



CSR Initiative: TEDx Kamiti Prison Talk

Coulson Harney sponsored the TEDx Kamiti Prison talk (TEDx Talk) on **Friday, 2 October 2015**. **TEDx** supports independent organisers who want to create a TED-like event in their own community – close to 50,000 talks have been given at 10,000 events since the program launched in 2009.

Speakers at Friday's event included artists, educators, prison officials and inmates to an audience of about 250, including **Philip Coulson**, **Anthony Njogu** and **Patricia Fokuo** of Coulson Harney. Most presentations touched on crime, crime prevention, education and expression with a particularly moving speech by inmate Peter Ouko, 45, who was convicted of murder and has spent 17 years of his life sentence in the Kamiti maximum-security prison. Ouko started an activist group — "Crime Si Poa," (Kiswahili for "crime is not cool") — which teaches about the consequences of criminal behaviour and how to change course before it's too late.

Organizers from the TEDx Talk orchestrated the event with Alexander McLean, founder of the African Prisons Project (APP). McLean has worked in Kenyan and Ugandan prisons for the last 12 years and stated that Kamiti offers opportunities for inmates, like a school, a well-stocked library, industrial workshops, and the option for students to study for law degrees. In fact, Coulson Harney's own **Terry Mwangi** and Philip Coulson have volunteered their services to teach law to the inmates at Kamiti prison.

Coulson's involvement with APP dates back to 2007 when it built a library at Kamiti prison. Subsequently, Coulson developed a friendship with both Ouko (who is now, in prison, doing a law degree with the University of London distant learning programmes – same one that Nelson Mandela did – after graduating with a diploma) and McLean. This friendship propelled Philip to donate his time to teach and also donate computers to the prison's school. He is also an officer of the local APP NGO. "I've personally seen the transformative power of education and fully believe that inmates should be given the opportunity to study and broaden their minds. We are proud to be a part of the first TEDx Talk in a prison in Africa," stated Coulson. Similarly, Anthony Njogu commented "the TEDx Talk demonstrated how loud, silent voices need to be heard in order to change the current prison systems we have. I am grateful I witnessed this monumental event."

[View pictures from the event here](#)

For more information on the APP or Coulson Harney's involvement with it, please contact **Patricia Fokuo**.

Coulson Harney is a member of the **Bowman Gilfillan Africa Group**