

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK**

4

**Intragroup Conflicts in Self Help Groups: Causes, Effects and Possible  
Solutions. Case Study of Starehe Division, Nairobi North District.**

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**C50/70979/2008**

**A Project Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Rural Sociology and  
Community Development.**

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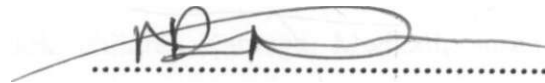
## DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has never been presented for a degree award in this or any other university.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the people who have contributed to my projects success.

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*r*

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my late Dad, Danson Mulei Makali and my Mum Susan Mulei.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i	«
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	L	iii
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	+	iv
	i	
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....		viii
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	\	ix
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	L	x
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....		xi
	i	
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1	1
1.0 Background of the Study.....		1
1.1 Problem Statement.....	i	7
1.2 Objectives of the study.....		8
1.3 Justification of the study.....	i	9
1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study.....	j	10
1.5 Definition of terms.....	i	11
 <b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	i	12
2.0 Self Help Groups around the World. ....	j	12
2.1 Self Help Groups in Kenya.....	i	15
2.2 Conflicts in Self Help Groups.....	J	17
2.3 Root Causes of Conflicts.....	i	19
	i	
2.4 Positive and Negative Effects of Conflicts in Groups.....		20
2.5 Conflict Management.....	i	23
2.6 Theoretical Framework.....		26
2.6.1 Conflict Management Theory.....	L	27
2.6.2 Social Identity Theory.....	•	29
	i	
2.7 Conceptual Framework.....		30
2.7.1 Types of Self Help Groups.....	i	31
2.7.2 Causes of Conflict in Self Help Groups.....		31
2.7.3 Conflict Management in Self Help Groups.....	j	31

<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	33
3.0 Research Design..... i.....	33
3.1 Site Selection.....	33
3.2 <b>Population</b> .....	33
3.3 <b>Unit of Observation</b> ..... <b>J</b> .....	34
3.4 <b>Unit of Analysis</b> .....	34
3.5 Sample Size..... J.....	34
3.6 Sampling Design..... <b>J</b> .....	35
3.6.1 Probability Sampling .....	36
3.6.1.1 Stratified Sampling .....	36
3.6.1.2 Proportionate Samples .....	37
3.6.1.3 Simple Random Sampling..... w.....	38
3.6.2 Non-Probability Sampling.....	38
3.7 Sources of Data.....	38
3.8 Data Collection Techniques.....	39
3.9 Data Analysis.....	40
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>41</b>
4.0 Introduction..... 1.....	41
4.1 Groups with Conflicts.....	41
4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics..... ;.....	41
4.1.1.2 Age..... \.....	42
4.1.1.3 Education Level..... ;.....	44
4.1.1.4 Position Held in the Group by Respondents..... ;.....	45
4.1.2 Group Profile..... j.....	47
4.1.2.1 Group Types..... j.....	47
4.1.2.2 Group Registration..... *.....	48
4.1.2.3 Membership..... j.....	50
4.1.2.4 Main Activities..... •.....	51
4.2 Causes of Recurrent Intragroup Conflicts in Selfhelp Groups.....	53
4.2.1 Years of Conflict..... j.....	53

4.2.2 Root Causes of Intragroup Conflicts.....	J.....	54
4.3 Internal and External Conflict Management Strategies.....		57
4.3.1 Internal Conflict Management.....	J.....	57
4.3.2 External Intervention.....	j.....	60
4 3.3 Reason for Choosing Place of Intervention.....		61
4 3.4 Mediators Level of Competence in Conflict Management Skills.....		63
4.3.5 Level of Satisfaction with Intervention.....		64
4.4 Positive and Negative Effects of Conflict.....		65
4.5 Report from Focus Group Discussions.....		68
4.6 Groups without Conflict.....		71
4.6.1 Gender.....	:	71
4.6.2 Age.....		72
4.6.3 Education Level.....	;	73
4.6.4 Positions Held.....	:	74
4.6.5 Type of Group.....		73
4.6.6 Groups First Registration.....		75
4.6.7 Membership.....		76
4.6.8 Main Activity.....		76
4.7 Internal Conflict Management.....		77
4.8 Strategies of Minimizing Conflicts in Selfhelp Groups.....		79
4.9 Comparison between Groups with and Groups without Conflict.....		80
<b>CHAPTER FIVE:</b> .....	:	<b>81</b>
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		81
5.0 Summary of Findings and Conclusion.....		81
5.1 Recommendations.....	:	84
REFERENCES.....		85
Appendix 1: Letter To Respondents.....		i
Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion Invitation Letter.....		ii
Appendix 3: Self Help Groups that have Reported Conflicts Questionnaire.....		iii
Appendix 4: Self Help Groups that have not Reported Conflict Questionnaire.....		xiii
Appendix 5: Letter of Authorisation.....		xviii

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age of Respondents.....	J.....	43
Table 2: Education Level.....	i.....	44
Table 3: Position Held in the Group.....		46
Table: 4 Type of Group.....	i.....	47
Table 5: <b>Group's</b> First Registration .....		48
Table 6: Main Activities of the Groups.....		51
<b>Table 7:</b> Year of Conflict.....	J.....	53
Table 8: Mean for Root Causes of Conflict .....		55
Table 9: Internal Conflict Management Strategies.....		58
Table 10: Place of Intervention.....	L.....	60
Table 11: Reason for Choosing Place of Intervention.....		62
Table 12: Level of Competence.....	;.....	63
Table 13: Level of Satisfaction.....		64
Table 14: Positive and Negative Effects.....	;.....	66
Table 15: Level of Education.....	L.....	73
Table 16: Positions Held in the Group.....	l.....	74
Table 17: First Registration.....	j.....	75
Table 18: Internal Conflict Management for groups without conflict.....		78



## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1: Gender of Respondents.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Figure 2: Total Membership..	
Figure 3: Gender of Respondents.....j(.....	71
Figure 4: Age of Respondent..	
Figure 5: Type of Group..	
Figure 6: Total Membership.....	75
Figure 7: Main Activity of the Group .....	77

## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Alcoholic Anonymous
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DGSD	Department of Gender and Social Development
DGSDO	District Gender and Social Development Officer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOK	Government of Kenya
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MGCSD	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development
NABARD	National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Science

## ABSTRACT

Many authors trace the history of modern self help groups to the foundation of alcoholic anonymous (AA) in the USA in 1935, a group that became active in a field in which existing social and health services did not provide adequate support. Other groups included those for the victims and families of victims of specific diseases, child abuse, suicide and crime among others. In Kenyan context, self help movement sprung from the national slogan *harcimbee* which is indigenous and is used to discuss economic and social development.

The initiative of forming a self help group comes from the community members arising from a felt need. However, groups encounter intragroup conflicts from time to time. Intragroup conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals, beliefs, attitudes or behaviors.

This study was a case study focusing on intragroup conflicts in self help groups in Starehe Division, Nairobi North District. The study found out the root causes of conflict in self help groups and their social and economic effects to members. The study also found out the existing internal and external conflict management mechanisms and their successes and failures. It further explored possible measures to minimize conflicts in groups.

The study was quantitative and relied on primary and secondary data to source for information. Primary data was generated through questionnaires where group officials and members were respondents. Two questionnaires were developed, one for groups with conflicts and another for groups without conflicts for comparison purposes. Two focus group discussions were held. Sampling was done using both probability and non-

probability sampling. Stratified sampling was used for groups with conflicts and quota **sampling** was used for groups without conflicts.

The researcher sought opinion on the root causes of intragroup conflict using prelisted statements. The results revealed that conflicts are caused by lack of transparency and accountability leading to financial mismanagement, poor communication, poor leadership skills, tribalism and political interference. These conflicts affect groups both positively and negatively.

Other prelisted statements were used to seek opinion on possible measures to reduce intragroup conflicts. Results showed that the measures were trainings, seminars, workshops and exchange programmes. Further there is need to visit groups frequently and get their reports on successes and challenges.

The study recommended that to minimize conflicts, group members be trained and educated regularly by relevant authorities on group dynamics, leadership skills, financial management and book keeping. Another recommendation is that groups should have exchange programmes to learn from each another and share experiences.

There should be frequent field visits to groups as a way of recognition, support and guidance. Groups should be closely monitored and their success stories and challenges brought out through reports.

This study was undertaken in the urban area, and therefore there is need for a comparative study in the rural areas to gather views from rural community groups. This is because of difference in setting.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background of the Study**

Conflict may be defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals. Although conflict is inevitable, the results of conflict are not predetermined. Conflict may escalate and lead to non productive results or conflict can be beneficially resolved and lead to quality final products. Conflict results because of miscommunication between people with regard to their needs, ideas, beliefs, goals and values. Conflict management is the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved but learning how to manage them can decrease the odds of nonproductive escalation. It involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills and establishing a structure for management of conflict (Katzenbach & Smith, 1992).

There are several varieties of conflict. Conflicts can occur between opposing individuals in an argument. They can occur within a single individual who struggles with a personal conflict. Conflict can also occur within a group or between two or more groups. Intragroup conflict refers to a specific kind of conflict that occurs between members of a group that shares common goals, interests or other identifying characteristics. Intragroup conflict can be small scale such as within a workplace or large scale such as between members of a specific population group.

According to Ashmore and Del Boca (1981) intergroup conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals, beliefs, attitudes or behaviors. It can take many forms ranging

from a disagreement with neighbours to a war between countries. Intragroup conflict is distinctive in that it occurs between members of a group or team who are theoretically united over a common characteristic or objective. Groups experiencing intragroup conflict may frequently solicit the input of superiors or show delayed progress in achieving a goal. Incompatibilities between groups that cause intergroup conflict include power, economic and value differences.

The two main forms of intragroup conflict are relationship conflict and task conflict. In relationship conflict, members of the group struggle with interpersonal relationships regardless of the task or objects of the group. If a group is experiencing a task conflict, members of the group disagree about the best practices for achieving an objective or struggle to agree on an appropriate objective.

In either type of intragroup conflict, members are at risk for damaging personal relationships and failing to achieve goals or objectives. According to *Journal of Managerial Psychology* (2005) intragroup conflict in organizations can distract group members from producing valuable results. Further, high levels of relationship conflict increases group members desire to leave their job or company while high levels of task conflict increases the likelihood that a group would experience relationship conflicts as well. Relationship conflicts also contribute to negative affective reactions that can cause emotional distress in group members.

Though the consequences of intragroup conflict can promote dissatisfaction and diminish personal relationships some degree of intragroup conflict can prove functional. In a functional intragroup conflict, the result of the conflict is increased communication that

could translate to increased productivity. Functional intragroup conflict promotes careful discussion of a variety of ideas that can yield greater or more effective output. Functional conflict is typically task conflict and requires careful group management and communication to prevent the development of relationship conflict.

**Prevention of intragroup conflict depends on the degree to which members are equipped to identify, manage and navigate conflict situations. All group members should receive training in conflict management that promotes the use of active listening, clear communication and effective feedback loops that promote growth rather than punish errors. Some intragroup conflicts require management from an external third party that provides guidance and input during group conflicts.**

Self help groups experience intragroup conflicts. According to Katz & Bender (1976) self help groups are voluntary structures for mutual aid and accomplishment of a special purpose. They are usually formed by peers who have come together for assistance in satisfying a common need, overcoming common handicap or life disrupting problem and bringing about desired social and personal change. The initiators of such groups emphasize face to face interactions and the assumption of personal responsibility by members. They often provide material assistance, as well as emotional support, they are frequently cause oriented and promulgate an ideology or values through which members may attain an enhanced sense of personal responsibility

The Ministry of Culture and Social Services (now Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development) (MGCSD) has the overall responsibility of organizing and

mobilizing communities, a process that entails awareness creation, sensitizing and organizing task oriented groups in order for them to understand and effectively play their role in project implementation. This is done through community group formation, registration and development (GOK, 1996) under community development programme. Community development refers to a method, a strategy or an approach that brings about change through initiation of projects that are responsive to community needs.

However, registration is done administratively without legal backing as they lack an Act of Parliament. Today, the minimum requirements for registration are group's constitution developed by members themselves, registration minutes, list of members duly signed and their national identity cards numbers and a registration fee. Minimum membership is twelve people with a maximum of one hundred people.

Most self help groups in Kenya are dominated by women. However, gradually, more male specific groups are emerging, although youth and mixed groups have become quite common. Such groups focus on financial arrangements while others initiate savings and credit or revolving funds popularly known as merry-go-round. Very few of the early groups had neither clear development plans in mind nor goals (Okech 2001)

Most of these self help groups are faced with one or more intragroup conflicts. According to Okech (2001) conflicts in Selfhelp groups, which at times lead to collapse<sup>01</sup> the same, arise mainly because relationship and task conflicts. Such conflicts revolve around financial mismanagement, poor leadership, lack of commitment by members, hijacking of group project by officials or some members, delayed elections, conflict of interest and roles in the groups. These conflicts are manifested through deviation from



the purpose of formation in a bid to get involved in everyday activities, power struggle among officials and proceedings as well as undue conflict solving mechanisms in the constitution. Some of the strategies of resolving these conflicts include effective communication among the members, involvement of mediators who are third parties and negotiations.

Self help groups pass through sequential stages of development from formation to disbandment. In early seventies, Hill & Grunner (1973) reported that more than one hundred theories of group development existed with various scholars coming up with various models of group development.

Tuckman (1965) described four stages of group development. The first stage is forming stage, where individual behaviour is driven by the desire to be accepted by the others and avoid controversy or conflict. Serious issues and feelings are avoided and people focus on being busy with routines, such as team organization, roles and when to meet. At this stage, individuals are also gathering information and impressions about each other and about the scope of the task and how to approach it. This is a comfortable stage to be in but the avoidance of conflict and threat means that not much actually gets done. The members come together and get to initially know one another and form as a group.

The second stage is storming stage. In this stage, some people's patience break, and minor confrontations arise that are quickly dealt with or glossed over. These may relate to the work of the group itself or to roles and responsibilities within the groups. Some will observe that it is good to be getting into the real issues whilst others will wish to

**remain** in the comfort and security of forming stage. Depending on the culture of the organization and individuals the conflict will be more or less suppressed but it will be there under the surface. To deal with the conflict, individuals may feel they are winning or losing battles, and will look for structural clarity and rules to prevent the conflict persisting.

The third stage is norming. As the storming stage evolves, the rules of engagement for the group become established and the scope of the groups tasks or responsibilities is clear and agreed. Having had their arguments they now understand each other better and can appreciate each others skills and experience. Individuals listen to each other, appreciate and support each other and are prepared to change pre conceived views. They feel they are part of a cohesive effective group. However, individuals have had to work hard to attain this stage and may resist any pressure to change especially from the outside for the fear that the group will break-up, or revert to a storm. Agreement is eventually reached on how the group operates.

The fourth stage is performing stage. Not all groups reach this stage characterized by a state of interdependence and flexibility. Everyone knows each other well enough to be able to work together and trusts each other enough to allow independent activity. Roles and responsibilities change according to need in an almost seamless way. Group identity, loyalty and morale are all high, and everyone is equally task oriented and people oriented. The high degree of comfort means that all the energy of the group can be directed

**towards** the task(s) in hand. The group practices its craft and becomes effective in meeting its objectives.

**Tuckman & Jensen (1977)** developed a fifth stage which is the adjourning stage. This is **about** completion and disengagement, both from the tasks and the group members.

**Individuals** will be proud of having achieved much and glad to have been part of such an **enjoyable** group. They need to recognize what they have done and consciously move on.

**Groups** also end because of failure to accomplish goals or because of unanticipated **problems** that make continued group interactions impossible (Levi 2007).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Self help groups are formed with the main purpose of satisfying common needs of members. They have been of help in raising living standards of the members, economic empowerment through income generating activities, improving members living conditions and acquiring small assets. However, such groups are dominated by intragroup conflicts that impact negatively on the efforts towards achieving set goals and objectives. Currently, approximately 110 self help groups are registered every month in Starehe Division. In 2006, 46 cases of conflicts were reported against 710 groups registered that year. In 2007, 67 cases were reported against 504 groups registered while in 2008, 94 cases were reported against 1138 groups registered (MGCSD) 2009. It is important to note that not all cases are reported to MGCSD because some are resolved by authorities such as local government, law courts, provincial administration and local leaders. During conflicts, there is wastage of resources in terms of human, time and money. If intragroup conflicts are not resolved they escalate, leading to break-up of groups, thus such groups

fail to achieve their set goals and objectives. It can also lead to negative relation reactions that can cause emotional distress in group members.

Studies on self help groups have been carried out by different researchers such as Lewa (2002) who focused on capacity building programmes amongst women groups in Mombasa. She was concerned with the nature of problems faced by women groups as a **way** of understanding areas to capacity building. Wandera (1982) carried out a study **which** was set to look at self help groups and their operations during the military regime in Tororo, Uganda while Wacker (1996) carried out a study (thesis) on peasant self help groups in rural development: Laikipia, Kenya. Despite the studies that have been undertaken on self help groups on economic, social, political and environmental circles, conflicts in these groups still remain a gray area with limited information calling for further investigation and research.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The overall objective of the study was to understand intragroup conflicts in self help groups.

The study had four specific objectives.

To establish root causes of recurrent intragroup conflicts in self help groups.

To identify internal intragroup conflicts management mechanism undertaken by self help groups.

To determine effects of intragroup conflicts in self help groups.

To explore possible measures to minimize intragroup conflicts in self help groups.

This study addressed the following research questions.

1. What are the root causes of recurrent intragroup conflicts in selected self help groups and what are their social and economic effects to the members?
2. What are the existing internal and external intragroup conflict management mechanisms and their successes and failures?
3. What are the possible strategies of minimizing intragroup conflicts in self help groups?

### **1.3 Justification of the study**

Self help groups are formed to address a felt need by members. They contribute towards income generation and economic empowerment. The groups also provide psychosocial support and information. However, they are faced with intragroup conflict that may give rise to both beneficial and dysfunctional effects to members. Starehe Division is one of the most active divisions in Nairobi in regard to community groups. Consequently intragroup conflicts are also high in Starehe. This study therefore was intended to contribute to existing knowledge and literature on intragroup conflicts and conflict resolutions in self help groups. It may be of importance in contributing to the understanding of causes of recurrent intragroup conflicts in self help groups. The study may be of help to other scholars, researchers and community developers who may be interested in the same.

#### **1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

Unmanaged conflict is a threat to survival of groups and tends to make them less effective. The study engaged groups that reported conflicts between 2006 and 2008 in **Starehe** Division, Nairobi North District. This study therefore has highlight root causes of intragroup conflicts in self help groups and their effects both socially and economically.

It **aimed** to understand the internal conflict management systems as well as external interventions undertaken by groups using alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The **researcher** has documented measures of minimizing intra group conflicts in self help groups.

Although there are several self help groups in Starehe Division the study was limited to self help groups registered between 1991 and 2008 because of high rate of registration and increasing number of conflicts. It was also based on the availability of records. Other limitations were time, funds and availability of respondents.

I he researcher conducted a case study using quantitative research method. Structured questionnaires were developed for data collection. Group officials and some members were requested to be respondents. Other groups that had not reported conflict were respondents for comparison purposes. The study targeted forty self help groups.

## **1.5 Definition of terms**

### **Intragroup Conflict**

**Intragroup** conflict is the conflict within an internal group, team or department. These are **conflicts** that typically involve more than one person within a group.

### **Self help group**

Voluntary small group structures for mutual aid and accomplishment of a special purpose

### **Conflict**

According to the oxford dictionary, conflict is defined as a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument.

### **Social conflict**

Coser (1956, p.8) defines social conflict as a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals.

### **Conflict resolution**

According to Schulenburg (1996) conflict resolution is broadly conceived as a reduction **in** social conflict. More specifically, conflict resolution is conceived as a marked reduction in social conflict as a result of conscious settlement of issues in dispute.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2 0 Self Help Groups around the World.

According to Borkman (1999) self help groups are a worldwide phenomenon, although **more** is known about them in industrialized democracies such as the United States of America (USA), Canada, England, Germany, Israel and Australia. In previously communist areas such as Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, self help groups are being developed. Some African countries are developing support groups for people with acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and their families. Borkman (1999) further argues that self help groups of interest in the USA cover a multitude of life issues related to health and human services. These are groups formed around diseases (especially chronic illnesses), disabilities, other health issues, life transitions, relationship issues, and economic and social issues. Family members, friends or significant others are the basis of many groups such as parents of gay children, alliance for mentally ill, mother of twin club, parents of murdered children and al-non and candle lighters. Groups are also formed around lifestyle such as parents without partners, gay alliances and gray panthers. Nayar (2004) states that many authors trace the history of modern self help groups to the foundation of alcoholic anonymous (AA) in the USA in 1935, a group that became active in a field in which existing social and health services did not provide adequate support. More recently, in the 1960s, civil rights movement gave people the confidence to trust in their collective power, rather than in that of politicians or experts and empowerment became a core motive in the formation of self help groups.

*m*



in West Germany in early 1980s, the idea of self help was claimed by politically opposing sides. When the government cut back expenditure for health and social services because of budgetary constraints, officials proposed that self help in groups within families and among neighbors, together with the work of unpaid volunteers, should compensate for the resulting reduction in services. Money was set aside to **support** self help groups financially. This alternative health movement perceived self **help** groups as a way to empower patients and to reduce the influence of professionals and bureaucrats (Nayar, 2004).

Governments and civil society organization of low and middle income countries including those in South-Asia have taken up the concept of self help. The agenda and to some extent the social base have become broader and even more ambitious than in industrialized countries. In the past years, self help groups in South-Asia have been formed as part of developmental strategy with a primary focus on poverty alleviation and empowerment of women. Self help groups contribute towards income generation of women members and thereby empower them. The groups also provide psycho-social support and information. In 1990s, there was the arrival of structural adjustment and economic liberalization in India. Concurrently, the number of self help groups linked with commercial banks increased from 255 in 1992-1993 to 2700 in 1995. Eighty five per cent of these groups were formed exclusively by women in production oriented and income generation activities (IGA) such as garment making, food processing, etc., and were following market-oriented approach with a narrow economic focus. These self help groups were organized with the help of outside agencies and the support of social, religious and political leadership were seen as alternatives in rural development to break

**away** from the traditional bureaucracy and top-down management. A number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) started self help groups mainly as savings and **credit** groups without any emphasis on health. This was an alternative movement due to **the** failure or absence of a formal rural credit system. The Grameen Bank of **Bangladesh** is one of the earliest such movements Nayar (2004). Self help groups in **India** and other South-East Asian countries undertake different activities to enhance **socio-economic** status of the members who mainly come from the poor communities. **The** National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) of India **estimates** that by March 2006, over 33 million women had been linked to banks for **financial** services through 2.2 million self help groups.

For Ghana, social initiatives are linked to economic ones through the creation of innovative, participatory, community-based organizations that are accessible, that empower residents, that generate income and local job opportunities, and that finance community infrastructure and social services (Campfens, 1997).

In Uganda, there were 1,735 Self help groups composed of 32,621 members by October 2009 (Self Help Approach Newsletter Issue No. 2, January 2010). They had accumulated a savings of US\$ 17,920. This money was borrowed and rotated among members and it boosted economic progress as well as social transformation at household and community level in which members continue to share knowledge, feelings and skills that enhance their social networks.

## 2 1 Self Help Groups in Kenya

In Kenya self help movement sprung from the national slogan *harambee* which is **indigenous** and is used to discuss economic and social development. Such concepts are **used in** many other developing countries all over the world. For example, similar terms **used** elsewhere include *ujamcici* in Tanzania and *humanism* in Zambia.

*Harambee* is a concept meaning collective effort or pulling together. It was applied to the activities of a village or neighborhood and was supported by the value of mutual **self-assistance**.

**Before** independence, *Harambee* was a grassroots form of social exchange of labor and other forms of mutual assistance. It became a national slogan in June 1963, when President of Kenya Mzee Jomo Kenyatta formally made it such. Since then, *harambee* is used to denote collective effort, community self-reliance, cooperative enterprises and all forms of collective self-reliance. Self help groups development is different from other development activities because they have bottom-up approach, the activities are heavily biased towards use of local resources, participation of individuals is guided by principle of the collective good rather than individual gain and choice of gain is guided by the principle of satisfying the immediate need of participating members (Mbithi, 1977).

the term self help group or self help organization has been defined manifold. Researchers focusing on Kenya use the term self help group for women's groups, clan groups, loan associations, neighborhood associations and church groups. The term thus

encompasses groups which evolved out of both traditional and non-traditional sources of solidarity (Thomas 1985:167). In a study carried out on Peasant Self Help Groups in Rural Development: Laikipia, Kenya (1996) self help groups are defined as voluntary organizations formed by neighbors of poorer segments of the population with defined rules, leadership, membership and membership contributions and sharing of common benefits usually on an egalitarian rotational basis, who register themselves with the government in order to legalize their activities and to obtain assistance and advice from the government and donors for carrying out their activities. These activities are self defined by the group to meet their specific needs, encompassing one or several of the following activities: mutual assistance and welfare, regularized rotating credit and labour associations, cultural activities and income generating projects (Wacker, 1996).

In Nairobi, financial difficulties and other problems brought about by rapid urbanization have prompted Nairobi dwellers particularly women, to organize themselves on a self help basis to improve their standards of living and that of their families. The groups can be categorized as follows: savings and housing improvement groups, building groups (houses and nursery schools), welfare groups (funerals etc.), and fellowship groups (mainly religious). Due to lack of data, however, it is not possible to identify these groups clearly and the actual number of women groups (including self help) in Nairobi today is very difficult to ascertain. It is even more difficult to know what capital contributions are being made by the women themselves and the amount of funding from either the department of social services or non-governmental organizations (GOK, 1990).

Kenya had over 600,000 Self help groups in the year 2008 (MGCSD), although data of the number of these groups country wide is ambiguous because of the prevalence of different definitions of what a Self help group is. It is also ambiguous because of the prevalence of different bodies collecting statistical data on the issue (Wacker, 1996).

## **2.2 Conflicts in Self Help Groups**

The potential for conflict exists whenever and wherever people have contact. As people are organized into groups to seek a common goal, the probability of conflict greatly increases. According to Pruitt & Rubin (1986), conflict means perceived divergence of interest or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously, while Folger, Poole & Stutman (1997) define conflict as the interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals. Conflict occurs when individuals or groups are not obtaining what they need or want and are seeking their own self-interest. Sometimes the individual is not aware of the need and unconsciously starts to act out. Other times, the individual is aware of what he/she wants and actively works at achieving the goal. Conflict can be as small as a disagreement or as large as war. It can originate in one person, between two or more people, or between two or more groups.

Social order and social conflict are always continuing simultaneous aspects of interactions among individuals and in groupings in every society (Mason et al., 1993).

There is no society without some conflict, and without some order (Williams, 1970).

Social conflict may be the result of actions that are ambiguous, moods or intentions that are disregarded or motives that are ambivalent or fundamentally incompatible. Social conflict arises whenever two individuals are seeking the same thing at the same time and both cannot be satisfied or because one individual wants or anticipates something from another who is unwilling or unable to comply (Coombs 1987; Hand 1986). Potential for conflicts is multiplied as group size increase, not only because of additional number of participants, but also because of possibilities for the formation of factions and coalitions increase (Mason et al., 1993)

Power and property are the twin sources of social conflict. According to Dahrendorf (1959) at least four conditions are necessary if a conflict situation can be said to exist. One, there must be sets of individuals exhibiting some level of organization. These could be voluntary groups, religious groups, families, communities, nations or some other collections of individuals. Two, there must be some level of interaction among group members. Without contact and communication, there can be no conflict. The contact may merely be propaganda about another people, culture or group for it need not be personal. Third, there must be different levels of positions to be occupied by group members - a hierarchy of relationships. All individuals cannot occupy the same positions at the same time. Lastly, there must exist a scarcity of needed or desired resources and a general dissatisfaction among members about how these resources are being distributed. When there is dissatisfaction, conflict can erupt (French 1969, Barker et al., 1987)

### 2.3 Root Causes of Conflicts

**Root** causes of conflict are factors that cause a conflict. They are the conditions that occur prior to conflict. There are usually root causes and identifying them may be **complex**. It is important to identify them in order to get to the real problem and to **resolve** the conflict. If these are not correctly identified, the conflict resolution process focuses on the wrong issues. It is possible to get to the root causes of a conflict by identifying the background and context of a conflict, identifying the parties involved, **the** power, position, interests and desired changes (IGAD 2004).

The circle of conflict is a tool to analyze a conflict situation. There are five different types/sources of conflict which are relation conflicts, information conflicts, conflicts of interest, structural conflicts and value conflicts (IGAD 2004).

Structural conflicts are caused by external forces such as availability of resources and time constraints. These conflicts require structural solutions.

Information conflicts in groups have to do with the information processes in place within the organization. Disagreements over data can be caused by the process itself or misunderstandings on how the process should work. Changes in the process or a thorough explanation on how it works are the solution approach needed.

Value conflicts in groups are based on individual belief systems and are the hardest to resolve. The best approach here is to encourage an understanding and respect of each others values.

Relation conflicts are centered around conflicting personality issues which lead to negative behaviors. Sometimes resolution can be reached through understanding each

**other's** reasons for disagreement depending on how ingrained the said issues are.

**Boundary** setting in terms of establishing a cordial respect for those involved may be all **that** is possible in this instance.

**Conflict** of interest happens as a result of perceived threats to one's goals, or needs.

**Emotional** and psychological factors may be present on both sides. A solution based **approach** that addresses each party's interests desired outcomes and positive intentions **can** reduce the likelihood of perceived threats dictating the resolution process.

#### **2.4 Positive and Negative Effects of Conflicts in Groups**

**According** to Robinson (1972) not all conflict is bad and not all cooperation is good.

**People** tend to view conflict as a negative force operating against successful completion **of group** or community goals. Conflict can be harmful to groups but may also serve **some** potentially positive functions, depending upon the types of groups within and **among** which it occurs. Not every type of conflict may benefit groups and conflict may **not** serve such functions for all groups (Coser & Rosenberg, 1964).

**However** conflict could be productive and could have positive effects on groups. **Some of these** positive effects are improving the quality of decisions, stimulating involvement **in the** discussion and building group cohesion. In improving the quality of decision, **most group** members look for more information to resolve task conflict. Expression or **conflicting** news generates need for additional information that is imperative to the **decision-making** process. Conflict among groups may increase unity and cohesion **within each** group as members unite in a common purpose. Mack (1969) suggests that



**conflict** may define, maintain and strengthen group boundaries, contributing to the **group's** distinctiveness and increasing group solidarity and cohesion. He adds that **conflict** promotes the formation of groups and also destroys groups, both in the sense of **realignments** resulting from shifts in the distribution of power and in the ultimate sense **of the** extermination of an unsuccessful part)' to conflict.

**Building** group unity through interpersonal conflict is difficult at times for example **when a** member confronts another in a heated discussion. If individual and group trust **exists and** members do not take remarks as personal rejection, the group can grow **through** the confrontation. Group members learn that together they can confront even **personality** clashes and as a group, work to solve them. Fisher (1980) states that, the **group** that fights together stays together. The conflict should be managed however, **before it** becomes verbal assault and irreparable damage to individual egos (Barker et al., 1987).

Conflict often helps gain recognition for the groups involved. However, conflict may increase bitterness, alienation and divisiveness within or among groups and may have long-lasting effects upon future cooperation among individuals and groups holding opposite views.

Coleman (1957) cites that the residuum of past controversy or the cleavages that exist in a community as a result of past conflicts have an effect on present and future conflicts. Conflict within a group can allow dissatisfied members to voice their complaints, thus, the group may restructure itself to deal with internal dissension and dissatisfaction.

**Conflict** can be viewed as positive because it can create an opportunity for balancing **power** within a relationship and reconcile people's legitimate interests. It can lead to a **greater** self-awareness and understanding of diversity and differences between people. It can lead to personal growth and development, allow for different interests to be reconciled and foster group unity (IGAD 2004).

On the negative side, conflict can disrupt normal channels of co-operation among various segments of the community. Conflict may result in social change, although change often occurs without conflict, and conflict does not always produce change (Schaller & Cox, 1974). It can produce harmful side-effects in addition to the intended change.

Conflict may become violent and in extreme cases, lead to destruction and bloodshed. It does not necessarily imply or lead to violence. It becomes violent when the process turns to overt hostility and involves destructive behavior (Robinson & Clifford, 1974). Hence conflict can be harmful to individuals or groups, increase bitterness, increase tension, alienation and divisiveness and weaken or destroy the group.

**Conflict is also potentially destructive in groups when it consumes individual member's energies. However, conflict can interfere with group process and create so much interpersonal hostility that group members may become unwilling or unable to work with one another.**

## 2.5 Conflict Management

**According** to Schulenburg (1996) conflict resolution is broadly conceived as a reduction **in** social conflict. More specifically conflict resolution is conceived as a marked **reduction in** social conflict as a result of conscious settlement of issues in dispute.

**Robinson** and Clifford (1974) advocate managing conflict towards constructive action **since** a conflict can seldom be completely resolved. When conflict arises, it needs to be **managed** so that it becomes a positive force rather than a negative force that can **threaten** to disrupt the group or community. Parker (1974) notes that conflict that is not **managed** brings about delays, disinterest, lack of action and in extreme cases a complete **breakdown** of the group. Unmanaged conflict may result in withdrawal of individuals **and** unwillingness on their part to participate in the group or assist with various group **action** programs.

**According** to Boulding (1962) procedural resolution by reconciliation and/or **compromise** is generally the method most appropriate in community development **programs**. Conflict reconciliation is dependent on the situation. Compromise involves **adjustments** and modifications with regard to the territories, values and goals of the **involved parties**. It arises when the two parties partially satisfy their concerns. Each **party gives up** something and no one is the clear winner. Both parties do not want to **either dominate the** process nor surrender. They hope that a medium will be found and <sup>m</sup> **such a way they** expect to get something of what they want and preserve something of <sup>their rel</sup> **ationship** with the other party.

**Boulding** (1962) discusses avoidance as a method of conflict resolution. Avoidance of **conflict** often leads to intensified hostility and may later cause greater problems for the **group**. Therefore, one of the first steps in conflict management is to recognize that a **conflict** situation exists. Conflict should thus not be ignored. The biggest problem in **developing** the institutions of conflict control is that of catching conflicts young. **Conflict** situations are frequently allowed to develop to almost unmanageable **proportions** before anything is done about them, by which time it is often too late to **resolve** them by peaceable and procedural means.

Avoidance in a particular situation might conceivably be the best answer, but this step should be made only after conflict is explicitly recognized and alternative ways to manage it are examined.

Subsequently, accommodation is another conflict management style that is directly opposite to avoidance (IGAD, 2004). The party has the willingness to co-operate in satisfying the concerns of other parties while at the same time acting unassertively in meeting its own. In this way, a party does everything to maintain its relationship with the other party. Since it does not want the relationship to be damaged by conflict, one **party** gives in the demands of the other.

Effective communication is central to conflict resolution. Good communication rests on **caring** about what the other has to say, focusing energy and cooperation on understanding and being tolerant of people's difficulties in communicating. Good communication feedback is crucial in making parties feel connected. Another key to communication is to change the way parties think by reframing the issues. Definitional

retraining can detoxify an issue by dropping unproductive accusations. Definitional **refraining** involves re-describing the issue **in** more general or specific terms, or **in** a **longer or** shorter time frame. Other ways to reframe issues include finding a metaphor that **both** parties can use or re-describe the conflict story (Mayer, 2000).

Negotiations in conflicts in groups can occur whenever two or more people try to reach a voluntary agreement about something. Most negotiations have both distributive and integrative elements. Negotiations may come to a close when alternative options are **ruled** out, or when integrative and distributive solutions converge. Either breaking down the conflict issue into smaller, more specific elements or addressing issues on level of general principles can help negotiators reach an agreement.

Another way of conflict resolution is through mediators. They are third parties who help disputants resolve conflicts. Mediators affect the resolution process by supplying skills, values, procedures, energy and a sense of optimism. Although there are many different types of mediation, in general, mediators begin by assessing the conflict. They establish an arena or mechanism for communication and negotiation. They draw resistant parties into the resolution process and manage parties' communication and emotions. Mediators help parties identify and discuss their needs and options. They encourage creativity and constructive risk-taking and they apply pressure to move the process forward (Mayer, 2000). One type of third party intervention is the group facilitator (Viller, 1991) who coordinates the discussion of the group to ensure that each member is participating fully.

Another important feature in conflict resolution is the ability to empower disputants. The conflict resolution field seeks to make the world a better place by decreasing violence and intolerance, and by promoting democracy and the struggle for social justice.

According to Mayer (2000) conflict resolution has three dimensions. Resolution involves believing the conflict is ended, no longer feeling in conflict and stopping conflict behavior and implementing new behaviors.

Emotional closure often comes from having ones needs acknowledged and met. Apologies and forgiveness can also help. Sometimes a symbolic action such as handshake may help signal the end of conflict. Often behavioral resolutions are incomplete. Parties stop fighting, but do not implement resolution behaviors. There are different ways of thinking about the goal of conflict resolution. Some people focus on reaching a settlement. Others focus on transforming the parties while others focus on achieving social justice or deeper understanding or satisfaction of interest.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

One of the purposes of literature review is to facilitate the development of a theoretical framework for a study (Nyagah, 1995). The importance of a theoretical framework is to bring order, unity and simplicity to what is being investigated. It is made up of a theory or set of theories, which form both the background and guide to the investigation in question (Orodho, 2004).

A theory is a system of generalizable statements that are logically linked together to **understand** or predict human phenomena (Kim, 1995). This study therefore is guided by **conflict** management theory.

### **2.6.1 Social Conflict Theory**

Social conflict theory which discusses why conflict exists was proposed by Karl Marx, a German theorist and political activist of the 19th century. Marx attributed the basis of **conflict** to materialism, in that norms established in the marketplace (the world of work) dictate our individual class associations and interests therein. He theorized that the resulting set of class consciousnesses, representing different socioeconomic levels and interests, leads to the inevitable conflicts that we face from day to day. According to Marx, the individual's sense of a class consciousness was necessary for constructive change to happen. He viewed society's power holders as opposed to the notion of class consciousness as a means to maintain their positions. Instead, power holders promoted the notion of individual consciousness as a way to weaken the impact of mass, or class conflicts. This theory was used to explain causes of conflict in this **study**.

### **2.6.2 Conflict Management Theory**

Conflict may be defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values or goals. Conflict in teams and groups is inevitable; however the results of conflict are not predetermined. Conflict might escalate and lead to non-productive results or conflict can be beneficially resolved and lead to quality final

**products.** Therefore, learning to manage conflicts is integral to a high-performance team. **Conflicts results because of miscommunication** between people with regard to **their** needs, ideas, **beliefs, goals** or values. Conflict management **is** thus the principle **that** all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved, but learning how to manage conflict **can** decrease the odds of non-productive escalation. It involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication **skills** and establishing structure for management of conflict (Katzenbach and Smith, 1992).

According to Kirchoff & Adams (1982) there are two conflict management theories. One is traditional conflict management that considers people involved in conflict situations as trouble makers, conflicts are bad and conflicts should be avoided or suppressed. The second is contemporary conflict management theory that considers conflict as a natural and inevitable outcome of human interaction, conflicts are the natural result of change, conflicts are beneficial and they should be managed.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1994) complex conflict involving fundamental **issues** such as goals and value may require intervention. In these cases, leaders and mediators should follow a prescribed sequence of phases which increases the likelihood of success, especially in difficult conflicts. The phases are data collection, probe, **saving** face, discover common interest, reinforcement, negotiation and solidifying adjustments. These seven phases allow for successful resolution. In the case of this **study**, conflict management is handled either internally or externally. Internally in the **se**nse that conflict management is guided by the groups' constitution and by-laws and



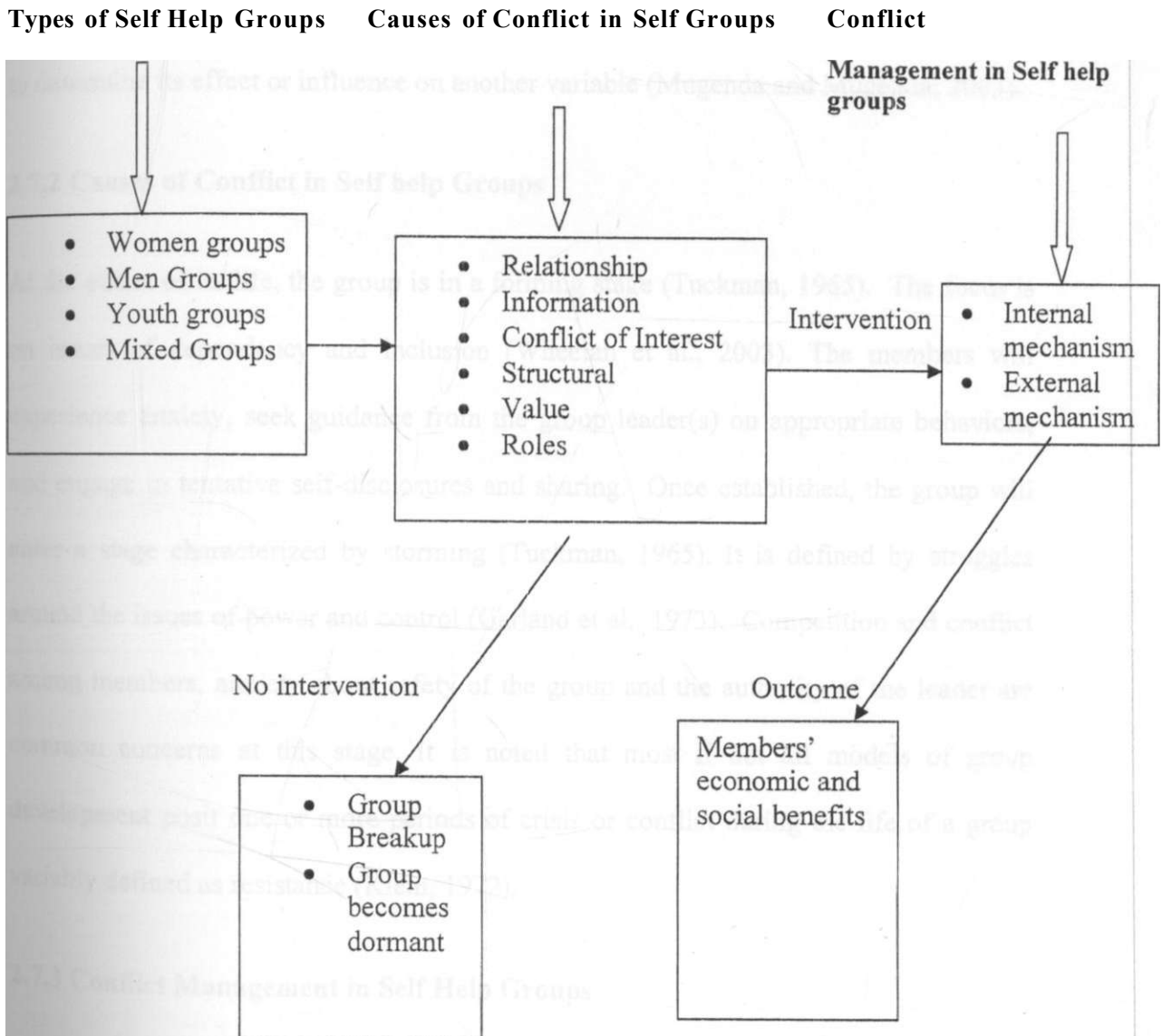
**externally whereby** exogenous intervention is sought, for example at the MGCSO, law **courts**, local leaders and provincial administration etc. Conflict management seeks to **involve** the **parties** in a consensual process and empower them to resolve the **incompatibility** in their approach to a **dispute**, understand the respective rights and **interests** of each other and settle the dispute themselves and not solving it for them **by** way **of** an imposed decision. Thus, the theory of conflict management is greatly aligned **to the** concepts of cooperation and participation rather than engaging in adversarial **process** of resolution of a dispute. Hence participation of **all** group members in handling conflict and their cooperation in this study is of importance.

### **2.6.3 Social Identity Theory**

According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) individuals define themselves to a large extent in terms of their social group members and tend to seek a positive social identity. This social identity consists of those aspects of an individual self image that derive from the social categories to which the individual perceives himself or herself to belong and to the value and emotional significance ascribed to that membership. Thus, it is a self definition in terms of group members.

## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework employs the use of drawings/diagrams to explain the interrelationships between variables (Orodho, 2004).



Source: Researcher

## **2.7.1 Types of Self help Groups**

Self help groups generally are groups of peers who have joined together to help each other with a common problem. They can lead to improved social function by extending social networks, providing new opportunities for social learning and changing cognitive perceptions about one's condition. In this study therefore, groups are independent variables. An independent variable is a variable that a researcher manipulates in order to determine its effect or influence on another variable (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

### **2.7.2 Causes of Conflict in Self help Groups**

At the outset of its life, the group is in a forming stage (Tuckman, 1965). The focus is on issues of dependency and inclusion (Wheelan et al., 2003). The members will experience anxiety, seek guidance from the group leader(s) on appropriate behaviors, and engage in tentative self-disclosures and sharing. Once established, the group will enter a stage characterized by storming (Tuckman, 1965). It is defined by struggles around the issues of power and control (Garland et al., 1973). Competition and conflict among members, anxiety about safety of the group and the authority of the leader are common concerns at this stage. It is noted that most if not all models of group development posit one or more periods of crisis or conflict during the life of a group variably defined as resistance (Klein, 1972).

### **2.7.3 Conflict Management in Self Help Groups**

To deal constructively with conflict, it is necessary to analyze it and find out the real Problem. If this is not done, then the real problem will not be effectively dealt with.

This means that conflict must be broken down and its parts examined, in other words, conflict must be analyzed (IGAD, 2004). Conflicts are often complex with a number of overlapping problems.

Through thorough analysis, it is possible to see what needs to be dealt with first as well as how to deal with it. Since groups operations are guided by a constitution developed **by** the members themselves, the constitution is consulted to assist in conflict management. In the event that tiat can not work, external intervention is sought from the relevant ministries and authorities.

Managed conflicts lead to the third stage of group development stage, where a consensus on the group tasks and a working process emerge (Tuckman, 1965). After **this** stage, the group enters a fourth stage of performing (Tuckman, 1965) or work (Wheelan et al., 2003). It is characterized by mature and productive group process and **the** expression of individual differences. Members are able to achieve their objectives **and** benefit from the group. Though a group may recycle through certain issues or conflicts, it will do so with the skills and experience derived from moving through the **earlier** development stages (Brabender, 1997).

In the event that the group does not receive timely intervention during conflicts (storming stage), it is likely that the group will prematurely break-up or become dormant.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Research Design

A research design is the program that guides the investigator as he or she collects, **analyses and** interprets observations. It is a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relationships among variables under investigation (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). This study employed case study design **because** the sample size is small and an emphasis on detail provides valuable insight for **problem** solving, evaluation and strategy. Yin (1984) defines case study research **method** as an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its **real-life** context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly **evident; in** which multiple sources of evidence are used.

### 3.1 Site Selection

**The** geographical area of coverage was Starehe Division, Nairobi North District, **Nairobi** Province. The main reason is because the researcher is interested in finding out lasting solutions to recurrent conflict in her area of jurisdiction which can also be implemented in other divisions in Nairobi Province. Time and financial constraints are **other** contributing factors.

### 3.2 Population

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugeda & Mugeda, 2003). For Bohrnstedt, and Knoke (1985) population is a set of persons, objects or events having at least one common

attribute to which the researcher wishes to generalize on the basis of a representative sample of observation. The population of this study was groups registered between 1991 and 2008.

### **3.3 Unit of Observation**

A **unit** of observation is the subject, object, item or entity from which we measure the **characteristic** or obtain the data required in the research study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). In this study, each group official or member in the sample was a unit of observation.

### **3.4 Unit of Analysis**

**According** to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) unit of analysis refers to those units that we initially describe for the purpose of aggregating their characteristics in order to **describe** some larger group or abstract phenomenon. Units of analysis are therefore the **individual** units about which or who descriptive or explanatory statements are to be **made**. This study employed self help groups as units of analysis.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

A **sample** is any subset of sampling units from a population. A subset is any **combination** of sampling units that does not include the entire set of sampling units that **has been defined** as the population (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). This study used two **samples**. One, a sample of thirty self help groups was drawn from a sample frame of **groups** that have reported conflicts between 2006 and 2008. The second sample of

ten self help groups was drawn from a sample frame of groups that have not reported conflict for comparison purposes.

### **3.6 Sampling Design**

**Sampling** was done using both probability and non-probability **sampling**. According to (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008), there is a basic distinction between probability and non-probability sampling in modern sampling theory. The distinguishing characteristic of probability sampling is that for each sampling unit of the population, you can specify the probability that the unit will be included in the sample. In non-probability sampling, there is no way of specifying the probability of each unit's inclusion in the sample, and there is no assurance that every unit has some chance of being included. Probability sampling engaged stratified sampling because the population consists of various categories of groups (subgroups) i.e. women groups, youth groups, mixed groups and male groups. This method is used when representatives from each subgroup within the population need to be represented in the sample (Odhiambo et al, 2010). Random samples were taken from each subgroup in proportion to the number of cases reported by each subset.

According to Odhiambo et al (2010) non-probability sampling entails sampling methods **where** some elements of the population have no chance of selection or where the Probability of selection cannot be accurately determined. It involves the selection of **elements** based on assumption regarding the population of interest, which forms the criteria for selection. Non-probability sampling engaged quota sampling, which is a

°f purposive sampling that bears a superficial resemblance to proportionate

stratified random sampling (Orodho, 2004). The objective of quota sampling is to include various groups or quotas of the population in the study based on some criteria (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Ten groups that have not reported any conflict were sampled using this method. The respondents in both samples were group leaders and **some** members.

### **3.6.1 Probability sampling**

The goal of probability sampling is to select a reasonable number of subjects that represents the target population.

#### **3.6.1.1 Stratified sampling**

This statistical method is used when representatives from each subgroup within the population need to be represented in the sample. The first step in stratified sampling is to divide the population into subgroups (strata) based on mutually exclusive criteria. Random or systematic samples are then taken from each sub-group.

To get a proportionate sample, multiply the total number of units in each stratum ( $n$ ) by the intended' sample size then divide that by the total number of units ( $N$ ) in the entire universe.

The sample frame or universe consists of 207 groups (women groups, men groups, youth groups and mixed groups).



<b>Sub-group</b>	<b>Number of individual groups in the universe (n)</b>
1. Youth groups	48
2. Mixed groups	83
3. Men groups	35
<b>4. Women groups</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>207 (N)</b>

### 3.6.1.2 Proportionate Samples

The sample size for groups with conflict was 30.

Proportionate sample formula is  $(n/N) \times \text{Sample size}$

Youth groups  $(48/207) \times 30 = 7$

Mixed groups  $(83/207) \times 30 = 12$

Men groups  $(35/207) \times 30 = 5$

Women groups  $(56/207) \times 30 = 6$

Total in

### 3 6.1.3 Simple Random Sampling

A number was given to every subject or member of each subgroup. The numbers were put in a container and then picked any number at random. The subjects corresponding to the numbers picked were included in the sample.

### 3.6.2 Non-Probability sampling.

Ten groups without conflicts were sampled using quota sampling for comparison purposes. The researcher purposively selected subjects to fit the quotas.

<b>Subgroup</b>	<b>Sample size (n)</b>
Youth groups	3
Mixed groups	3
Men groups	2
Women groups	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

### 3.7 Sources of Data

Data are measurements taken on a variable. Data is thus collected when information is needed for various reasons for example to make important decisions, to keep records for administrative purpose or to pass information on to others (Odhiambo et al., 2010).

There are two sources of data which are primary data and secondary data. Primary data

**was collected** from **registered** group's officials and members. The secondary data was to **provide** the basis for the existing literature gap. Sources of **this** data was group **registers**, annual and quarterly reports, books, journals, internet and other published and **unpublished** materials.

### **3.8 Data Collection Techniques**

**The** methods used for data collection vary with the topic and inclination of the **researcher** as well as the situation in which the research takes place (Orodho, 1998:82). **However**, most researchers tend to agree on the criteria for choosing the appropriate methods. The criteria among others are: appropriate research objectives, reliability, validity, representativeness or generalizability and explanatory powers (Bulmer, 1983:10-11). Primary data collection instruments were questionnaires that were made **of** structured closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions. The researcher also conducted two focused interviews (focus group discussions) to collect data.

Closed-ended questions offer respondents a set of answers and ask them to choose the one that most closely represents their views. These questions are easy to ask and quick to answer, and their analysis is straight forward (Nachmias and Nachmias, 2008).

For open-ended questions according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) the respondents <sup>a</sup>re given complete freedom of response. These free response questions permit an individual to respond in his or her own words.

According to Odhiambo et al (2010) a focus group can be defined as a group of people <sup>w</sup>ho posses certain characteristics and provide information of a qualitative nature in a

focused discussion. Focus group discussion (FGD) is useful in obtaining a particular **kind of** information that would be difficult to obtain using other methodologies. Focus groups generally are composed of six to twelve people. Size is conditioned by two factors: the group must be small enough for everyone to participate, yet large enough to **provide** diversity. This group is special in terms of purpose, size, composition and **procedures** and participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in **common** that relate to the topic at hand. Typically, more than one FGD should be **convened** since a group of six to twelve people could be too atypical to offer any general insights on the problem.

### 3.9 Data Analysis

**Data** analysis was by use of descriptive statistics as this is an exploratory study. This  
i  
descriptive analysis involves the examination across cases of one variable at a time. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the basic features of the study data. They provided simple summaries and quantitative description about the sample and the measures in a manageable form. These statistics helped the researcher to simplify large  
i  
amounts of data.

The descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of  
scores of measurements using a few indices or statistics (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2008). Data was tabulated using statistical averages, percentages, frequency tables and proportions. The researcher used statistical package for the social science (SPSS) for analyzing the data. Appropriate conclusions were drawn which helped to further understanding.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides analysis of data collected from the field using questionnaires and FGDs. Forty respondents, comprised of group officials and members, received the questionnaires, of which all of them were completed and returned. Two FGDs were conducted, each with nine participants. This gave a response of one hundred percent.

The results are presented in tables to highlight the major findings. They are also presented sequentially according to the research questions of the study. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to carry out analysis of data collected. The raw data was coded, evaluated and tabulated to depict clearly the results of the statement of the problem.

### **4.1 Groups with Conflicts**

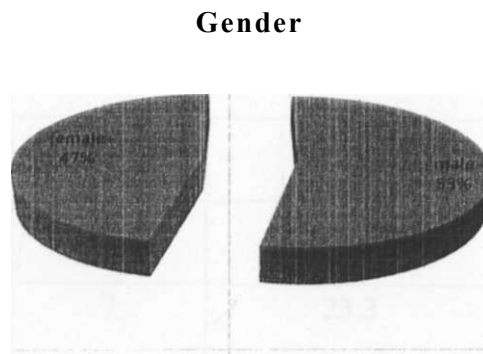
#### **4.1.1 Demographic characteristics**

The respondents were asked to indicate their demographic characteristics as was presented in the questionnaire. The characteristics included gender, age, level of education and position held in the group.

##### **4.1.1.1 Gender**

Today, self help groups are formed by both men and women.

**Figure 1: Gender of Respondents.**



**Figure 1** shows that out of 30 respondents interviewed, 53% were male while 47% were female.

Although most self help groups are run by women, gradually more male specific groups are emerging (Okech, 2001). Communities are forming self help groups to enable them to be self-reliant by engaging in income generating activities. Men and women alike are finding strengths in numbers and if they pool their resources together in self help groups of their own creation, they can radically change their lives and those of their families. According to this study finding, more men were respondents compared to women, which could be attributed to emergence of heterogeneous membership groups that see more men forming or joining groups.

#### **4.1.1.2 Age**

Self help groups are not age specific but a member is expected to be of adult age. At group registration, all members must be 18 years and above.

**Table 1: Age of Respondents**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
18-25	2	6.7
26-35	7	23.3
36-45	9	30.0
46-55	7	23.3
56+	5	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 indicates that majority of the respondents were aged between 36-45 years, forming 30%. Those aged 26-35 years and 46-55 years formed 23.3% each. Respondents aged 56+ years and those aged 18-25 years formed 16.7% and 6.7% respectively. According to Wacker (1996) in urban areas, most group members are women aged 25 to 65 years, both single and married. Young single and married men (25-45 years) and old men (above 65 years) are also members of self help groups to a lesser extent. Most of them live in the town-villages (slums).

People aged between 18-25 years are more likely to be continuing with education at different levels hence the low number of respondents in this category. Further this younger age tends to see self help activities as the duty of their parents and not theirs (Wandera, 1982). Respondents aged 26-55 are active and in their productive age and therefore engage in groups activities for socio-economic benefits.

#### 4.1.1.3 Education Level

Members of self help groups have different levels of education.

**Table 2: Education Level**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No Education	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Adult Education	<b>1</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Primary Education	0	0
Secondary Education	16	53.3
Tertiary Education	7	23.3
University Education		20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results in table 2 shows all the respondents attained some level of education, with 53.3% having attained secondary education. A total of seven respondents (23.3%) had tertiary education and 20% were university graduates. Only one respondent was an adult education drop-out forming 3.3%. None of the respondents was a primary school drop-out or had no education. An explanation to this finding could be unemployment. Unemployment has caused communities to form groups so that they can co-guarantee one another in order to obtain loans from banks, government or other institutions. According to Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS) 2005/2006, education and training are still important buffers against unemployment despite the unemployment challenges experienced by educated youth. Buffer levels of education against



unemployment are at least university level of education. This implies that those with secondary level of education (53i3% of respondents) or below may have problems **securing** employment especially **in** urban areas. Hence they turn to self help groups to **support** themselves.

#### **4.1.1.4 Position Held in the Group by Respondents**

Self help groups are led by a committee comprising of a chairperson, secretary and treasurer with their vices and committee members. They are expected to hold office until the next elections are held.

### 3: Position Held in the Group

Positions Held	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chairperson	11	36.7
Secretary	4	13.3
Treasurer	2	6.7
Committee Member	2	6.7
Member	11	36.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3 indicates that 36.7% of the respondents were chairpersons. Those holding the position of secretary formed 13.3% while those holding the position of treasurer were 6.7%. Respondents who were committee members formed 6.7% while those who were members formed 36.7%. Every group has leaders both in the formal sense where a person conducts or facilitates the meeting and in the informal sense where every person in the group takes on a leadership role by making suggestions, volunteering for responsibilities, keeping group discussion moving or noticing when other members need special support. Self help groups are led by a committee including chairperson, secretary, treasurer and their vices (Wacker, 1996).

Those selected to the committee must have the interest and willingness to serve. They should have knowledge, skills and have access to information. All women groups were chaired by women and all men groups were chaired by men. Mixed groups and youth groups were mostly chaired by men mainly because of male chauvinism with women

being secretaries and treasurers. Women are more trusted with money and this could explain why they are elected as treasurers. They are also associated with secretarial work **thus**, they are elected as secretaries.

#### 4.1.2 Group Profile

##### 4.1.2.1 Group Types

**There** are various types of group which are categorized as self help groups. They are women groups, youth groups, men groups and mixed gender groups. Historically, women groups existed earlier than mixed groups, men groups and youth groups.

**Table: 4 Type of Group**

Type of Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Women Group	6	20.0
Men Group	5	16.7
Youth Group	7	23.3
Mixed Group	12	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4 shows that 40% of the respondents were from mixed groups and 23.3% from youth groups. Respondents from women groups were 20% while those from men groups formed 16.7%. Self help groups are power sources for many communities. They are essential development tools which are used to promote the interest of their members. Groups also act as disciplinary bases where each member becomes a co-worker and

"professionally" each member should be able to participate in problem solving. These findings agree with Okech (2001) argument that through groups, individuals can build their own strengths and reduce inherent weaknesses when they adhere to the rules and regulations set to govern the affairs of the group.

In this time of economic hardship where majority of people live below poverty level, members of well managed groups can build their economic bases by putting their financial contributions together and later on lending towards individuals micro business enhancement.

#### 4.1.2.2 Group Registration

The MGCSD has the mandate to register, administer and assist self help groups.

**Table 5: Group's First Registration**

Year of registration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Between 1991-1995	3	10.0
Between 1996-2000	5	16.7
Between 2001-2005	11	36.7
Between 2006-2008	11	36.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study results in table 5 shows that respondents whose groups were registered in 2001-2005 were eleven forming 36.7%. Respondents from groups registered in 2006-2008 were also eleven forming 36.7%. Groups registered in 1996-2000 had 16.7% respondents while 10% were respondents from groups registered in 1991-1995. Group registration could be attributed to the fact that initial development agencies gave the

impression that group formation was synonymous to receiving funds and their formation had largely been pegged on assistance from the government or funding agencies (Okech, 2001).

**Another** reason for formation of women groups and youth groups is introduction of enterprise fund by the government aimed at benefiting the two categories. With the introduction of youth fund by the GOK in 2006/2007 budget, more youth groups have been formed to benefit from the skid fund that is aimed at enabling them start income generating projects/businesses as individuals or as groups. The fund targets the unemployed youth or those in *Jua Kali* sector as beneficiaries. Youth in Kenya form 30% of total population while unemployed youth constitute 78% of total unemployment.

Consequently, women enterprise fund was conceived by the GOK in 2006 and officially launched in 2007 with an objective of economic empowerment of women which increased formation of women groups. The fund targets individual women entrepreneurs or women in groups as beneficiaries. Although women constitute 52% of the total Kenya population, majority of them have been excluded from the formal financial services, for example; few have bank accounts^ can access loans, transact money transfer and have assets. The fund is designed to address the perennial challenges women face in their desire to venture in IGAs.

Others decentralized funds that influence group formation and registration include constituency development fund, MGCS D grants, *njaa marufuku* (hunger elimination) under the ministry of agriculture and local authority transfer fund. Disbursement of these funds either as loans or as grants mainly uses group approach.

### 4.1.2.3 Membership

Self help group members reflect a diverse membership covering different social and economic categories including the poor. Membership of self help groups is voluntary (Wacker, 1996).

Figure 2: Total Membership

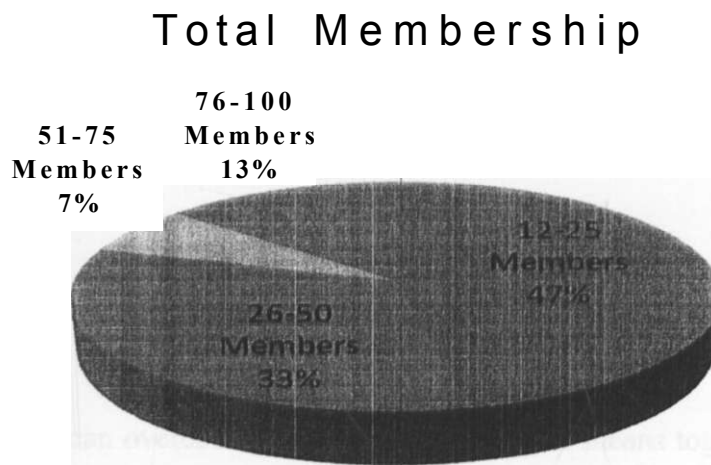


Figure 2 shows that 47% of respondents were from groups with a membership of 12-25 people. 33% of the respondents were from groups with 26-50 members. 7% of respondents were from groups With 51-75 members while 13% respondents were from groups with 76-100 members. NABARD (2005) states that self help group is a group with an average size of 15 people from a homogenous class. The size of a group depends on the goals and purposes of formation, though a group should remain small to allow all members to express themselves and participate in sharing and discussions.

A small sized group has 12-25 members although groups with 26-50 members are also common. Other groups are exceptionally large with 100 or more members (Wacker 1996). A small group of 12-25 members or a moderate group of 26-50 members enables active participation of the members because the performance of the group depends to a larger extent on the effectiveness of the members participation. Larger groups of 51-75 members and those of 76-100 members are difficult to manage inviting conflicts. As the group becomes complex in terms of organization and activities, they are expected to convert into cooperative societies, associations or companies, and then register them under appropriate legislative frameworks.

#### 4.1.2.4 Main Activities.

The basic needs theory of development puts forward the view that poorer population segments can overcome poverty by pulling their means together as self help groups and embarking on IGAs.

**Table 6: Main Activities of the Groups**

<b>Main Activities</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
	1	
Merry-go-round	5	16.7
Savings and Credit	8	26.7
Small Scale Business	14	46.7
Handcraft	3	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in table 6 shows that 46.7% respondents were engaged in small scale businesses as the groups' main activity. 26.7% were engaged in savings and credit while 16.7% and 10% were engaged in merry-go-round and handcraft as groups' main activity **respectively**.

According to Wacker (1996) self help group activities reflect member's needs and priorities. Their activities typically encompass both income generating activities and various forms of reciprocity and solidarity arrangements to help each other in formalized egalitarian and reciprocal way.

**Introduction** of youth enterprise fund and women enterprise **fund** by GOK in 2006/2007 whose main purpose was to enable groups start businesses or boost the existing ones **could** be a contributing factor to 46.7% respondents from groups engaged in small scale businesses as **discussed** earlier. According to Nayar (2004) Grameen Bank of Bangladesh started self help groups as savings and credit groups for women. Consequently, local Kenyan banks like Equity Bank, Family Bank, K-Rep bank and Cooperative Bank, together with other financial institutions like Jamii Bora and Kenya Women Finance Trust support groups engaged in small scale businesses. For instance K-Rep bank's core business is to serve low-income people especially those operating very small and micro-enterprises as a means of facilitating their participation in economic development.

Group activities still hold on the *hqrambee* concept of collective efforts. Members pool their small savings together and the accumulated savings are let to each member in turns<sup>on</sup> credit or they start a group ifcrA project. This agrees with Mbithi (1977) that



**harambee** is used to denote collective effort, community self-reliance, cooperative enterprises and all forms of collective self-reliance.

**Merry-go-round** as a group activity is an old concept where group members meet, contribute money and give it to one member following laid down order by the group. **Since** there are no strict guidelines on how to use the money, many groups have converted to engage other IGAs.

## **4.2 Causes of Recurrent Intragroup Conflicts in Self help Groups**

### **4.2.1 Years of Conflict**

All the groups under this study had conflict in 2006-2008.

**Table 7: Year of Conflict**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
2006	7	23.3
2007	13	43.3
2008	10	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results in table 7 indicate that 43.3% of respondents had conflict in 2007. 33.3% of the respondents had conflicts in 2008 while 23.3% respondents had conflicts in 2006.

Group conflicts could be attributed to groups undergoing storming stage (Tuckman 1965). This is where differences and suppressed tension begin to surface. Questions

arise during this period. It is a stage in which different ideas compete for consideration. The group addresses issues such as what problems they are really supposed to solve, how they will function independently and together and what leadership model they will accept. Group members open up to each other and confront each other's ideas and perspectives. In some cases storming can be resolved quickly. In others, the group never leaves this stage. The maturity of some group members usually determines whether the group will ever move out of this stage.

The storming stage is necessary to the growth of the group. It can be contentious, unpleasant and even painful to members of the group who are averse to conflict. Tolerance of each group member and their differences needs to be emphasized. Without tolerance and patience the group will fail. This phase can become destructive to the group and will lower motivation if allowed to get out of control. Some groups will never develop past this stage.

In the assumptions underpinning most models of group development, groups manifest increased interaction complexity but may occasionally exhibit regression and reversibility, recycling back to earlier stages of development. This explains why groups that are expected to have gone through storming stage are still in conflict.

#### **4.2.2 Root Causes of Intragroup Conflicts**

Root causes or sources of group conflict can be many and varied. The most common causes are scarcity of resources (finance, equipment and facilities), different attitudes, values or perceptions, disagreements about needs, goals, priorities and interests, poor

communication, poor or inadequate group structure, lack of teamwork and lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities.

**Table 8: Mean for Root Causes of Conflict**

<b>Root Causes of Conflict</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Members having different goals have resulted to conflict in the group	4
Members having differences in values in the group results to conflict	3.5
Lack of clear objectives during group formation was the cause of conflict in the group	3.4
Poor communication between leaders and members on group matters has led to conflict in the group	4
Misuse of groups funds initiated conflict in the Group	4.2
Differences in understanding and viewpoint among members led to disagreements and conflict in the group	3.8
Individual differences among members led to conflict in the group	2
Competition where members put their concerns first and only want to win, causes conflict of interest	3.2
Members differences in status have contributed greatly to conflicts in the group	2.2

**Likert Scale: 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neutral), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree)**

Respondents were given prelisted variables to give their opinion that best describes root causes of conflicts from strongly agree (score 5) to strongly disagree (score 1).

Table 8 indicates that misuse of group's funds was the highest root cause of conflict with a mean score of 4.2. Poor communication between leaders and members on group matters had a mean score of 4. Members having differences in goals also had a mean score of 4. Poor communication may be caused by presenting data that may not be genuine because the information itself or the procedure used to collect data is not appropriate (IGAD, 2004). Members having differences in goals concurs with Okech (2001) that groups collapse mainly because they have no clear goals since such a process was never a concern during group formation.

Lack of clear objectives had a mean score of 3.4, differences in understanding and viewpoint among member had a mean score of 3.8 and members having differences in values in the group had a mean score of 3.5. One factor that could contribute to this is

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that, at times groups form in a hurry without a shared vision especially when they anticipate some funding or other kind of assistance.

**Competition where members put their concerns first and only want to win had a mean**

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score of 3.2 while differences in status had a mean score of 2.2. Individual differences among members had a mean score of 2 which could be attributed to the fact that groups are formed by members of the same status to address a felt need.

**Given the dynamic nature of social life of persons and groups which work together, conflicts are often inevitable. With the ongoing disintegration of communities owing to their increasing commercialization, self help groups among other groups conflict over scarce resources including control over decision making process.**

The study findings concur with IGAD (2004) in that there are usually several root causes of conflict and identifying them may be complex.

### **4.3 Internal and External Conflict Management Strategies,**

#### **4.3.1 Internal Conflict Management**

**Conflict management involves analysis, diagnosis, intervention, resolution and prevention, and the best conflict management is prevention. Benefits of managing internal conflict include preventing conflict, resolving dispute, reconciling differences, reducing cost, resolving issues quickly, improving communication, preventing misunderstanding and building relationships and mutual trust.**

**Table 9: Internal Conflict Management Strategies**

<b>Internal Conflict Management (Strategies)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Effective communication by updating members on current issues has helped in conflict management	
<b>Group members willingness to cooperate to reach a successful resolution of any issues</b>	4.3
<b>Group members use avoidance to evade conflict</b>	
<b>Group members accommodate conflict by willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs (ignoring conflict)</b>	3.4
The group members themselves use negotiation so as to reach voluntary agreement about an issue.	4.3
Group members engage in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution	3.8
Group members engage in compromise by finding a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone.	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Likert Scale: 5 (very good), 4 (good), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Poor), 1 (Very poor)</b>	

**Conflict management is the process of planning to avoid conflict where possible and organizing to resolve conflict where it does happen as rapidly and smoothly as possible.**

**For internal conflict management strategies, respondents were given prelisted statements on the opinion scale to indicate their management strategies from very good (score 5) to very poor (score 1).**

Results of this study as shown in table 9 indicates that the most effective internal conflict management strategies are group members themselves using negotiation so as to reach voluntary agreement about an issue which has a mean score of 4.3. Group members' willingness to cooperate to reach a successful resolution also had a mean score of 4.3. Effective communication by updating members on current issues had a mean score of 4 while members engaging in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution had a mean score of 3.8. The finding further shows that ignoring conflict had a mean score of 3.4 while evading conflict had a mean score of 3. Group engaging in compromise by finding a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone had a mean score of 2.6. This concurs with Kirchoff & Adams (1982) who argues that contemporary conflict management theory considers conflict as a natural and inevitable outcome of human interaction. They further argue that conflicts are the natural result of change and they should be managed. Negotiation, cooperation and communication are most important tools of internal conflict management according to this study.

### 4.3.2 External Intervention

When conflict is not internally resolved, groups seek intervention else where. Since these are social groups, members mainly use ADR approach.

**Table 10: Place of Intervention**

Place of Intervention	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Dept of Gender	22	73.3
Provincial Administration	3	10.0
Law Courts	1	3.3
Community Development Assistants	0	0
Church Leaders	0	0
Village Elders	1 2	6.7
NGOs	0 i	0
Bank	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Despite group's internal conflict management strategies, sometimes they are unable to resolve conflict themselves necessitating them to seek external intervention.

Table 10 indicates that twenty two of respondents forming 73.3% sought intervention with the department of gender and social development (DGSD). 10% of respondents sought intervention at the provincial administration whereas 3.3% sought intervention



with law courts. Respondents who sought intervention from village elders were two forming 6.7%. Another 6.7% of respondents sought intervention from banks. None of the respondents sought intervention from community development assistants, church leaders or NGOs.

Members sought intervention with DGSD because they believed that the department has the mechanism of handling conflict in groups. District gender and social development officers (DGSDO) who are on the ground with the communities have been helping in conflict resolution between members of self help groups using ADR with the aim of arriving at a win-win situation. The government is also increasing awareness of communities and groups about causes of conflicts and their local solutions.

Other groups sought intervention from various authorities. This was usually experienced in large groups and groups with multiple activities because of their complexity.

Since self help groups are social groups, they use ADR to resolve issues hence only 3.3% sought court intervention. Provincial administration works closely with the group at the grassroots. This could explain 10% of respondents seeking intervention from them.

#### **4.3.3 Reason for Choosing Place of Intervention**

Groups have varied reasons as to why they sought external intervention.

**Table 11: Reason for Choosing Place of Intervention**

<b>Reason for choosing place of intervention</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Because it near to us</b>	8	26.7
<b>It is the only authority we know that can help</b>	2	6.7
<b>Its where we are registered</b>	18	60.0
<b>Because we are their clients</b>	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Results in table 11 show that various reasons explain why respondents sought intervention from different areas. 60% of respondents sought intervention where their group is registered. 26.7% respondents sought intervention at a place that was near to them while 6.7% respondents sought intervention where they are clients. Another 6.7% respondents sought intervention because it was the only authority they knew that could help. None of the respondents sought intervention where they were partners. The results indicate that proximity or nearness to the place of intervention and the registering authority are of importance to groups with conflicts.

Nearness entails shorter time taken to get to the place of intervention and savings on transport cost. Groups believe the registering authority have mechanism of conflict resolutions and understand groups better than other authorities. Further, groups develop rapport with field officers and therefore find it easy to seek assistance.

#### 4.3.4 Mediators Level of Competence in Conflict Management Skills

Mediators are neutral intermediaries who apply their training, individual skills and experience to guide and assist disputing parties towards settlement of their differences by negotiation in a cordial, constructive atmosphere.

**Table 12: Level of Competence**

Level of competence of mediator	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very incompetent	0	0
Incompetent	0	0
Neutral	4	13.3
Competent	9	30.0
Very Competent	17	56.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>31)</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Conflict resolution calls for a competent mediator. The results as indicated in table 12 shows that 56.7% respondents said the mediator was very competent. 30% of respondents said that the mediator was competent while 13.3% were neutral. None of the respondents indicated that the mediator was either incompetent or very incompetent. To be an effective mediator as shown in the above results, the mediator need to have the ability to gain the trust, acceptance and co-operation of conflicting parties, clear thinking in identifying the real problems and offering practical solutions and be tactful and diplomatic with the necessary powers of persuasion and strong character to nudge the participants progressively towards an agreement.

Another skill is to be knowledgeable about the group, strategies and attitudes of the conflicting parties as well as any relevant laws or agreements in the group. With these skills the mediator achieves credibility and results. The study findings agree with Mayer (2000) that mediators affect the resolution process by supplying skills, values, procedures, energy and a sense of optimism.



#### 4.3.5 Level of Satisfaction with Intervention

The respondents indicated their level of satisfaction with intervention from very satisfied to very dissatisfied.

**Table 13: Level of Satisfaction**

<b>Level of satisfaction of the intervention</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Very Dissatisfied	0	0
Dissatisfied	0	0
Neutral	2	6.7
Satisfied	14	46.7
Very Satisfied	14	46.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 13 shows the levels of satisfaction with the intervention. Respondents who were very satisfied formed 46.7% while those who were satisfied formed another 46.7%. Respondents who were neutral formed only 6.7%. None of the respondents were either



dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with intervention. This is reflected in level of competence of the mediators in table 12.

#### **4.4 Positive and Negative Effects of Conflict**

The result of conflict is not always negative. It gives a positive effect as well. Conflict gives positive effect if handled constructively. The effects of conflict are negative if proper conflict management is not done.

**Table 14: Positive and Negative Effects**

<b>Positive and Negative Effects of Conflict</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>"Quality of group decision was improved by members discussing and deciding together</b>	4
Members unity for common purpose was increased	4.2
Conflict generated new ideas and approaches to issues by members, that is innovation and change	4
Conflict brought about problems previously ignored to the open for discussion	3
Group reorganized itself to deal with dissent and dissatisfaction among members	3.2
Conflict resulted in polarization of group members	2
There was degradation of members relationships and cooperation due to conflict in the group	3
Members developed hatred against others	2
The group was weakened by the conflict	3
There was increase in the possibilities of violent conflict	2

**Legend: 5 (very positively affected), 4 (positively affected), 3 (neutral), 2 (negatively affected), 1 (very negatively affected)**

Respondents were given prelisted statements on an opinion scale to indicate the number that explained how their group was either positively or negatively affected by conflict from very positively affected ( score 5) to very negatively affected (score 1).

The result in table 14 indicates that groups were differently affected by conflict. Increase in members unity for common purpose had a mean score of 4.2 while quality of group decisions was improved by members discussing and deciding together had a mean score of 4, both of which are positive effects. Conflict generated new ideas and approaches to issues (innovation and change) had a mean score of 4. This concurs with Brabender (1997) who argues that repeated conflicts in groups are handled with skills and experience from earlier developmental stage.

Conflict brought about problems previously ignored to the open for discussion had a mean score of 3, there was degradation of members relationships and cooperation due to conflict in the group had a mean score of 3 while conflict weakened the group had also a mean score of 3.

Groups were negatively affected by conflict because members developed hatred against one another had a mean score of 2, conflict resulted in polarization of group members had a mean score of 2 and there was increase in the possibilities of violent conflict with a mean score of 2.

It is often assumed that not all conflict is bad for self help groups, but if managed effectively, conflict can bring benefits. The theory of conflict management indicates that conflict can be harmful to groups as indicated by statements with a mean score of 2 (negatively affected). The study findings concur with Mack (1969) that conflict may define, maintain and strengthen group boundaries, contributing to the group's

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distinctiveness and increasing group solidarity and cohesion. He adds that conflict promotes the formation of groups and also destroys them.

#### **4.5 Report from Focus Group Discussions.**

Two focus group discussions were held to get members views on possible ways of minimizing conflict. The first group was comprised of nine members four of whom were men and five women. Group two comprised nine members, three men and six women. In both cases participants were drawn from groups with and *without* conflicts. The following are the findings from members of FGDs gathered in relation to possible solutions to conflicts.

Participants defined conflicts as *mzozo unaoleta utengamano* (issues that cause split). They also defined conflict as people misunderstanding one another causing fight among them. Other definitions were; some people going against what had been planned and fighting over leadership.

Members were then asked the common types/sources of conflict. They all agreed that conflict exists in groups and that there are key issues that bring about conflicts. They are financial mismanagement where those entrusted with the group's funds lack accountability and transparency. They said that there is poor communication regarding group's affairs and most of the time what is communicated to them is pure lies. Differences in social statuses also contribute to conflict. For example, one woman said that when they are in their group meeting a certain lady boasts to the others that they live in cheap houses paying rent of Kshs. 1,500/- while her house is more expensive



because she pays Kshs. 3,000/-. Wrangles for leadership affect the group causing conflict. Participants said that there are those who want to lead regardless of group's members' opposition. They argue that they are the ones who are able to lead the group because they know people in high offices and they are more learned. Members themselves cause conflict because they are not committed to group's affairs. The participants further said that some members feel more superior to others whereas a group should bring members to the same level. Gossip especially in women groups causes a lot of conflict that at times leads to collapse of the same or members quitting. The participants said that introducing politics and entertaining politicians in their groups has led to conflict while differences in viewpoint has led to value conflict hence group members fail to agree on prioritizing groups matters. Tribalism where members from same tribe exclude other members in group affairs and holding information to themselves is a cause of conflict.

In order to minimize conflicts, participants said that there is need to train members, educate them and hold workshops for them to shed more light on self help groups and their operationalizations. Participants said that leaders should be transparent and accountable and they should prepare and sent progress reports together with challenges faced to the government and particularly MGCSO. The participants also said that there should be regular elections to avoid leadership problems. Group members on the other hand should be active and commit themselves to collective responsibility. Groups interact with banks when they go for business loans or to open a group's account. The participants said that banks should train them on business and credit management. For NGOs and other partners/stakeholders, participants said they should closely monitor

groups that they have assisted and work with all members. From FGD, group conflict can be managed or resolved. This agrees with Robinson and Clifford (1974) who advocates managing conflict towards constructive action since a conflict can seldom be completely resolved.

The participants were asked to state those who are most affected by conflicts and those who are least affected. This elicited mixed reactions whereby some participants said that officials are most affected since their efforts are watered down. They also said that officials over commit themselves as they work towards the success of the group hence most affected. Others said it is the active members who are affected most because the officials are in control of group's property and take advantage by misusing the group. A lady participant said that all are affected, relating the group to a human being. She gave an analogy of human body function with groups operations. She said that if one part of the body is affected, the other parts are also affected. Similarly conflict in a group affects all.

The question of who is least affected also elicited mixed reactions. Some said it is the officials who are least affected because they are mostly the initiators of conflict especially on financial mismanagement and abuse of groups property. Others said the less committed members are least affected because they have nothing to lose. These are members who have not updated themselves as per the group's requirements.

## 4.6 Groups without Conflict

Just like the groups with conflicts, the basic relevant background information is presented covering the gender, age, marital status and education level. This is followed by group profile, internal conflict management and strategies of minimizing conflicts in self help groups.

Group leaders and members were the respondents to this questionnaire.

From data collected, there were a lot of similarities on respondent profile and group profile in groups with conflict and groups without conflict. However the groups differed in terms of conflict management strategies.

### 4.6.1 Gender

The respondents were both male and female.

**Figure 3: Gender of Respondents**

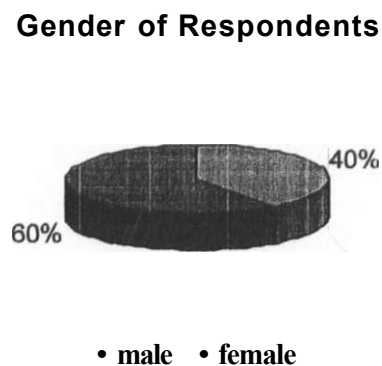


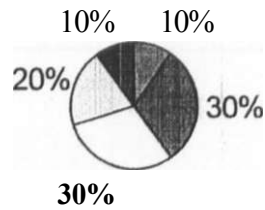
Figure 3 shows that 60% of respondents were female and 40% male.

#### 4.6.2 Age

The age of respondents ranged from 18 years to 56+ years just like the groups with conflict.

**Figure 4: Age of Respondent**

**Age of Respondents**



**EI 18-25yrs • 26-35yrs • 36-45yrs D46-55yrs • 56yrs+**

Figure 4 shows that respondents who were 26-35 years and 36-45 years formed 30% each. Those aged 46-55 years formed 20% while respondents aged 18-25 years and 56+ years formed 10% each.

### 4.6.3 Education Level

**Table 15: Level of Education**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No Education	0	0
Adult Education	0	0
Primary Education	1	10
Secondary Education	5	50
Tertiary Education	3	30
University	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Results in table 15 shows that 10% respondents had university education. Respondents with tertiary education were 30% and respondents with secondary education were 50%. One respondent had primary level education forming 10%. None of the respondent had either adult education or no education.

#### 4.6.4 Positions Field

**Table 16: Positions Held in the Group**

Position Held	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chairperson	2	20
Secretary	2	20
Treasurer	2	20
Committee member	2	20
Member	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Results in table 16 shows that 20% of respondents were chairpersons. Respondents who were secretaries, treasurers, committee members and members also formed 20% each.

#### 4.6.5 Type of group

**Figure 5: Type of Group**

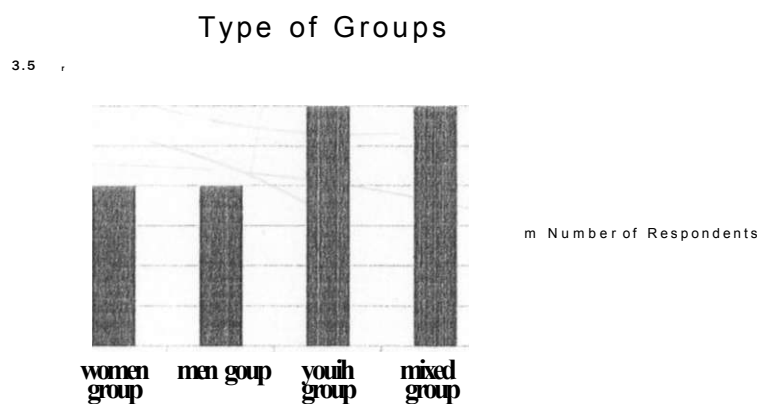


Figure 5 indicates that out of the 10 respondents, three were from mixed groups and another three from youth groups. Two of the respondents were from men groups and another two from women groups.

#### 4.6.6 Groups First Registration

**Table 17: First Registration**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
2006-2008	4	40
2001-2005	3	30
1996-2000	2	20
1991-1995	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 17 indicates that 40% of respondents were from groups registered in 2006-2008. Respondents from groups registered in 2001-2005 formed 30% while those from groups registered in 1996-2000 were 20%. Only one respondent (10%) was from a group registered in 1991-1995.

#### 4.6.7 Membership

Total membership in groups is usually varied.

Figure 6: Total Membership

### Total Membership

- 12-25 members
- » 26-50 members
- ft 51-75 members
- 76-100 members

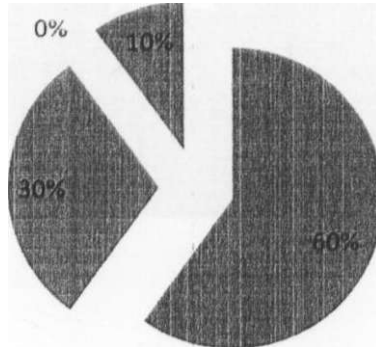


Figure 6 shows that 60% of respondents were from groups with a membership of 12-25 members. 30% of the respondents were from groups with a membership of 26-50 members while 10% of respondents came from groups with membership of 76-100 members. None of the respondents was from a group with 51-75 members.

#### 4.6.8 Main Activity

Just like groups with conflicts, groups without conflict identify their main activity based on a felt need.



**Figure 7: Main Activity of the Group**

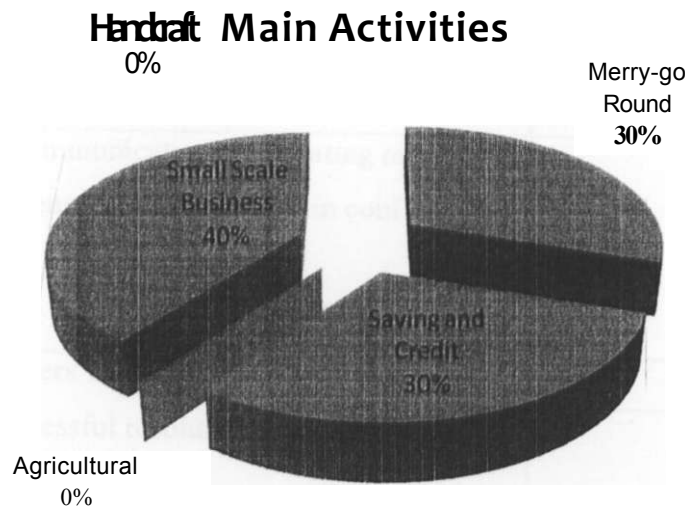


Figure 7 indicate that 40 % the respondents were from groups engaged in small scale businesses. Respondents from groups engaged in merry-go-round formed 30% while another 30% of respondents were from groups engaged in saving and credit as their main activity. None of the respondents were from groups engaged in agriculture or handcraft as their main activity.

#### **4.7 Internal conflict Management**

Resolving conflict is an important skill to use when working with others.

**Table 18: Internal conflict Management for groups without conflict**

Internal conflict management systems for groups without conflict	Mean
Effective communication by updating members on current issues has helped in conflict management	4.4
Group members willingness to cooperate to reach a successful resolution of any issue	4.2
Group members use avoidance to avert conflict	2.5
Group members accommodate one another by giving in, in order to satisfy others	4
The group uses negotiation so as to reach voluntary agreement about an issue	4.1
Group members engage in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution	4.1
The group engages in compromise by finding a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone	3.8

**Likert Scale: 5 (very good), 4 (good), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Poor), 1 (Very poor)**

The respondents were given prelisted statements to give their opinions on the best strategies that they use to minimize conflicts in groups, from very good (score 5) to very poor (score 1). The results in table 18 indicates that out of the seven statements five of them had a mean score of 4 and above. Effective communication by updating members on current issues had a mean score of 4.4. Willingness of group members to cooperate to reach a successful resolution had a mean score of 4.2. Groups engaging in negotiation to reach voluntary agreement about an issue and members engaging in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution had a mean score of 4.1 each. Group members accommodate one another by giving in, in order to satisfy others had a mean score of 4 while group engaging in compromise by finding a solution that at least partially satisfy everyone had a mean score of 3.8. Use of avoidance to avert conflict had a mean score of 2.5

#### **4.8 Strategies of Minimizing Conflicts in Self help Groups.**

The respondents were asked to state other strategies they thought can be used to minimize conflicts in groups. Their responses were that members should engage in dialogue in group's affairs. They also stated that it is important to understand one another's strengths and weaknesses as well as use of policy of oneness when dealing with conflict. Respondents further stated that there should be strict adherence to the group constitution. Transparency and accountability were also described as key strategies of minimizing conflict.

**Respondents** indicated that there should be regular trainings of groups, frequent visits by the government officials and organizing exchange programmes so as to learn and share experience from other self help groups. Further, respondents said that it is important to introduce the element of social welfare to support members in case of any eventualities.

#### **4.9 Comparison between Groups with and Groups without Conflict**

The study shows that both groups with and without conflicts show similar characteristics in terms of gender, age, education level and position held. There is also similarity in regard to type of group, year of registration, membership and group's main activities.

However, there is a difference between the two groups in their internal conflict management strategies. Table 9 that shows internal conflict management strategies for groups with conflict indicates that three out of seven prelisted statements had mean scores of 4 and above representing 42.9%. On the other hand table 18 that shows internal conflict management strategies in groups without conflict indicates that five out of seven of the same prelisted statements had mean scores of 4 and above, representing 71.4%. Therefore, groups without conflicts engage a lot in effective communication, cooperation and reconciliation than groups with conflict

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Summary of Findings and Conclusion**

Self help group formation and registration in Starehe Division has been on the rise over the years. However, such groups are dominated by conflict of different types that impact negatively on the efforts towards achieving set goals and objectives.

This study focused on groups with conflict in 2006-2008. At the same time, groups without conflicts were interviewed for comparison purposes. The purpose of the study was to establish root causes of conflict in self help groups, their socio-economic effects and the existing internal and external conflict management mechanisms. The study further sought to explore possible strategies of minimizing these conflicts.

Sampling design used was both probability and non-probability. Primary data collection instruments were questionnaires made of structured closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions. Two FGDs were also conducted.

Data analysis was by use of descriptive statistics as this is an exploratory study. It involved the examination across one variable at a time. Descriptive statistics was used to describe basic features of the study area. They provided simple summaries and quantitative descriptions about sample and measures in a manageable form. SPSS was used for analyzing data.

**Results** of the study indicated that self help groups are formed by both men and women **Members** are of different age groups where majority lie between 26-55 years. They are also of different education levels. From the study all respondents had acquired some **education** most of them being secondary school graduates. Members are in various types of groups which are women groups, youth groups, mixed gender groups and men groups. Membership differs where majority are in smaller groups. **An** ideal group has few members whose minimum is 12 people. Moderate groups have up to 50 members, although **there** are bigger groups of 100 people. Their main activities are also different.

The study found out that the most common root cause of conflict in groups is financial mismanagement. This has affected the groups negatively. Other root causes are poor communication on group matters and telling lies to members. Another finding is that members had different goals because the goal was not clear during group formation. Poor leadership is another root cause of conflict in groups since leaders do not have leadership skills. Lack of commitment by members together with differences in social status is another cause of conflict. Political interference and tribalism are root causes of conflict in groups according to this study.

Internal conflict management systems were compared for groups with and without conflicts. The most effective mechanisms were effective communication, cooperation among members, use of negotiation and reconciliation. Groups without conflict ignore conflicts according to the result of this study while compromise and avoidance of conflict are not good measures of conflict management in groups.

Effects of conflicts were either positive or negative. According to the study group leaders and officials are affected alike. The negative effects are members develop hatred against others, possibilities of violent conflict, and group becomes polarized. Positive effects according to results of the study were improved group's decision making and increase in members' unity. Another positive effect is that conflict generated new ideas and approaches to issues by members.

The study further explored possible measures to minimize conflicts. They are effective communication, understanding clearly the goal of group formation, to train and to educate the groups on group development and to hold workshops with groups regularly. According to this study, members should have commonalities and similarities and work towards improving their standard of living. Members should be committed and have a collective responsibility.

In conclusion and based on the findings above, groups are formed with good intentions for every member and to a larger extend the community. Their activities if well managed, can impact positively on efforts toward unemployment and poverty eradication. Members can reap socio-economic benefits expected prior to joining the group. However, progress in hampered by recurrent conflicts experienced from time to time. These conflicts are mainly caused by lack of information and knowledge.

## **5.1 Recommendations.**

Based on the results of the study it is recommended that to minimize conflicts, group members be trained and educated regularly by relevant authorities on group dynamics, leadership skills, financial management and book keeping. Frequent workshops for groups are also necessary. It is also recommended that groups should have exchange programmes to learn from each another and share experiences.

There should be frequent field visits to groups as a way of recognition, support and guidance. Groups should be closely monitored and their success stories and challenges brought out through reports.

This study was undertaken in the urban area, and therefore there is need for a comparative study in the rural areas to gather views from rural community groups. This is because of difference in setting.



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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX Is LETTER TO RESPONDENTS**

#### **LEADERS AND MEMBERS**

#### **Questionnaire on Intragroup Conflict in Self Help Groups: Causes, Effects and Possible Solutions. A Case Study of Starehe Division, Nairobi North District.**

Dear Respondent,

My name is Rose Mwangangi, a Master of Arts Student at the University of Nairobi. I am currently conducting research on Intragroup Conflict in Self help Groups, Causes, Effects and Possible Solutions in Starehe Division; Nairobi North District to try to understand the gaps that lead to conflicts in self-groups.

I would like to inform you that you have been selected in the survey to provide some information which will be very useful in understanding these conflicts.

The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for academic purposes. Your participation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you,

**Nose Mwangangi.**

**APPENDIX 2:**

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION INVITATION LETTER**

**Intragroup Conflicts in Self help Groups: Causes, Effects And Possible Solutions. A Case Study of Starehe Division, Nairobi North District.**

Dear Respondent,

My name is Rose Mwangangi, a Master of Arts Student at the University of Nairobi. I am currently conducting research on Intragroup Conflicts in Self help Groups, Causes, Effects and Possible Solutions in Starehe Division, Nairobi North District to try to understand the gaps that lead to conflicts in self- help groups. This information is for academic purposes only.

We are therefore inviting you to participate in a **focus group discussion** to hear your views/opinions about possible strategies of minimizing conflicts in groups on

at .....The venue will be

Some other 8 participants have been invited to the discussions who are either leaders or members of their groups Some refreshments will be served at the end of the discussion.

Thank You,

Rose Mwangangi



## APPENDIX 3

### SELF HELP GROUPS THAT HAVE REPORTED CONFLICTS

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE RESPONDENTS WITH CONFLICTS

### LEADERS AND MEMBERS

Please tick in the box [ ] necessary. Do not indicate your name anywhere in this document.

#### SECTION A

#### Respondents Profile

1. Gender?

Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. What is your age bracket?

18-25 [ ] 26-35 [ ] 36-45 [ ]

46-55 [ ] 56+ [ ]

3. What is your level of education?

No education [ ] Adult education [ ] Primary education  
[ ]  
Secondary education  
Tertiary University ]

4. What is your position in your group?

Chairperson [ ] Secretary [ ] Treasurer

Committee Member [ ] Member [ ]

### Group Profile

1. What is the type of your group?

Women group [ ] Men group [ ]

Youth group [ ] Mixed group [ ]

2. When was the group first registered?

Between 1991 - 1995 [ ] Between 1996 - 2000 [ ]

Between 2001 - 2005 [ ] Between 2006 - 2008 [ ]

Not Known

3. Total membership.

4. What is the main activity of the group?

Merry-go Round Saving and credit [ ]

Agriculture [ ] Small scale business [ ] Handcraft [ ]

**SECTION B**

**Causes of Recurrent Intragroup Conflicts in Self help Groups**

1. Have you ever experienced conflict in your group between 2006- 2008? Yes [ ]

No[ ]

2. Which year(s) was/were the conflict(s)

2006 [ ] 2007 ( ) 2008 [ ]

**Please circle the opinion that best describes *root cause(s)* of intragroup conflicts in your group**

**5 for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree, 3 for Neutral, 2 for Disagree and 1 for Strongly Disagree.**

1. Members having different goals have resulted to conflict in the group

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

2. Members having differences in values in the group results to conflict

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. Lack of clear objectives during group formation was the cause of conflict in the group

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

4. Poor communication between leaders and members on group matters has led to conflict in the group.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

5. Misuse of group's funds initiated conflict in the group

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

6. Differences in understanding and viewpoint among members led to disagreements and conflict in the group

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

7. Individual differences among members led to conflict in the group.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

8. Competition where members put their concerns first and only want to win, causes conflict of interest.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

9. Members differences in status have contributed greatly to conflicts in the group.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

## SECTION C

### **Internal and external conflict management**

**(a) Please circle the number that best describes internal conflict management strategies in your group. 5 for very good, 4 for good, 3 for neutral, 2 for poor and 1 for very poor.**

1. Effective communication by updating members on current issues has helped in conflict management.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

2. Groups members' willingness to cooperate to reach a successful resolution of any issues.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. Group members use avoidance to evade conflict.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

4. Groups members accommodate conflict by willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs (ignoring conflict)

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

5. The group members themselves use negotiation so as to reach voluntary agreement about an issue.

5                  4                  3                  2                  1

6. Group members engage in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution.

5                  4                  3                  2                  1

7. The group engages in compromise by finding a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone.

5                  4                  3                  2                  1

**(b) If conflict was not internally resolved, please tick [ ] the appropriate space for the category that best states the external conflict management intervention.**

1. Where did you seek intervention when you experienced conflict?

Department of gender and social development

Provincial administration                                  [       ]

Law courts

Village elders    [       ]

Community Development Assistants

Church leaders [     ]

NGO [     ]

Bank [     ]

2. Why did you choose (1) above for intervention?

Because it is near to us [     ]

It is the only authority we know that can help [     ]

It is where the group is registered [     ]

Because we are partners [     ]

Because we are their clients [     ]

3. Was the mediator competent in conflict management skills?

Very competent [     ]     Competent [     ]     Neutral [     ]

Incompetent [     ]     Very incompetent [     ]

4. Were you satisfied with the intervention?

Very satisfied [     ]     Satisfied [     ]     Neutral [     ]

Dissatisfied [     ]     Very dissatisfied [     ]

Please tick ( ) the number that explains how your group was either positively or negatively affected by conflict.

**5 for very positively affected, 4 for positively affected, 3 for neutral, 2 for negatively affected and 1 for very negatively affected.**

1. Quality of group decisions was improved by members discussing and deciding together

5            4            3            2            1

2. Members unity for a common purpose was increased

5            4            3            2            1

3. Conflict generated new ideas and approaches to issues by members, that is innovation and change.

5            4            3            2            1

4. Conflict brought about problems previously ignored, to the open for discussion.

5            4            3            2            1

5. Group reorganized itself to deal with dissent and dissatisfaction among members

5            4            3            2            1



6. Conflict resulted in polarization of group members

5            4            3            2            1

7. There was degradation of member's relationships and cooperation due to conflict  
the group

5            4            3            2            1

8. Members developed hatred against others

5            4            3            2            1

9. The groups was weakened by the conflict

5            4            3            2            1

10. There was increase in the possibilities of violent conflict.

5            4            3            2            1

## **SECTION E**

### **Focus Group Discussion**

#### **Possible Strategies of minimizing conflicts in self-help groups.**

1. What is the definition of conflict according to you?
2. What are the common types of conflict you know in self help groups?

3. What would you like to be done by the government, banks, group leaders, members themselves, non-governmental organizations and other partners/stakeholders to minimize conflicts in groups?

4. Who are most affected and least affected by conflict in groups?

**Thank you for your time to fill this questionnaire**

## APPENDIX 4

### SELF HELP GROUPS THAT HAVE NOT REPORTED CONFLICT

#### QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE RESPONDENT

#### LEADERS AND MEMBERS

Please tick in the box, [ ] or till in others specify option as necessary. Do not indicate your name anywhere in this document.

#### SECTION A

##### Respondents Profile

1. What is your Gender?

Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. What is your age bracket?

18-25 26-35 [ ] 36-45

46 -55 [ ] 56+ [ ]

3. What is your level of education?

No education [ ] Adult education [ ] Primary education  
[ ] Secondary education [ ] Tertiary  
University

4. What is your position in your group?

Chairperson [ ] Secretary [ ] Treasurer [ ]

Committee Member [ ] Member [ ]

**Group Profile**

1. What is the type of your group?

Women group Men group [ ]

Youth group Mixed group [ ]

2. When was the group first registered?

Between 1991- 1995 [ ] Between 1996-2000 [ ]

Between 2001 -2005 [ ] Between 2006 - 2008 [ ]

Not Known

3.Total membership

4. What is the main activity of your group?

Merry-go Round [ ] Saving and credit [ ]

Agriculture [ ] Small scale business [ ] Handcraft  
L ]

**SECTION B**

**Internal conflict management**

**Please circle the number that best describes the strategies you use to minimize conflicts in your group: 5 for very good, 4 for good, 3 for neutral, 2 for poor and 1 for very poor.**

1. Effective communication by updating members on current issues has helped in conflict management.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

2. Groups members' willingness to cooperate to reach a successful resolution of any issues.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

3. Group members use avoidance to avert conflict.

5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Groups members accommodate one another by giving in, in order to satisfy others.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

5. The group uses negotiation so as to reach voluntary agreement about an issue.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

6. Group members engage in reconciliation where they restore friendship and harmony between two rival parties after conflict resolution.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

7. The group engages in compromise by finding a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone.

5                    4                    3                    2                    1

**SECTION C**

**Strategies of minimizing conflicts in self help group**

What other strategies do you think can be used to minimize conflicts in groups?

1.....,

2

3

4

5

6

**Thank you for your time to fill this questionnaire**

## APPENDIX 5

### LETTER OF AUTHORISATION



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY fit SOCIAL WORK

Fax 254-2-245566  
Telex 22095 Varsity Ke Nairobi Kenya  
Tel. 318262 ExL 28167

P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi  
Kenya

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2010

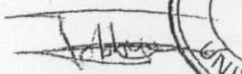
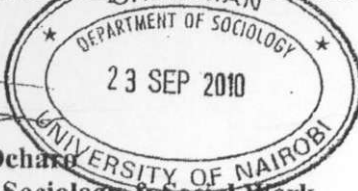
#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: ROSE NDUNGE MWANGANGI**

Through this letter, I wish to confirm that the above named is a bonafide postgraduate student at the Department of Sociology & Social Work, University of Nairobi.

Further, I wish to inform you that the student is collecting data for her research proposal on **"Conflicts in Self-Help Grotips: Causes, Effects and Possible Solutions. A Case Study of Starehe Division, Nairobi Nohh District**

I through this letter, I am kindly requesting you to provide the student with any form of support that is required to collect data.

  
  
**Dr. Robinson Ocharo**  
**Chair, Dept. of Sociology & Social Work**

c.c. Dr. R. Ocharo, Supervisor

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