



JUSTICE POWER
presents

**A VIRTUAL TEACH-IN ON
COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVOCATES**
WITH VIISTA AND KITUO CHA SHERIA

JOIN US THURS 11/4 11:00 AM EST
[TINYURL.COM/3ZRX3H](https://tinyurl.com/3zr2ex3h)

Robert and Helen Bernstein
Institute for Human Rights
Villanova University

KITUO CHA SHERIA
LEGAL ADVISORY CENTRE
we are for justice

Immigration Advocates
NETWORK

Panelists

- Michelle Pistone, VIISTA
- Dorcas Akinyi Otieno , Kituo Cha Sheria
- Ojunni Ojulu Ochalla, Kituo Cha Sheria
- Sukti Dhital, Moderator NYU Law Bernstein Institute for Human Rights



What is Legal Empowerment

More than **5 billion people** live at the margins – pushed or kept out, often silenced, without access to meaningful justice. Denied healthcare, citizenship or fair pay, those unprotected by law have challenges that are real and relentless, yet they are often forced to navigate complicated legal systems without essential resources and education.

Legal empowerment strives for a different world – **a rights-based methodology** that centers people in their own fight for justice and creates opportunities to **know, use, shape, and transform the laws and systems** that impact their lives.



Legal Empowerment History

Insights from trade union and feminist movements which saw the "emancipatory power of popular education and therefore embedded rights awareness with self-reflection and collective action"

Roots in anti-apartheid movements, where women community paralegals partnered with lawyers, NGOs, and churches to document violations, provide legal assistance, and bear witness to injustice

Emerged as principal strategy to increase access to justice and achieve sustainable development with the 2008 United Nations Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor. Commission's report anchored legal empowerment in human rights. SDG 16 rooted in "access to justice for all"



Today a global movement with 2800+ organizations in at least 190 countries committed to community-led justice.

Justice Power

Justice Power uplifts the work of immigration organizations who partner with communities to know, use, shape and transform the laws and systems that impact their lives.

Justice Power is a network of activists and lawyers who engage in community-centered approaches to build power and increase access to immigrant justice. To learn more check out justicepower.org



Justice Power

The legal empowerment strategies featured on Justice Power center impacted communities in the right-claiming process, with a goal of **building power, knowledge, and action** from the **grassroots**.



Community Legal Advocates

Community legal advocates, known globally as community paralegals, are community members trained in law and skills and are agents of change and organizing. They connect connect community to legal system, they lift up new demands made by communities of the legal system. Also known as barefoot lawyers, grassroots legal advocates, legal workers.

We will take a deep dive into two models: 1) DOJ Accredited Representatives in the US (who work with non-governmental organizations to represent immigrant families) and 2) Community Paralegals in Kenya. In both cases, everyday people are trained in law and skills and harness knowledge and power to advance immigrant justice from the grassroots.



Justice Power: Community Legal Advocates

Professor Michele Pistone
Founder, VIISTA

Justice Power: Community Legal Advocates

Professor Michele Pistone
Founder, VIISTA



VIISTA is an innovative, online certificate program designed and built to train immigrant advocates. You don't need to be a lawyer to become part of the solution.

I believe everyone deserves an advocate.

1.3m **60%** **10x**

immigration cases pending in court

of immigrants – including children – go to court without representation

more likely to be granted immigration benefit with representation

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I believe everyone deserves an advocate

<4,000 **>325**

lawyers and FARs represent clients in immigration court

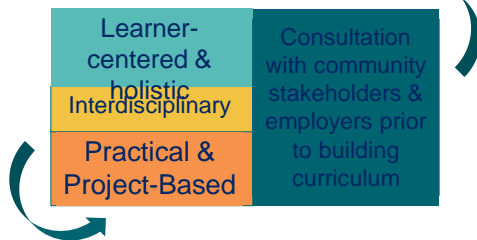
immigration court cases per lawyer

Impossible!

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We reinvented the learning experience.



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We connected the dots for you.

As you move through the curriculum, you will see that we intentionally designed many of the Learning Activities to touch on multiple Course Topics. We did that because in the real world, the Course Topics all connect and relate to each other.



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We know that everyone
learns in different ways.



Three Modules Offer Three Pathways

Each Module is designed so that upon completion, you will be able to add value to the community. The Modules build upon one another, and students have the flexibility to choose whether to complete Module 1, 1 and 2, or all three.



And at their own pace.

3 modules
take 1, 2, or all 3

14 weeks
per module
(2x7 week sessions)

10-15 hours
per week

3 years
maximum to complete

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students

21-86

ages

41%

32

minority

states,
DC + PR

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impact

First Year Achievements: VOLUNTEER SERVICE



First Year Achievements: UPSKILLING



Upskilling: HIGHER ED & PhDs



First Year Achievements:



Tasks performed by Immigrant Justice Advocates

Type of immigration practitioner	Immigrant accompaniment	DOJ Partially accredited representative	DOJ Fully accredited representative	Lawyer	Kituo cha Sheria Community Paralegals
Plan for and conduct intake interview					
Prepare client communities for raids					
Refer clients to wrap-around services					
Gather evidence					
Conduct know-your-rights presentations					
Collect and assess country conditions research					
Refer clients to experts (medical, mental health)					
Plan for and conduct client interviews					
Engage in formal client relationship					
Assess eligibility for immigration benefits					
Complete immigration application forms					
Sign immigration forms as preparer					
Represent client in USCIS interview					
Represent client in immigration court					
Represent client in appeal to BIA					
Represent client in appeal to federal court					



Kituo Cha Sheria



Kituo Cha Sheria

- WHO WE ARE
- WHAT WE DO
- OUR PROGRAMMES
- OUR APPROACHES



Kituo Cha Sheria

FORCED MIGRATION PROGRAM

- OUR MANDATE
- INTERVENTIONS
- ACHIEVEMENTS
- PARTNERS



Kituo Cha Sheria

COMMUNITY PARALEGALS

Who are they?
 What do they do?
 How do we involve them in our work
 Are they recognized?
 Challenges



Training and Connecting Paralegals



Working directly with refugees and incarcerated individuals



Educating Communities about Refugee Rights



Litigation and Monitoring



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Plan for and conduct client interviews					
Engage in formal client relationship					
Assess eligibility for immigration benefits					
Complete immigration application forms					
Sign immigration forms as preparer					
Represent client in USCIS interview					
Represent client in immigration court					
Represent client in appeal to BIA					
Represent client in appeal to federal court					



Questions

Questions?

(Use the chat box on the right of your screen to ask questions.)



Join Us!



Join a community of over 9,000 advocates dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of immigrants in the United States.

To learn more, visit

www.immigrationadvocates.org

 twitter.com/immadvocates

 facebook.com/immigrationadvocates



Immigration Advocates
NETWORK
