feranmi Amusan
- Asmaa Ibrahim
- Ogelaka Chinedu
- Christian John
Thank you all for your gifts and partnership.

We celebrate all our Partners
## CORPORATE DONORS

LEAP Africa ------------------------------ N650,000  
German Embassy ------------------------ N550,000  
Anonymous ----------------------------- N1,000,000  
Youth Rise Networks ------------------- N105,900  
Accountability Lab --------------------- $500

## INDIVIDUAL CASH DONORS

We received several cash donations from individuals who supported our Emergency Welfare Intervention for Prison Inmates organized in April/May. Most of our donors asked to be anonymous and we choose to respect their wishes.

The Audited Report can be found on the website: [www.hopebehindbarsafrica.org](http://www.hopebehindbarsafrica.org)

## COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  

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<td></td>
<td>(3,402,317)</td>
<td>(3,609,750)</td>
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<td>Net Assets at the beginning of the year</td>
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<td>Net Assets at the End of the year</td>
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<td>279,513</td>
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END SARS

The year 2020, many young persons in Nigeria defied all odds and went into the street, to protest the violations they face in the hands of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (a special unit in the Nigerian Police Force) popular for police brutality and the clandestine manner in which they carried out their “covert” operations.

At the crux of the #EndSARS protest was a simple cry for DIGNITY. The right to live without oppression in their own country. A right to fair hearing. A right to freedom from discrimination. A right to life. All rights guaranteed by the country’s constitution.

We provided legal support and training to the several lawyers who signed up to provide probono legal services to arrested protesters. In one of the trainings where our Executive Director was a facilitator, there were over 100 lawyers present. We also provided and we are still providing post-protest legal services to innocent citizens who were arrested inordinately by law enforcement officers.

The trajectory of our work has been greatly influenced by the End SARS movement. In designing our Strategic plan for the next 3 years, working with stakeholders to implement reforms is one of our core goals.

ABOUT US

VISION

To promote human rights for all, ensure that justice is accessible to the disadvantaged behind bars and to empower them with opportunities to change their lives.

MISSION

To be a beacon of hope to the unjustly incarcerated and a voice for criminal justice reforms using action, education and advocacy.

Human rights for all
We believe in the advancement of a just, peaceful and equitable society that puts humanity first based on the universal fundamental principles of the international humanitarian law and the human rights conventions.

Openness
We are open and accountable to the people and partners we serve, transparently sharing our results, stories and lessons. Integrity is embedded at the core of what we do.

Pursuit of Excellence
We pursue excellence in everything we do.

Empowerment
We provide an environment that fosters development and empowers our team to be able to compete globally. We also empower the people we serve to take charge of their lives even whilst in prison.