

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY**

**SOCCER IN PROMOTING PEACE IN KENYA'S INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENTS: THE CASE OF MATHARE SLUMS (2008-2017)**

**COURSE: ARMED CONFLICT AND PEACE STUDIES**

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**December 2022**

**DECLARATION**

This Project Paper is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other institution.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research paper is devoted to my most understanding, caring and loving family, for their immense and unconditional support. Their motivation kept me going throughout the entire research period.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AFCON:</b>	Africa Cup of Nations
<b>AFC:</b>	All Footballers' Confederation
<b>BBC:</b>	The British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>FIFA:</b>	Federation Internationale de Football Association
<b>FKF:</b>	Football Kenya Federation
<b>IOM:</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>MYSA:</b>	Mathare Youths Sports' Association
<b>NGO:</b>	Non-governmental Organizations.
<b>SDGs:</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SDP:</b>	Sport for Development and Peace
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>YDF:</b>	Youth Development through Football

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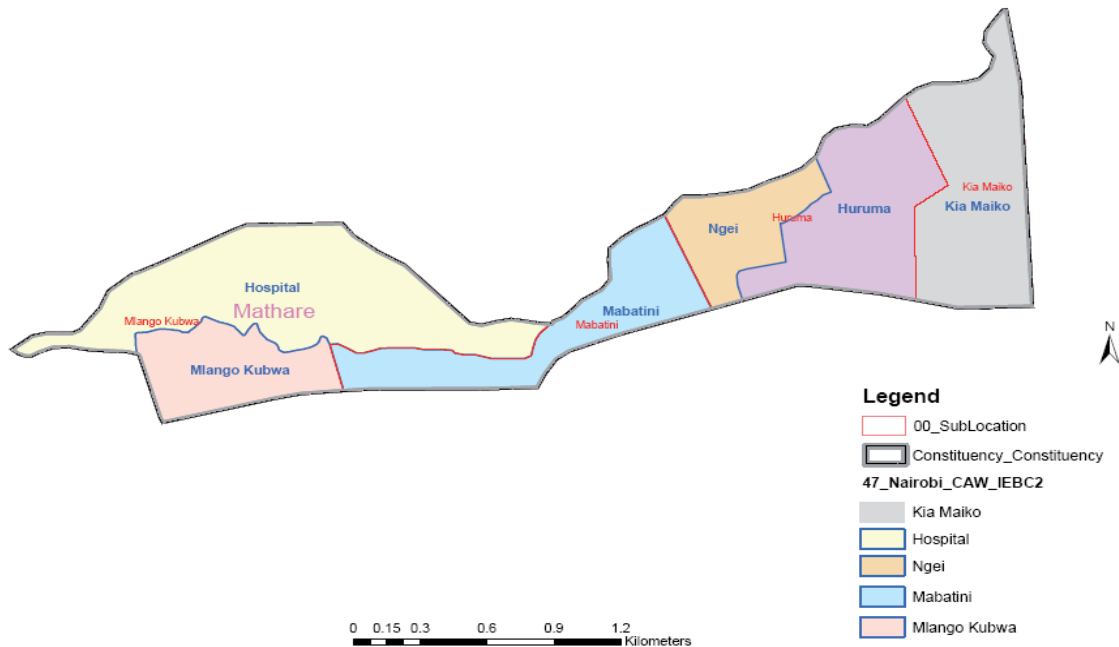


## **ABSTRACT**

Soccer has been touted as a passionate and emotional game that has the capacity to generate conflict and peace between individuals or groups. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, soccer is increasingly emerging as a useful tool for peace-building due to its capacity to open and maintain communication in antagonistic milieus and its ability to connect people, establish channels for cooperation and reframe social ties between communities/ and groups that have previously been in antagonistic stances. Consequently, this paper examined the role of soccer in fostering peace in Kenya's informal settlements using the case study of soccer clubs in Nairobi's Mathare slums (2008-2017). Specifically, the study evaluated the nature of conflict in the Mathare slums; examined the impact of soccer activities on the promotion of reconciliation in Mathare slums; and assessed the challenges of soccer activities in peace building in Mathare slums. The study is hinged upon Johann Galtung's 3Rs peace model which translates to restoration once an act of brutality has occurred, reunification of the entities or persons in conflict as well as resolving underlying factors that have led to the conflict. Further, it employs a qualitative approach to evaluate the role of soccer in promoting peace in Nairobi's Mathare informal settlements. Data was collected through interviews with soccer players, soccer fans, grassroots leaders, soccer club officials, provincial administration and peace committee members in Mathare slums. The findings were presented in narration form. The findings revealed that conflict in Mathare slums is a common phenomenon that was witnessed during the period 2008-2017. Poverty, unemployment, land disputes, ethnicity, police brutality and poor governance were found to fuel conflict in Mathare slums. The findings established that soccer has been able to engage the youth in environmental and social activities, thus shielding them from being recruited into militia and vigilante groups and ultimately promoting peace through the soccer related activities. The findings indicated that the challenges of soccer related activities range from inadequate financing, poor governance and political interference, gender imbalance, soccer hooliganism, the reality that soccer is not loved by everyone, and lack of proper formal education. The study recommends that more financing for soccer related activities should be availed by the government. Additionally, NGOs and volunteers should also offer more financial support to the local soccer teams/clubs to finance their initiatives in peace building in Mathare slums.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Mathare slums in Nairobi, Kenya, has a huge population and is the second largest slum after Kibera slums in the country. The slum harbours a population that is estimated at 206,564 as per the 2019 population census<sup>1</sup>.



**Figure 1. 1: Map of Mathare**

**Source:** <https://kenyacradle.com/mathare-constituency>

The Slum/Mathare Valley is organized into 13 villages classified as follows: *Mabatini* , *Kiamutisya*, *Village 1/Mlango Kubwa*, *Village 2*, *Mathare 3A*, *Mathare 3B*, *Mathare 3C*, *Kwa Kariuki*, *Mathare 4A*, *Mathare 4B*, *Mashimoni* ( including *mashimoni Village 10*), *Kosovo* and *Gitatharu* <sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. *The Kenya Population Census, 2009*. Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019

<sup>2</sup> UN Habitat, 2020. *Informal settlements vulnerability mapping in Kenya*, pp. 6.



**Figure 1. 2: Map of Mathare Valley with the 13 Villages**  
Source: Center for Global Health Cities – University of California, Berkley



**Figure 1. 3: Mathare Informal Settlement**  
Photo: Valerie Omamo

According to the UN Habitat,<sup>3</sup> there are numerous challenges in Mathare, linked to sanitation, health care, congestion, contamination, education, job opportunities, and secure tenure, with majority of these issues remaining unquantified. These challenges have driven conflict in Mathare slums which was particularly severe following the 2007/2008 post-election violence.

Mathare slums was deemed as an appropriate area for study since soccer/football is a popular and recognized sport in the area, and the fact that Mathare was highly dominated by violence following the outcome of the 2007 elections. Therefore, it is potent to understand the role played by soccer in promoting peace in Mathare slums.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

It has become more and more crucial to use sports for development, especially in post-conflict cultures. For sport organizations, donors, and policymakers in many different nations throughout the world, the study of how soccer may promote peace is becoming progressively more crucial.<sup>4</sup> Even if each sport has a significant function, soccer receives the most attention from the public. One sport that has enjoyed significant global appeal for many years is soccer, among many others. According to Borsani, soccer is a potent, impartial, modest, common and beneficial tool in the achievement of peace in societies emerging from conflict and especially with regard to reconciliation<sup>5</sup>. The notion that taking

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Sellstrom, Tor. "Football for Liberation and Peace in Africa: South Africa, Algeria and Ivory Coast." *Conflict Trends* 2010, no. si-1 (2010): 6 -16.

<sup>5</sup> Borsani, S. 2012. The Impact of Sport Interventions in Rift Valley Kenya after Post Election Violence: A Case Study. In K. Gilbert, & W. Bennett, *Sport, Peace, and Development* (pp. 465-480). Champaign, Illinois: Common Ground Publishing LLC.

<sup>5</sup> Kipng'etich, Kirui E. J., and Osman A., 2018 Sports for Intra and Inter Community Peace in Kenya: An Analysis of Tegla Loroupe Peace Foundation. *International Journal of Social Science and Economic Research.*, No. 3; pp.237-251

part or involvement in soccer comes with some advantages rather than being liked for no good reason, can be traced back to the mid-1800s when middle class reformers in the United Kingdom started to evolve with the concept that if soccer is well conducted, it can contribute towards building one's character, bring about order at work place, contribute to team spirit, fairness and acceptable kind of social character<sup>6</sup>.

According to Stüwe, soccer is characterized by modest and effortlessly lucid forms of imagery, which make it practicable to get rid of language impediments as well as other barriers to promote exchange. This is due to the fact that soccer is characterized by instantaneously graspable interactions, and as such, it is principally observed an appropriate channel for overwhelming sentiments, associated with not being familiar with social and societal aspects and what he calls "otherness".<sup>7</sup> Soccer programmes also provide opportunities for mutual occurrences and immediate contact through bodies. Stüwe avers that this offers diverse groups a chance for shared occurrences and interaction through immediate body contact among the players. Persons mutually taking part in energetic sport, mainly in team soccer, gets into immediate bodily connection with each another, that nearly elicits the development of in-depth reciprocal associations.

The history of soccer is directly related to the struggle for racial justice, national liberation, and peace in the early 20th century on the continent of Africa.<sup>8</sup> African leaders have reportedly utilized sport as a means of unification and emancipation. Among others, Kwame Nkrumah, Nnamdi Azikiwe, who played soccer himself, Algeria's Ahmed Ben

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<sup>6</sup> Borsani, S., 2012. The Impact of Sport Interventions in Rift Valley Kenya after Post Election Violence: A Case Study. In K. Gilbert, & W. Bennett, *Sport, Peace, and Development* (pp. 465-480). Champaign, Illinois: Common Ground Publishing LLC.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Sellstrom, T., 2010 "Football for Liberation and Peace in Africa: South Africa, Algeria and Ivory Coast." *Conflict Trends* 2010, no. si-1: 6-16.

Bella, and the now "in-form" Paul Kagame are famous examples.<sup>9</sup> In South Africa, Keim<sup>10</sup> outlines how soccer was pivotal in amplifying and providing a rallying call in the struggle against racism and apartheid. Keim reinforces the belief that the inclusion of players across socio cultural and political fissures could be pivotal in the achievement of peace and the healing of emotionally and psychologically broken societies after being ravaged by conflict and war.

When peace is an end goal, soccer has been touted as a key platform to not only preventing conflict but also to serve as a key constituent for constructing sustainable peace. When meritoriously applied, soccer activities advance national integration and foster inter-group tolerance. The importance of soccer is underscored by the fact that soccer offers a platform for communication without necessarily exchange of words, making it a viable integrational diplomacy tool.<sup>11</sup> Keim's thesis can be construed to imply that since soccer activities are devoid of words and more to do with the use of symbols to induce collective interactions, semantic, linguistic and ethnic or societal impediments are lucidly defeated. As such, it is construed that soccer is a tool of conflict diplomacy due to its employment of the most accessible symbolism.<sup>12</sup> Bearing in mind the salience of the ethno-linguistic factor in inter-ethnic relations in Nairobi's Mathare slums,<sup>13</sup> there is a need to explore the potency of the universality of the language of soccer activities in conflict management.

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<sup>9</sup> Mohammed, A., 2018. "The Role of FIFA and CAF in Using Football to Promote Peace in Africa." PhD diss., Thesis Magister. University of Ghana.

<sup>10</sup> Keim, M., 2011. "Die Rolle des Sports in Afrika als friedensstiftendes Element." In *Herausforderung Afrika*, pp. 114-133. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Sellstrom, T., 2010 "Football for Liberation and Peace in Africa: South Africa, Algeria and Ivory Coast." *Conflict Trends* 2010, no. si-1: 6-16.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

In Kenya, soccer activities have been linked with community and environmental improvements as soccer groups strive to leave a mark in the society. In Mathare slums, the Mathare Youths' Sports Association (MYSA) has been using this guided by the principle of giving back to the community<sup>14</sup> through community service for example tidying up the area<sup>15</sup>. However, such kind of initiatives were not directly linked to peace activities prior to the 2007-2008 Post Election Violence in Kenya and as such, literature on the activities focused on community empowerment at the micro and meso levels. The study therefore seeks to determine the role of soccer in promoting peace in Mathare slums in Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Soccer is increasingly being used to address societal problems in nations that are afflicted by poverty, conflict, and violence.<sup>16</sup> The importance of the soccer should never be understated, according to Bill Shankly, the illustrious former manager of Liverpool.<sup>17</sup> Soccer has the power to change people's lives on a local, national, and international level. It can spark uprisings, start wars, bring about peace, and inspire entire nations. Notably, while soccer can promote peacebuilding among conflicting communities, it can also result in the creation of a 'we versus them' situation, leading to conflict and violence. This is because, the world of football/soccer is a passionate and emotional game that has the capacity to generate conflict between individuals or groups. The football teams that individuals support become a crucial part of their identity and therefore soccer clubs/teams

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<sup>14</sup> Munro, B., 2009. "Sport for peace and reconciliation." In *6th Play the Game World Communications Conference on Sport and Society*.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

<sup>16</sup> Cárdenas, A., 2013. "Peace building through sport? An introduction to sport for development and peace." *Journal of Conflictology* 4, no. 1: 4.

<sup>17</sup> Deyo, Julianna M., 2013 "Sports and International Relations: The Role of Soccer in International Conflicts and Resolutions." Chancellor's Honors Program Projects.

often become synonymous with group identity for historical, geographical or in Kenya for instance, ethnic based reasons. Therefore, soccer can bring people together as well as divide a society based on its application.

Traditionally, soccer was used as a means for entertainment in society. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as conflicts continue to intensify, soccer has grown in popularity as a tool for promoting peace as posited by Rojo-Labaien<sup>18</sup> and Lea-Howarth<sup>19</sup> Further, authors Cardenas<sup>20</sup> and Sellstrom<sup>21</sup>, found that soccer has been used as a tool of healing in conflicting communities. Moreover, the authors established that soccer has been used in mobilizing communities and bringing people together, hence spreading the message of peace especially among the youths.

In conflict zones in Kenya, soccer has been used as a means to promote peace. One of the areas that has seen soccer activities employed is in Nairobi's informal settlement areas. Soccer in Mathare slums has been embraced by the youth as a tool to improve their lives. Following the 2007/2008 post-election violence, conflict was severe in Mathare slums. Despite soccer being identified as a critical element in promoting peace, in Mathare slums, the efforts of soccer clubs are thwarted by poor financing and poor governance in driving reconciliation. Therefore, following the post-election violence, the study seeks to explore

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<sup>18</sup> Rojo-Labaien, E. 2014. "Football as a Reflection of Modern Society's Conflicts and a Way of Creating Societal Ties in Enduring Enmity Context." *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport (IntJSCS)* 2, No. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Lea-Howarth, J. 2006 "Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilise in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction." Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Sussex.

<sup>20</sup> Cárdenas, A., 2013. Peace Building through Sport? An Introduction to Sport for Development and Peace." *Journal of Conflictology* 4, No. 1

<sup>21</sup> Sellstrom, T., 2010. "Beyond the Big Stage: Football, Reconciliation and Social Development in Africa." *Conflict Trends* 2010, No. Special issue 1.



the interplay between soccer, and soccer as a tool for fostering peace in conflict situation. The study adapts Mathare slums as a case study.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

- i. What is the nature of conflict in Mathare slums?
- ii. How do soccer activities contribute in the promotion of reconciliation in Mathare slums?
- iii. What is the role of soccer activities in peacebuilding in Mathare slums?

### **1.4 Broad Objective of the Research**

The broad objective of the research was to evaluate the role of soccer in fostering peace in Kenya's informal settlements using the case study of soccer clubs in Nairobi's Mathare slums (2008-2017).

#### **1.4.1 Specific Objectives**

- i. To evaluate the nature of conflict in Mathare slums
- ii. To examine the impact of soccer activities on the promotion of reconciliation in Mathare slums
- iii. To assess the challenges of soccer activities in peace building in Mathare slums

### **1.5 Justification of the Research**

The study advances knowledge in the area of peacebuilding and provide concrete examples of how soccer-related activities might aid in national peace and development. The study adds knowledge to management teams in soccer teams/clubs in their efforts of using the game as a tool of bringing communities together and advocating for peace. The study

provides a framework that soccer teams/clubs all over the world can adopt in promoting peace in their own countries.

The study also educates governments, experts, and policy makers on the need of paying close attention to soccer, particularly soccer, as a powerful tool for reducing conflict attitudes and fostering intertribal harmony, especially among young people. Soccer is particularly popular among the youth, therefore, by developing policies and strategies that facilitate cohesion of soccer teams/clubs, policy makers create opportunities for young people to advocate for peace through playing soccer/football.

The study provides literature for students and academics planning on conducting more research in the field of soccer and world peace. The study can be adopted as a reference by scholars who seek to shed light on the important role of soccer in promoting cohesion and peace.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

The data collected for the study was limited to the role of soccer in promoting peace in informal settlements using the case study of soccer clubs in Mathare informal settlements. The data was collected from the respondents using a snowballing sampling technique. This is where the researcher relied on reference from the residents of Mathare slums to identify the sample size of the study. To maintain confidentiality, the personal information of the respondents was not revealed in the study. The study limited its focus to the period between 2008 and 2017. The researcher deemed this to be a sufficient period to holistically examine the efficacy of soccer in the promotion of peace in time and space, due to the nature of manifestation of ethnic conflicts in Kenya along electoral cycles. Moreover, the general

elections in 2007, was one of the worst cases of violence experienced in Kenya; it is also an apt period as it gave a contemporary picture of the efficacy of soccer in peace and reconciliation in post-conflict societies.

The researcher faced constraints in obtaining information owing to the sensitivity of the issue of peace and reconciliation and due to the nature of memories it evoked, and emotions whipped by this. This however was addressed by triangulating data from different sources as well as through a peer review of the data by peers of the researcher. Information obtained was used to enrich the available documented information.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

This section covered an empirical review of studies in relation to the study. In particular, the section covers the nature of conflict in society, the impact of soccer activities on the promotion of reconciliation and the impact of soccer activities in peacebuilding. The gaps from empirical literature are also identified.

### **1.7.1 Nature of Conflict in Society**

According to Abadie<sup>22</sup> traditional widespread view across western terrorism and conflict literature is that poverty creates conflict, which has dominated much of the debate on causes of conflict. This is rarely surprising. Ultimately, the idea that poverty creates conflict is congruent with the results of most of the existing literary text on the economics of conflicts. For example, there has been a view that bad economic state increases the likelihood of political coups where governments are overthrown by the military or political opponents. Political forces have little descriptive power, however economic indicators

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<sup>22</sup> Abadie, A., 2004. *Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism*. Cambridge: Harvard University and NBER

have been demonstrated to be a powerful mediator of civil war. The likelihood of civil strife increases in response to negative exogenic shocks to economic growth. These findings seem to imply that poverty and an unfavourable economic situation may play a significant role in explaining conflict, given that conflict is a manifestation of political strife.<sup>23</sup> This is supported in Kenya by an interview conducted by BBC journalist John Nene with an Al Shabaab combatant. He contends that the bulk of Kenya's young generation are drawn to terrorism not because of jihad or Islam but rather because of the money or package that goes along with it and the assurance that they will have food on the table.<sup>24</sup> While the study looked at poverty as a core motivator of conflict, it was not based in Mathare Slums, Kenya, the geographical scope of the current study.

Nonetheless, authors such as Arendt<sup>25</sup> have questioned the perspective that poverty generates conflict. This is because conflict is multi-faceted. He argues about the disenchantment that happens when economic success is gained without a corresponding rise in political power. Accordingly, potential terrorists have been defined as people who, based on their educational and/or professional credentials, are candidates for elite group membership but are rejected for a variety of reasons. Their main complaint is that their ambition is being restricted. They are unable to use social and economic resources to gain political influence.<sup>26</sup> The study was critical for the purpose of the present study was providing a clear understanding of peace making through the application of soccer.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Lowen, M., 2014. *Kenya al-Shabab terror recruits 'in it for the money'*. 29 January. Accessed April 7, 2021. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25934109>.

<sup>25</sup> Arendt, Hannah. 1969. *On Violence*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

In looking at how political administration impacts on conflict, Arendt addresses the matter of legit power and savagery in a diverse way; differentiating legitimate authority from violence.<sup>27</sup> In her work, she firmly indicates that power, quality, and control of the state is vested upon its authenticity, which provides it with the control to promote mutual activity amidst its citizens. State savagery, though it could have a justification, shows that the state needs adequate authenticity to obtain citizen adherence without use of force.<sup>28</sup> The author posited that poor governance facilitates conflict but did not mirror the situation to Kenya's governance. The current study looked at Kenya's governance, especially during the electoral period 2007, 2013 and 2017 to determine whether it drove conflict in Kenya and particularly, in Mathare slums.

These arguments on failed governance seem to hold water if a primer on conflict in Nigeria is anything to go by. According to Ngwodo, the springing up of fear-based oppressor group in Nigeria such as Boko Haram, denotes the ripening of lengthy festering extremist driving forces that move extensively within the societal fact of North side of Nigeria. Nevertheless, the classification may be a result and not the root; it is an indication of the country's non-performing administration, as well as the wrongdoings eventually developing into social related disorder<sup>29</sup>. The publication was geographically limited since it focused on Nigeria; the present study focused on Kenya which has experienced conflict due to various factors among which is poor governance as posited by the findings.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Arendt, Hannah. 1969. *On Violence*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World

<sup>29</sup> Ngwodo, C., 2010. *Understanding Boko Haram: A Theology of Chaos*. 6 October. Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021. <http://chrisngwodo.blogspot.com/2010/10/understanding-boko-haram-theology-of.html>.

Lea-howarth<sup>30</sup> also argues that while the regimes that have ruled Kenya have in rhetoric peddled the idea of the quest of a unitary nation as the prevailing form of statehood, poor governance coupled by the attendant lack of visionary and transformative leadership have continued to undermine the quest for national amity.<sup>31</sup> According to the author, the different regimes in Kenya post-independence have failed in bringing together the Kenyan people. This has particularly been evident during the election period, where conflict among ethnic lines has persisted as a common phenomenon. The study was used to mirror the concept under investigation on the grounds of understanding the nature of conflict in Kenya.

Further, Warren, Cumber and Kevin<sup>32</sup> have attempted to nuance an understanding of conflict dynamics both at the inter-group as well as intra-group levels. Intra-ethnic struggle is a vital occurrence in its entirety, leading to many people dying and being displaced all over the globe. Notable occurrence of several intra-ethnic conflicts has been a norm across the world. Ranging from the co-ethnic factional violence, counting between Hamas and Fatah within the Palestinian Domains and between KDP and PUK groups in Iraqi Kurdistan, intra-ethnic conflicts has been a norm across the number of countries especially in the developing world.<sup>33</sup> The publication was relevant to the study since it advanced the concept of ethnic conflict, a phenomenon that has been witnessed in Kenya and for the current study, the Mathare slums. Therefore, the publication was used as a foundation to build on the ethnic conflict phenomenon witnessed in Mathare slums.

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<sup>30</sup> Lea-howarth, J., 2006. *Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilize in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction?* Contemporary War and Peace Studies, MA Dissertation, University of Sussex.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Warren, T. Camber, T., and Kevin K. (2014). Explaining Violent Intra-Ethnic Conflict: Group Fragmentation in the Shadow of State Power. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, pp. 1-44

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

Horowitz,<sup>34</sup> observed that not much is known around the common state, upon which battles happen among people within the same ethnic group. In this regard, it has become a daunting task for scholars to explain why some groups keep inner peace and unity in spite of gigantic outside weights, whereas other groups eject into rough internal fracture between clashing groups. The author noted that conflict within groups is closely attached to conflict between groups. Horowitz for instance argues that intra-group elements such as radical flanking as well as outbidding are a few of the biggest barriers to residential peace in disjoined social orders.<sup>35</sup> The author noted that conflict can be between individuals or communities in the same ethnic group as well as individuals and communities of different ethnic group. This is an implication that while ethnicity plays a critical role in promoting conflict it is not the only factor. For the current study, the publication was adopted to explain the nature of intra-ethnic conflict among the residents of Mathare slums.

Akinteye,<sup>36</sup> in his research of the Igbo-Ora in Nigeria found that groups are habitually plagued by political and financial splits which are cross-cutting in nature that can shape the premise for the mobilization of mutual savagery at the subset category. These integral splits, Akinteye argues, could be established on increased contract ethnic markers, but could also be established in tribal grounded or clan allegiances which do not outline perfectly onto ethnic frontiers.<sup>37</sup> The argument is further stretched by Barth, Anderson and Brass who argue that ethnic groups are not inactive. Instead, they argue, the frontiers of tribal group participation are the theme of consistent argument whereby political business

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<sup>34</sup> Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Akinteye, A., (1999). Intra-Ethnic Conflicts among the Yoruba: A Case of Igbo Ora. In *Community Conflicts in Nigeria: Management, Resolution and Transformation*, eds. Otite, Onigu and Isaac Olawale Albert. Oxford, UK: Spectrum Books.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

class battle to characterize participation in conditions which are conducive to their interface. In this regard, the striking nature as well as constitution of tribal character levels can hence be anticipated to alter considerably over time leading to intra-ethnic conflicts.<sup>38</sup> The study was based in Nigeria; the current study was based in Kenya where there are over 42 ethnic groups.

#### 1.7.2 Impact of Soccer Activities in the Promotion of Reconciliation

A universal language exists in sport. It has the potential to unite people, regardless of their origin, history, religious convictions, or socioeconomic standing. When FIFA decided to let Japan and Korea host the 2002 World Cup, the first time this had ever happened in the history of soccer, Rojo-Labaien<sup>39</sup> demonstrated how the game of soccer had a positive influence on the creation of a policy of rapprochement. The large-scale international event in Asia made a significant contribution to the development of peace between Japan and Korea.<sup>40</sup> Although the two were seen as traditional rivals, some notable accomplishments were made during this collaboration. Fearing hooligan activity, the governments of the two nations engaged in a security discussion that resulted in the creation and adoption of a comprehensive extradition treaty as well as an improvement in the sharing of intelligence. It is significant to note that negotiations for an agreement on free trade between South Korea and Japan began after the two nations agreed to host the World Cup three years later, in 2005. Additionally, South Korea withdrew its embargo on Japanese cultural goods, and most importantly, social and cultural exchanges between the two countries increased. The

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<sup>38</sup> Barth, F., 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. See also, Anderson, Benedict (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso and Brass, Paul (1997). *Theft of an Idol*. Princeton University Press

<sup>39</sup> Rojo-Labaien, E. 2014. "Football as a Reflection of Modern Society's Conflicts and a Way of Creating Societal Ties in Enduring Enmity Context." *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport (IntJSCS)* 2, No. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid



study focused on international soccer activities while the current study focused on local soccer teams/clubs.

Lea-Howarth<sup>41</sup> focuses on promoting peace in Israel and Sierra Leone based on soccer. He evaluates his position using the Paul Lederach theory of peacebuilding and the Johan Galtung "3Rs" theory of peace and violence. Lea-Howarth adds that neither Galtung nor Lederach provide examples from actual life that show how to establish connections that promote peace. Based on the critically examined case studies, the author made recommendations to individuals who want to use team soccer and promote grassroots initiatives as part of complete peacebuilding techniques in the modern world

Cardenas<sup>42</sup> claims that soccer has aided in the healing, rapprochement, and reconciliation of parties and regions adversely affected by social problems and conflict tensions. The author also outlines the historical background of Sports for Development and Peace and highlights the moment when it first became a social intervention technique. His writing also describes the genesis of Colombia's academic discipline of Sports for Development and Peace. The author ended by making several recommendations, including the necessity for SDP programs and campaigns to take into account cultural aspects that are unique to the focus regions in order to build appropriate sports and reconciliation initiatives for such communities.

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<sup>41</sup> Lea-Howarth, J. 2006 *"Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilise in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction."* Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Sussex.

<sup>42</sup> Cárdenas, A., 2013. Peace Building through Sport? An Introduction to Sport for Development and Peace." *Journal of Conflictology* 4, No. 1

An article by Sellstrom<sup>43</sup>, examined how soccer has traditionally been employed as a powerful mobilizing factor in the social and political uprising of Africans against foreign dominance, racial abuse, and injustices. The article indicates how Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Kwame Nkrumah, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Algeria's Ahmed Ben Bella, and other African leaders used soccer to further their freedom and peace agendas in their respective nations. The essay is concluded with examples of how the Ivory Coast national team used soccer to advocate for unity during the nation's civil war. The study was however wide since its focus was on the entire African Continent while the present study was specific to Kenya with a focus on Mathare slums.

In examining the role of soccer in the promotion of peacebuilding efforts, Rookwood and Palmer<sup>44</sup> examine the paradox of soccer as an offensive oriented activity grounded on the philosophy of strike and defence, essentially fighting strategies, as a tool of peace. The two scholars found out that this paradoxical soccer' philosophy can be applied like a contrivance to encourage peace-making after the end of conflict in the society. They note many actors within civil society spaces have taken note of the aptness of soccer like a contrivance to support peace and foster societal growth in communities that have been affected by conflict. Soccer is perceived as a mode of inspiring conflicting categories to assemble in mutual spaces to take part in mutual activity which is a positive thing to do and helps in building of relationships. By examining a soccer-grounded Non-Governmental project in Liberia, the authors recommend that additional research is vital to

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<sup>43</sup> Sellstrom, T., 2010. "Beyond the Big Stage: Football, Reconciliation and Social Development in Africa." *Conflict Trends 2010*, No. Special issue 1.

<sup>44</sup> Rookwood, and Palmer, C., 2011 'Invasion games in war-torn nations: can soccer help to build peace?', *Soccer & Society*, 12: 2, 184 — 200

understand exactly what role soccer plays in peace-building and how it does that.<sup>45</sup> The study takes up the recommendation to determine the essential role of soccer in peacebuilding in Mathare slums, Kenya.

Makwerere and Mandoga<sup>46</sup> applied the '3Rs' theory of Peace and violence in addition to the holistic peace building approach of Johan Galtung<sup>47</sup> and Paul Lederach<sup>48</sup> respectively established that, if used or handled properly, soccer can be a vital tool for fostering and promoting peace in post-conflict cultures, mentioning Zimbabwe as a major example. This is accomplished using the most talents and approaches possible, not just by playing soccer. According to the report, Zimbabwe's soccer landscape is holistic and inclusive, making a peace-building strategy there more suitable. Even while the sport is helpful in terms of the peace agenda, the research discovered that government meddling, violence, match manipulation, and ethnic differences, all of which are connected to soccer, have a propensity to spark disputes if proper consideration is not paid to containing them. Due to the study's geographic focus on Zimbabwe, there is a need for additional research in this area. The study carried out is still pertinent to the current research conducted as it spends a lot of time generating conclusions that are specific to an African nation.

The present study was based in Kenya, an African country that has experienced conflict and has embraced soccer as a tool of promoting peace. Therefore, using the study, this

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid

<sup>46</sup> Makwerere, D, and Edward M., 2012. *"Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Football as a Vehicle for Peacebuilding in Zimbabwe."*

<sup>47</sup> Galtung, Johann (1998). *After Violence: 3R, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Resolution: Coping with Visible and Invisible Effects of War and Violence.* Transcend

<sup>48</sup> Lederach, P., 2005. *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace.* Oxford University Press.

research sought to determine the challenges of soccer activities in promoting peace in Mathare slums.

### 1.7.3 Challenges of Soccer Activities in Promoting Peacebuilding

Research has revealed developing nations do not prioritize investment into soccer and talent development as much as developed countries do, because soccer is not considered a priority, hence not incorporated into the national budget or in the education system or the same is given very minimal budget or consideration. As a result of this lack of investment in developing soccer facilities and related initiatives, there is a growing concern that talented athletes fail to develop their talents and leverage on them as a poverty alleviation tool.<sup>49</sup> In the same breath, there are increasing concerns that talented individuals may fail to develop their talents and become professional athletes, since they lack the support and incentive to grow in a developing country. The lack of support to develop talents means that these countries realize even less return on investment made on soccer facilities and infrastructure. This discourages more investment, which further erodes the chances of future talent development, thereby limiting sport career pathways. This tendency was made clear in 1996 when Kenya was disqualified from hosting the AFCON due to a lack of government funding as well as inadequate facilities and infrastructure.<sup>50</sup> The study by Zhang and colleagues was broad since it looked at the whole aspect of soccer while the current study only focused on soccer in Mathare slums.

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<sup>49</sup> Zhang, J.J., Kim, E., Mastromartino, B., Qian, T.Y. and Nauright, J., 2018. The sport industry in growing economies: critical issues and challenges. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*.

<sup>50</sup> BBC.com., 2010. "South Africa 1996- Apartheid out." Available at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2010/01/100106\\_acn\\_moment\\_south\\_africa\\_1996.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2010/01/100106_acn_moment_south_africa_1996.shtml)  
Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Hough<sup>51</sup> focused on the "Football War" that occurred between El Salvador and Honduras. The most tragic incident in the history of the game was caused by the scorching of Honduran flags as well as some brutal attacks on the Honduran fans after El Salvador won the 1970 World Cup qualifying match in San Salvador. After the match, the two nations had hostile diplomatic discussions that set the stage for El Salvadoran troops to invade Honduras and start a five-day conflict that claimed around 2000 lives in both countries.<sup>52</sup> These wars are thought to have had complex social, political, geographic, economic, historical, and cultural roots and would have occurred even if football was not in the picture. However, the fact that a football dispute escalated into major fighting shows that the sport can act as a catalyst for latent violence to erupt. This should serve as a warning to anyone who wants to use the sport to heal rifts among community members or people involved whose relationships are less than stellar. Rojo-Labaien,<sup>53</sup> claims that in this instance, soccer was used by politicians to uphold the established order that leads to inequality and dominance by the wealthy landowners in the two South American nations. The two studies though showed that poor governance and political interference impact the efforts of soccer activities in promoting peace did not focus on the use of soccer in promoting peace in informal settlements such as Mathare slums.

According to Panneborg<sup>54</sup> Africa's soccer infrastructure is in poor shape. Only a few nations, like South Africa and Morocco, can brag of having facilities and stadiums of the highest caliber. The hosting of the Africa Cup of Nations has benefited other nations,

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<sup>51</sup> Hough, P., 2008. 'Make goals not war': the contribution of international football to world peace. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 25(10), pp.1287-1305.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Pannenborg, A. (2010). Football in Africa: Observations about political, financial, cultural and religious influences, NCDO Publication Series Sport & Development, pp. 19

leading to the construction and refurbishment of various stadiums in Angola, Burkina Faso, Egypt, and Mali. Due to this, attending sporting events across the continent is risky, and fatal accidents occur every year at stadiums. There is no funding allocated for enhancing stadium safety or raising fan comfort levels. This has an impact on attendance, which harms small clubs who depend heavily on gate entry fees to make ends meet. The performance of the players in their national leagues is subsequently impacted by this. The stadium and its amenities have an impact on the attendance at home games and could be a key success element for football clubs. The study was however limited since it did not show the relationship between soccer and peacebuilding in Africa, which is the aim of the current study with a focus on Mathare slums in Nairobi, Kenya.

Muthuri<sup>55</sup> examines the role that soccer can play in resolving conflict in Kenya using the case study of Kibera constituency in Nairobi County. Muthuri concludes that soccer can be an influential tool for the promotion of peace. He also found that soccer is a useful tool for conflict resolution if employed effectively and that the main challenge hampering soccer is poor management and poor infrastructure especially at the grassroots. Secondly, there is limited participation of girls/women in soccer thus limiting its inclusivity as a tool for peace.<sup>56</sup> The study however, only focused on Kibera slums. This is a research gap the study filled by focusing on Mathare slums, the second largest informal settlement in Kenya.

## **1.8 Hypotheses**

The study is guided by the following study hypotheses;

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<sup>55</sup> Muthuri, D., 2016. *The Role of Soccer in Conflict Resolution in Kenya: A Case Study Kibra Constituency*. MA Dissertation, University of Nairobi.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

- i. There is conflict of a certain nature in Mathare slums
- ii. Soccer activities have promoted reconciliation in Mathare slums
- iii. There are challenges of soccer activities in promoting peacebuilding in Mathare slums

## **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The study employed Johann Galtung's peace model in examining the role of soccer in the promotion of peace in societies emerging out of conflict. According to Galtung, there are three key processes in peace building referred to as 'the 3Rs' (reconstruction, reconciliation and resolution) which translates to restoration once an act of brutality has occurred, reunification of the entities or persons in conflict as well as resolving underlying factors that have led to the conflict. He suggests that if only one of the Rs is undertaken without the other two, even the one R undertaken would not be achieved.<sup>57</sup> According to Galtung, the brutal series associated with all the aspects playing a role in a conflict situation could be fragmented then converted to a righteous sequence accompanied with shared efforts connected to the '3Rs'. This framework was important to the present study as it provided the framework to analyse how soccer can be employed from the perspective of the 3Rs as a tool for the holistic process of peace building.

The first R denotes reconstruction. Reconstruction involves rehabilitation mainly through trauma healing and psycho-social support. Secondly it involves rebuilding, that is things like infrastructure, buildings, institutions etc., that existed before the war or violence. Third, is restructuring that deals with democratization and elimination of structures that

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<sup>57</sup>Galtung, J., 1998. *After Violence: 3R, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Resolution: Coping with Visible and Invisible Effects of War and Violence*. Transcend

tend to undermine efforts towards an environment for positive peace. Lastly is reculturation which signifies the change from the practice of brutality to attainment of Peace. In the first R, soccer can help in establishing relationships, creating conducive condition for peaceful solution and increasing prospects for success through established relationship.<sup>58</sup>

The second R involve reconciliation which include healing and closure of hostilities. The initial steps of reconciliation involve allowing individuals to express themselves freely and to tell their truth. In this R, soccer can help parties to thaw emotions of hatred, intense scepticism, indignation as well as retaliation or vengeance. Reconciliation thus needs, healing of deep emotional scars which soccer offers a platform to address. Lastly, the last R refers to resolution. Conflict resolution is achieved through cease-fires for example. Resolution can also include the utilization of power with engagement of the armed forces or even involvement of a neutral person to provide mediation services. Soccer can contribute through building of sport infrastructure and facilitating social inclusion.<sup>59</sup>

Boulding<sup>60</sup> criticized Galtung's theory on the basis that the latter downgraded the study of international peace by labelling it negative, consequently dragging peace professionals or actors into abstract spheres of which their skills are limited.<sup>61</sup> To unify the two concepts, Boulding called it stable peace which he drew from notion of peace with justice for all.

Galtung's theory is relevant for the study since whereas Boulding emphasizes on instances characterized by peace presence, Johann makes an attempt to puzzle out where there is

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<sup>58</sup>Serena B., 2009. *The Contribution of Sport Within the Process of Peace and Reconciliation: From Trauma Healing to Social Integration: The Impact of Sports in the Rift Valley Province After the Post-election Violence in Kenya*. Saint Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy. p, 10

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Boulding, K.E., 1977. Twelve friendly quarrels with Johan Galtung. *Journal of Peace Research*, 14(1), pp.75-86.

<sup>61</sup> Boulding, K., 1991. "Stable peace Among Nations: A learning Process" in Boulding, K., Brigagao, C. and Clements, K. (Eds). *Peace, Culture and Society: Transnational Research and Dialogue*. Boulder, Co: West view Press, pp108-124.



presence of conflict, the violence it brings about as well as ways of attaining peace with justice for all.<sup>62</sup> The theory is relevant to the current study since it holds that while there is conflict in any society, effective ways have to be adopted to promote peace. Soccer is an international game that has gained popularity around the world. Soccer has been used in the past to bring people together. Using Johann Galtung's peace model, soccer can be applied to reconstruction, reconciliation and drive resolution among conflicting communities. Thus, the theory was essential in elaborating the importance of soccer in promoting peace in Mathare slums.

### **1.10 Methodology of the Study**

This section outlines how the researcher collected, analysed and presented data on the role of soccer in promoting peace in informal settlements using the case of soccer clubs in Mathare slums. The section also outlined the study's research design, the study population, study site, sampling techniques, data collection methods, instruments of data collection, data analysis techniques and the presentation of findings.

The study is qualitative. To this end therefore, the data collected sought to respond to the qualitative questions. To achieve the objectives of the research, data was collected and triangulated to develop themes. The raw data was collected through in-depth oral interviews. Therefore, the design of the study was qualitative since the data gathered was non-numerical. Secondary data was collected from sources such as articles, books,

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<sup>62</sup> Galtung, J., 1998. *After Violence: 3R, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Resolution: Coping with Visible and Invisible Effects of War and Violence*. Transcend

previous research, reports, as well as publications with vital information relevant or applicable to the research.

The target population for the study was drawn from the residents of Mathare slums/soccer fans (15), Soccer club officials (6) (2 from Gor Mahia residing in Mathare, 2 from Mathare United F.C and 2 from Real Mathare F.C), soccer players (15), the Provincial Administration and peace building committees (5) and grassroots leaders (4). The study therefore used a sample of 45 respondents. The respondents were identified using snowballing sampling to identify initial respondents who would be in a position to provide the relevant information and then snowballing sampling technique was employed to identify subsequent respondent. To begin with, the researcher has friends who work and have lived in Mathare and who have contacts with Mathare soccer club officials, '*mama mboga's*' in Huruma and '*kwa chief*'. Through these contacts the researcher was able to purposively identify the respondents relevant for the study.

The qualitative data collected from in-depth interviews was analysed using content analysis to deduce patterns, themes and outlines of the influence of soccer in promoting peace in informal settlements. The researcher employed an examination method which is inductive in nature, whereby trends, the subjects, as well as classifications emanating from the data collected is analysed thematically then thematised in order to tease out the influence of soccer activities in promoting peace. The descriptive qualitative data was presented in narrative form.

## CHAPTER TWO: NATURE OF CONFLICT IN MATHARE SLUMS

### 2.1 Introduction

According to Mwangi,<sup>63</sup> conflict is endemic in all societies. This means that where we have people and society, there is always a possibility of conflict. Mwangi says that conflict in society and among people, cannot be eliminated, because it is part of life. Since the post-colonial period, conflict in Mathare slums has been a common phenomenon. Just like other informal settlements in Nairobi, Mathare slums is a product of colonial urban residential land use where the natives and the poor were forced to eke an existence in congested zones. The Mathare slums was built in the 1960s, just after Kenya attained independence, beside the Mathare River, a major tributary of the Nairobi River, in a flood plain. Though a creation of the post-colonial era, it is a consequence of the inability of the post-colonial authorities to address urban spatial justice issues particularly zoning segregation systems which skewed land distribution in favour of the white and the affluent. In addition, post-colonial land arbitration by the authorities allocated meagre spaces to landless urban dwellers leading to the mushrooming of informal settlements.<sup>64</sup> The difficulties experienced in Mathare have resulted in consistent conflict and violence in the region. Therefore, this chapter sought to determine the nature of conflict in Mathare slums by examining its causes and the challenges faced in mitigating it in Mathare.

### 2.2 Causes of Conflict in Mathare slums

Conflict in Mathare slums is not a new phenomenon; it has been experienced over the years. Therefore, this section sought to understand the underlining causes of conflict in the

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, Mwangi

<sup>64</sup> Peris Njoroge, Amollo Ambole, Daniel Githira and George Outa (2020). Steering Energy Transitions through Landscape Governance: Case of Mathare Informal Settlement, Nairobi, Kenya. *Land*, 9; 1-19

area. Different drivers of conflict are identified and discussed in this section. The causes of conflict in Mathare slums have been categorized into two; the underlining causes and the trigger causes. The underlining causes include; poverty, poor governance and unemployment while the trigger causes include police brutality and ethnicity.

### **2.2.1 Underlining Causes**

The underlining causes are the main causes that have caused conflict in Mathare slums. These are the causes that directly lead to conflict.

#### **2.2.1.1 Poverty**

Poverty is a leading cause of conflict across the world.<sup>65</sup> According to Abadie<sup>66</sup>, negative exogenic shocks in economic growth intensifies the probability of civil conflict. This phenomenon has been evident in Mathare slums where poverty was reported as a leading cause of conflict and violence in the region. According to a respondent interviewed<sup>67</sup>, poverty in Mathare slums has propelled conflict and violence in the region by pushing young people in particular to engage in any form of activity to make ends meet.

*Most of the youths in Mathare including myself are unemployed. This leaves us with little to no chances of earning a living, therefore, to make ends meet, we can engage in any mischief as long as it guarantees us some money at the end of the day (Mathare Soccer Fan, 007, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

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<sup>65</sup> Abadie, Alberto. 2004. *Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism*. Cambridge: Havard University and NBER

<sup>66</sup> Abadie, Alberto. 2004. *Poverty, Political Freedom, and the Roots of Terrorism*. Cambridge: Havard University and NBER

<sup>67</sup> Soccer Fan, 005 from Mathare slums, Area 3B, interviewed on 12th Aug 2020

Additionally, two grassroots leaders<sup>68</sup> interviewed attributed the rise of the militia activity in Mathare to poverty. They argued that with poverty, the youths sought to belong to one of the ethicised militias in order to have an organizational structure to engage in crime or to protect the neighbourhoods at a fee. In this regard, vigilantism became part of the lifestyle in Mathare. They further indicated that the establishment of the vigilante and militia groups by young people in Mathare slums has intensified over the years in retaliation to exacerbating security concerns as well as inefficient, unscrupulous, or entirely absent protection of such places.

Two soccer players<sup>69</sup> explained that the vigilante groups in Mathare slums have been instigated by the need for safer streets, in slum settings. Additionally, a soccer fan<sup>70</sup> revealed that the vigilante groups in Mathare slums attract many young people due to the poverty in the area. The lack of clean reliable water, good standard medical facilities and employment opportunities drive the youth into joining such groups since in some instances it provides economic advantages. An interviewee<sup>71</sup> explained that the militias in Mathare slums duopolize violence by becoming alternatives to protection and public safety. This was made possible by the cross-breed of institutions with crime like background which mutated into vigilantes.<sup>72</sup> Conflict periodically erupted largely driven by militias. The presence of militias has been theorized to be a product of state absence in policing urban informal neighbourhoods.

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<sup>68</sup> Grassroot Leader, 00 from Mathare slums, Area 4A interviewed on 25th Aug 2020; Grassroot Leader, 002 from Mathare slums, Area 3C, interviewed on 20th Aug 2020

<sup>69</sup> Two soccer players from Mathare slums Area 3B interviewed on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020

<sup>70</sup> Soccer Fan, 008, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 14th Aug 2020

<sup>71</sup> Soccer player, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>72</sup> Ibid

According to a resident born and raised in Mathare and the founder of ‘*Bunge la Wamama Mashinani*’,<sup>73</sup> conflict over the years has tended to feature one vigilante group or another. The respondent indicated that due to the ingrained challenges faced in Mathare slums such as poverty, these vigilante groups are easily incited to start conflict by politicians. According to an interviewee<sup>74</sup>, the 2007/2008 post-election violence saw many vigilante groups in Mathare slums participating in conflict for their support of different political leaders in the belief that the leader they support would provide employment opportunities for the youth. The finding concurs with results by Lowel<sup>75</sup> who established that majority of young people join criminal groups under the promise of financial reward in the attempt of trying to escape poverty.

Arendt<sup>76</sup> questioned the perspective that poverty generates conflict. According to the author, there is more to conflict than just poverty which in this case he talks about alienation. The alienation that results when economic triumph has been attained, yet a corresponding increase in political power has been declined. The same scenario has been evident in Mathare slums where most residents from the region feel side-lined based on their area of residence. The following is verbatim statement from an interview:

*Although, Mathare slums is one of the regions that is near the Central Business District of Nairobi City, the residents do not receive the same facilities as those provided in other areas such as Kasarani area. Our health facilities, educational facilities and the security is poor (Soccer Player, 012, Mathare slums 4A, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

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<sup>73</sup> Soccer Fan, 009, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3rd Aug 2020

<sup>74</sup> Soccer player, 006, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>75</sup>Lowen, Mark. 2014. *Kenya al-Shabab terror recruits 'in it for the money'*. 29 January. Accessed April 7, 2020. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-25934109>

<sup>76</sup> Arendt, Hannah. 1969. *On Violence*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

This is an implication that the leaders elected in Mathare slums have not been effective in implementing developmental projects despite the region being allocated a budget. Although the concept of alienation was identified to have driven conflict in Mathare slums, two soccer club officials<sup>77</sup> revealed that the resource distribution in Nairobi area is unequal particularly with reference to Mathare. One of the soccer club officials said:

*Mathare is a short drive away from the hotels and shopping malls in Nairobi, but it couldn't be further detached from the wealth and glamour of Kenya's capital (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

Hansen<sup>78</sup> found out that, unequal distribution of resources are the critical factors that have led to violence in the slums. This was found to be the case in Mathare slums, where due to the high levels of poverty, conflict has been embedded in the day-to-day lives of the residents. Therefore, there is need for proper implementation of leadership and governance to ensure fair distribution of resources and its effective use as a measure of mitigating poverty in Mathare slums.

### **2.2.1.2 Poor Governance**

Poor governance is a factor that predisposes Mathare slums to conflict and violence. An interviewee<sup>79</sup> stated that Mathare slums is an example of how government administration has failed on the matter of resource distribution in urban informal settlements. The representative of the soccer club explained that programs like "*Kazi kwa Vijana*," a government program that was implemented in the wake of the post-election violence to

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<sup>77</sup> Soccer club official, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020; Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020.

<sup>78</sup> Hansen, T.O., 2009. Political violence in Kenya: a study of causes, responses, and a framework for discussing preventive action. *Institute for Security Studies Papers*, 2009(205), p.24.

<sup>79</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

provide jobs, primarily for urban slum youth, in an effort to deter them from engaging in violent and criminal behaviour, has been severely criticized. As part of the project, young people are hired for manual labour jobs such as repairing roads and bridges and cleaning up of the environment. They are paid approximately 300 Kshs per day which is perceived to be very little. The provincial administration oversees the project. Three government ministries, Roads and Public Works, Youth Affairs and Sports, and Environment and Natural Resources, coordinate with each other to implement the "Kazi kwa vijana" initiative. The interviewee<sup>80</sup> explained that the initiative's implementation has not been consistent across all Nairobi's slums, based on the interviews that were performed.

Additionally, an interviewee stated that:

*Much of the 'kazi kwa vijana' initiative funds have been directed to Kibera, the largest slum in Kenya, thus sidelining informal settlements such as Mathare slums. (Provincial Administration and Peace Committee Member, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This calls for the need to properly distribute resources equally in informal settlements such as Kibera and Mathare slums. In addition to resource distribution, proper management is required for successful development of informal settlements, thus promoting peaceful coexistence. Okombo and Sana<sup>81</sup> found that the poor governance in the financing of the 'Kazi Kwa Vijana' initiative has resulted in very few youths benefiting from the initiative. According to the report by Okombo and Sana<sup>82</sup>, only 3000 youths have benefited from the "Kazi kwa Vijana" initiative. This has had an indirect impact on conflict, since it does not

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<sup>80</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>81</sup> Okombo, O., and Sana, O. 2010. *Balaa Mtaani: The Challenge of Mending Ethnic Relations in the Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

<sup>82</sup> Okombo, O., and Sana, O. 2010. *Balaa Mtaani: The Challenge of Mending Ethnic Relations in the Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).



solve the problem of unemployment, therefore providing room for violence in Mathare slums.

Ngwodo<sup>83</sup> found that poor governance was a leading factor of conflict. A soccer player<sup>84</sup> revealed that the increased conflict in Mathare slums has been driven by poor governance with regards to the Nairobi County leadership. According to the interviewee,<sup>85</sup> the leaders they elected and even physically fight for, have disappointed them since the cost of living has risen pushing many residents of the area to join militia groups, thus exacerbating conflict. Two soccer players<sup>86</sup> added that the leaders elected to ensure development and growth of Nairobi County have abandoned Mathare slums. According to the two players, the area receives aid mostly from well-wishers, former residents and non-governmental organizations. The poor governance in the region, particularly as linked to resource allocation paves way for conflict as all residents strive to survive in the area. Lea-howarth<sup>87</sup> found that poor governance coupled by lack of visionary and transformative leadership have continued to undermine the quest for national amity.<sup>88</sup> This shows that the different regimes in Kenya post-independence have failed in bringing together the Kenyan people.

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<sup>83</sup> Ngwodo, C., 2010. *Understanding Boko Haram: A Theology of Chaos*. 6 October. Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021. <http://chrisngwodo.blogspot.com/2010/10/understanding-boko-haram-theology-of.html>.

<sup>84</sup> Soccer player, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 24th Aug 2020

<sup>85</sup> Soccer player, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 24th Aug 2020

<sup>86</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 010, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>87</sup> Lea-howarth, J., 2006. *Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilize in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction?* Contemporary War and Peace Studies, MA Dissertation, University of Sussex. P, 25

<sup>88</sup> Ibid

### 2.2.1.3 Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a determining factor in the nature and dynamic of conflict around the world. This phenomenon is especially common in developing countries such as Kenya. Horowitz,<sup>89</sup> observed that conflict can be between individuals or communities in the same ethnic group as well as individuals and communities of different ethnic group. As posited earlier, conflict in Mathare slums revolving around militia groups is not a new phenomenon. According to a soccer player<sup>90</sup>, militia activities in the neighbourhood of Mathare is usually carried out along ethnic lines. Additionally, a soccer fan<sup>91</sup> revealed that the business people from individual ethnic communities usually use their ethnic militia ties if they are aggrieved or under attack from the other militia. This is similar to findings by Akinteye,<sup>92</sup> who argued that groups that are habitually plagued by tribal and ethnic issues which are cross-cutting in nature can shape the premise for the mobilization of mutual savagery and violence.

The following are verbatim statements from two interviewees:

*The conflict conducted by the militia and vigilante groups in Mathare slums are often grounded on ethnic lines. For instance, the Taliban, is a Luo affiliated militia, while the Mungiki is a Kikuyu affiliated militia (Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020)*

*Conflict between the Taliban and the Mungiki in Mathare slums is often grounded on the belief that each militia group is protecting the interests of its ethnic community. (Provincial Administration and Peace Building Committee Member, 004, Mathare slums 3C, 20<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

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<sup>89</sup> Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<sup>90</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>91</sup> Soccer Fan, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 1st Sept 2020

<sup>92</sup> Akinteye, A., (1999). Intra-Ethnic Conflicts among the Yoruba: A Case of Igbo Ora. In *Community Conflicts in Nigeria: Management, Resolution and Transformation*, eds. Otite, Onigu and Isaac Olawale Albert. Oxford, UK: Spectrum Books.

The qualitative data indicates that ethnicity has been central in the conflict between the militia groups in Mathare slums. This concurs with Horowitz<sup>93</sup> findings, that ethnicity fuels conflict particularly in developing countries. Therefore, in the efforts of promoting peace, awareness grounded on nationality rather than ethnicity, can promote peace in Kenya.

According to Wamalwa, Wanjala and Tuikong,<sup>94</sup> A history of perceived ethnic favouritism by Kenyan politicians is largely to blame for the polarization of ethnic cleavages in the country. The party system, which has historically mirrored and sustained ethnic cleavages, is a second factor contributing to ethnic tensions. The ethnic divide in Mathare slums goes far back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A soccer player<sup>95</sup> reported that the divide of residents along ethnic lines is further worsened by the increased population and high level of poverty. A soccer player said:

*Majority of the people in Mathare slums believe that they need to be surrounded by their own ethnic communities to survive. Therefore, it is no wonder that most of the conflict witnessed in Mathare slums is usually based along ethnic lines. (Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020)*

Okombo<sup>96</sup> agrees with the finding suggesting that ethnic diversity has for a long-time fuelled conflict in Kenya in different regions. The author argues that conflict along ethnic diversity often results in the loss of lives and destruction of property. Therefore, ethnic based conflict should be avoided to save lives and ensure growth and development of the economy.

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<sup>93</sup> Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<sup>94</sup> Wamalwa, D., Wanjala, T., and Tuikong, S. 2016. Nature and Influence of Conflict in Kibera and Mathare Slums after 2007 Elections in Kenya. *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (IJRRSSH)* Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (9-16).

<sup>95</sup> Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3rd Aug 2020

<sup>96</sup> Okombo, O., and Sana, O. 2010. *Balaa Mtaani: The Challenge of Mending Ethnic Relations in the Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

The Kenyan Constitution was based for a long time on its colonial-era version, which gave the president broad authority. According to Human Rights Watch, this increases the dangers of a winner-takes-all scenario. This has caused the general population to assume that in order to secure benefits and to create a defense strategy to prevent other ethnic groups from acquiring employment, land, and entitlements, someone belonging to their own ethnic community must be in power. Politicians and the general public now view obtaining presidential authority as a zero-sum sport in which losing is extremely expensive and unacceptable.<sup>97</sup> One of the interviewees said:

*The 2007 general election was based on the belief that the president should come from a specific ethnic group to ensure the protection and security of that group. That was the thinking of most voters in Mathare slums. The fact that the residents were divided along ethnic militia groups also fuelled the conflict that was experienced after the elections (Provincial Administration and Peace Committee Member, 005, Mathare slums 3B, 11<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The qualitative data showed that the conflict following the 2007 general elections was fuelled by ethnicity leading to the loss of many lives and destruction of property. Yieke<sup>98</sup> agrees with these findings, claiming that Kenyan politics is still predominantly driven by ethnic concerns, with candidates for government portraying themselves as the staunchest protectors of their ethnic community.

Data collected from an interviewee residing in Mathare slums 3A<sup>99</sup> argued that the political class often plays on the people's ignorance and exploit ethnic divisions to incite

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<sup>97</sup> Wolf, S., 2006. *Ethnic Conflicts a Global Perspective*. Oxford University Press: Great Calderon Street Oxford.

<sup>98</sup> Yieke, F.A. 2008. *The Discursive Construction of Ethnicity: The Case of the 2007 Kenyan General Election*. Eger ton University, Kenya.

<sup>99</sup> Soccer Fan, 010, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 4nd Aug 2020

communities into hating each other. A soccer fan<sup>100</sup> explained that the politicians exploited the ignorance of the residents of Mathare slums in inciting them to engage in conflict and violence. The high level of ignorance by a majority of Mathare slums residents is largely contributed by poor level of education and exposure. According to the interviewee<sup>101</sup>, majority of the residents in Mathare slums do not have the necessary or proper education, therefore, it is easy for them to be incited by politicians who ought to protect them from conflict and violence.

The 2008 post-election violence came in the wake of the disputed Kenyan Presidential election results in 2007, when violence erupted almost at the same time in several different locations. An interviewee<sup>102</sup> reminisced that the ethnically based conflict during the 2007/2008 post-election violence resulted to him losing close family members. Two soccer players<sup>103</sup> reported that their mothers lost their businesses because of the violence as young men engaging in the act looted their shops completely. The two interviewees<sup>104</sup> added that the looting affected their family and they had to work extra hard in order to survive following the incident. Following the 2007/2008 post-election violence over 1000 people died and over 650,000 persons were internally displaced.<sup>105</sup> Due to the nature of politics in Kenya that is culturally linked and determined by the divisiveness of geographical area and the ethnicization of the urban settlements in Nairobi, the conflict turned to be catastrophic,

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<sup>100</sup> Soccer Fan, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 15th Aug 2020

<sup>101</sup> Soccer Fan, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 15th Aug 2020

<sup>102</sup> Soccer Fan, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>103</sup> Soccer players from Mathare slums, Area 4B, interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

<sup>104</sup> Soccer players from Mathare slums, Area 4B, interviewed on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

<sup>105</sup> Elder, C., Stigant, S. and Claes, J., 2014. *Elections and Violent Conflict in Kenya: making prevention stick*. United States Institute of Peace.

that is politically, economically as well as affected human welfare in slums that are based in Nairobi such as Mathare.<sup>106</sup>

In Mathare, the 2008 post-election violence that was grounded on ethnicity immensely destroyed the socio economic and political fabric of the area. This is captured by scholars such as Wamalwa, Matanga and Onkware who postulate that the conflict divided people in the thirteen slum villages dotting the Mathare Valley along ethnic lines.<sup>107</sup> The findings of the authors were similar to the data collected from a soccer player<sup>108</sup> who argued that the 2007-2008 post-election conflict in Mathare slums destroyed the social fabric of the society to the extent that it was a challenge for the community to rise again and find a common ground for mutual existence and collaboration. A provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>109</sup> argued that as the slum was rising out of the conflict in the wake of the signing of the National Accord between the two main political protagonists, Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki, the major task was to rebuild trust between all sections or areas of Mathare as well as to find ways through which people could live together peacefully. In the urban centres, the epicentres of the conflict were in slum settings such as Kibera and Mathare. Due to the manifestation of the conflict ethnically, the cosmopolitan nature of Mathare heralded a much worse conflict compared to other areas. Two interviewees said:

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<sup>106</sup> Dennis Nyongesa Wamalwa, Frank Matanga, Kennedy Onkware, Nature and Influence of Conflict in Kibera and Mathare Slums after 2007 Elections in Kenya, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*. Vol. 4, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 19-26

<sup>107</sup> Wamalwa, N., Matanga, F., and Onkware, K., 2016. Challenges Encountered By the State and Civil Society in the Implementation of Post- Conflict Reconstruction in Kibera and Mathare Divisions, Nairobi; Kenya, *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Vol. 20, No. 9; pp. 71-78

<sup>108</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>109</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

*Establishing peace among the residents of Mathare slums was difficult even after the signing of the national accord agreement. This is because, the atrocities that were committed during the conflict were severe to be forgiven quickly as the head of state expected. (Mathare Soccer fan, 007, Mathare slums 4A, 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*In as much as people wanted to resolve their differences following the conflict and violence, it was difficult since trust among neighbours had already been affected. Even after the end of the post-election, conflict and violence in the form of vengeance continued to be witnessed in Mathare slums. (Soccer Player, 005, Mathare slums 4B, 31st Aug 2020)*

Nyongesa, Wamalwa and Onkware<sup>110</sup> established that the task of rebuilding a divided Kenya since 2007/8 post-election and particularly in places such as Mathare has been a daunting one. Individual's way of living was injured and tore down hence the issues to do with restoration after conflict included; the formation of a government that is operative and recognized security reforms and economic, as well as societal rejuvenation. The findings were in support to the conclusions drawn by Warren, Cumber and Kevin<sup>111</sup> that intra-ethnic struggle is a vital occurrence in its entirety, leading to many people dying and being displaced all over the globe.

### **2.2.2 Trigger Causes**

This section covers the trigger causes. These are the causes that have an indirect effect on conflict in Mathare slums.

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<sup>110</sup> Dennis Nyongesa Wamalwa, Frank Matanga, Kennedy Onkware, Nature and Influence of Conflict in Kibera and Mathare Slums after 2007 Elections in Kenya, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*. Vol. 4, Issue 2, 2016, pp. 19-26

<sup>111</sup> Warren, T. Camber, T., and Kevin K. (2014). Explaining Violent Intra-Ethnic Conflict: Group Fragmentation in the Shadow of State Power. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, pp. 1-44

### 2.2.2.1 Police Brutality

Compared to official settlement areas, police abuse in the guise of arbitrary detention to disproportionate and illegal use of force is more prevalent in informal settlements. According to one of the grassroots leaders<sup>112</sup>, the police brutality in the area is often perpetrated by the General Service Unit (GSU) and Administration Police (AP). The interviewee<sup>113</sup> explained that the police officers justify their brutality and excessive use of force against the residence of Mathare under their mandate of maintaining law and order in the region. The following are verbatim statements from two interviewees:

*In the eyes of the police and law enforcement, residents and in particular young men are perceived as criminals. (Mathare Soccer Fan, 001, Mathare slums 3C, 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*I do not get out of the house at night since I might be mistaken for a criminal by the police and may either be jailed, asked for a bribe or in a worse scenario, killed (Soccer player, 010, Mathare slums 3C, 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The findings show that the police force in Mathare slums does not provide a safe environment for the youths to freely move in their own place of residence. This raises concern over the negative relationship existing between the police and the youth in the region which may hinder efforts by security officers to promote peace and security. According to a report by Melchiorre,<sup>114</sup> they defend their brutality like extrajudicial killing as cleansing of young people and criminalizing of the youth. The author discovered that the killings are the most recent in a long history of unlawful killings and overuse of force

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<sup>112</sup> Grassroot Leader, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 25th Aug 2020

<sup>113</sup> Grassroot Leader, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 25th Aug 2020

<sup>114</sup> Melchiorre, L. 2021. *Class and Police Brutality in Kenya: An Interview with Activist Gacheke Gachihi*. African Arguments, Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://africanarguments.org/2021/07/class-and-police-brutality-in-kenya-an-interview-with-activist-gacheke-gachihi/>



in Nairobi's low-income neighbourhoods. This in turn results into conflict, since the young people fight back through protests and riots which result in more conflict and violence in Mathare slums.

A soccer player<sup>115</sup> indicated that the conflict between the police and the residents of Mathare slums is worsened by the fact that the police officers go to the extent of killing innocent residents. A soccer player<sup>116</sup> argued that the core reason for young people joining football teams was to shield themselves from the eyesight of the police who have no regard for their lives as evidenced by the brutality they use in the area. One soccer player<sup>117</sup> exclaimed and stated that the police officers using brutality in Mathare slums do not apply the same in other well-off areas such as Muthaiga and Thome which are immediate neighbours. The finding was similar to a report by the Human Rights Watch<sup>118</sup> that documented that on 25<sup>th</sup> December the police shot two young men in Mathare, Peter Irungu who was 19 years old and Brian Mung'aru who was 20 while they were kneeling and pleading for the police to spare their lives.

The issue of police brutality as a source of conflict in Mathare and other informal settlements is not very much highlighted, yet it is prevailing. A soccer fan<sup>119</sup> explained that the police brutality in Mathare has resulted in animosity between the police and the residents. According to one soccer fan<sup>120</sup>, most residents including the children fear the

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<sup>115</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>116</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>117</sup> Soccer player, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>118</sup> Human Rights Watch, 2020. *Kenya: No Letup in Killings by Nairobi Police*. Human rights watch website. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/20/kenya-no-letup-killings-nairobi-police>.

<sup>119</sup> Soccer fan, 002, Mathare slums 4B, 30<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>120</sup> Soccer Fan, 009, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020

police. This is because as documented by the Mathare Social Justice Centre that was started in 2015,<sup>121</sup> the police use extra force and justify their acts of extrajudicial killings since there is no proper accountability of their actions. One soccer club official said:

*It is unfortunate that the police use brutality against the residents of Mathare slums. I believe that the use of excessive force by the police is based on the aspect that the residents of Mathare slums are not wealthy to always issue bribes. Therefore, since the police understand that they cannot gain any economic benefits from the Mathare slums residents, they use this as justification for their brutality and killing of young men and boys in the area. This almost and always leads to riots and protests, thus exacerbating conflict in Mathare slums. (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This implies that police brutality is a common phenomenon in informal settlements as compared to formal settlements. Odhiambo<sup>122</sup> notes that police brutality as a factor predisposing informal settlements to violence. The study revealed that police use of excessive force in arresting and searching young men and women in informal areas has resulted in increased animosity between the security forces and the residents.

#### **2.2.2.2 Unemployment**

Urban unemployment is a prominent feature of Nairobi city as a majority of residents work in informal sectors, where the output in terms of value could be sometimes low and in turn resulting into low incomes. Most of the urban poor survive on very low income or in most instances on less than one dollar a day and therefore are unable to pay for access to services such as good healthcare, transport, education, and also unable to cater for proper clothing.

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<sup>121</sup> Melchiorre, L. 2021. *Class and Police Brutality in Kenya: An Interview with Activist Gacheke Gachihi*. African Arguments, Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://africanarguments.org/2021/07/class-and-police-brutality-in-kenya-an-interview-with-activist-gacheke-gachihi/>

<sup>122</sup> Odhiambo, O. 2020. *Exploring factors that predispose Mathare slum dwellers to violence*. Master's Thesis, University of Nairobi

The high rate of urban youth unemployment and slum populations is cause for alarm.<sup>123</sup> High levels of unemployment rates and additional poverty levels are shared by residents of the Mathare slums. According to Ngunyi and Katumanga, Kenya's high rate of youth unemployment increases conflict risks since there are signs that young people quickly engage militia groups and settle in different urban slum neighbourhoods to safeguard certain interests.<sup>124</sup> An interviewee<sup>125</sup> stated that most of the young people joining the soccer teams/clubs are unemployed and are looking for some form of activity to ensure they are busy so as not to be incited into taking part in violence and conflict. An interviewee<sup>126</sup> added that most of the residents in Mathare slums engage in informal forms of employment which are not always guaranteed.

A soccer fan<sup>127</sup> stated that a large number of young men work in informal employment as hawkers (small-scale street vendors) or motorcycle taxi drivers, often known as "boda boda" or "matatus" (small buses). The soccer fan further claimed that the key factors contributing to young vulnerability to violence are the shrinking capacity for self-expression, joblessness, the need for an identity, and a sense of belonging. According to a grass-roots leader<sup>128</sup> in Mathare, young people involvement in violent conflict on the front lines has been attributed to unemployment, the struggle to survive in a difficult urban environment, and illiteracy. An interviewee noted:

*Despite the fact that many young people in Mathare slums engage in informal works such as hawking and becoming*

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid

<sup>124</sup> Ngunyi, M., and Katumanga, M. 2014. *From Monopoly to Oligopoly of Violence: Exploration of a Four-Point Hypothesis Regarding Organised and Organic Militia in Kenya*. Nairobi, UNDP.

<sup>125</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>126</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>127</sup> Soccer Fan, 008, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 14th Aug 2020

<sup>128</sup> Grassroot Leader, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

*'bodaboda' riders, there have been many cases where these groups have been party to the execution of violence with the intention of achieving political and even economic interests. (Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums 3B, 12<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020).*

The finding was similar to results by Wamalwa, Wanjala, and Tuikong<sup>129</sup> who found that the high rate of unemployment in Kenya and particularly in informal settlements is a cause of conflict and violence. Wamalwa, Wanjala, and Tuikong<sup>130</sup> argue that the idleness brought about by unemployment of residents in informal settlements puts them at risk of joining militia and vigilante groups that are often involved or associated with conflict and violence.

Youth vulnerability to criminality and civil upheaval is a major issue due to youth unemployment. Due to underlying issues including lack of economic prospects and limited participation in political and governmental processes, youth, who make up a significant segment of the Kenyan population, are especially susceptible to being manipulated for political turmoil and radicalization.<sup>131</sup> This perspective was supported by a soccer fan<sup>132</sup> who stated that the residents of Mathare slums comprises of youth who some moved from rural areas with the hope of finding jobs in the city or youths who attended up to secondary school but could not join college due to the expense involved. A soccer fan<sup>133</sup> explained that the politicians often take advantage of the unemployment rate of the youths by inciting

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<sup>129</sup> Wamalwa, D., Wanjala, T., and Tuikong, S. 2016. Nature and Influence of Conflict in Kibera and Mathare Slums after 2007 Elections in Kenya. *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (IJRRSSH) Vol. 3, Issue 2*, pp: (9-16).

<sup>130</sup> Wamalwa, D., Wanjala, T., and Tuikong, S. 2016. Nature and Influence of Conflict in Kibera and Mathare Slums after 2007 Elections in Kenya. *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (IJRRSSH) Vol. 3, Issue 2*, pp: (9-16).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid

<sup>132</sup> Soccer Fan, 015, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>133</sup> Soccer Fan, 015, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

them to engage in conflict or violence for cheap money. According to Muchiri<sup>134</sup> unemployment motivates many young people to join the wrong groups that often land them into trouble.

### **2.2.2.3 Land Disputes**

According to Akedi,<sup>135</sup> the poor who lack proper representation in the government's decision-making circles, are at significant social and physical risk as a result of the growing demand for scarce resources, which breeds competitiveness and leads to confrontations and conflicts within the communities. According to a soccer club official,<sup>136</sup> land ownership conflicts have traditionally been linked to the colonial and post-independent distribution of land, as the colonial government's forced relocation of members of particular ethnic groups into various regions. Such disagreements go unresolved, and some political figures stir up conflict over land by bringing up ethnicity. A soccer player<sup>137</sup> reminisced that during the campaigns before the 2007 elections, specific leaders made remarks on ethnicity. A soccer player<sup>138</sup> argued that the Kenyan politicians understand the vulnerability of Kenya as it pertains to ethnicity, yet they still go ahead to use it as a weapon to gain votes. By doing so, Aapenguo<sup>139</sup> contends that the issue has the potential to lead to intercommunal conflict, which has historically been a feature of political violence in Kenya. Land disputes from

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<sup>134</sup> Muchiri K., (3 September 2010). "Myth shattered: Kibera numbers fail to add up". Daily Nation 22-21

<sup>135</sup> Akedi, J., 2020. *Briefing Paper No 1: A Conflict Analysis of Nairobi's Informal Settlements*. Shalom, Center for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://shalomconflictcenter.org/briefing-paper-no-1/>

<sup>136</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>137</sup> Soccer player, 003, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 2nd Aug 2020

<sup>138</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>139</sup> Aapenguo. C.M. 2010. *Misinterpreting Ethnic Conflicts in Africa*. Africa Center for Strategic Studies, University Press

the colonial past continue to be a significant barrier to lasting peace in Kenya notwithstanding these alternate solutions.<sup>140</sup>

The issue of land in Mathare slums has been contentious leading to conflict in the region.

The following are verbatim statements from the respondents:

*Mathare slums is highly populated, an implication that the land available is not enough to accommodate well all the residents. This has resulted in a stream of conflict between the residents and in other times, between the residents and government over public land (Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 3C, 19<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*Most families in Mathare slums live in single rooms and double rooms. The issue of distribution of land has resulted in many conflicts as majority of the land in the area belongs to wealthy people who do not reside in the area. This has led to many cases of land grabbing as the residents try to improve their current state of living (Soccer player, 013, Mathare slums 3B, 9<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

A soccer club official<sup>141</sup> from Real Mathare F.C stated that; large portions of land in Mathare slums are owned by the wealthy in the country, who are few and do not reside in the region. The issue of land disputes in Mathare slums remains contentious and a driver of conflict as explained by Mburu,<sup>142</sup> who argued that urban conflicts in Nairobi are over land use. She contends that the creation of conflict is influenced by tenure insecurity. Land use disputes in Nairobi, Kenya have resulted in the loss of lives as well as property, as evidenced by the Sinai fire disaster in 2011 and the Lang'ata Road demolitions in 2013. Her research revealed that the main land use conflicts were related to property ownership, construction, drainage, soil disposal, and border disputes. Their primary causes were

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid

<sup>141</sup> Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare F.C), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020

<sup>142</sup> Mburu, L. 2014. *An Assessment of Land Use Conflict in Peri-Urban Areas of Nairobi: A Case of Drumvale Estate – Ruai*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi

identified as unauthorized land transfers and subdivisions, an absence of land tenure records, poor planning, and a failure to enforce development regulations. Land theft, unstable housing tenure, flooding, loss of lives and property losses, and environmental destruction were their results.<sup>143</sup>

According to Ouna,<sup>144</sup> as the demand for land becomes bigger, land as a finite resource remains in short supply. For instance, prices for land and property before 2014 could not be compared to the year 2000, it had tripled, generating reduced possibilities for the not so rich families to access and gain rights to land. Land has been a salient issue in most urban conflicts in Nairobi. An interviewee<sup>145</sup> revealed that conflict over land in Mathare slums has persisted because land has many merits, among them, providing a space for construction that can be utilized for various reasons, from construction of schools, churches, houses, shops etc. In the city of Nairobi, the pressure on land as well as the inequalities in access, have led to a housing crisis that is evident in the informal settlement of Mathare slums.

## **2.7 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter evaluated the nature of conflict in Mathare slums. From the analysis conducted, it was revealed that conflict is a common phenomenon in Mathare slums. However, this situation is driven by specific factors among which include; poverty, ethnicity, police brutality, unemployment, poor governance and land disputes. The chapter shows that due to the high level of poverty in Mathare slums, the residents are vulnerable

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid

<sup>144</sup> Ouna, V., 2017. *Land Governance in Urban Areas Case of Nairobi City County*. 2017 World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty. Washington DC: The World Bank

<sup>145</sup> Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 9th Aug 2020

and can easily engage in conflict or be incited into war and violence. Moreover, since conflict is deep-rooted in the way of life in Mathare slums, there are some challenges incurred in the efforts of eradicating or reducing the same. These challenges include high level of insecurity, corruption and inability to meet the overwhelming needs of the residents in Mathare slums. The next chapter covers soccer as a tool in promoting peace in Mathare slums and its impact to the community.



## CHAPTER THREE: IMPACT OF SOCCER ACTIVITIES ON THE PROMOTION OF RECONCILIATION IN MATHARE SLUMS

### 3.1 Introduction

According to Tsuchiya,<sup>146</sup> there's need for considerable utilization of soccer in peace and work geared towards bringing change. Tsuchiya notes that soccer for Development and Peace could be a rising idea which validates the point of view that initiatives geared towards soccer, can be “powerful, applicable, and cost-effective instrument” to foster tranquillity or peace. This is clear from the operations of various governments and NGOs that utilize soccer as an instrument to accomplish improvements such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and sort out social clashes and foster tranquillity or peace. Tsuchiya contends that soccer can be a capable way for the individual improvement and development of the youth. Tsuchiya<sup>147</sup> also found that soccer can be utilized to strengthen patriotism contributing to national, cultural, communal and devout isolation.

In Kenya, there has been soccer initiatives for peace operating for decades. However, the sport initiatives for peace increased after the electoral skirmishes of the late 2007 and early 2008 where a number of interventions such as soccer tournaments took place with the objective of creating a social arena for diverse ethnicities to unite. In addition, these interventions proffered an *ad hoc* trauma recovery program in different locations within

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<sup>146</sup> Tsuchiya, S., 2009. *Sport as an International Tool for Development and Peace-building*. University for Peace in Costa Rica. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from [http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id\\_article=621](http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=621)

<sup>147</sup> Tsuchiya, S., 2009. *Sport as an International Tool for Development and Peace-building*. University for Peace in Costa Rica. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from [http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id\\_article=621](http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=621)

the country.<sup>148</sup> This research thus attempts to assess the role of soccer in promoting peace using the ethnically heterogeneous informal settlement of Mathare slums as a case study.

### **3.2 Engaging the Youth**

In Mathare, Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA)<sup>149</sup> was established in the late 1980s with the aim of using soccer to facilitate economic and social development in the region. MYSA's symbiotic relationship with the community members in the region is driven by the need to give back to the society. With regard to ethnic conflict in Mathare slums, MYSA has had profound effect on 3000 to 4000 youth from various ethnic tribes. A soccer player<sup>150</sup> revealed that MYSA is unique from other organizations, since it is dominated by the young generation. This is a best practice particularly to the peace-building process in a society since it provides a platform for the young people to understand how a peaceful and equal society should operate by being inclusive and accommodative.

MYSA provides the young generation in Nairobi's Mathare slums with an opportunity to flourish in other areas apart from the soccer game. Through the various soccer related activities, it creates a platform for promoting peace as well as dealing with violence and conflicts by creating a conducive environment to impart the youth with skills aimed at reducing or ending conflict. MYSA's intention is for all its members who are particularly young to realize their abilities. To enable this, it utilizes soccer, together with other community ventures to give the young generation the necessary skills and confidence

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<sup>148</sup> Diliway, S., 2012. Sport for development and peace: can football prevent violence in the Kenyan elections? Democracy in Africa. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <http://democracyinafrica.org/sport-for-development-and-peace-can-football-prevent-violence-in-the-kenyan-elections/>

<sup>149</sup> Willis O., 2000. Sport and development: the significance of Mathare Youth Sports Association, *Canadian journal of development studies*, Vol. 21, No. 03.

<sup>150</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

required to improve their way of living and surviving.<sup>151</sup> The following are verbatim statements from two interviewees:

*I am so grateful to MYSA, it saved my life. It has become my second home not only because it gives me something to look forward to, but it is also moulding me into a better human being that can contribute positively into my community. (Soccer player, 010, Mathare slums 3C, 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*MYSA has gone out of its way to ensure that the youths in Mathare slums actively engage in activities that would contribute to peace building. It paves a way and reminds the youth on the important position they must take to ensure that messages of peace are spread in the society (Grassroot leader, 004, Mathare slums 3A, 5<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The data collected from the interviews imply that the residents of Mathare slums understand the important role played by MYSA in promoting peace and unity. Moreover, the position taken by MYSA goes hand in hand with its mandate of helping the youth from engaging in risky behaviour or in joining militia and vigilante groups. MYSA has stayed true to its vision and mission of educating and providing a platform for young people to express their concerns and to contribute towards their own society with regards to peace initiatives.<sup>152</sup>

Further, a soccer fan residing in Mathare slums, Area 4A<sup>153</sup> indicated that Soccer activities have uplifted youths by helping them move away from conflict and ghetto gangs. This notion was supported by a soccer player<sup>154</sup> who added that the platform created by MYSA does not only allow them to simply play the game, but they are able to receive training in

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<sup>151</sup> Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA)., 2016. Peace Insights. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://www.peaceinsight.org/conflicts/kenya/peacebuilding-organisations/mysa/>.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid

<sup>153</sup> Soccer Fan, 015, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>154</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

music, photography, dance, drama etc. A soccer club official<sup>155</sup> explained that most of these non-football trainings lay emphasis on several matters of importance, for instance matters pertaining to health, security, peace and other challenges within the region. Two soccer players<sup>156</sup> stated that through the non-football trainings, young people have been moulded into leaders, who propagate for unity and peace in Mathare slums. An interviewee said:

*Although many young people in Mathare slums have no access to higher education and training due to poor economic status, the training by MYSA enables us as young people to have some form of training that we can build our lives and career upon. (Mathare soccer fan, 013, Mathare slums 3B, 13<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The results show that the engagement of the youth in peace initiatives has highly been contributed by the existence of MYSA. The findings agree with results by Rookwood and Palmer<sup>157</sup> that actors within civil society spaces have taken note of the aptness of soccer like a contrivance to support peace and foster societal growth in communities that have been affected by conflict and violence. Soccer is perceived as a mode of inspiring conflicting parties to assemble in mutual spaces and take part in mutual activities that helps in building relationships.

Furthermore, a Mathare soccer fan<sup>158</sup> argued that soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums have also been critical in imparting teachings to the youths pertaining to conflict management and peace building. One of the interviewees said:

*Soccer in Mathare slums is perceived as a serious sport particularly during times of conflict and during conflict*

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<sup>155</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>156</sup> Soccer players, 006, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>157</sup> Rookwood, and Palmer, C., 2011 'Invasion games in war-torn nations: can soccer help to build peace?', *Soccer & Society*, 12: 2, 184 — 200

<sup>158</sup> Soccer Fan, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 15th Aug 2020

*resolution. For example, the Mathare Youths Sports Association has employed sport and sports affairs in regard to conflict reconciliation and creating awareness on the social challenges related to ethnic discourse. This has been achieved through the incorporation of peace education during soccer training session. (Soccer player, 015, Mathare slums 3B, 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

By providing peace education to the players, MYSA ensures that the young generation play a leading role in propagating for peace within their community. The findings concur with results by Rojo-Labaien <sup>159</sup> who pointed out that soccer activities can promote peace.

A provincial administration and peace building committee member<sup>160</sup> further added that the peace education often take the design of moderated and narrated dialogues that are utilized to assist everybody to talk about how they feel, their sentiments and their opinions. In addition, a soccer club official<sup>161</sup> revealed that such interactions or engagements enables them to become aware of each other, irrespective of the sex and ethnicity to what is common and underscore the reality that everybody is aiming to achieve an agenda which is similar in nature. It is through communication that solutions are developed. Therefore, the soccer clubs in or affiliated with Mathare slums are on the right path in promoting peace by allowing the young people to share their issues in a safe space. The following are verbatim statements from the interviewees:

*Interacting with my fellow team mates during training and during matches allows me to understand the line of thought*

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<sup>159</sup> Rojo-Labaien, E. 2014. "Football as a Reflection of Modern Society's Conflicts and a Way of Creating Societal Ties in Enduring Enmity Context." *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport (IntJSCS)* 2, No. 2 .

<sup>160</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>161</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

*of my colleagues with regards to issues pertaining conflict and conflict resolution (Soccer player, 008, Mathare slums Area 4A, 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020)*

*I believe that as a team, our success greatly relies in understanding the principles and the beliefs of each other. Therefore, we engage in a lot of conversations about our area of residence, Mathare slums and brainstorming on the efforts and initiatives we can implement to ensure a more peaceful society and community (Soccer player, 003, Mathare slums Area 3A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020)*

*I am very proud of the young people who are soccer players in Mathare slums since they seek to understand their environment better by having conversations with the aim of devising ways to improve the concept of peacebuilding and unity in the region (Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums Area 3B, 12<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This implies that by way of interacting during soccer matches, players become aware of how their rivals feel, what is common among them, as well as their similar endeavour to achieve the same purpose/objective. The findings are similar to authors Lea-Howarth<sup>162</sup> and Cardenas<sup>163</sup> who found that soccer facilitates peacebuilding by creating a platform that players can use to advocate for peace in their communities. With reference to the current study, soccer players in Mathare slums have taken up the mandate of ensuring that peace is attained in their environment by first understanding each other through creating a safe space, where teammates can communicate their opinions and perspectives on different issues affecting their community.

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<sup>162</sup> Lea-howarth, J., 2006. Sport and Conflict: Is Football an Appropriate Tool to Utilize in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation or Reconstruction? Contemporary War and Peace Studies, MA Dissertation, University

<sup>163</sup> Cárdenas, A., 2013. Peace Building through Sport? An Introduction to Sport for Development and Peace." *Journal of Conflictology* 4, No. 1

An interviewee<sup>164</sup> reported that the soccer players did not bother asking their fellow teammates which ethnic community they come from since they believe that all people deserve respect and a place they can call home irrespective of the source of origin. Another soccer player<sup>165</sup> added that the teammates try not to speak or converse in their ethnic language. This means that the commonly used language of communication used by the soccer players was identified to be Kiswahili and ‘*Sheng*’ (popular language among the youth). A provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>166</sup> reported that the ethnically unbiased soccer environment in Mathare slums has been attributed to the incorporation of peace-oriented organizations in soccer competitions such as the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). The CSO has been critical in increasing the awareness on the value of free, just, and peaceful elections among Mathare residents. The provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>167</sup> added that over 25,000 of the youth in Mathare have taken part in ethnically diverse teams. This shows that soccer in Mathare slums is not driven by ethnicity but rather by talent and the common goal of bringing people together. The finding is similar to results by Namita who observed that the usage of soccer in peace building is largely pegged on fostering conciliation as well as keeping tranquillity or peace.<sup>168</sup> The findings also concur with Makwerere and Mandoga<sup>169</sup> who found that the holistic and inclusive nature of the soccer terrain in Zimbabwe makes

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<sup>164</sup> Soccer player, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 24th Aug 2020

<sup>165</sup> Soccer player, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>166</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 11th Aug 2020

<sup>167</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 11th Aug 2020

<sup>168</sup> Namita M., 2013. Youth Soccer Promotes Peace and Reconciliation in Kenya. Dip Note. <http://2007-2017-blogs.state.gov/stories/2013/03/01/youth-soccer-promotes-peace-and-reconciliation-kenya.html>. Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

<sup>169</sup> Makwerere, D, and Edward M., 2012. "*Challenges and Opportunities in Developing Football as a Vehicle for Peacebuilding in Zimbabwe.*"

peace building approach in the country more appropriate. This implies that soccer in Mathare slums if always integrated appropriately, can be a useful tool in facilitating peacebuilding and unity in the area.

### **3.3 Social Activities in Promoting Community Reconciliation**

According to a soccer player<sup>170</sup> in Mathare slums, the soccer teams/clubs engage in different social activities such as improving and conserving the environment as initiatives of encouraging reconciliation. The interviewee<sup>171</sup> indicated that Mathare Environmental Conservation Youth Group (MECYG) which was started in 1997 has been instrumental in initiating social activities in the region. A soccer club official from Mathare slums, Area 3C<sup>172</sup> stated that all teams gain additional points in the league positions for finishing their community service projects, and that in cooperation with the MECYG, social and environmental initiatives are typically incorporated within the same program as the match fixtures. A grassroots leader<sup>173</sup> stated that training the soccer players to protect and conserve the environment is a good initiative as it shows the importance of holding to one's environment and allows them to understand their own environment, which comes in handy during conflict resolution initiatives. This is an indication that common social goals are instrumental in bringing people together. The findings from the interview guide concurs with Johann Galtung's<sup>174</sup> peace model that emphasizes on the importance of reconstruction. Through taking part in environment initiatives, the soccer teams/clubs are

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<sup>170</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>171</sup> Soccer player, 007 from Mathare slums, Area 3C, interviewed on 17th Aug 2020

<sup>172</sup> Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020

<sup>173</sup> Grassroot Leader, 001, from Mathare slums, Area 4A, interviewed on 25th Aug 2020

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. Johann Galtung's peace model emphasized on three R's: Reconstruction, Reculturation and Reconciliation



reconstructing their environment by showing the residents that there is room for healing and addressing the trauma that was borne from conflict.

Soccer in Mathare slums not only provides an opportunity in this field, but also advancement in other areas within the community, as well as emphasizing on the importance of working as a team and encouraging the importance of keeping fit and maintaining high levels of hygiene to promote good health. An interviewee said:

*The role of soccer club officials is to ensure team building among the players by requiring that they interact one on one at a deeper level. At the end of the week, teams comprising between 25 to 30 football players normally engage themselves in activities or operations like getting rid of waste and trenches in their neighbourhood as part of MYSA's clean-up project. (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

A soccer fan<sup>175</sup> who took part in MYSA sporting activities, started doing environmental clean-ups and encouraged other residents to engage on the same. A soccer club official<sup>176</sup> explained that while the standard practice in the soccer world across the globe is for teams to get three points for a victory, Mathare Youths Sports Association's teams would earn six points for each completed clean-up project. A newcomer would be astounded with the standings as there would be points for games won or tied plus points for garbage clean-ups. Such team building activities were identified to motivate the soccer players in creating and developing a new culture that allows the Mathare residents to mingle and collaborate with each other without any fear that conflict may erupt. Moreover, the team building

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<sup>175</sup> Soccer Fan, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 1st Sept 2020

<sup>176</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

activities supports the peace model by John Galtung<sup>177</sup> since it paves room for reconstruction and reconciliation.

Further, an interviewee<sup>178</sup> added that in Mathare slums, MYSA has been using this guided by the principle that “if you get something from the community than you must put something back into the community”. For two soccer players<sup>179</sup> interviewed, they revealed that at the moment the only tangible contribution they can make in Mathare slums is to spread the message of peace and ensure that the younger generation does not fall victim to radicalization and join vigilante and militia groups. The interviewees explained that the soccer players educated the youths in the society about loving each other irrespective of the ethnic culture. The soccer players spread the message of love to promote peace and unity among the youth. Therefore, it can be concluded that the motivation of the soccer players to give back to the society is largely built on the principles they have been taught during trainings, that they must give back to the society in whichever way they can. The interviewees<sup>180</sup> sees the same scenario unfolding at the Kakuma refugee camp where sporting activities were tasked at community development within and outside the camp. For instance, community work being performed by soccer volunteers, e.g. cleaning services and planting of trees. Furthermore, the sporting activities ensured that there was inter-ethnic harmony.<sup>181</sup> Notably while the programme in Kakuma was largely intended for

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<sup>177</sup> Grewal B., 2003. Johan Galtung: Positive and Negative Peace. School of social sciences, Auckland University.

<sup>178</sup> Soccer Fan, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>179</sup> Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 9th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>180</sup> Ibid

<sup>181</sup> Ibid

community development, it showed massive potential in harnessing soccer for peace efforts in Kenya.

A soccer club official<sup>182</sup> gave the example of the “Amani Football Cup” organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) which was largely geared towards psychosocial support efforts for people who had been displaced internally and living in camps as well as host communities in the Province of Rift Valley.<sup>183</sup> This shows the great impact soccer can have in helping victims or survivors of conflict to recover and ensure peace is attained in the community.

A soccer fan<sup>184</sup> explained that the soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums allow the youth to take part in decision making, thus enabling them to engage in other activities to support the community as a whole. The interviewee<sup>185</sup> added that the thirteen villages in the Mathare valley were neglected by the city council. There were mounds and mounds of uncollected garbage. During the rainy seasons, this was a nightmare as it resulted in communicable and waterborne diseases such as cholera. However, it was observed during data collection that the soccer players have stepped up to engaging in social community activities to ensure that Mathare slums becomes a better place to live. This is an indication that in Mathare, soccer has been part and parcel of slum life in the thirteen villages of Mathare.

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<sup>182</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>183</sup> Borsani, S., 2012. The Impact of Sport Interventions in Rift Valley Kenya after Post Election Violence: A Case Study. In K. Gilbert, & W. Bennett, *Sport, Peace, and Development* (pp. 465-480). Champaign, Illinois: Common Ground Publishing LLC.

<sup>184</sup> Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>185</sup> Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020.

A provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>186</sup> argued that the establishment of MYSA in the late 1980s, emerged to be one of the largest grassroots establishments in the Country. This supported Willis<sup>187</sup> argument that prior to the coming of the Mathare Youths Sports Association, Mathare was simply but a hopeless valley of rusted tins that resembled houses. A soccer fan<sup>188</sup> supported the sentiments and expressed that once a person is in the slum, they realize each square of that metal is not a scrap yard but the roof for a home. Understanding the challenges experienced in Mathare slums has motivated the soccer players as well as the residents of Mathare slums to actively engage in social community activities under the umbrella of MYSA. A soccer club official<sup>189</sup> acknowledged that after the 2008 post-election violence, the community started a local premier league, that is the Mathare Premier League in 2010 and 2011. This is where the community was brought together despite the ethnic and religious divide. The soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums understood that in order to bring peace in the area, all community members must be involved, therefore, the introduction of the local league paved way for peace initiatives headed and operated by the community. The findings concurred with outcomes by Bankwest who posited that the players were able to get support from the community by involving the residents in social community initiatives.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>187</sup> Willis O., 2000. Sport and development: the significance of Mathare Youth Sports Association, *Canadian journal of development studies*, Vol. 21, No. 03.

<sup>188</sup> Soccer Fan, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>189</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>190</sup> Bankwest Curtin Economics centre, 2015. After the Siren: the community benefits of indigenous participation in Australian rules football. Curtin University.p.7.

This position was supported by two interviewees<sup>191</sup> who pointed out that as a social institution, soccer has brought together unprecedented number of community members as players and as spectators which made it easier to ease social tensions.

*The fact that soccer has been able to attract large numbers of people from different tribes and communities residing in Mathare, this has made it the number one phenomenon of social integration. This has helped reduce tensions (Soccer fan, 003, Mathare slums Area 4B, 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2020).*

*In Mathare, soccer has brought the youths together thus reducing conflicts amongst each other. (Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums Area 4B, 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2020)*

A soccer club official<sup>192</sup> also stated that the signature impact of soccer in Mathare is its ability to tackle the elephant in the room that is tribalism which is a contributor to the ethnic tensions. As such, by bringing people together, the glass barrier instituted by tribal differences is slowly eroded. In the same way, the tensions within the community are also dissolved through soccer.

According to a soccer fan<sup>193</sup>, soccer has also played a key role in reconciliation by building a foundation to inter-communal activities that heralded cooperation and intra-communal integration. An interviewee said:

*Soccer tournaments make it easier to talk to each other while working together in communal activities and creating social bonds. (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This has been augmented by a soccer player<sup>194</sup> who perceives that soccer provides a common ground for conflicting parties to talk. Furthermore, soccer gives room for the

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<sup>191</sup> Soccer players from Mathare slums area 3A and Area 4A interviewed on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020 and 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

<sup>192</sup> Soccer club official, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020.

<sup>193</sup> Soccer Fan, 009, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3rd Aug 2020

<sup>194</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

community to interact in the playground. These interactions have been critical in promoting a peaceable environment. An interviewee<sup>195</sup> noted that soccer first brings people together, that is; men, women, children, and the youth. According to the interviewee, everyone is equal in the field because the focus is on the ball and not the individual. This helps thaw away tensions as the players and the community can be able to talk out issues and look for solutions together.

Soccer has been touted as an integral platform to not only preventing conflict but also to serve as a key factor for establishing long-lasting peace. A soccer club official<sup>196</sup> noted that when soccer is employed constructively, it fosters social integration and promote tolerance. The importance of soccer is underscored by the fact that soccer offers a platform for communicating with gestures or without words or speech making it a viable integrational diplomacy tool. In this regard, language and cultural challenges are simply defeated in this integrational diplomacy tool compared to some spheres connected to social life. To this end therefore, soccer is frequently cited to be the “conveyor of culture of the most accessible symbolism”.<sup>197</sup> However, while the ability to overcome language and cultural challenges are comfortably defeated in soccer making it a key integrational diplomacy tool, there is a need to examine the extent to which it serves this cardinal purpose and if so, the convergence and divergence in different polities.

According to an interviewee<sup>198</sup> soccer programmes also offer opportunities of shared experience and direct bodily contact. This offers diverse groups a chance for shared

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<sup>195</sup> Provincial administration and peace committee member, 004, Mathare slums 3C, 20<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>196</sup> Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>197</sup> Keim, M., *Sport as Opportunity for Community Development and Peace Building in South Africa*. In, Vanauweele et al (Eds), *Sport and Development*: 97

<sup>198</sup> Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

experiences, as well as direct bodily engagement, between the persons who are participating. This has been aptly demonstrated in Mathare where it has been used in expanding the spaces for the exploration of women rights and for healing. A provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>199</sup> stated that as for the case of femicide which is referred to as the killing of women, which is the most severe form of violence against women, was on the rise in Mathare in both relative and absolute terms. The interviewee<sup>200</sup> blamed the rise of femicide case on the incompetent and patriarchal criminal justice system, which allowed a culture of impunity to creep in resulting in the rise of women killed. An interviewee explained:

*Coupled by the pervasion of incompetency within the criminal justice system and a culture of impunity particularly with regard to crimes by the high and mighty in our society, the termites of femicide are at work hollowing Mathare's tree of life, women, from within. Therefore, the women turned to soccer to lower their chances of being victimized (Provincial administration and peace committee member, 003, Mathare slums 3A, 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020).*

An interviewee<sup>201</sup> was of the opinion that in Mathare, soccer also become an acknowledged medium of intervention. This aptly reflected the view of Cardenas,<sup>202</sup> who postulates that soccer is a key impetus for inclusivity, dealing or resolving conflicts and promoting tranquillity or peace in various areas facing deficiencies/ problems and dispute. Cardenas explores the advancement of sport for growth and peace both as a social involvement plan

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<sup>199</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 20th Aug 2020

<sup>200</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 20th Aug 2020

<sup>201</sup> Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020

<sup>202</sup> Cárdenas, A. 2012. *Exploring the Use of Sports for Peace-building and Conflict Resolution*. Colombian Association for Research and Social Study of Sport. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <http://www.hope.ac.uk/warandpeace/workingpaperseries/>

as well as an educational area highlighting novel ways in which soccer supports peace building and conflict resolution procedures.<sup>203</sup> A key informant said:

*The number of women in the soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums is still low. However, we routinely hold women's circles after football games as means of addressing issues affecting women and offering safe spaces. In the women circle we include both the men and women to discuss issues pertaining to women since we understand that such challenges cannot be solved by women only. We try to involve the men in the women circle so that they can understand the trauma and the negative effects that are borne when other men perceive women as objects and move to victimize the women. This has created a community where women and young girls know they are safe to turn to soccer to help address their challenges. (Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020)*

The Women's Circle are not only aimed to campaign against femicide and other forms of gender and sexual based violence but also a safe space for women human rights defenders (HRDs) to brainstorm and reflect on measures to combat femicide and other forms of gender and sexual based violence as well as rejuvenate and vent their emotional anguish.

The above is further supported by an interviewee who indicated that:

*Soccer has provided a platform for women to come together and address their challenges. To me I see it is an effective tool of promoting a ground for equality, addressing violence and injustices in the society. (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This shows that in achieving peace in a post-conflict society such as Mathare, soccer has been critical in strengthening the confidence, that is by organizing sport teams in various categories that constitute players with different backgrounds, gender and cultural orientation.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> ibid

<sup>204</sup> Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26th Aug 2020



Furthermore, two interviewees<sup>205</sup> observed that soccer in Mathare was able to entice high level persons from different sectors within the country, generating platforms for advocating on matters that influence community members. In addition, a soccer fan<sup>206</sup> revealed that soccer also assists those participating to rethink how they interpret things and reconstruct associations between conflicting communities by generating the basis on which society members welcomes as well as commemorate their areas of similarities and variations. It provides a platform that can permit people to discuss as well as negotiate. This is supported by scholars such as Kochomay<sup>207</sup> who are of the view that soccer, provides a platform for exhibiting it as a means of survival via recognition of talents, as well as changing the behaviour of the young generation. Nonetheless, Kochomay<sup>208</sup> cautions the events or activities organized to foster peace, as they are also accompanied with some hurdles that comprises restricted understanding of the notion of soccer, therefore need of its acknowledgement as a viable conciliation technique.

Soccer was also employed as a building block of trust between conflicting parties in Mathare. Two interviewees<sup>209</sup> were of the view that soccer brought them together because of the way people in Mathare slums are attached to soccer as a recreational activity. It thus helps in breaking tensions among ethnically conflicting parties.

*Soccer can be used to bring conflicting parties together. It also helps them express their views and come up with solutions of their own making. I would thus categorize soccer as a building block of trust since it creates a forum where people can talk freely without fear of one another, it*

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<sup>205</sup> Two soccer club officials from Mathare slums, Area 4A, interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

<sup>206</sup> Soccer Fan, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>207</sup> Kochomay S., 2007. *Running for Peace: The Role of Peace Races in Peace-building and Development of East African Pastoralists*. Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> IIPT African Conference on Peace through Tourism, 24 May 2007 in Kampala, Uganda

<sup>208</sup> Ibid

<sup>209</sup> Soccer player, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020; Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020.

*is a key step towards building trust and healing on the social divisions. (Soccer player, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*The good thing with soccer is that it does not consider ethnicity, age or even gender. Anyone can play soccer; it is not biased. Therefore, the residents of Mathare slums have maximized on the unbiased nature of soccer to bring people of different ethnicity together through the local leagues and friendly matches held in the area. (Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020)*

This is an implication that in soccer, the ethnicity of the players is not a point of focus, but instead the players talents and abilities. The findings concurred with Horowitz,<sup>210</sup> who identified ethnicity as a contributor of conflict in modern society. Therefore, based on the author's findings, the data collected shows that through the use of soccer as a conflict resolution mechanism, the residents of Mathare slums have been able to promote peace by treating community members as equals in the society.

In addition, third party mediators were able to come to the community through the playground and mediate the conflicting communities. A grassroot leader from Mathare slums Area 4B<sup>211</sup> explained that football was able to offer a meeting ground for the entire community, which is men, women, youths and children. Third party mediators were able to cash in the opportunity and advocate for dialogue. Furthermore, teams are made up of socio-culturally different players. This brings antagonists to support the same team and thus ease up tensions.

Furthermore, a soccer fan<sup>212</sup> revealed that the game has been used in Mathare slums to bring people together, to initiate life-long interactions that would determine how life plays

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<sup>210</sup> Horowitz, Donald L. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

<sup>211</sup> Grassroot leader, 003, Mathare slums 4B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2020

<sup>212</sup> Soccer Fan, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020

out amongst the communities in Mathare. According to a soccer fan<sup>213</sup>, this became possible because the youth of Mathare decided to come together regardless of their tribe and formed a community soccer league to promote peace and reconciliation. In addition, as expressed by an interviewee<sup>214</sup>, conflicting parties usually found themselves in the same playground supporting the same team. The playground thus serves as a building block to trust as people begin to grow social bonds and understand each other. Another interviewee<sup>215</sup> explained that the playground where soccer is held is normally taken as a safe place where people can meet and interact freely without any fear of insecurity because it is regarded as a sacred place. This is in line with findings from Muthuri<sup>216</sup> who identified the game of soccer as a tool for peace in conflicting communities if used effectively. This is similar to results by Sellstrom<sup>217</sup> who observed that many African countries and leaders capitalized on soccer to achieve their liberation and peace agenda.

In promoting reconciliatory dialogue in Mathare, an interviewee<sup>218</sup> explained that soccer was key in creating an egalitarian reconciliatory table thus driving the healing of the fissures that had threatened to tear the social fabric of Mathare slums. Soccer promoted reconciliatory dialogue by bringing together people from different tribes and creating an opportunity where everyone seeking to discuss with the other person across the social divide were not treated differently. An interviewee said:

*I was really impressed by the young people of Mathare slums following the end of the 2007/2008 post-election violence,*

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<sup>213</sup> Soccer Fan, 014, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 15th Aug 2020

<sup>214</sup> Soccer player, 008, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>215</sup> Soccer Fan, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>216</sup> Muthuri, D., 2016. *The Role of Soccer in Conflict Resolution in Kenya: A Case Study Kibra Constituency*. MA Dissertation, University of Nairobi.

<sup>217</sup> Sellstrom, T., 2010. "Beyond the Big Stage: Football, Reconciliation and Social Development in Africa." *Conflict Trends 2010*, No. Special issue 1.

<sup>218</sup> Soccer Fan, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

*since they decided that it was time they stopped being used as conduits of political violence. Youths from Mathare 4A, were the first to come up with a local league. The rest followed suit, that is a league at the village level and a community league for Mathare Valley. (Grassroot Leader, 002, Mathare slums 3C, 20<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

### **3.4 Soccer and Promoting Peace during the 2007/2008 Post-Election Violence**

Soccer has been critical in promoting post conflict resolution in Mathare. According to one respondent<sup>219</sup>, soccer played an essential role in conflict resolution following the 2007/2008 post-election violence. The interviewee<sup>220</sup> noted that during the post-election violence, the football fields were perceived as neutral grounds where the residents of Mathare slums could meet to play friendly matches while developing strategies to address their conflict. This assertion was supported by a soccer fan<sup>221</sup> who postulated that soccer was critical in helping youths shun from gang violence since the youths had played the game together from their early age as children. The familiarity brought about by playing football was an effective catalyst in preventing more bloodshed during the 2007/2008 post-election violence. The finding contradicts results by Sugden<sup>222</sup> who established a ‘ripple effect’ model, that shows soccer as a model of peace and a promotional tool of social fairness, as well as essential rights in extremely divided post-conflict communities, occurring under contextual circumstances and tailored as such.

Furthermore, soccer was perceived as a social healing space for the society. Two Interviewees stated:

*Soccer brought about understanding and a sense of togetherness among the people in the community. Previously, we used to see ourselves as a Kikuyu or a Luo*

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<sup>219</sup> Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>220</sup> Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>221</sup> Soccer Fan, 006, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 11<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>222</sup> Sugden, J., 2010. Critical left-realism and sport interventions in divided societies. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, Vol. 45, No. 3; pp. 258-272

*residing in Mathare. Now we see ourselves as people from Mathare. (Soccer club official, 001 (Gor Mahia Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*There was bad blood between different ethnicities in Mathare. However, soccer gradually brought these communities together and unity was born between these communities. (Provincial administration and peace committee member, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

This means that the tournaments that have been a norm in Mathare have been critical in the post conflict economy in Mathare since they have helped to bring the people together while at the same time promoting small businesses. This was also enhanced by the monetary prizes given to winning teams which also boosted the local economy. This was supported by an interviewee<sup>223</sup> who explained that soccer is a critical economic forum in the community owing to the opportunities it creates. The following are verbatim statements from two interviewees:

*During the post-election violence period, we used soccer as a tool to come together and think of ways that would promote peace and create employment opportunities in Mathare slums especially for the youth. (Soccer Player, 002, Mathare slums 3A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020)*

*In Mathare, soccer was able to initiate social reconciliation and peace. This created an ample and conducive environment for businesses to thrive after the post-election violence (Grassroot leader, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

From the data gathered, it is evident that addressing conflict cannot end with resolution but rather in rebuilding as indicated by Galtung<sup>224</sup> peace model. Therefore, it can be drawn that soccer has played a key role in promoting some level of stability in Mathare by promoting the economy hence reducing the contributors of conflict such as tribalism. In

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<sup>223</sup> Soccer Fan, 007, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 27th Aug 2020

<sup>224</sup> Galtung, J., 1998. After Violence: 3R, Reconstruction, Reconciliation, Resolution: Coping with Visible and Invisible Effects of War and Violence. Transcend

addition, soccer reduces enmity and creates friendships and bonds among conflicting parties.

A provincial administration and a peace committee member<sup>225</sup> revealed that the youths use soccer to build trust with each other since they are used to playing soccer together. In putting this in perspective, a soccer fan<sup>226</sup> argued that whenever people in Mathare came together either as fans or as players, there was a sense of togetherness that the community enjoyed. This was critical in promoting stability in the community. Soccer's socializing nature predisposed the community to frequent interactions that helped in thawing social tensions particularly among different ethnicities. An interviewee explained:

*The major role of soccer in easing conflict and tensions in Mathare during the 2007/2008 post-election violence was largely due to the socializing nature of soccer. It was able to bring people from different tribes together thus reducing ethnic tensions (Soccer player, 012, Mathare slums 4A, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020).*

Serena<sup>227</sup> questions the function of soccer in periods after conflict has occurred, through the application of the theory of Galtung<sup>228</sup> of conflict change encompassing 3Rs that could be translated to; Resolution, Reunification and Rebuilding. Serena states that sport is not a panacea for peace but rather a purge box that ought to be filled. In this regard, sport success relies on the procedure of execution in an exercise that draws closely different players who develop an opinion of each other based on the nature of their interaction. In the same way,

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<sup>225</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 11th Aug 2020

<sup>226</sup> Soccer Fan, 007, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 27th Aug 2020

<sup>227</sup> Serena B., 2009. *The Contribution of Sport Within the Process of Peace and Reconciliation: From Trauma Healing to Social Integration: The Impact of Sports in the Rift Valley Province After the Post-election Violence in Kenya*. Saint Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy

<sup>228</sup> Ibid

two interviewees<sup>229</sup> argued that, reconciliation in Mathare slums may not be achieved solely through engaging on the soccer and its related activities; on the flip side of it, it can generate struggle on the off chance that is seen as win at all costs. In any case, sport may be not a high passage and high impact point for a social alter.<sup>230</sup>

### 3.5 Security

As noted by Wanyeki,<sup>231</sup> the informal settlement areas can be largely insecure following conflicts. Thus, it is essential to acknowledge the role of soccer in Mathare slums in promoting security as it allows people to move around freely and to interact with one another without fear that a conflict or violence may erupt. According to an interviewee,<sup>232</sup> soccer also led to a significant reduction in incidences of insecurity in Mathare slums as security was approached as a community rather than an individual venture. Two soccer fans<sup>233</sup> posited that soccer was critical in promoting third party conflict mediation, in Mathare slums. According to the interviewees<sup>234</sup>, third party mediators used to organize tournaments in the region as a way of easing tensions before they could intervene. This has been critical in breaking tensions among conflicting sides. Furthermore, it attracts third parties who can use soccer to break social tensions and thus able to promote dialogue among the conflicting sides. An interviewee said:

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<sup>229</sup> Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 9th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>230</sup> Ibid

<sup>231</sup> Wanyeki, M. 2010. „Lessons from Kenya: Women and the Post-election Violence. Standpoint, Feminist Africa“, 91

<sup>232</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 25th Aug 2020

<sup>233</sup> Soccer Fan, 009, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3rd Aug 2020; Soccer Fan, 010, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 4nd Aug 2020

<sup>234</sup> Soccer Fan, 009, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 3nd Aug 2020; Soccer Fan, 010, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 4nd Aug 2020

*Soccer has no boundaries. It accommodates all tribes, races and genders equally without discrimination. It accommodated on field conflict mediators who used the rules of football to show us how life should play about. What we were taught on the field was supposed to be replicated off the field. We were taught fair play as the basic rule of football. In life, we'd be told to play by the same rules. This helped in promoting reconciliation. (Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums 4B, 30<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The findings provide recommendations to results by Wanyeki<sup>235</sup> that insecurity is particularly high in informal settlements such as Mathare slums. However, based on the findings of the current study, residents of informal settlements can use soccer as a tool to promote peace and improve security since all residents irrespective of demographic attributes are treated equal through soccer.

### **3.6 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter provides an analysis on the impact of soccer in promoting reconciliation in Mathare slums. From the findings, it is evident that soccer plays a critical role in promoting peace in society particularly in informal settlements where conflict is based largely on ethnicity. However, through soccer, the people of Mathare slums have been able to engage the young people in peace building activities. This is particularly important since young people are vulnerable to being recruited to join the militia or vigilante groups. The findings also show that soccer has been critical in providing an environment for social activities in Mathare slums. This has allowed the community members to engage in activities such as cleaning the environment and engaging in local leagues at the village level. Additionally, through soccer, messages of peace were spread following the 2007-2008 post conflict

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<sup>235</sup> Wanyeki, M. 2010. „Lessons from Kenya: Women and the Post-election Violence. Standpoint, Feminist Africa“, 91



election. The post-election conflict marked a strategic time for the people of Mathare slums, since in as much as it resulted in conflict, it also gave room for stronger bonds among community members. Lastly the chapter highlighted that soccer has improved security in Mathare slums, since people attending the soccer matches can move about freely without any fear of insecurity. The next chapter covers the challenges of soccer activities in promoting peacebuilding.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CHALLENGES OF SOCCER ACTIVITIES IN PRPOMOTING PEACE IN MATHARE SLUMS

### 4.1 Introduction

Even though it has been made clear of what an integral role the development of soccer plays in enhancing sustainable development, harmonious co-existence and evasion of conflict, there are challenges hindering its successful implementation. With a focus of Mathare slums, this chapter covers the challenges of soccer activities in peacebuilding.

### 4.2 Lack of Investment

Two interviewees<sup>236</sup> identified lack of funding for programs when players participate in the tournaments as a challenge faced by the soccer teams/clubs. According to the interviewees, it is difficult to conduct soccer tournaments without adequate funding. The interviewees<sup>237</sup> argued that it is finances received either from the government or volunteers that allows the soccer teams/clubs to actively engage in soccer and soccer activities that would contribute to peace building. This is based on the understanding that majority of the players joining the soccer teams/clubs do so to earn some form of income the right way, without having to engage in dangerous or questionable acts such as joining vigilante and militia groups to earn a living. The following are verbatim statements from two interviewees:

*As a soccer player, I appreciate the fact that I am part of a team and I am busy most of the time training and engaging in other soccer activities. However, the remunerations we are given for the tournaments we play is very small to the*

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<sup>236</sup> Soccer Fan, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums 3B, 9<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>237</sup> Soccer Fan, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums 3B, 9<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

*extent that I sometimes wish I would join a vigilante group if it guarantees that I would earn more money (Soccer player, 004, Mathare slums 3B, 9<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*I just became a father recently; this means that I have an extra mouth to feed. I appreciate what the soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums are doing for young people, but we need to be supported financially in terms of remuneration since majority of the players have families who look up to them for daily provisions. (Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums 3C, 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The qualitative data shows that in as much as the soccer players are grateful for the opportunity given to them, they need more reliable financial support either from the government, NGOs or even volunteers to ensure that they continue engaging in soccer and its activities that would promote peace building and therefore not enticed by money to join vigilante and militia groups. Dudfield<sup>238</sup> identified that in many common wealth countries, soccer teams or clubs suffer from insufficient financing and incentives. This greatly hinders the efforts of soccer teams or clubs in peace building and promoting reconciliation. A similar observation was made from the present study, an indication that the government, NGOs and other institutions should actively participate in developing and supporting soccer in Kenya by providing adequate funding to soccer teams or clubs, especially those in informal settlements such as the Real Mathare FC.

A soccer fan<sup>239</sup> also stated that the financing of the soccer players in Mathare slums is very little to sustain them. The interviewee<sup>240</sup> explained that his brother was a soccer player, however, due to the poor remuneration given, he had to change his soccer career path and

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<sup>238</sup> Dudfield, O. ed., 2014. *Strengthening sport for development and peace: National policies and strategies*. Commonwealth Secretariat.

<sup>239</sup> Soccer Fan, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>240</sup> Soccer Fan, 005, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

look for other jobs that could sustain not only him but the family as well. One of the interviewees said:

*I know many soccer players in Mathare slums would like to progress with soccer as a professional career. However, this is not possible since most of our soccer players in Kenya are poorly remunerated. The ministry of sports has failed its sportsmen and sportswomen that is why many are moving or prefer to play for international teams. Lack of proper remuneration to our soccer players, demotivates their engagement in soccer locally and the tournaments, let alone advocating for peace and unity in the society (Soccer club official, 001 (Gor Mahia) (Gor Mahia) Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

A provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>241</sup> added that most of the times the soccer players who participate in tournaments stay for a long time before being paid or receiving any form of reward. The delayed remuneration discourages most players from engaging in soccer activities and even in recruiting or encouraging other individuals to join the soccer teams or clubs. This has a direct impact on their commitment towards promoting peace and reconciliation in their respective communities that could be linked to soccer related activities. Two interviewees<sup>242</sup> revealed that due to poor financing, the soccer teams/clubs from Mathare slums (Real Mathare F.C) and Kibera slums (Kibera Kings, F.C) were planning on going directly to their elected leaders to air their grievances and see whether they may get any assistance from the leaders they elected. The findings are similar

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<sup>241</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 20th Aug 2020

<sup>242</sup> Soccer player, 006, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 015, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

with results by Zhang and colleagues<sup>243</sup> who established that in most developing countries, adequate finance is not allocated for sporting activities such as soccer.

Moreover, an interviewee<sup>244</sup> noted that despite the establishment of the National Sports Fund as per the Sports Act 2013, fund allocation remains strained with misallocation and embezzlement of funds being part of the scandals facing sport agencies. Nick Mwendwa, the Football Kenya Federation's president at the time, was recently investigated by the Directorate of Criminal Investigations for the improper use of 244 million Kenyan Shillings for the Harambee Stars' participating in the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON).<sup>245</sup> A soccer club official<sup>246</sup> explained that the players won't be inspired to partake in initiatives and soccer efforts that are not exciting due to absence of sufficient funding. Youths would like to engage in lucrative activities. A study by Omotayo and Gitonga,<sup>247</sup> observed that majority of the Kenya Premier League players go with unpaid salaries and allowances for as long as three to four months. Unless soccer people are well remunerated, soccer performance and achievements cannot be fully guaranteed. Kenya's soccer funds have over the years been mismanaged by the specialized agencies hence frustrating soccer people, national soccer federations and national teams. This has demotivated team spirit and pride to represent Kenya in international soccer events.

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<sup>243</sup> Zhang, J.J., Kim, E., Mastromartino, B., Qian, T.Y. and Nauright, J., 2018. The sport industry in growing economies: critical issues and challenges. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*.

<sup>244</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>245</sup> Njeri, S., 2020. *FKF president Nick Mwendwa grilled by dci officers over embezzlement of funds*.

University of Nairobi. Retrieved on 03<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 from <https://studentlife.uonbi.ac.ke/latest-news/fkf-president-nick-mwendwa-grilled-dci-officers-over-embezzlement-funds>.

<sup>246</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>247</sup> Omotayo, O., and Gitonga, E. 2016. Streamlining the Selection Process of Sports Teams. *East African Journal of Physical Education, Sport Science, Leisure and Recreation Management*, 123-145.

One of the grassroots leaders<sup>248</sup> stated that peacebuilding initiatives can appear to be boring at times, therefore, to capture the attention of the youth, who make up majority of the population in Mathare slums, adequate and reliable funding for the sport is important to motivate them to engage in it and also contribute positively to the activities linked to it that could possibly contribute to peacebuilding. This is because, unlike before, where soccer players mostly played for the fun of the game, today young people understand that soccer can be a lucrative career. A soccer club official<sup>249</sup> explained that through social media and mass media, the young people are able to see how international soccer players such as Ronaldo and Messi live lucrative lives, therefore, their expectation is that when they join soccer teams/clubs, it can be a good source of income for them and their families. Therefore, without good financial package to accompany soccer, it is difficult to convince young people to engage fully in soccer and its activities that would contribute to peacebuilding.

An interviewee<sup>250</sup> explained that the infrastructure necessary for soccer tournaments is not financed adequately. According to a soccer player<sup>251</sup> Mathare's soccer facilities are in a deteriorated state and require immediate attention. The interviewee<sup>252</sup> however exclaimed that while the soccer teams/club do not have adequate infrastructure to ensure tournaments and other soccer activities are conducted smoothly, they do receive some form of support from volunteers. The findings concurred with results by Panneborg<sup>253</sup> who found that a

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<sup>248</sup> Grassroot Leader, 002, from Mathare slums, Area 3C, interviewed on 20th Aug 2020

<sup>249</sup> Soccer club official, 004 (Mathare United FC) (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3B, 12th Aug 2020

<sup>250</sup> Soccer player, 010, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>251</sup> Soccer player, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 24th Aug 2020

<sup>252</sup> Soccer player residing in Mathare slums Area 4A, interviewed on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020

<sup>253</sup> Pannenborg, A. (2010). Football in Africa: Observations about political, financial, cultural and religious influences, NCDO Publication Series Sport & Development, pp. 19

lack of infrastructure for soccer is a hindrance for the use of the game in promoting peace. Additionally, a soccer club official<sup>254</sup> outlined how the majority of soccer clubs and teams in Kenya's informal settlements rely on professional Kenyan athletes from throughout the world. For instance, a soccer fan pointed out that Victor Wanyama, a Kenyan international player, has donated to several soccer teams and clubs as a result of his connections to the Scottish club Celtic Fc. However, while the financial support received from volunteers is appreciated by the soccer players it is not sufficient. The inadequate financing and infrastructure for soccer in Kenya dates back in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Specifically, in 1996, due to inadequate facilities and infrastructure, as well as the government's lack of financial support, Kenya was forced to withdraw from hosting the AFCON.<sup>255</sup>

A soccer club official<sup>256</sup> revealed that the impression among some development players that the sport industry has access to significant corporate resources and revenue from large events contributes to the scarce resource investment in football for peace efforts. While some contexts of elite sport have access to a sizable resource pool, these resources are frequently unequally allocated; this imbalance is even more obvious when viewed through the lenses of gender, class, able-bodied/disabled, geography, or participation. The following are statements from two interviewees:

*Many people think and believe that soccer teams/clubs receive a lot of funding from large corporations, the government and international organizations. While big soccer team are able to get such financing, local teams such as the ones in Mathare slums do not enjoy much of the financing discharged by large corporations (Soccer club*

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<sup>254</sup> Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>255</sup> BBC.com., 2010. "South Africa 1996- Apartheid out." Available at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2010/01/100106\\_acn\\_moment\\_south\\_africa\\_1996.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/2010/01/100106_acn_moment_south_africa_1996.shtml) . Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

<sup>256</sup> Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020

*official, 004 (Mathare United FC, Mathare slums 3B, 12<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*I have had friends disown me and refuse to pay to watch community leagues since they believe that I am paid good money and I do not help them. This is far from the truth since many local soccer teams/clubs in Mathare depend on well-wishers whose support though valued and appreciated is not much to sustain the teams in the long run. It is my opinion that large corporations should focus on financing local soccer teams/clubs as part of their social corporate/responsibility, to help improve our stands and to motivate us to work towards unifying our society and uplifting the youth. (Soccer player, 012, Mathare slums 4A, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020).*

This is an indication that poor financing of football teams ripples down to poverty which drives conflict in informal settlements. A study by Dudfield,<sup>257</sup> found that that soccer teams/clubs are inadequately funded that limits their engagement in soccer related activities that would contribute to peacebuilding. In order to engage in activities that would contribute to peace building, adequate and reliable financing is vital.

A grassroots leader<sup>258</sup> explained that inadequate and reliable funding is still an elephant in the room when it comes to Kenyan soccer. It is no secret that most of the sportsmen are paid way below what their counterparts abroad receive for the same services. However, the interviewee<sup>259</sup> reminisced that the phenomenon of inadequate financing of soccer seemed to have started off in a different trajectory with the entry of betting company SportPesa in Kenya's soccer industry. SportPesa entry into Kenya's soccer industry came as a relief as the betting industry giant decided to sponsor the Kenya premier league, boxing federation,

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<sup>257</sup> Dudfield, O. ed., 2014. *Strengthening sport for development and peace: National policies and strategies*. Commonwealth Secretariat.

<sup>258</sup> Grassroot Leader, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 5th Aug 2020

<sup>259</sup> Grassroot Leader, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 5th Aug 2020



Kenya rugby union, and grass roots leagues such as the SportPesa super 8 league.<sup>260</sup> However, with the closure of SportPesa in 2019 by the Licensing board, the hope of improving financing for local soccer teams/clubs also faded as explained by a soccer club official.<sup>261</sup>

According to Mwongeli<sup>262</sup> Kenya is one of the African counties that is regarded as a soccer powerhouse, internationally recognized for its soccer excellence and sporting grounds. Despite a high international sporting pedigree, a soccer player<sup>263</sup> revealed that the mismanagement of soccer funds, failure to honour soccer people and political interference in soccer has led to the underutilization of Kenya's sports potential. Challenges associated with Kenya's soccer fraternity including corruption scandals have been a loophole affecting the development, cultural exchange, and sports tourism to build soccer networks and partnerships, growing the influence and value of the Kenyan sport. In 2015, the then FKF president Sam Nyamweya was charged for mismanagement of Sh17,241,824 by the FKF in a near-abortive trip by Harambee Stars to Cape Verde.<sup>264</sup>: This assertion was supported by two interviewees who said:

*It is unfortunate that the leaders we wake up very early to elect during elections are the ones who disappoint us by embezzling the money that is supposed to drive development and growth. (Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums 3C, 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

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<sup>260</sup> Wafula, B. (2016, February 8). How Kenyans Will Benefit From Sport Pesa- Arsenal Sponsorsip Deal. Retrieved from Citizen Digital: Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <https://www.citizentv.co.ke>.

<sup>261</sup> Soccer club official, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>262</sup> Mwongeli, M. M. 2019. *The role of sports diplomacy in promoting Kenya's foreign policy*. Nairobi: United states international University.

<sup>263</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>264</sup> Nation Sports Desk. 2015. *Nyamweya, two FKF officials to be charged with funds theft* Retrieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 from <https://nation.africa/kenya/sports/football/nyamweya-two-fkf-officials-to-be-charged-with-funds-theft-1157304>.

*I get discouraged whenever I hear those finances meant to improve the lives of young people in informal settlements is embezzled. The officials that steal this money, are unjust since they facilitate the rise in poverty among young people in informal settlements. Soccer scandals as pertains to financing demoralizes me completely, that I am not able to attend training or engage actively in other soccer activities. (Soccer player. 010, Mathare slums 3C, 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

Mwongeli<sup>265</sup> observed that public soccer facilities have been lacking to nature local soccer such as local soccer leagues. Due to inadequate financing, a ripple effect is experienced such as inadequate number of qualified coaches to train the soccer players, poor infrastructure in the form of playgrounds and stadiums to conduct tournaments. These financial inadequacies experienced by soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums also contribute to poor initiation of peace building initiatives by soccer players at the community level.

#### **4.3 Poor Governance and Corruption**

A soccer fan<sup>266</sup> identified poor governance of soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums as a challenge, limiting the promotion of peacebuilding initiatives in the area that could be possibly supported through soccer related activities at the community level. According to an interviewee<sup>267</sup> the management of the soccer teams/clubs do not offer effective and appropriate management to sustain the efforts of the team to actively participate in soccer matches and to also contribute to the community by advocating for peace and unity. One of the interviewees<sup>268</sup>, stated that the management of the soccer teams/clubs in Mathare slums is often concerned about winning tournaments to prove that they are the best team. This leaves a gap in the corporate social responsibility of such soccer teams/clubs where

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<sup>265</sup> Mwongeli, M. M. 2019. *The role of sports diplomacy in promoting Kenya's foreign policy*. Nairobi: United states international University.

<sup>266</sup> Soccer Fan, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>267</sup> Soccer Fan, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>268</sup> Soccer Fan, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 1st Sept 2020

they are expected to actively participate in developing the community and society. The poor management of the soccer teams/clubs has resulted in the soccer players not maximizing on the activities initiated by MYSA since their key or primary focus is on winning tournaments.

FIFA is the body that oversees all issues relating to soccer/football around the world. However, it has failed in its mandate to intervene in local football teams/clubs in ensuring that the set standards are maintained. An interviewee<sup>269</sup> stated that FIFA mostly focuses on the national teams and does not pay much attention to the management of local soccer teams/clubs. According to Mohammed,<sup>270</sup> poor FIFA interventions in the affairs of local football governing bodies is another issue that has affected football management and thus affecting the capability of soccer teams/clubs to engage effectively in other activities such as peacebuilding initiatives. Therefore, FIFA needs to take an active role in promoting local soccer teams/clubs across the world.

An interviewee<sup>271</sup> also identified poor governance in the form of political interference in soccer activities, as a challenge to effective implementation of peacebuilding initiatives. One of the interviewees<sup>272</sup> indicated that in Kenya, political interference in soccer activities is common. This agrees with a report by the stakeholders' transition committee<sup>273</sup> which determined that football club management at various levels has always been voluntary,

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<sup>269</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>270</sup> Mohammed, A., 2018. "The Role of FIFA and CAF in Using Football to Promote Peace in Africa." PhD diss., Thesis Magister. Univeristy of Ghana

<sup>271</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>272</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>273</sup> Stakeholders Transitional Committee. 2004. For the Good of the Game: Achieving Good Governance, Financial Transparency and Stakeholder Accountability for Saving and Improving Kenyan Football, Nairobi, Stakeholders Transitional Committee.

similar to the majority of soccer in Kenya. In fact, football executives frequently use their personal funds to support the operations of their clubs.<sup>274</sup> A popular campaign marketing strategy for many political candidates is to invest money in a highly politicized football organization.<sup>275</sup> This shows that the politicians have learnt the art of using soccer as a tool to market their campaign manifestos to get themselves elected. The following are statements from three interviewees:

*Political leaders in Kenya have mastered the art of lying where they make promises of funding local soccer teams/clubs but fail to do so once elected (Soccer fan, 015, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020)*

*Most political aspirants use local soccer teams/clubs as gimmicks during their campaigns. This is because, to gain the large following of soccer fans, politicians will align themselves and support local teams using the campaign period, but when they get elected they forget the platform that garnered them soccer fans votes (Soccer player, 006, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*The worst consequence of politicians using local teams/clubs for their own gain is that it encourages soccer executives to misuse meagre club and national team resources such as gate fees and sponsorship income. (Grassroot leader, 004, Mathare slums 3A, 5<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

According to Munro,<sup>276</sup> the drive for political power, which is regarded as offering prospects for self-enrichment, has been further fuelled by the vicious cycle of inadequate resources and poor leadership. This has had a negative impact on soccer clubs' participation in local and national peacebuilding programs.

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid

<sup>275</sup> Munro, B., 2005. Greed vs Good Governance: the fight for corruption free football in Kenya. A report presented to the Fourth World Communication Conference on Sport and Society (November 6-10, 2005). Copenhagen, Denmark

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

Two soccer fans<sup>277</sup> revealed that soccer club management comprises of corrupt administrators. They expressed that they have heard many cases of soccer clubs' administrators embezzling finances meant to engage the clubs, that would most likely advance or promote peace building initiatives through their various soccer related activities. A soccer fan<sup>278</sup> gave the examples of the FKF presidents, Nick Mwendwa and his predecessor, Sam Nyamweya who are facing allegations of embezzlements and fraud in court. The finding concurred with report by Khumalo,<sup>279</sup> that characterizes soccer officials as crooked, avaricious, and ineffective officials. Khumalo comes to the conclusion that players (such George Weah, Salif Keita, Didier Drogba, and Kalusha Bwalya) have given up their own successes to advance not only soccer but also their own localities and have in some cases supported their national teams. However, the organization in charge of growing the game places a greater emphasis on personal gain, which results in subpar club management.<sup>280</sup>

Corruption associated with soccer is a widespread issue that starts at the top with FIFA. A soccer club official<sup>281</sup> indicated that the corruption scandals witnessed in Kenyan soccer clubs have also spread across the large corporations mandated to oversee soccer activities across the world. The corrupt cases in local soccer teams/clubs may be attributed to the fact that FIFA does not require accountability for the financing it provides for each soccer club

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<sup>277</sup> Soccer Fan, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020; Soccer Fan, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 1st Sept 2020

<sup>278</sup> Soccer Fan, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

<sup>279</sup> Khumalo, T., 2013. *Football's rotten core must be excised*, Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2020 from <http://www.citypress.co.za/you-say/footballs-rotten-core-must-beexcised/>.

<sup>280</sup> Rukuni, C. and Groenink, E. (eds.). 2010. *Killing Soccer in Africa. FAIR Transnational Investigation*. Download the report at [www.fairreporters.org](http://www.fairreporters.org).

<sup>281</sup> Soccer club official, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

across the globe as stipulated by Madegwa<sup>282</sup>. Observations by Madegwa<sup>283</sup> established that FIFA scandals and corruption charges reveal a contentious global football structure. According to two interviewees<sup>284</sup> corruption in Kenyan soccer is similar to that in other countries since the heads of the federations are chosen by a small group of delegates interested in running the game. A soccer fan<sup>285</sup> explained that only former and present administrators are allowed to run for elective positions in Kenya. The interviewee<sup>286</sup> stated that Kenya's system had institutionalized corruption, and football was no exception. A soccer supporter also recalled the corruption controversy involving Sam Nyamweya, the previous president of the FKF, who was accused of stealing money intended to pay for the national team's trip to Cape Verde. Often finances meant to develop the soccer clubs in Mathare slums disappear at the last minute and the players are not allowed to complain or even raise questions. Worst of all is that the corruption by Mathare slums soccer clubs results in a ripple effect among which includes the inadequate financing of soccer activities that leaves the players demotivated to engage in peace building initiatives.

#### **4.4 Soccer Hooliganism and Wars**

The function of soccer clubs in utilizing the same sport as a forum for peace is limited by the fact that the sport elicits tensions of hooliganism and fights. A soccer fan<sup>287</sup> explained that while soccer is a good medium of bringing people together to enjoy the game, often it

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<sup>282</sup> Madegwa, R. 2020. *FIFA is the cause of Kenya's miserable performance in football*. Retrieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 from <https://kenyapage.net/commentary/kenya-football-articles-and-profiles/fifa-has-aided-and-abetted-kenyas-misery-in-football/>.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid

<sup>284</sup> Soccer player, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 24th Aug 2020; Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 003, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020.

<sup>285</sup> Soccer Fan, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>286</sup> Soccer Fan, 002, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>287</sup> Soccer Fan, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

is a source of conflict since it provides a win-lose situation which results in animosity and enmity. A grassroots leader<sup>288</sup> expressed that no human being likes to lose, some of the teams that lose to other teams take it very personal to the extent that they do not talk or even interact with the winning team. The interviewee<sup>289</sup> demonstrated that by employing the same game that fosters nationalism, rage in lose-lose scenarios, and heightened ethnic sentiment, such acts in favour of peace have been branded as unrealistic, lacking in permanence, and invalid. While this dispute in soccer may be perceived as a barrier to peacebuilding initiatives, it is important to note that, even diplomatic mediation, which has earned much praise for promoting peace, can worsen conflicts if improperly used. This implies that the techniques used in peace building, whether it is the use of diplomacy or soccer, the approach taken must be assessed properly to ensure its success. Otherwise, it may result in conflict and animosity. Therefore, as mentioned by Madegwa,<sup>290</sup> FIFA, and governments must step in to ensure that local teams/clubs follow the set rules and regulations in conducting all its approaches that would also contribute to peacebuilding.

An interviewee<sup>291</sup> also noted that the enmity that arises from soccer is mostly prevalent among soccer fans. The interviewees said:

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<sup>288</sup> Grassroots Leaders, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

<sup>289</sup> Grassroots Leaders, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

<sup>290</sup> Madegwa, R. 2020. *FIFA is the cause of Kenya's miserable performance in football*. Retrieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020 from <https://kenyapage.net/commentary/kenya-football-articles-and-profiles/fifa-has-aided-and-abetted-kenyas-misery-in-football/>

<sup>291</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

*Soccer is a passionate game; therefore, it is no surprise that some soccer fans enter into animosity with other fans over which team plays the best or over which team won in specific tournaments (Soccer club official, 002 (Gor Mahia), Mathare slums 4A, 26<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

*Soccer has loyal fans; if a fan is loyal to a soccer team, it does not matter if the team loses or wins, the loyalty still remains. Therefore, this strong loyalty, though important in motivating the players can also imply that the fans are likely to collide over which team to support often times. (Administration and peace building committee member, 001, Mathare slums 4A, 25<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The findings concur with Muthuri<sup>292</sup> who noted that soccer can be used to promote peacebuilding while at the same time it can be used to promote hooliganism and violence. 75 people were reportedly killed in Alexandria, Egypt, during a match between AL Ahly and Zamalek. In the Mathare slums, soccer hooliganism is nothing new; fans have been caught fighting during games and even friendly competitions. Muthuri<sup>293</sup> noted that hooliganism is a problem across most of Eastern Europe, highlighting the negative aspects of football. If not addressed effectively, this phenomena in soccer/football can result in violence, which would limit its ability to foster peacebuilding and promote reconciliation. A soccer player<sup>294</sup> expressed that it is sad to see their soccer fans engaging in reckless acts of violence over a game that is supposed to bring joy and peace to society. However, two soccer players<sup>295</sup> noted that the soccer fans are often following in the footsteps of large soccer teams/clubs such as Gor Mahia and the AFC Leopards where cases of violence and

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<sup>292</sup> Muthuri, D.K., 2016. *The Role Of Football In Conflict Resolution In Kenya, A Case Study Of Kibra Constituency* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

<sup>293</sup> Ibid

<sup>294</sup> Soccer player, 011, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

<sup>295</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020; Soccer player, 008, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020



hooliganism have been reported. They further<sup>296</sup> observed that in recent years both clubs (Gor Mahia and AFC Leopards) have had points deducted by the league for hooliganism among its fans, which has resulted in violence and even fatalities. In the same way, in Mathare slums, a soccer fan<sup>297</sup> admitted that majority of the population are aligned to different soccer clubs (even beyond Mathare) thus fans have clashed on a number of occasions. A good example occurred in 2018 when unknown goons attacked fans during the play-offs in Machakos when Gor Mahia defeated SuperSport United 1-0.<sup>298</sup> The hooliganism during football matches is a challenge for promoting soccer and peace as a result.

An interviewee<sup>299</sup> stated that they have witnessed violence perpetrated by their fans in the name of supporting specific soccer clubs. Violence has been witnessed in form of stampedes where people have been stepped on while they try to escape the stadiums and football grounds due to conflict. In 2010, 8 people lost their lives at Nyayo stadium after a stampede occurred during the Gor Mahia and AFC Leopards game.<sup>300</sup> 14 people lost their lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2001 after missiles were thrown after an equalizing goal in a game between TP Mazembe and FC Saint Eloi Lupopo. As usual, the police use of tear gas sparked a stampede that ultimately resulted in deaths.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Ibid

<sup>297</sup> Soccer Fan, 013, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 13th Aug 2020

<sup>298</sup> Willis, S. 2018. *Gor Mahia ban Mathare 4A Branch after ugly scenes in Machakos*. Retrieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2021 from <https://www.goal.com/en-kw/news/gor-mahia-ban-mathare-4a-branch-after-ugly-scenes-in/1fgwj2mrh6su719ldwbfiuullz/match/2eciutmv9gzsd0oa8v3x5tzl6>.

<sup>299</sup> Soccer club official, 003 (Mathare United FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 16th Aug 2020

<sup>300</sup> Somoni, M. 2010. *Eight Dead In Kenyan Stadium Stampede In Nairobi Derby Between Gor Mahia And AFC Leopards*. Retrieved on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 from <https://www.goal.com/en/news/89/africa/2010/10/23/2180213/eight-dead-in-kenyan-stadium-stampede-in-nairobi-derby>.

<sup>301</sup> Police 'blamed' for Congo Stampede, Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/football/africa/1305538.stm>.

Notably, an interviewee<sup>302</sup> expressed that in as much as they were disappointed that some soccer fans engaged in hooliganism activities during soccer tournaments, they were grateful that the violence incidences in the area did not lead to loss of lives unlike the unfortunate incident of 2010 at Nyayo Stadium. The interviewee<sup>303</sup> added that the form of violence or challenges experienced between different soccer teams/clubs such as Real Mathare FC and Mathare United FC is often started by mocking each other which ultimately turns into a fight and misunderstanding. Violent hooligan activities were seen in Egypt in 2006, 2012, and 2013, which led to the deaths of roughly 79 individuals in 2012 and about 30 in 2013.<sup>304</sup> Furthermore, in 2015, during Ghana and Equatorial Guinea's AFCON semi-final match, hooligans invaded the field and threw bottles and other projectiles at the Ghanaian players, causing the match to be stopped for more than 30 minutes. In a tweet on the incident, the Ghana Soccer Association (GFA) likened it to a battle zone.<sup>305</sup> After 17 soccer supporters lost their lives in a stampede that broke out at the stadium entrance in Uige, northern Angola, Santa Rita de Cassia and Recreativo de Libolo played a game that will never be forgotten by fellow Angolans.<sup>306</sup>

According to an interviewee<sup>307</sup>, such acts of hooliganism and violence during soccer matches result in strong animosity between teams/clubs and soccer loyalists limiting the efforts of using soccer as a tool of peacebuilding. The interviewee said:

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<sup>302</sup> Soccer Fan, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>303</sup> Soccer Fan, 012, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>304</sup> Gulve Anthony. "Football Hooligans: Subcultures and Sociology." Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 from <http://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultures-and-scenes/football-hooligans>

<sup>305</sup> Tom, S., 2015. "*Ghana reaches AFCON final as crowd troubles mars Equatorial Guinea Semi-Final.*" Available at <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/02/05/football/afcon-semifinal-ghana-equatorial-guinea/index.html> Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

<sup>306</sup> Thembaletu M., 2017. "*Shameful act of Hooliganism clouds World Football.*" Available at <https://citypress.news24.com/Sport/shameful-acts-of-hooliganism-cloud-world-football-20170215>. Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

<sup>307</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

*It is really difficult to try and convince anyone that soccer can be used to promote peace after they have witnessed either on mass media or social media such incidences of violence (Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums 4B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020)*

*As part of our team's mandate, we take part in mediating conflict in Mathare slums. However, one day as we were going about our responsibilities in spreading peace messages during the environmental clean-up sessions, one resident asked us how we expect to promote peace while we cannot manage the violence in our stadiums during matches. That was a strong question that I was unable to answer but it showed how such acts of violence affects our actions in trying to bring the residents of Mathare slums together to attain peaceful coexistence. (Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums 4B, 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2020)*

The hooliganism witnessed during soccer matches indicates the need for set rules of conduct for both the players and the fans. This is because, as pointed out by Thembaletu<sup>308</sup> hooliganism during soccer matches negatively impacts the ability of soccer to promote peace in areas where conflict is a common phenomenon.

#### **4.5 Not Everyone Enjoys Soccer**

Although soccer has managed to claim the title as the most popular sport in the modern world, not everyone appreciates the game, making its use in processes of reconciliation and reconstruction challenging. As a result, not all soccer for peace activities in Mathare slums have benefited all members of the community who are unfamiliar or not keen with the benefits of the sport. An interviewee<sup>309</sup> expressed that in the modern day, people have choices as it pertains to all things including soccer. Different people like different types of

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<sup>308</sup> Thembaletu M., 2017. "Shameful act of Hooliganism clouds World Football." Available at <https://citypress.news24.com/Sport/shameful-acts-of-hooliganism-cloud-world-football-20170215>. Retrieved on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

<sup>309</sup> Soccer player, 003, Mathare slums, Area 3A, 2nd Aug 2020

soccer among which include basketball and rugby that has a large following in Kenya. The interviewee said:

*I have family members who do not enjoy soccer, thus it is difficult to convince them to attend a tournament where talks on peace and reconciliation will be held. This is because, they do not understand let alone appreciate the game that is soccer (Soccer player, 014, Mathare slums 3A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020)*

Moreover, a soccer player<sup>310</sup> also echoed that most Kenyan fan base choose to support international teams and neglect local teams because of disappointments in Kenya's soccer performance. This neglect from the local fans has a very negative impact on the Kenya soccer people who sometimes lose the motivation to excel in their soccer, due to the strained support. The provincial administration and peace committee member<sup>311</sup> stated that the effects of feeling neglected by their own community has led to some of the soccer players opting to the use of enhancement drugs to boost their soccer performance and confidence in order to make their communities and nation proud. An interviewee<sup>312</sup> explained that with a range of live matches on soccer betting sites every other day ranging from football, rugby, tennis, handball, basketball, ice hockey and more in the international arena, Kenyans are fascinated by the bets, opting to play favourites with foreign teams as opposed to local teams. The result is a local soccer fraternity that is highly demotivated leading to even more poor results and low participation in peacebuilding initiatives. This is because the soccer players feel unappreciated, therefore, they lack the strength to give back to the community as they feel fatigued.

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<sup>310</sup> Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 17th Aug 2020

<sup>311</sup> Provincial Administration and peace building committee member, 004, Mathare slums, Area 3C, 20th Aug 2020

<sup>312</sup> Soccer player, 005, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 31st Aug 2020

A soccer club official<sup>313</sup> observed that Kenyans have also been very hesitant to watch live sport matches at the local stadia stating reasons ranging from payment of unreasonable entry fees to unavailability of transportation to the soccer venues themselves. Murugi,<sup>314</sup> observed that in 2018, in attempt to make Kenyans cheer on Harambee stars as they played against Ethiopia in the first leg of the 2019 AFCON qualifier, Nairobi's former Governor, Mike Sonko and nominated Senator Millicent Omanga offered free transport to the fans to watch the match live at the Moi International Sports Stadium, Kasarani. The Ministry of Soccer, Culture and Heritage former Cabinet Secretary Rashid Echesa also publicized free charge on entry to the stadium to make Kenyans attend the game. Luring locals to support athletes proves that the locals have lost faith in their soccer people, which is a challenge in Kenya's soccer. A grassroots leader<sup>315</sup> explained that the fact that not all individuals enjoy soccer was a cause for the poor support of local soccer teams/clubs by Kenyans.

Additionally, Murugi<sup>316</sup> observed that a contributing factor that has resulted in the unpopularity of soccer in Kenya is the neglect of the soccer men in the country. Despite honouring Kenya sports people during Mashujaa Day or through awards, people like Nyandika Maiyoro and John Mayaka died in neglect after branding the country in international sports events bringing honour to the nation.<sup>317</sup> The following are verbatim statements from the key informants:

*When I read about stories of sports legends in Kenya who had a bad ending, I am discouraged from taking part in some*

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<sup>313</sup> Soccer club official, 001, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 26th Aug 2020

<sup>314</sup> Murugi, S., 2020. *The role of sports in promoting peaceful interactions and co-existence in Kenya (2001-2019)*. Master's thesis, USIU.

<sup>315</sup> Grassroot Leader, 003, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 2nd Sept 2020

<sup>316</sup> Murugi, S., 2020. *The role of sports in promoting peaceful interactions and co-existence in Kenya (2001-2019)*. Master's thesis, USIU.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid

*soccer related activities, since I am reminded that once I stop scoring goals I can be as easily forgotten and abandoned by my own country (Soccer Player, 002, Mathare slums 3A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020)*

*The truth is that in as much as the government want to help young people by supporting soccer, it does so to ensure that we can market the country. Once we are unable to deliver, the government forgets what we have done and moves on to the next generation of upcoming soccer players. Such realizations make me and my fellow players to only take part in the soccer activities that are aligned with our pockets and not to think of giving back to the society. (Soccer player, 007, Mathare slums 3C, 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020)*

The findings from the interview guide are aligned with results by Murugi<sup>318</sup> that the Kenyan government and public does not fully appreciate the contribution of soccer players which includes undertaking activities that contributes to peace building.

#### **4.6 Gender Imbalance**

Soccer has traditionally been a sport played exclusively by men, though more and more women are joining in. For instance, the use of soccer to help ex-combatants assimilate back into society places a lot of emphasis on men at the expense of women. An interviewee<sup>319</sup> added that in Mathare slums, soccer is mostly dominated by the male gender. Additionally, most of the soccer fans are also male. This leaves a gender imbalance that poses a challenge when the soccer clubs are working towards initiatives aimed at promoting peace. This is because, the role of women in peace building is not recognized as it ought to be in society. The interviewee<sup>320</sup> further states that even though most NGO's, like Esperance in Rwanda

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<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Soccer player, 008, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 23rd Aug 2020

<sup>320</sup> Ibid

and MYSA in Kenya use inclusive soccer techniques, there is still the question of whether female participants will accept these programs psychologically.

Sheryl<sup>321</sup> indicates that there is gender imbalance in the field of soccer. Looking at soccer historically, most of sport related activities/games were initially geared towards men. Participating in soccer meant being exposed to training techniques that would help men fight their foes. A soccer club official<sup>322</sup> indicated that it should be mentioned that as more women participate in amateur and professional soccer, this perception is changing. A soccer player<sup>323</sup> used the Carolina for Kibera initiative as an illustration of how it has assisted young people in adjusting to community reintegration. Carolina for Kibera's main goals in using soccer to spread peace and teach life choices. According to the soccer player<sup>324</sup> each year, more than 5000 boys and girls compete in football tournaments sponsored by Carolina for Kibera, where tribal diversification is a key criterion. Teams must contain members who are not exclusively from the same ethnic group in order to compete. The formation of deep bonds in the society across racial and ethnic divides is one of the skills that players gain. To demonstrate their commitment to the competition, contestants participate in volunteer work in the community, such as environmental clean-ups.

Consequently, encouraging the local community to consider including women and children who have also faced conflict.<sup>325</sup> In Mathare, the soccer players explained that MYSA has paved way allowing girls to join in the soccer clubs and to actively participate in activities

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<sup>321</sup> Sheryl A. and Bruce B., 2005. *Building Team Cohesion: Becoming 'We' Instead of 'Me'*. George Mason University.

<sup>322</sup> Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020

<sup>323</sup> Soccer player, 009, Mathare slums, Area 4B, 30th Aug 2020

<sup>324</sup> Ibid

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

that would contribute to peace building. However, the interviewee<sup>326</sup> caution that without attaining or advancing effectively the application of gender balance, use of soccer in Mathare slums to promote peace and reconciliation will continue facing a big challenge.

#### **4.7 Lack of Formal Education**

Since independence, governments have focused primarily on formal education as the principal tool for development. Formal education was seen in human resources enhancement and modernisation theories as both a necessity and a sign of civilization.<sup>327</sup> Education has recently been recognized as a fundamental human right, for instance in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, the state has a duty to provide education as a right. In 2003, Kenya implemented free primary education as a response. However, formal schools from the lower tiers are absent or scarce in slums (e.g. primary school). This brings us to the challenge of slum dwellers to find a way to pay for their education or to arrange logistics to attend formal schools in a different location. From the interviews with two soccer fans<sup>328</sup>, it was revealed that lack of or little formal education has hindered the efforts by soccer clubs to effectively promote peacebuilding initiatives through soccer in Mathare slums. Formal education as explained by them, allow individuals to be knowledgeable, exposed and to gain confidence when communicating with other people. However, since a number of residents in Mathare slums lack proper formal education or have not been able to advance their education, it is a challenge for them to express themselves eloquently in order to actively engage in some

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<sup>326</sup> Soccer club official, 005 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 3C, 19th Aug 2020

<sup>327</sup> Smith, I., 1974. *'Becoming modern: Individual change in six Developing Countries'*, in N. Ansell (ed.), *'Children, Youth, and Development'*. London and New York: Routledge.

<sup>328</sup> Soccer Fan, 007, Mathare slums, Area 4A, 27th Aug 2020; Soccer Fan, 008, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 14th Aug 2020



of the peacebuilding initiatives due to lack of confidence or low self-esteem. Additionally, a soccer club official<sup>329</sup> stated that in as much as the soccer clubs can offer different training opportunities to the young people, they still require proper formal education that enlightens them on how to communicate effectively with other people, how to show empathy and to pass information and counselling to victims or survivors of conflict in a more professional manner.

An interviewee<sup>330</sup> suggested that communication and engagement hurdles exist even though MYSA offers a chance to enhance lifestyles, such as through soccer that promote physical health for healthy life. Those who chose not to volunteer for the community in order to be eligible for education scholarships expressed regret for their decision and described how a communication barrier during international tours in English-speaking nations reduced their level of involvement in football training sessions that were intended to be extremely helpful to them. They were forced to rely on their peers or watch those who understood. Most young people now volunteer in the community with the hope of getting the chance to continue or further their studies as a result of this. Despite their struggles, the youth acquire certain talents and apply them to their daily lives.<sup>331</sup>

#### **4.8 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter evaluated the challenges of soccer activities in promoting peace in Mathare slums. According to the findings, while soccer has played a key role in promoting peace in Mathare slums during the period 2008-2017, it was faced with some challenges limiting the

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<sup>329</sup> Soccer club official, 006 (Real Mathare FC), Mathare slums, Area 4B, 3rd Sept 2020

<sup>330</sup> Soccer player, 015, Mathare slums, Area 3B, 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

<sup>331</sup> Ibid

opportunity for conducting some of the peacebuilding initiatives. A key challenge facing soccer activities is inadequate and reliable funding. The findings established that majority of the residents in Mathare slums live hand to mouth, therefore, they are not able to fully participate in peace initiatives that would require funding. This implies that they rely on the government, volunteers and NGOs to finance soccer activities that would facilitate peace building initiatives. If no financing is obtained, the soccer clubs find it difficult in some instances to spread the message of peace in the community. Additionally, poor governance and political interference were found to hinder soccer activities that involve peace building. The hooliganism associated with soccer, the fact that soccer is not loved by everyone, gender imbalance and lack of proper formal education were also identified as challenges that affected to some extent the promotion of peace building initiatives in Mathare slums. The following chapter makes recommendations that can be implemented to address the challenges identified in this chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Conflict in Mathare slums is exacerbated by the high level of poverty and the growing population. The aftermath of the 2007 elections, resulted in a countrywide state of violence, notably, its severity was felt in the informal settlements such as Mathare slums. Since the post-election violence in 2007, Mathare slums has been on a journey of healing. To propel this process, soccer was adopted as a mechanism of bringing people together. This is because, through soccer different people can interact irrespective of ethnicity, age or gender. However, the use of soccer must be applied appropriately to be effective. If implemented in the wrong way, it may result in more conflict through hooliganism that has been evident in the football fields such as the Nyayo stadium. Therefore, the study concludes that soccer is a double-edged sword in that it can promote peace and also facilitate conflict depending on the way it is implemented.

The study recommends that adequate and more reliable financing for soccer and its activities should be availed by the government. Additionally, NGOs and volunteers should also offer financial support to the local soccer teams/clubs to finance their initiatives in peace building in Mathare slums.

While soccer has been an important cog in peace building in Mathare, there is need to enhance other measures in order to mitigate Mathare as well as other slums in Nairobi such as Kibera from future conflicts. To this end therefore, there is a need to adopt and focus on Early Warning Early Response (EWER) systems that is centred around detecting and deterring conflict; Peace Messaging; Dialogue/conversation forums with members of the

community, and Resolution; Monitoring of Hate Speech incidences, as well as strengthening of the structures that have been created to foster peace.

Additionally, it is of importance to provide adequate technical and financial support to structures in the country mandated with the responsibility of peace building, for instance the National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management that works very closely with the Peace Committee Structures at various levels in the Country. There is need for continuous capacity building for the peace committee members in matters gender, hate speech, mediation, how to effectively conduct community dialogues, conflict – sensitivity, leadership and governance etc.

The study recommends that schools from the lower level (primary) with proper structure of formal education should be increased or constructed and be well equipped with all the necessary material including government teachers. This is because lack of proper formal education was identified as a factor limiting (to some extent) the promotion of peace initiatives during some of the soccer activities.

The study evaluated the role of soccer in promoting peace in the informal settlement of Mathare slums. The study was based in Mathare slums, the second largest slum in Kenya. A similar study should be considered in other areas such as ‘*Kondele*’ Slum in Kisumu that has a huge youth population which is passionate in football as well. ‘*Kondele*’ is one of the areas in the Country that was heavily affected by violence following the disputed general election of 2007. This will add to literature in the effort of understanding the role soccer plays in the Kenyan society as pertains to promoting peace.

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## **APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

### **SECTION A: Nature of conflict in Mathare slums**

1. Does Mathare slums experience any form of conflict?. Explain
2. What is your opinion on the forms of conflict experienced in Mathare slums?
3. What are the causes of conflict in Mathare slums?
4. Which groups of people are commonly engaged in conflict in Mathare slums?
5. Do you think it is possible to reduce, end or prevent the conflict in Mathare slums?
6. What are the challenges that organizations, civil servants, the community and the government face when trying to mitigate conflict in Mathare slums?

### **SECTION B: Impact of soccer activities in promoting reconciliation**

7. Is soccer a common game in Mathare slums?
8. Do people go to watch local soccer tournaments in Mathare slums?
9. How has soccer been used to promote peace in Mathare slums?
10. What has been the impact of using soccer activities in promoting reconciliation in Mathare slums?
11. Are the youths engaged in the soccer activities initiated to promote reconciliation in Mathare slums?
12. Did soccer activities play a role in facilitating peace after the 2007-post-election violence?

### **SECTION C: Challenges of soccer activities in promoting peace in Mathare slums**

13. What are some of the challenges faced by soccer clubs as they attempt to promote peace in Mathare slums?
14. In your opinion do the local soccer clubs have adequate financing to promote peace initiatives in Mathare slums?
15. In your opinion have the soccer activities been successful in promoting peace in Mathare slums?

**APPENDIX II: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES**

<b>Soccer/Football Fans</b>		
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1.	Mathare Area 3C,	18 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
2.	Mathare Area 4B	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
3.	Mathare Area 4B	1 <sup>st</sup> Sept 2020
4.	Mathare Area 3C,	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
5.	Mathare Area 3B	12 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
6.	Mathare Area 3B,	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
7.	Mathare Area 4A,	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
8.	Mathare Area 3B	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
9.	Mathare Area 3A,	3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020
10.	Mathare Area 3A,	4 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
11.	Mathare Area 4B	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept 2020
12.	Mathare Area 4B	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020
13.	Mathare Area 3B	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
14.	Mathare Area 3B	15 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

15.	Mathare Area 4A	23 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020
<b>Soccer Club Officials: Mathare United Football Club (Mathare FC), Real Mathare Football Club (Real Mathare FC) &amp; Gor Mahia</b>		
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1.	Mathare Area 4A	26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
2.	Mathare Area 4A,	26 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
3.	Mathare Area 3C,	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
4.	Mathare Area 3B,	12 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
5.	Mathare Area 3C	19 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
6.	Mathare Area 4B	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept 2020
<b>Soccer Players: Real Mathare FC &amp; Mathare United FC</b>		
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1.	Mathare Area 4A	24 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
2.	Mathare Area 3A,	2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020
3.	Mathare Area 3A,	2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug 2020
4.	Mathare Area 3B,	9 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
5.	Mathare Area 4B,	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2020

6.	Mathare Area 3C,	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
7.	Mathare Area 3C,	17 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
8.	Mathare Area 4A,	23 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020
9.	Mathare Area 4B,	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
10.	Mathare Area 3C,	17 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
11.	Mathare Area 4B	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2020
12.	Mathare Area 4A,	24 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
13.	Mathare Area 3B	9 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
14.	Mathare Area 3A	3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020
15.	Mathare Area 3B	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
<b>Provincial Administration and Peace Building Committee Members</b>		
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1.	Mathare Area 4A,	25 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
2.	Mathare Area 4A	23 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2020
3.	Mathare Area 3C	19 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
4.	Mathare Area 3C	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
5.	Mathare Area 3B	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020



<b>Grassroots Leaders</b>		
<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>
1.	Mathare Area 4A,	25 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
2.	Mathare Area 3C,	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020
3.	Mathare Area 4B,	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept 2020
4.	Mathare Area 3A,	5 <sup>th</sup> Aug 2020

**APPENDIX III: TWO MAIN SOCCER/FOOTBALL CLUBS REFERRED IN  
THE STUDY THAT HAVE DIRECT LINKAGE TO MATHARE: REAL  
MATHARE FC & MATHARE UNITED FC**

**Real Mathare FC**

Real Mathare Football Club is a grassroots football/soccer club that is situated in Mathare Slums in Nairobi, Kenya that was established in 2016. The club plays in the 4th tier of the Kenya Football League in Kenya. It pays more attention to the rehabilitation and developing talents of young people growing and living in Mathare slums and its environs by providing a sporting platform as well as linking them with various life skills opportunities.



*Football players and officials from Real Mathare FC*

*Source: <https://mathare.org/mathare-football-teams-and-tournaments/> . Accessed on 2<sup>nd</sup>*

*May 2021*

## **Mathare United F.C.**

Mathare United Football Club (nicknamed as slum boys) is a professional association football club, located in Mathare, Nairobi, Kenya that was established in 1994 by Bob Munro. The club comprises of 33 players from diverse ethnic groups.

The club started when Bon Munro saw the initiative to transform slums into a football organization that collects waste and reforms the Mathare community. It is the recruitment of youths into the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA) that steered the environmental policy into forming competitive football clubs. The association made room for both boys and girls as competition increased youth participation, creating the football club in 1994. Mathare United was established to transform the poverty circumstances of talented individuals who could find an avenue to achieve their goals.

Currently, they compete in the Kenyan Premier League, the top tier of the Kenyan football league system, and won their first and only league title during the 2008 season.



*Mathare United team preparing to face off Vihiga United. May 17, 2021.*

*Photo: Jonah Onyango*

**Source:** <https://sportsbrief.com/facts/teams/11712-mathare-united-fc-players-owner-stadium-players-trophies-world-rankings/>. Accessed on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021



Training session ongoing at Austin Grounds in Mathare Mlango Kubwa/Village 1 area.

**Photo: Valerie Omamo**