

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

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**THE CAUSES OF URBAN POVERTY AND THE ROLE OF NON  
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ITS ALLEVIATION IN  
KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF KAWANGWARE SLUM, NAIROBI.  
(2005-2011) "**

**BY**

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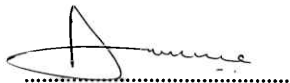
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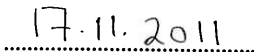
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## DECLARATION

This dissertation is my original work, and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.



**BEHR WANJIRUAGNES**



**DATE**

This dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.



**DR. LUCAS NJOROGE**



**DATE**

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## **DEDICATION.**

To my beloved son, Bradley Uki Behr and daughter Briana Ami Behr for the inspiration and motivation acquired as a result of your presence in my life and the drive you gave me to finish the dissertation.

To God: for the opportunity, resources and good health.

## ABSTRACT

World Bank development indicators 2008 states that the share of the World's private consumption in 2005 has the World's richest 20% consuming 76.6% where as the world's poorest 20% consume 1.5% implying poverty is the greatest challenge faced by mankind. For decades countries are still trying to combat poverty and find a permanent solution however its causes and mechanisms to permanently resolve it remains a challenge.

The study uses a descriptive survey research in establishing the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation. Primary data from questionnaires, personal interviews and secondary data enables to generate information from the poor and five NGOs in Kawangware slum. Primary data allows navigation of bias that may be there with secondary data in finding the causes of urban poverty and the role of NGOs. Theoretical framework of the vicious cycle of poverty explains the causes of urban poverty and its continuity from generation to generation.

One fundamental way by which poverty can be alleviated is through the vehicle of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). NGOs utilize strategies such as provision of education, trainings and technical skills, provision of health, motivation through reference groups which promotes rebuilding social cohesion and promotion of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that encourage economic growth of the urban poor.

Policy implications for NGOs include; strengthening local institutions and building linkages with development agencies at higher levels in urban areas. Scaling up program intervention by working together and avoiding duplication/overlapping of activities. Engaging in policy advocacy for the poor. Finally establishing exit strategies in terms of funds and exit strategies for the beneficiaries and the founder/brainchild of the program to ensure effective continuity of the NGOs.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

- ACORD- Association for Cooperative Operations Research and Development
- AGRA- Alliance for a green revolution
- AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- ATM – Automated Machine
- CBO- Community Based Organizations
- CEO – Chief executive Officer
- CCP- Chosen Children of Promise
- CGAP – Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest
- CIDA - Canadian International Development Agency
- DANIDA – Danish International Development Agency
- DFID - Department of International Development
- EFA- Education For All
- EU – European Union
- FINNIDA - Finnish International Development Agency
- FPE- Free Primary Education
- GDP- Gross Domestic Product
- HIV – Human Immune Virus
- HFCK- Housing Finance Company Kenya
- IDS – Institute of Development Studies
- IMF- International Monetary Fund
- IQ- Intelligent Quotient
- JICA - Japan International Cooperation Agency
- KTN- Kenya Television Network
- LDC- Least Developed Countries

**KWFT- Kenya Women Finance Trust**

**MDG- Millennium Development Goals**

**NGO – Nongovernmental Organization**

**NORAD – Norwegian International Development Agency**

**OECD- Organization of Economic Co-operative Development**

**PASS – Programme for Africa’s Seed System**

**SPSS- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences**

**TNC- Trans-National Corporations**

**UNCHS- United Nations Centre for Human Settlements**

**UNCTAD - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

**UNDP – United Nations Development Program**

**UNGASS- United Nations General Assembly**

**UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund**

**UK – United Kingdom**

**UPE- Universal Primary Education**

**U.S – United States**

**U.S.A – United States of America**

**ZEMP – Zambia’s Education Materials Project**



## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Table 1. Community vs. World Vision Staff View on causes of poverty.....	47
Table 2: Corruption and Economic Growth.....	50
Table 3: Factors Affecting Motivation to have a large family as economic wellbeing increases.....	61
Table 4: Distribution of the Study Population by Age and Sex.....	77
Table 5: Distribution of the Study Population by Marital Status and Sex.....	77
Table 6: Distribution of the Study Population by Age and Marital Status.....	78
Table 7: Distribution of the Study Population by Sex and Education.....	80
Table 8: Distribution of the Study Population by Source of Income and Sex.....	82
Table 9: Distribution of the Study Population by Monthly Income and Sex.....	83

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Share of the Worlds Private Consumption, 2005 .....	3
Figure 2: How Sample size is obtained from Kawangware location.....	33
Figure: 3. Indication of the poor in a series of limitations.....	42
Figure 4: Cycle of Poverty.....	44
Figure 5: Effects of low personal income on education.....	64
Figure 6: Occupation of the study population.....	81
Figure 7: Who should play a major role in economic empowerment of the poor.....	84

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Problem Statement .....	6
1.2 Objectives of the study .....	7
1.3 Justification of the study .....	8
1.3:1 Policy Justification .....	8
1.3:2 Academic Justifications .....	9
1.4 Literature review .....	10
1.4:1 Collective activities of the NGO's in urban poverty alleviation. ....	14
1.4:2 NGOs in conjunction with grass-root organizations in urban poverty alleviation .....	16
1.4:3 NGOs and Cultural Practices .....	18
1.4:4 NGOs in Microfinance as a means of Sustainable Community Development in Poverty Alleviation .....	19
1.4:5 NGOs in Promotion of Self-Reliance.....	20
1.5 Theoretical Frame work .....	22
1.5:1 Dependency Theory .....	22
1.5:2 The Culture of poverty Theory.....	23
1.5:3 Collective Socialization Theory. ....	24
1.5:4 Vicious Cycle of poverty Theory .....	27
1.6 Operation Definition of Terms .....	29
1.7 Methodology of Research .....	30
1.8 Organization of the Chapters.....	34
2 CHAPTER TWO: THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF POVERTY .....	36
2.1 Introduction .....	36
2.2 The Nature of Poverty .....	37
2.2:1 Poverty as entanglement.....	37
2.2:2 Poverty as a Lack of Access to Social Power. ....	40
2.2: 3 Poverty as a lack of Freedom to Grow .....	42
2.3 The Causes of Poverty.....	43
2.3.1 Vicious Cycle of Poverty .....	43
2.3:2 Physical Causes of poverty .....	45
2.3:3 Social Causes of Poverty.....	46
2.3:4 Mental Causes of Poverty .....	46

2.3:5 Cultural Causes of Poverty.....	48
2.3:6 Other Causes of Poverty.....	50
2.4 Conclusion.....	51
<b>3 CHAPTER THREE: STRATEGIES USED BY NGO'S AND OTHERS.....</b>	<b>53</b>
3:1 Strategies used by NGO's .....	53
3.1:1 Provision of Health Care.....	55
3.1:2 combating HIV/AIDS and the culture of stigma surrounding it .....	58
3.1:3 Population Controls in Poverty Alleviation by the NGOs .....	60
3.1:4 Provision of Education by NGOs.....	63
3.1:5 NGOs Training and Technical Support.....	65
3.1:6 Motivation through Reference Groups.....	66
3.2 Strategies used by others.....	67
3.2:1 Cash Transfer Programme.....	68
3.2:2 Rapid Economic Growth leading to Trickle-down Approach.....	69
3.2:3 Micro-Finance by Local Banks .....	70
3.2:4 Free Primary Education by the Kenyan Government.....	71
3.2:5 Provision of Water.....	72
<b>4 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS .....</b>	<b>75</b>
4:1 Interviews with wives and husbands.....	76
4.2 Characteristics of the Study Households.....	76
4.2:1 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Households.....	76
4:3 Socio- Economic Characteristics .....	79
4:3:1 Education Background .....	79
4:3:2 Source of income.....	80
4:3:3 who should play the major role in boosting the economy of the poor? .....	84
4:4 Communities Perception of NGOs.....	85
4.4:1 Views on NGOs Presence in the Community .....	88
4.5 The Works of NGOs in Kawangware Community .....	89
4.6 NGOS Challenges and Adoption Opportunities.....	90
4.6:1 Operational Challenges Facing NGOs .....	91
4.7 NGO's Suggestions on How to improve Their Operation in the Slums .....	95
4.8 Conclusion.....	96
<b>5 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS .....</b>	<b>99</b>
5.1 Conclusion.....	99

5.2 Policy Implications.....	102
5.2:1 NGOs Performance Evaluation.....	102
5.2:2 Addressing NGO Challenges.....	103
5.2:3 The Government requires removing barriers to solutions.....	107
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	109
APPENDICES.....	117
Appendix I: Structured Questionnaire.....	117
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE .....	122

## 1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains the greatest challenge of the world. In order to end the poverty, the 191 UN members signed the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. The first goal of the MDGs is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. To achieve this goal, a target has been set, that is, to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015. If the target can be realized, there will be an opportunity to end the extreme poverty by 2025<sup>1</sup>. Meaning poverty is the greatest challenge of the global society.

Despite years of effort in fighting poverty, misconceptions remain about the poor, why they are poor and what is needed to help them lift themselves out of poverty. Poverty is a multidimensional fact of life<sup>2</sup>, and it manifests itself in various forms. Hence, no uniform standard is available for measuring it, even though it is widely viewed as the lack of sufficient income. Some groups in the population often face a combination of the predicaments associated with poverty, low income, illiteracy, premature death, early marriage, large families, malnutrition, and illness and injury which lock them into unacceptably low standards of living. Poverty may be defined in absolute or relative terms<sup>3</sup>. Steven Hawthorne et al states that, "absolute poverty is a term used to describe poverty when people have an absolute insufficiency to meet their basic needs- food, clothing, housing"<sup>4</sup> thus a state where one cannot raise the income required to meet the expenditure for purchasing a specified bundle of basic requirements. Relative poverty is when one cannot

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey D. Sachs. *The End of Poverty. Economic possibilities of our times*. The Penguin Press, New York. 2005. pg. 25

<sup>2</sup> World Bank. 2000a. *World development report 2000/2001: attacking poverty*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Kenya (GoK). 1998. *The first report on poverty in Kenya*. Volume 2: Poverty and social indicators. Nairobi: Central Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning.

<sup>4</sup> Steven Hawthorne and Ralph D Winter. *Perspectives on the World Christian movement*: Paternoster Press, Carlisle, United Kingdom 1999.

purchase a bundle of basic needs available to a reference social group, such as people within a median income level it is sometimes referred to as secondary poverty<sup>5</sup>. The European Union defines the relatively poor as “... persons, families and groups of persons whose resources (material, cultural, social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the member state in which they live.”

Various reports<sup>6</sup> define poverty in Kenya in the absolute sense as a situation where individuals cannot raise the income required to meet a given level of basic needs, usually over a period of one month. They live on \$1.25 or less, over a period of one month.

Through analysis of the major concepts used by comparative poverty researchers, this paper identifies the "many faces" of poverty found throughout urban cities in Africa.

Whereas people in the richer part of the world have experienced a phenomenal rise in living standards in the last 20 or 30 years, more than one billion people still live in abject poverty<sup>7</sup>. They lack the barest essentials and have no possibility of safeguarding themselves and their families against starvation and diseases that could otherwise be easily prevented and cured. The following pie chart indicates private consumption comparison between the richest 20% versus the poorest 20%.

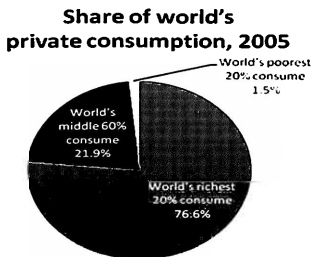
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<sup>5</sup> Ibid pg. 583

<sup>6</sup> Government of Kenya (GoK). 2000a. *Second report on poverty in Kenya, Volume 1. Incidence and depth of poverty*. Nairobi: Government Printer.

<sup>7</sup> According to Net Aid, over a billion people, or roughly one in six, live in extreme poverty. Extreme poverty is defined as living on less than US\$1 a day. Read more: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NetAid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NetAid)

**Figure 1: Share of Worlds Private Consumption, 2005**



Source: World Bank Development Indicators 2008

Figure 1 above indicates the greatest challenge faced by humanity. In Kenya the richest households (top decile) spends about four times the poverty line.<sup>8</sup>

Poverty is not limited within borders of any country; its effects are trans-boundary, failure to curb poverty leads to massive immigration to 'greener' pastures and for those who cannot avoid poverty the legal way, the alternative is exercised, hence increases crime rates.

It is clear from the multi-faceted nature of poverty that the nature and characteristics of poverty go beyond income measures alone. This implies certain aspects of poverty can be captured by quantitative surveys while others can be established by qualitative studies. In Kenya the two approaches have been used to generate information on the magnitude, extent, nature and characteristics of poverty.

Poverty alleviation remains one of the most elusive goals confronting the international community, development specialists and policy makers at the outset of the new century. The

<sup>8</sup> World Bank. Kenya Poverty and Inequality Assessment Executive Summary and Synthesis Report. Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit Africa Region. Report No. 44190-KE. April 2009



sheer numbers of people who become poor each year, combined with the depth of their deprivation, adds urgency to the search for more effective solutions to poverty. Despite the advances over the last five decades in social and economic well-being, disease eradication, the Green Revolution, and information technology, a large number of people in the developing world remain desperately poor<sup>9</sup>. In Kenya, the number of people unemployed is estimated at 2million or 14.6% of the labor force with the youth accounting for 45% in total<sup>10</sup>. The number of the working poor is staggering comprising of primarily, farmers, female headed households, and slum dwellers<sup>11</sup>. Nairobi city overall poverty rate stands at 50% according to the poverty reduction strategy paper of 2005, but the sub-location level, where we have 110 sub-locations, poverty ranges between 6% and 78%<sup>12</sup>. The poor in urban areas are concentrated in slums where the living conditions are pathetic<sup>13</sup>. This has been mainly due to an increase in population growth rates, economic emergencies such as droughts and oil shocks, and inefficient government agencies. Consistently high inflation rates, high widespread unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people, all contribute to unprecedented high levels of poverty. Poverty determinants have includes location, in urban areas being the slums, household size, that is the larger the family the higher its chances of not being able to meet its needs hence falling into poverty, the level of education of the household head, gender whether male or female, living with HIV/ AIDS and or with disability<sup>14</sup>.

Recent development experiences indicate that rapid and politically sustainable progress on poverty reduction has been achieved by pursuing a strategy that has the two key elements of

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<sup>9</sup> OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). *Waging the global war on poverty: strategies and case studies*. OECD Publishers. Paris 2000

<sup>10</sup> International Monetary fund. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2005 pg. 8. Available at <http://www.imf.org>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid pg. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Ibid pg. 10

promoting broad-based economic growth and providing basic social services to the poor<sup>15</sup>. The NGOs seem to concentrate more on the latter. Since independence, one of Kenya's development goals has been to reduce poverty. It has pursued this through various development strategies emphasizing economic growth, employment creation and provision of basic social services. In the first two decades after independence, Kenya's development strategy was based on the idea that poverty would be alleviated through rapid economic growth, as the poor would also benefit from sustained growth. However, poverty reduction was not realized even when the country was experiencing strong economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, the growth led, poverty reduction approach has been criticized on the grounds that it ignores the non-income aspects of poverty. In another participatory poverty assessment study,<sup>16</sup> some Kenyan communities claimed that neither their district authorities nor the local governments had initiated effective poverty-alleviation measures. The communities attribute the lack of such measures to the failure by the administration to involve them in the development process. In many countries, Kenya included, the consensus in development is that the beneficiaries of anti-poverty program should be involved in the design and implementation of such programs. Working at the grassroots level<sup>17</sup> helps to provide assistance directly at the source. The poor, who are the potential beneficiaries of these programs, have valuable contributions to make in the design of these programs. The poor can provide the data and detailed insights into the causes, nature and extent of poverty, as well as on what can be done to effectively tackle it.

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<sup>15</sup> World Bank. *Kenya poverty assessment*. Report No. 13/52.KE. Washington, DC: World Bank. 1995

<sup>16</sup> AMREF (African Medical Research Foundation). 1998a. *Participatory assessment report: Nyeri District*. Nairobi: AMREF.

<sup>17</sup> 'Development Charities talking, from the grassroots to the internet', Durham University, UK, <http://www.geography.durham.ac.uk/grassroots/>

## 1.1 Problem Statement

The continent of Africa continues to be reaped with various faces of poverty, which impacts on the welfare of the people and maim the economic growth and sustainability. African countries experience poverty transcending to increases in crime rates, social injustices like child abuse, rape, and civil war due to limited resources. Lack of basic needs by the absolute poor leads to deterioration of economies, hence poor infrastructure, hospitals, schools and administrative facilities. This indicates there is a dire need for poverty alleviation.

Gorman, Korten<sup>18</sup>, and Clark<sup>19</sup> state that throughout the 1970s and 1980s, development professionals began to acknowledge the contribution of NGOs, with particular emphasis on the ability of NGOs to work directly with the poor and with grassroots organizations. In the urban context, Turner 1988 and UNCHS 1996 both emphasizes on the growing scale and significance of NGOs working on a range of housing and neighbour-hood development issues in low-income settlements. In particular, NGOs are seen as being more participatory, people-led and responsive to local needs in comparison with formal official development assistance agencies. The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by a reduction in the role of the state in virtually every area. In general, the ideology is, the private sector should take over state functions wherever possible, moving from a state allocation system to one based on markets. At the same time, short-term recession extended into longer-term economic difficulties for many countries. NGO activities grew in scale. Participation was welcomed as a new opportunity for cost recovery. The work of authors such as Putman<sup>20</sup> indicates that both non-governmental and non-private sector institutions have an important role to play in economic and political development.

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<sup>18</sup> Korten, David C, *Getting into the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1990.

<sup>19</sup> Clark, John. The State, Popular Participation, and the Voluntary Sector. *World Development*, vol.23, No.4, pp., 593-601. 1995

<sup>20</sup> Putman, Robert , *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton. 1993.

In order to achieve the first goal of MDGs, it is broadly assumed that NGOs have important roles. NGO engages in relief, emergency and or longer-term development work or the mixture of all three. It is generally assumed that NGOs have the institutional capacity to reduce poverty. It is argued that compared to the government, NGOs have comparative advantages. Van der Heijden, states their comparative advantages as:

“their ability to deliver emergency relief or development services at low cost, to many people, in remote areas; their rapid, innovative and flexible responses to emerging financial and technical assistance needs at the grass roots level; their long-standing familiarity with social sector development and poverty alleviation; their experience with small-scale development projects as well as with those requiring a high degree of involvement by, and familiarity with, the concerned target groups”

As part of their commitment to realize the targets of MDGs in 2015, the NGOs have greater opportunity to increase their roles in reducing poverty especially in the developing countries.

Therefore, what is the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation in Kenya? Our study area Kawangware slum in Nairobi is chosen due to limited literature on it and financial constraint. The proximity of the slum offers the best solution to the financial burden implying higher chances of deeper analysis.

## **1.2 Objectives of the study**

The general objective of this study is to explore the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation. The study investigates the role of NGOs participation in poverty alleviation and establishes how best their participation can be incorporated to alleviate urban poverty in

Africa, in Kenya urban slums and specifically in Kawangware slum. Furthermore it investigates the challenges facing the NGO projects.

The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the root causes of urban poverty in urban slums in Kenya.
2. To establish the role played by NGOs in alleviating urban poverty
3. To suggest and recommend workable remedial measures in alleviating urban poverty based on the research findings

### **1:3 Justification of the study**

#### **1:3:1 Policy Justification**

Currently, Africa tops the list of many corrupt regimes consuming massive amounts of funds from NGOs and governments. In the past, funds especially from developed states were often tied to political agendas and went to supporting regimes that had no business receiving aid. More money went to feeding strategic alliances with countries that were "poorly run, or not that poor." Often, direct aid has not only bred corruption and the misallocation of resources away from those who need it most, but it has also fostered dependency and skewed the perceived value of goods and services<sup>21</sup>. *"Almost any account of African poverty these days begins with same assertion: Poor governance is the major stumbling block"* <sup>22</sup> Poverty continues to grow rampantly irrespective of all the attention it is receiving from NGOs both indigenous and foreign. This is most likely due to lack of participation by the poor people in

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<sup>21</sup> Moyo, Dambisa, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> Jeffrey D. Sachs. *The End of Poverty. Economic possibilities of our times*. The Penguin Press, New York. 2005. pg. 312

finding the correct solution to alleviating poverty and or failure to channel the funds to the poor. NGOs have been known to be closely in touch with the grass-root hence in a better position to collect valuable information and to implement viable solutions to the danger of poverty. It is thus assumed NGOs have an upper hand compared to the government when it comes to suggesting workable policies towards finding a better solution to poverty. NGOs further engage in policy advocacy to influence public policies concerning the poor people. In essence, NGOs have developed various strategies to influence the process of public policy making and to control the implementation of development programs or projects. This is an area into which NGOs have been moving during the 1990s when they revised and re-strategized to move away from direct service delivery and prioritized policy advocacy and lobbying.

The study results provides facts that need to be taken into consideration by NGOs if they are to succeed towards alleviating poverty substantially which aids in achieving the millennium development goals (MDGs) and poverty reduction papers (PRSP).

### **1:3:2 Academic Justifications**

The Literature review section reveals there is literature dealing with urban poverty alleviation in developing countries. However, the existing literature focuses on the region as a whole with few references on specific countries. Furthermore, the focus is on re- known NGOs hence a missing gap on the small NGOs that operate daily face to face with the urban poor. The literature also focuses in general with urban slums and thus the study brings it to the basic level of the slum with real faces of the poor. The study attempts to overcome the generalization. Besides, the vast literature on urban poverty alleviation suffers from a lack of statistical data. This study fills this gap by investigating the role of NGOs on urban poverty

alleviation in Kenya with a specific focus on Kawangware slum in Nairobi. The study further adds value to the limited literature on challenges facing the NGOs in alleviating urban poverty and recommends a way forward.

## 1:4 Literature review

### Introduction:

In both popular and academic writing about poverty, two major areas are emphasized. One is the discussion of causes of poverty. The other is the justification of the allocation of energy, money and man-power, to eradicate poverty. In the discussion of causes two arguments have been raised. One suggests that the poor are responsible for their own condition<sup>23</sup> while the other perceives the poor as victims of a larger social system over which they have no control.<sup>24</sup> Commitment in the elimination of poverty is justified in economic, ethical and political terms.<sup>25</sup> Some perceive the poor as receivers of welfare, non-producers and inadequate consumers unable to contribute to economic growth. Others stress the unethical impropriety of the existence of the poverty.<sup>26</sup> Finally there are those who perceive the poor as a basic threat- through crime, riots and revolution to society at large<sup>27</sup>. The study delves in the strategies applied in poverty alleviation by both NGOs and other stakeholders such as governments and international organizations.

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<sup>23</sup> David Alfred Chart, 'Unskilled labor in Dublin: its housing and living conditions', *Journal of the Statistical Society of Ireland* 94 (1914) 160-181. New York:

<sup>24</sup> Albert Camus, *The Plague*, Vintage Books, New York: 1972, 235-37.

<sup>25</sup> Available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2010/cr10224.pdf> Poverty reduction strategy paper Kenya 2010. Pg. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Steven Hawthorne and Ralph D Winter. *Perspectives on the World Christian movement*: Paternoster Press, Carlisle, United Kingdom 1999

<sup>27</sup> Eames Edwin and Goode Judith Granich, "Urban Poverty in a Cross-Cultural context" The Free press, Collier Macmillan Publishers, New York 1973

NGOs are increasingly recognized as being critical to the successful realization of development. NGOs are regarded as a new panacea for people-centered, pro-poor development. But should this be the case? Low-income communities are subject to division due to unequal access to power, prestige, income and capital. Do these organizations support their poorest members to increase and achieve development options? How do NGOs truly support participatory processes? What is the perception of the poor on NGOs? Do NGOs alleviate poverty, or they reinforce dependency, powerlessness and exclusion? These are the questions that need to be understood in addressing the role NGOs in urban poverty alleviation.

The study draws together a wide range of development literature in considering the activities of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation. This is done in the context that poverty in urban slums has several causative factors such as; mental, being in a state of mind that one does not believe in their own ability resulting to a limited perspective, mental blocs and poor self-image, physical which is the lack of material and or scarce resources with limited choices, social constituting of limiting restrictions, cultural which mainly constitutes of cultural demands that deplete resources<sup>28</sup>. In our discussion the strategies used by NGOs addresses one or more of the above causes in a bid to alleviate urban poverty and attain sustainability. In the developing countries, sustainability is linked more closely to issues of poverty and the gross inequalities of power and resources<sup>29</sup>. We focus on the role of NGOs in empowering individuals and the community as a whole.

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<sup>28</sup> Sachs D Jeffrey. *The End of Poverty. Economic possibilities of our times.* The Penguin Press, New York. 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Hamnett S, Hassan M I. *The Relevance of Sustainable Urban Development to Asian Cities: An Indonesian Case Study.* Paper presented in the 7th international congress of the Asian planning schools association in Hanoi. 2003



### Strategies used by NGOs to alleviate urban poverty

What strategies should be developed to alleviate urban poverty and attain sustainability? At a macro level, pro-poor growth combined with social development is promoted by scholars, especially economists. At a micro level, promotions of small scale enterprises and microfinance is referred to by various agencies.

In this context, it is worth referring to Jeffrey D. Sachs's strategy for alleviating poverty. According to Sachs, a 'poverty trap' must first be solved in combating poverty<sup>30</sup>. Although the poor have willingness to overcome their ill-being, they are not able to do it by using their own resources. There are many factors that trap the poor in powerless conditions, such as diseases, climate stress, environmental degradation, physical isolation, and also extreme poverty itself. Sachs states that:

"The world's poor know about the development ladder: they are tantalized by images of affluence from halfway around the world. But they are not able to get a first foothold on the ladder, and so cannot even begin the climb out of poverty"<sup>31</sup>.

Therefore, the poor need help to exit from the poverty trap. If it can be reached it can provide an opportunity to get a first foothold on the ladder of development.

In facilitating the poor to climb out of poverty, NGOs use two approaches: supply-side and demand-side<sup>32</sup>. In a similar sense, Fowler identifies two types of NGO tasks: micro-tasks and macro-tasks<sup>33</sup>. From the supply-side or micro-tasks approach, NGOs provide various basic public services to the poor. It is argued that in countries where government lacks public services, NGOs play a significant role in the direct provision of social and economic services.

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<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey D. Sachs. *The End of Poverty. Economic possibilities of our times.* The Penguin Press, New York. 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid pg. 19-20

<sup>32</sup> Clark, John. The State, Popular Participation, and the Voluntary Sector. *World Development*, vol.23, No.4, pp., 593-601. 1995

<sup>33</sup> Fowler, Alan. *Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhance the Effectiveness of Non-governmental Organizations in International Development.* Earthscan Publication. London: 1997

These include, education, health, counseling, family planning, provision of water and or access to water sources, motivation, shelter, legislation for women and child and small scale loans in form of micro-finance. In general, NGOs emerge and play the roles as service providers. This study shows the services provided, such as education, health, child support among others and specifically how NGOs work with other institutions such as government in providing their services which most scholars do not highlight.

Unlike the supply-side approach where NGOs directly provide services to the people, the demand-side NGOs play indirect roles. The demand-side role of NGOs is seen as being an articulator of the people's 'voice'. NGOs mobilize and clarify the demand for services, from both the government and the market, so that the people are able to achieve its development goals. In the context of service delivery, generally, NGOs seek to improve the access of the people to the services provided by the state. Clark on the other hand identifies some potential NGO contributions by employing the demand-side approach as follows:

"Such NGOs assist citizens in finding out about activities of the government and others which might affect them; they use advocacy and political influence to hold local officials accountable for activities and or inactivity which are damaging to the poor; they help communities mobilize and form societies to express their concerns, and help guard against reprisals; they construct forums in which officials can consult people about development plans and listen to alternatives presented by the people; and they help ensure individuals disadvantaged by government decisions receive just compensation, negotiates with affected parties"<sup>34</sup>.

These two approaches are not mutually exclusive. In the recent trends, NGOs combine the two approaches for increasing their efficacy to reduce poverty. In practice, NGOs can function on both the supply and the demand sides and even forge the linkages between the

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<sup>34</sup> Clark, John. The State, Popular Participation, and the Voluntary Sector. *World Development*, vol.23, No.4, 1995. Pg. 345

two sides. The latter is emphasized by Fowler by arguing that it is necessary for NGOs to make a linkage between micro-tasks consisting of provision of goods, of social and of financial services, capacity building, process facilitation, and fostering linkages, and macro-tasks consisting of policy advocacy, lobbying, public education and mobilization, monitoring compliance, and reconciliation and mediation<sup>35</sup>. The role of NGOs is thus to make sure the urban poor are empowered. The study is enriched by delving into the challenges the NGOs encounter while pursuing these tasks and further what they foresee as the way forward to improvement of their achievements.

#### **1.4:1 Collective activities of the NGO's in urban poverty alleviation.**

Income generation based strategies to tackle poverty rarely support and strengthen collective activities. Residents may be organised into small groups to provide social collateral for credit programmes but these are often based on narrowly defined self-interest and do not often have a life beyond the credit programme. Often, local residents work in similar sectors to each other, selling vegetables or having small shops, sometimes dress-making or running other small house based services. In some cases, they collaborate in obtaining goods wholesale through the kind of purchase unions, but this does not appear to occur often. NGOs are known to be reliable in assisting such groups to either make wares for sale or to open up market opportunities for the urban poor. In a very real sense, these activities are in competition with each other. Montgomery draws from a study of two organisations which support savings groups for income generation activities in Asia to argue that there are:

"...contrasting examples of the extent to which members develop mutual trust and are prepared to support individuals facing distress. Where such trust and support fail to develop,

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<sup>35</sup> Fowler, Alan. *Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhance the Effectiveness of Non-governmental Organizations in International Development*. Earthscan Publication. London: 1997. Pg. 12-16

the result can be institutionalised suspicion which enhances the perception of risk amongst solidarity group members. Certain forms of repayment discipline imposed on solidarity groups, if not tempered with additional mechanisms to protect individuals, may contradict these social objectives of generating trust and mutual support."<sup>36</sup>

For the citizen as a private entrepreneur, this aspect of competition does not necessarily matter. But for the citizen as a resident of a low-income community, such as urban poor in Kawangware slum, mutual support between neighbours may be critical to well-being, particularly for women and those with the lowest incomes. Close cooperation can do much to address the vulnerability associated with being poor and stronger collective awareness and mutual support may be one of the best ways to reduce vulnerability. One of the conclusions emerging from the study in Khulna as quoted below is that:

"Neighbours were a constant source of support to most profile (a study sub-group which includes the poorest residents) households in various ways, including emotional support, helping to find jobs for women and children, occasionally donating or lending food and also sometimes in child care. One of the conclusions of the research is emphasis should be placed on community based insurance and credit schemes to ease the financial burden and distress incurred following sickness induced by loss of income."<sup>37</sup>

A further aspect of concern is that everyone within a settlement may not be able to participate in income generation strategies for development, and those most likely to be excluded are the

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<sup>36</sup> Montgomery, R. "Disciplining or Protecting the Poor? Avoiding the social costs of peer pressure in micro-credit schemes", *Journal of International Development*, special issue 8:2, Manchester, 1996( pg. 290) pp. 289-305

<sup>37</sup> Pryer, Jane, "The impact of adult ill-health on household income and nutrition in Khulna, Bangladesh", *Environment and Urbanization*, 5:2, October, 1993 pp. 35-49

poorest members of the community<sup>38</sup>. In low-income settlements, such as Kawangware slum, there are those unable to work either due to poor health and or disability. They are forced to beg and undertake irregular poorly paid employment. Such programmes do little to address their needs. It is in this area that we find out the role of NGOs in reaching the absolute urban poor.

#### **1.4:2 NGOs in conjunction with grass-root organizations in urban poverty alleviation**

A view of the numerous case studies of grassroots organizations in low-income urban settlements suggests that, in general, such organizations otherwise known as residents' associations, community organizations, self-help groups, etc. are prevalent, although the types of organizations vary considerably.

In the Philippines, Berner's study of grassroots organizations in Manila concludes that "...with the exception of some new squatter colonies and scattered clusters of houses... we found formally organized associations in all squatter slums we visited during our stay in Metro Manila"<sup>39</sup>.

Lee-Smith and Stren, argue that "...Africa generally has a wealth of under-supported CBOs."<sup>40</sup> In Nairobi, Lee Smith found that 27 per cent of women belonged to some membership organization<sup>41</sup>, with the two most common activities being rotating savings groups commonly known as merry-go-round. Magutu discusses the emergence of community

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<sup>38</sup>See Johnson, Susan and Ben Rogaly, *Micro-finance and Poverty Reduction*, Oxfam. Oxford: 1997(for a discussion of this issue in relation to micro-finance specifically)

<sup>39</sup> Berner, Erhard. *Defending a Place in the City: Localities and the Struggle for Urban Land in Metropolitan Manila*, Ateneo de Manila University Press, Manila, 1997. Pg. 62

<sup>40</sup> Lee-Smith, Diana and Richard Stren, "New perspectives on African urban management", *Environment and Urbanization*. Vol 3, No 1, April, 1991. Pg. 34.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid Pg. 34

organizations in a site and savings scheme near Mombasa Kenya<sup>42</sup>. He identifies a number of groups, including ethnic communities, kinship ties among others.

What these studies imply is that in many settlements there may be a multitude of local associations and that the presence of some form of grassroots organizations is the norm rather than the exception. There is minimal literature on the role of NGOs in associations with such groups to alleviate poverty thus the study looks into this area to see if the study population engages in these associations and how prevalent they are in the study area and the difference it makes in urban poverty alleviation.

The role of NGOs in creating and supporting grassroots organizations varies considerably. Some assist with forming community organizations whilst others seek to support those in existence. Community organizations that are initiated by NGOs may be formed around any one of a number of specific issues such as, health, credit for housing and income generation, for example, income generation for marginalized and vulnerable youth within the slum of Kawangware by Kawangware Vision Centre (KVC), which produces bags for sale and acts as support Centre not only for the youth but orphans and vulnerable children in the community<sup>43</sup>. In this case the study probes into the co-ordination of activities in Kawangware slum among the NGOs and determines the unanimity effort and or independence of the NGO in poverty alleviation and how that affects their work and the urban poor.

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<sup>42</sup> Magutu, Jerry, "An appraisal of Chaani low-income housing programme in Kenya", *Environment and urbanization* Vol 9, No 2, October, 1997. pg. 315.

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.africabags.com/mission-and-goals.html>

### 1.4:3 NGOs and Cultural Practices

Boonyabancha et al<sup>44</sup> and Fernandes<sup>45</sup> both describe how tribal groups move to the city with urban migration. These authors suggest that traditional organizations are mainly concerned with welfare issues, deaths, marriages and religious ceremonies and holidays. Even when the traditional organizations break down, the activities may remain and provide a focus for organization to address other needs. In an African example, Uduku<sup>46</sup> discusses how the traditional Yoruba organizations provide communal infrastructure and services. Cultural practices in Kenya are one of the contributing factors to poverty, the monetary demands from such practices virtually depletes savings and or creates loans which sink individuals into poverty. Such practices include, funeral, birth rites, marriages, child bearing among others. One of the common practices in the slums is bearing many children as one can get with a view that one child survives and is able to take care of the parents in their old age<sup>47</sup>. This is an area which has not been given much light by scholars with the assumption that cultural practices are a thing of the past and hence not practiced in today's norms. The study looks at how NGOs handle this aspect in their role of urban poverty alleviation and the challenges they encounter in curbing this cause of poverty.

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<sup>44</sup> Boonyabancha, Somsook, Natvipa Chalitanon, Diana Mitlin and Pranthip Petchmark, "Sustainability through people's participation in urban development in selected Asian cities: the Thai experience", German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – BMZE. 1998.

<sup>45</sup> Fernandes, Kenneth, *How Communities Organize Themselves: Stories from the Field*, City Press, Karachi. 1997

<sup>46</sup> Uduku, N O, "Service provision in cities; public, private or community", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 6, No 2, October, 1992. Pg. 59.

<sup>47</sup> Hulme, David, Barrientos Armando and Hanlon Joseph. *Just Give the money to the poor*: Kumarian Press. USA. 2010.

#### **1.4:4 NGOs in Microfinance as a means of Sustainable Community Development in Poverty Alleviation**

During the 1990s, scholars have increasingly referred to microfinance as an effective means of poverty reduction<sup>48</sup> they point out the importance of microfinance in empowerment, particularly women empowerment. Microfinance is defined as efforts to improve the access to loans and to saving services for poor people<sup>49</sup>. It is currently being promoted as a key development strategy for promoting poverty eradication and economic empowerment. It is said to have the potential to effectively address material poverty, the physical deprivation of goods and services and the income to attain them by granting financial services to households not supported by the formal banking sector<sup>50</sup>. Microcredit programs provide small loans and savings opportunities to those traditionally excluded from commercial financial services. As a poverty alleviation inclusion strategy, NGOs microfinance programs emphasize women's economic contribution as a way to increase overall financial efficiency within families. According to Cheston and Kuhn, one of the most popular forms of economic empowerment for women is microfinance<sup>51</sup>, which provides credit for poor women usually excluded from formal credit institutions. These issues have been researched and debated by donor agencies, NGOs, feminists, and activists. However, underneath these shared concerns lie three fundamentally different approaches to microfinance: financial sustainability, feminist empowerment, and poverty alleviation. Our focus is on poverty alleviation. NGOs through microfinance are known to empower the poor by putting capital in their hands and allowing the poor to earn an independent income and contribute financially to the households and

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<sup>48</sup> Rekha M. *Credit for Women: Why is it so Important?* United Nations: International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. 1995

<sup>49</sup> Shreiner M. A cost-effective analysis of the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh. From < [http://www.microfinance.com/English/Papers/Grameen\\_CEA.pdf](http://www.microfinance.com/English/Papers/Grameen_CEA.pdf)> 2001

<sup>50</sup> Sheraton M... *An Analysis of The Effectiveness of Microfinance: A Case Study in the Western Cape*. M.S. Thesis, University of the Western Cape. 2004

<sup>51</sup> Cheston S, Kuhn L 2002. *Empowering Women through Microfinance*. From < <http://videos.opportunity.org/website/Empowering-Women-Paper.pdf>>.



communities. NGOs do it believing, the economic empowerment generates higher self-esteem, respect, and other forms of empowerment for its beneficiaries. Some evidence show that; NGOs through microfinance empowers the poor in domains such as increased participation in decision making, equitable status in the community, increased political power and rights, and increased self-esteem<sup>52</sup>. Poor self-esteem in the slums has been known to cause individuals to sink into social vices like drunkenness, prostitution and crime. In the study we find out how NGOs helps to make turn-around through building self-esteem of the poor people to overcome these social vices. People well-being as an out-put of NGOs microfinance does not only cover the economic indicators, but also other indicators such as community education, environment, recreation and accessibility to social services. It is related to the quality of life<sup>53</sup>. In order to gain economic sustainability, NGOs through microfinance help the communities to reduce poverty, via creation of jobs, and income generation. In this aspect the study analyses how NGOs work with micro-finance institutions in empowering the urban poor in Kawangware community.

#### **1.4:5 NGOs in Promotion of Self-Reliance**

Mental cause of poverty can be very difficult to undo, we look into the NGOs strategy of motivating and mobilizing people to be self-reliant and to participate in development activities. According to Korten, the second strategy of the NGOs focuses on developing the capacities of the people to better meet their own needs through self-reliant local action<sup>54</sup>. In the second generation strategy, Korten, mentions that the local inertia is the heart of the

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Asnarulkhadi AS. Community Empowerment Towards Achieving Sustainable Development. In: Sharifah Norazizan Syed Abdu Rashid, Aishah Edris, Nobaya Ahmad (Eds.): *Cities in the 21st Century: Urban Issues and Challenges*. Serdang: UPM Press, 2002 pp. 221-231.

<sup>54</sup> Korten, David C, *Getting into the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1990.

problem in a community. There is a potential energy in a community but remains inactive because of the inertia of tradition, isolation and lack of education. But this inertia can be broken through the intervention of an outside change agent such as NGOs that helps the community realize its potentials through education, organization, consciousness raising, small loans and the introduction of simple new technologies. It is the stress on local self-reliance, with the intent that benefits sustains the community self-help action beyond the period of NGO assistance<sup>55</sup>. Therefore, NGOs, through the strategy of self-reliance, facilitates sustainable development of the community and alleviates poverty. In Korten's analysis he does not mention the perception of the community on NGOs self-reliance strategy. Do the people believe self-reliance can be achieved? In the study we look into the mindset of the study population to grasp how much they believe in themselves in terms of whether they believe poverty can be alleviated to a point of self-reliance hence terminating external help. It is one thing to have a goal by the NGOs but if the community they are helping does not believe in itself it can be detrimental towards achieving the set goals.

The study fills the gaps on the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation in the following areas; how NGOs work in conjunction with other institutions such as government, local banks in providing their services to the poor and what that implies, the importance of gaining neighborhood support in urban slums before rolling out their mandate in service provision, the importance of acquiring ground information from the poor themselves before enlisting the beneficiary in the NGOs program. We further highlight the role of NGOs in association with grass-root organizations and the role of NGOs in creating support groups for the poor where we find minimal literature. The study determines how NGOs work with/without harmony with others in the field in the study area, what it implies to the mandate of NGOs and the

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<sup>55</sup> Korten, David C, *Getting into the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, 1990.

lives of the poor. The study looks into the cultural practices, how they affect the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation. How sustainable micro-finance programs are and to what extent NGOs use them as one of their tools. The study delves into the thoughts of the urban poor, who they believe should play a major role in their economic empowerment and why? Perception of the study population on NGOs presence in the community. Finally the study highlights the challenges facing NGOs in the field and what they foresee as a way forward. The study further provides recommendations on NGOs performance evaluation, and how to counter the challenges facing them, all gaps are filled by findings from our study population in Kawangware slums and the NGOs operating in the area via mainly questionnaires, interviews and informal talks.

## **1.5 Theoretical Frame work**

The study looks at the different theories of poverty, dependency, the culture of poverty, collective socialization and cycle of poverty theory. The vicious cycle of poverty is used in examining the root causes of urban poverty in Kenyan urban slums with specific reference to Kawangware slum.

### **1.5:1 Dependency Theory**

Dependency theory was developed in the late 1950s under the guidance of the Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Raul Prebisch. Prebisch and his colleagues were concerned by the fact that economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poorer countries. International capitalism is seen as the motive force behind dependency relationships. Indeed, their studies suggested that

economic activity in the richer countries often led to serious economic problems in the poorer countries<sup>56</sup>. Poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries which then manufactured products out of those commodities and sold them back to the poorer countries. The "Value Added" by manufacturing a usable product always cost more than the primary products used to create those products. Therefore, poorer countries would never be earning enough from their export earnings to pay for their imports. Dependency theory is viewed as a possible way of explaining the persistent poverty of the poorer countries. According to Brazilian social scientist, Theotonio Dos Santos<sup>57</sup>, dependence means a situation in which certain countries economies' are conditioned by the development & expansion of another to which the former is subject. He goes on to further clarify that the interdependence of two or more economies, and consequently world trade, assumes the form of dependence when dominant countries can create dependency only as a reflection of that expansion, which can have a negative effect on the subordinate's immediate economy<sup>58</sup>. Similarly the study examines the interdependence of NGOs and the urban poor the relationship between the two, whether there is dependency as a result of the strategies being utilized by the NGOs in poverty alleviation.

### **1.5:2 The Culture of poverty Theory.**

Lewis and Moynihan state that the theory is influential when it comes to the causes of poverty. The "culture of poverty", theory suggests that the norms and behaviors of the poor can be distinguished as a subculture of larger society and characterized by a distinct way of

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<sup>56</sup> Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment," in James D. Cockcroft, Andre Gunder Frank, and Dale Johnson, eds., *Dependence and Underdevelopment*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p.3.

<sup>57</sup> Irogbe, Kema "Globalization and The Development Of Underdevelopment Of The Third World." *Journal of Third World Studies* 22.1. 2005.

<sup>58</sup> Irogbe, Kema "Globalization and The Development Of Underdevelopment Of The Third World." *Journal of Third World Studies* 22.1. 2005.

life, including a typical worldview and low aspirations<sup>59 60</sup>. This culture is said to perpetuate itself from generation to generation. According to Lewis the culture of poverty perpetuates poverty: It "tends to perpetuate itself from generation to generation because of its effect on children. It indicates that by the time slum children are aged six or seven, they have usually absorbed the basic values and attitudes of their sub-culture and are not psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime."<sup>61</sup> The culture of poverty has been widely criticized for being too deterministic, blaming the victim, and diverting attention away from the structural causes of poverty.

### 1.5:3 Collective Socialization Theory.

The theory suggests that neighborhoods indirectly affect children by influencing the presence of successful adult role models and supervision<sup>62</sup>. The theory argues that children growing up in high poverty communities with few successful adult role models have low expectations of themselves. One study found that children's IQ scores were positively associated with the presence of wealthy neighbors, regardless of family characteristics<sup>63</sup>.

This finding could be indicative of the effects of greater social organization, role modeling, and adult supervision; or the effects of better funded schools, or some combination of these factors.

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<sup>59</sup> Lewis, O. *The Culture of Poverty*: Random House, Inc. New York. 1968

<sup>60</sup> Moynihan, D.P. *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor. Washington, D.C. 1965

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.blacksacademy.net/content/3253.html>

<sup>62</sup> Small, M.L. & Newman, K. Urban Poverty After the Truly Disadvantaged: The Rediscovery of the family, the Neighborhood, and Culture. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27: 23-45. 2001

<sup>63</sup> Chase-Linsdale, P.L., Gordon, R.A., Brooks-Gunn, J. & Klebanov, P.K., (1997). Neighborhood and family influences on the intellectual and behavioral competence of preschool and early school-age children. In *Neighborhood Poverty Volume I: Context and Consequences for Children*.

Another way neighborhoods may affect children is through contagion effects, which are said to operate through peer influences on children's behavior. Children growing up in poor urban neighborhoods are exposed to street norms as well as conventional norms. The more opportunities to attain conventional goals are strained, the more likely it is that children will be drawn to street norms, which are often opposed to mainstream culture<sup>64</sup>. One mechanism that has gained a great deal of attention in recent years to explain how neighborhoods affect residents' wellbeing is social capital. Research has shown that people who live in heterogeneous neighborhoods tend to have greater human capital (education and earning power) as well as greater social capital, which is important for peoples' life chances and mobility prospects<sup>65</sup>. Robert Putnam defines social capital as "the connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them"<sup>66</sup>. Thus, social capital exists in the structure of relationships and helps individuals and groups achieve goals<sup>67</sup>. Xavier de Souza Briggs conceptualizes social capital as having two dimensions. One element is made up of the social ties that provide us with social support and help us *get by* in life. The other element is made up of the ties that act as social bridges and provide us with leverage to help us *get ahead* in life<sup>68</sup>. Some researchers suggest that a lack of social capital amidst poor inner-city residents perpetuates poverty, welfare dependency, and crime. Several studies have shown that poor urban residents often have insular and localized social networks that offer little opportunity for advancement<sup>69, 70, 71, 72</sup>. In effect,

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<sup>64</sup> Leventhal, T., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Kamerman, S.B. (1997). Communities as Place, Face, and Space: Provisions of Services to Poor, Urban Children and Their Families. In *Neighborhood Poverty Volume II: Policy Implications in Studying Neighborhoods*. Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G.J., & Aber, J.L. New York: 199 7 Russell Sage Foundation.

<sup>65</sup> Putnam, R. *Bowling Alone*. Simon & Schuster. New York. 2000.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid* pg. 19.

<sup>67</sup> Coleman, J.S. Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital: *American Journal of Sociology*, 94: S95-S120. 1988.

<sup>68</sup> Briggs, X. Brown Kids in White Suburbs: Housing Mobility and the Many Faces of Social Capital. *Housing Policy Debate*, 9, 1, 177-213. 1998

<sup>69</sup> Tigges, L.M., Browne, I., & Green, G.P. Social Isolation of the Urban Poor: Race, Class, and Neighborhood Effects on Social Resources. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 39, 1, 53-77. 1998

such residents are isolated from the social capital of mainstream society. Yet, another set of studies have found that rich social networks *do* exist in low-income communities and that these kin networks provide an important safety net for the poor<sup>73</sup>,<sup>74</sup>,<sup>75</sup>. These studies point to tight functioning social networks as one of the greatest assets in poor communities and challenge the notion that the social networks of the poor are inferior. Using Briggs' 1998 definition of social capital, we might conclude that while residents in poor communities may have an abundance of strong ties, these ties usually provide only one form of social capital: *social support*. What they lack is access to bridging ties that can provide social leverage and connection to the outside world. Granovetter's research supports this reasoning with his finding that people most often find jobs through weak rather than close ties<sup>76</sup>. Thus, there is "strength in weak ties" because weak ties provide individuals with information they do not already have, such as job opportunities. Therefore, having relations, albeit informal or weak, with different types of people who have access to different resources and information is critical to learning about new opportunities and becoming upwardly mobile. NGOs have different resources and are therefore an opportunity to the urban poor towards upward mobility.

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<sup>70</sup> Wacquant, L. & Wilson, W.J. The Costs of Racial and Class Exclusion in the Inner City. *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science*, 501: 8–25. 1989

<sup>71</sup> Wilson, W.J. *The Truly Disadvantaged*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago. 1987

<sup>72</sup> Wilson, W.J. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.: New York. 1996

<sup>73</sup> Edin, K. & Lein, L. *Making Ends Meet*. Russell Sage Foundation: New York. 1997

<sup>74</sup> Vale, L.J. Comment on James E. Rosenbaum, Linda K. Stroh, and Cathy A. Flynn's "Lake Parc Place: A Study of Mixed-Income Housing." *Housing Policy Debate*, 9, 4, pg. 749–756. 1998

<sup>75</sup> Vale, L.J. *Reclaiming Public Housing*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts: 2002

<sup>76</sup> Granovetter, M. *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*: Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1974.

### 1.5:4 Vicious Cycle of poverty Theory

The theory has its origins in economics in the work of Myrdal<sup>77</sup> who developed a theory of “interlocking, circular, interdependence within a process of cumulative causation” that helps explain economic underdevelopment and development. Myrdal notes that personal and community well-being is closely linked in a cascade of negative consequences. The cycle of poverty argues that, there are many disadvantages that collectively work in a circular process making it virtually impossible for individuals to break the cycle.<sup>78</sup> Examples of these disadvantages working in a circular process would be: economic decline, low personal income, no funds for school leading to lack of education. The lack of education results in unemployment and lastly low national productivity.<sup>79</sup> This occurs when poor people do not have the resources necessary to get out of poverty, such as financial capital, education, or connections. In other words, poverty-stricken individuals experience disadvantages as a result of their poverty, which in turn increases their poverty. This would mean that the poor remain poor throughout their lives.<sup>80</sup> This cycle has also been referred to as a “pattern” of behaviors and situations which cannot easily be changed.<sup>81</sup>

The lack of employment leads to lack of consumption and spending due to inadequate incomes, and to inadequate savings, implying individuals cannot invest in training, and individuals also lack the ability to invest in businesses or to start their own businesses, leading to lack of expansion, erosion of markets, and disinvestment, all of which contributes back to more inadequate community opportunities. Health problems and the inability to afford preventive medicine, a good diet, and a healthy living environments become reasons the poor fall further behind. The cycle of poverty also means people who lack ample income

<sup>77</sup> Myrdal, G. Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. 1957. Pg.

<sup>78</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycle\\_of\\_poverty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycle_of_poverty)

<sup>79</sup> Merger... “Social Inequality: Patterns and Processes.” McGraw Hill publishing. 4th edition. 2008

<sup>80</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycle\\_of\\_poverty](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycle_of_poverty)

<sup>81</sup> Valentine, C. A. Culture and Poverty. University of Chicago: London, 1968.



fail to invest in their children's education, the children do not learn as well in poor quality schools and they fall further behind when they go to get jobs. They are also vulnerable to ailments and poor medical care.

Cycle of poverty theory further explores another perspective that, individual lack of jobs and income leads to deteriorating self-confidence, weak motivation, and depression. The psychological problems of individuals are reinforced by association with other individuals, leading to a culture of despair, perhaps a culture of poverty under some circumstances. In urban slum communities this culture of despair affects leaders as well, generating a sense of hopelessness and fatalism among community leaders.

This study utilizes the cycle of poverty theory because the theory incorporates many of the previous theories. It shows how people become disadvantaged in their social context which then affects psychological abilities and income at the individual level. The various structural and political factors in the cyclical theory reinforce each other, with economic factors linked to community and to political and social variables. Perhaps its greatest value is that it more explicitly links economic factors at the individual level with structural factors that operate at the slum level. As a theory of poverty, the cyclical theory shows how multiple problems cumulate, and it allows speculation that if one of the linkages in the spiral is broken by the NGOs intervention, the cycle would not continue. Even though it poses the problem of hard to break linkages due to each reinforcing and being reinforced by other parts of the spiraling system it gives a better perspective to the NGOs that poverty in urban slums is not easy to break and therefore requires well thought out strategies that are broad-based and incorporative of all players in the system.

## 1.6 Operation Definition of Terms

**Absolute Poverty** is "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. The World Bank defines extreme poverty as living on less than US \$1.25 (according to 2005 purchasing power parity) per day<sup>82</sup>. An absolute poverty line is used in this study as stated by the World Bank thus living on \$1.25 a day or less<sup>83</sup>. This definition meets the objective of the study which is to study the bottom decile population of the urban poor living on \$1.25 or less per day.

### Non-Governmental Organization

The World Bank defines NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development"<sup>84</sup> The World Bank further states that in wider usage, the term NGO can be applied to any non-profit organization which is independent from government. NGOs are typically value-based organizations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service. Although the NGO sector has become increasingly professionalized over the last two decades, principles of altruism and voluntarism remain key defining characteristics<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>82</sup> "The World Bank, 2007, Understanding Poverty". Web.worldbank.org. 2005-04-19.  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/0,,contentMDK:20153855~menuPK:373757~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:336992,00.html>. Retrieved 2010-10-24.

<sup>83</sup> Ravallion, Martin; Chen Shaohua & Sangraula, Prem Dollar a day The World Bank Economic Review, 23, 2, 2009, pp. 163-184

<sup>84</sup> World Bank website "Nongovernmental Organizations and Civil Society/Overview."  
<<http://wbi018.worldbank.org/essd/essd.nsf/NGOs/home>

<sup>85</sup> Ibid

NGO is defined as “organizations that are not part of the government and are voluntary, non-profit making and non-partisan”<sup>86</sup> By NGO we mean any group, association, or movement set up in durable fashion by private persons belonging to any country for the pursuit of non-profit making aims<sup>87</sup> This approach is taken by this paper.

### 1.7 Methodology of Research

This section describes the study of NGOs participation in urban poverty alleviation through interviews and observation of 103 households. The households are drawn from across three sub-locations constituting seven villages from Kawangware location. An in depth interview is carried out with Managing directors and or their assistants from five NGOs randomly selected operating in Kawangware slums namely, Compassion International, World Vision, Chosen Children of Promise, Maisha Poa and Lea Toto. A combination of the interviews from the households and Managing Directors/assistants results in rich information that analyses the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation in Kawangware slum.

The research is a descriptive survey study that establishes the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation with specific reference to Kawangware slum area. The slum is chosen due to proximity thus implying less costly in carrying out the research. The slum exhibits similar characteristics with other slums in urban areas in Kenya thus enabling us to draw general conclusions from the findings.

The data is both; primary, from questionnaire, personal interviews and secondary. Primary data enables us to generate information from the poor themselves and hence navigates the

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<sup>86</sup> Sam Kobia *The old and The New NGOs; Approaches to Development in K. Kinyanjui* (Ed) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Contributions to Development Nairobi Institute for Development Studies (IDS), Occasional paper (OP) No. 50, 1985 Page 32

<sup>87</sup> Schneider Bertrand, *The Barefoot Revolution, A Report to the Club of Rome*; Intermediate Technology Publications, London, 1988

bias that secondary data may have in terms of favouring the institutions that collected it. Primary data further helps to ensure authenticity of the data collected. Secondary data is derived from the published materials obtained from the library, internet, newspapers, and documentation centres. This allows us to draw comparisons with previous studies to see the similarities and or differences in the findings. Secondary data further enables us to have a preview of the research over a long period of time. Therefore, an in-depth review of the literature carried out develops a synthesis paper.

Our study area is Kawangware slum. It is located on the western side of Nairobi about 15km from the city. The population is estimated to be about 400,000 residents.<sup>88</sup> Kawangware is however an area with different social classes. We have those living in concrete houses with an income that enables them to live above US \$1.25 a day and those living in shacks/ mad houses. The latter is our focus. Thus people living under US \$1.25 per day.

The main instrument in data collection is structured and semi structured questionnaires. The questionnaires are administered on a one on one basis. Personal interview is administered on a one on one basis too. The interviewees mainly include residents of the slum, head of NGO's and or their assistants. This captures the NGOs mission, reconciles it with the work they are undertaking on the ground thus determining gaps and or lack of gaps. The interview begins with the introduction of researchers to the informant. The researcher presents the agenda of the visit after establishing a viable ground for conversation. One visit per household is made since a rapport is created immediately through informal conversations thus eliminating need for subsequent visits. After going through the questionnaires researchers linger more and talks about the informant's life experience in the slum, this proves to be a very useful

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<sup>88</sup> <http://www.nextaid.org/kawangware.htm>

research tool that encourages many informants to open up. It shapes the outcome of the study through observable alterations during the process. Despite the researchers prepared questionnaires and interviews, the respondents are given an opportunity to steer the discussion through the use of explorations and participants observation. The combination of the research approach leads to collection of data which would have otherwise been left out. As days go by issues discussed from previous data collection exercise are utilized as a marker during the subsequent visits to the remainder households.

Data collected from the residents analyses the role of NGOs and their effectiveness in meeting the needs of the poor leading to poverty alleviation. The interview further exposes the sustainability of the NGO programs and the strategies in use.

Collected quantitative data is analysed by use of descriptive statistics and is presented by means of Statistical package of Social sciences (SPSS) through percentages. The data collected from 103 respondents from Kawangware slum is coded then keyed into the statistical packaged of social sciences (SPSS) which derives general results enabling us to come up with the general analysis from the study population where conclusions are drawn in form of percentages. The information is shown by use of tables and pie charts.

Statistical package of social sciences is chosen because it is mainly used when dealing with primary data collection and it is easier to utilize to analyse the information at hand bearing in mind the objective of the study.

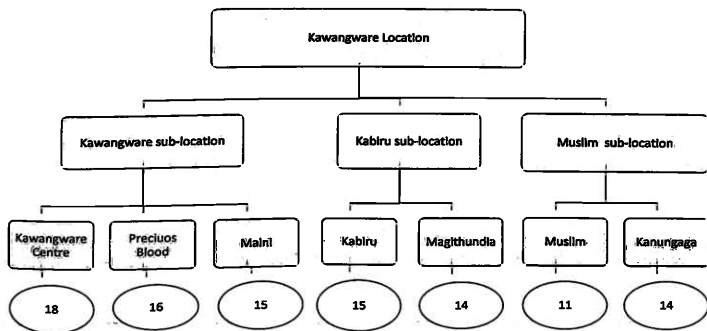
Cross-section survey method is employed, that is data collected at one point in time from a sample selected is used to represent a larger population<sup>89</sup>. In this study the data collected from Kawangware slum is used to draw conclusion on the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation in Kenya. Kawangware slum being the “sample” is a fraction of the total

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<sup>89</sup> Owens, K Linda, Introduction to Survey Research Design 2002- found at <http://www.srl.uic.edu>

population being studied, the urban poor in Kenya. The information is collected by means of standardized procedures so that every individual is asked the same questions in the same way. The survey's intent is not to describe the particular individuals who, by chance, are part of the sample but to obtain a composite profile of the population.

Figure 2: How Sample size is obtained from Kawangware location



The household is selected as a unit of analysis hence data is obtained from the household survey. Kawangware slum has 3 sub-locations. Kawangware, Muslim and Kabiru. The three sub-locations have seven villages in total as indicated in figure 2 above. To attain our study population we derive the sample using stratified sampling method where by the sub-locations and the villages form part of our strata's from which simple random sampling method is utilized to draw the sample population from each village a total of which gives us the sample population of 103 households. Therefore we get 18 households from Kawangware centre village, 16 from Kabiru village, 15 from Maini village, 15 from Kabiru village, 14 from Magithundia village, 11 from Muslim village and 14 from Kanungaga village resulting to a total of 103 households which is our study sample size. The sample size is a compromise of

representation, financial burden and time constraint. The sample is found to be representative considering the total population of the study area. The role of NGO in the livelihood of the households is analysed. The study delves into the goals of the NGO's, the challenges encountered in the field and what they foresee as the best way forward to achieving the goals.

Simple random sampling is used to select each sample size from the village hence the total sample for Kawangware location enables us to make generalization of the larger population of the urban poor in Kenya. The reason being, people living under US \$1.25 a day in urban areas in Kenya, exhibit similar behavioural characteristics. They are the same homogeneous group.

## **1.8 Organization of the Chapters**

Chapter one provides an insight into the structure of the dissertation, it contains the introduction, statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, justification, literature review, theoretical framework, research methodology, and a summary of proposed chapters outline.

Chapter two indicates an in depth analysis of the nature and causes of Poverty in Kenya. It enables us to understand the strategies used towards urban poverty alleviation by the NGOs in line with the causes of urban poverty and the gaps that exists that may need further analysis. It also investigates the extent of poverty in urban areas in Kenya, the push and pull factors that contributes to the problem and/or maintains the status quo or tries to resolve it.

Chapter three analyses the strategies used by Non-Governmental Organizations and others. The chapter assesses the historical strategies that have been used by NGO's in resolving the

problem of poverty in urban cities. On the other hand it ventures into the strategies used by other organizations, such as government, intergovernmental organizations and the link/gap between NGO's approach and others in poverty alleviation. This is found to be necessary in order to see the missing dots and the connection that may need or not be needed.

Chapter Four looks into the findings and discussions, it critically analyses the role of Non-Governmental organizations in urban poverty alleviation. This is done by assessing the data collected in the previous chapter and from the field research in the light of the research questions and objective of the study.

Chapter five provides conclusions and policy implications on urban poverty alleviation.



## **2 CHAPTER TWO: THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF POVERTY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter investigates the nature of poverty and the holistic causes of poverty. It enables us to understand the strategies used/ being used by NGOs and other stakeholders in alleviating urban poverty. It identifies the gaps between the strategies being used by both the NGOs and other stakeholders. By the end of the analysis poverty is viewed holistically from both the poor and the non- poor perspective. The chapter probes into the different views that have been used by different scholars in understanding the nature and causes of poverty.

We begin by looking at the nature of poverty which comprises of; first, poverty as an entanglement, this involves living in a cluster of disadvantages, secondly, poverty as a lack of access to social power, this inserts the poor household in the global economy and allows us to see the social disadvantages encountering the poor when the interacting domains are the systems within which the poor struggle to find space. Finally we view poverty as a lack of freedom to grow, the poor household is in limitations by powerful stakeholders, people whose interests are served by the limitations and thus are interested in retaining the status quo by sustaining the illusion that such limitations cannot be changed.

In the causes of poverty the chapter discusses; first the vicious cycle of poverty, which is a series of disadvantages that locks the poor household into poverty. It perpetuates itself for generations when viable intervention modes are not put in place. Secondly we have the physical causes, the lack of basic needs such as food, shelter, water and clean air. Third, we probe into the social causes often generally firmly approved by the members of the society that perpetuates injustices and misery. Fourth there is the mental cause of poverty, at the

basic level known as the lack of knowledge and technical information that puts the poor at a disadvantage. Fifth we discuss the cultural causes, this is especially important when dealing with third world countries which often has prevailing cultural expectations that cannot be ignored. Finally we look at other causes generally referred by the global community when dealing with poverty in third world Countries.

The nature and causes of poverty discussion prepares us to understand why NGOs and other stakeholders use the strategies utilized in the following chapter. First the study begins with poverty as an entanglement in the discussion of nature of poverty.

## **2.2 The Nature of Poverty**

### **2.2:1 Poverty as entanglement**

Robert Chambers uses the household as a unit of analysis. He describes the poor as living in a “cluster of disadvantage”. The household is poor, physically weak, isolated, vulnerable and powerless. He describes these dimensions as an interactive system which he refers to as “poverty trap”<sup>90</sup>. This view has considerable explanatory power and aligns well with the experience of the urban poor in the slum of Kawangware. It is broken down into the following;

*Material Poverty:* The household has few assets, inadequate housing and sanitation.

*Physical weakness:* Members of the household are weak. They lack strength because of poor health and inadequate nutrition; many are women, the very young and the very old. There are too many dependants.

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<sup>90</sup> Chambers Robert. Rural Development. Putting the First Last. London: Longman. 1983 pg103-139

*Isolation:* The household lacks access to services and information. It is often remote, far from main roads, water lines and electricity. It lacks access to market, capital, credit and information. It is excluded from the system. In this case, the urban poor are isolated from the system.

*Vulnerability:* The household has few buffers as against emergencies or disaster. Its members lack choices and options. They cannot save, and they are vulnerable to cultural demands such as dowry, and feast days, that soak up savings.

*Powerlessness:* The household lacks the ability and the knowledge to influence the life around it and the social systems in which it lives.

Kawangware slum fits into the above profile and NGOs intervention tries to make the living conditions better by tackling the highlighted weaknesses.

Chambers system approach to poverty is a powerful tool. The interaction among the five elements of the poverty trap is an important feature; each is linked to and reinforces the others. A problem in one area implies problems in other areas, thus indicating the greater picture of poverty.

Powerlessness is often overlooked because it's an open invitation to exploitation by the powerful. Chambers alerts us on three forms of exploitation, first by the local non-poor who often stand as nets between the poorer people in the slums and the outside world by trapping resources and benefits that are meant for the poor. The local non-poor police, politicians, and landowners who use deception, blackmail and violence to rob the poor who in turn lack recourse to justice; "since they do not know the law, cannot afford legal help and fear to offend the patrons on whom they depend"<sup>91</sup> The poor are particularly vulnerable to

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid pg. 133

bargaining when it comes to being paid for their labour<sup>92</sup>. The power to withhold work without reason is a powerful bargaining tool. Kawangware slum dwellers are often the victims of cheap labour with majority earning less than \$100 a month hence living under US\$ 1.25 a day. NGOs focusing on human right come in here to empower the poor with the knowledge on their legal rights.

One aspect that lacks in chambers analysis is the contribution the poor make to their own poverty by destructive behaviour within the household, and the poverty of being psychologically negative, (we are of no value and are unworthy) Lack of awareness that they have answers to important questions such as how they can be part of the bigger picture in alleviating poverty in conjunction with the NGOs, CBOs Governments and other institutions. This attitude has led to many development projects being hand outs, in short, solutions are ready made then the problem is addressed by the solution. This is a detrimental approach since there is lack of ownership by the slum dwellers who only get involved to 'benefit'. Such programs lack sustainability, once the NGO leaves, the slum dwellers plunges deeper into poverty due to lack of effort to address own problems and creation of redundancy in innovativeness as a result of getting used to 'hand outs'. This thought is shared by a former World Bank director who said "Hand-outs are simply not doable. Local conditions have to be created, which is what the people want. Poor people do not want hand-outs, but opportunities"<sup>93</sup>. The study explores what the poor people in Kawangware slum think is the answer to boosting their economic empowerment where NGOs role in urban poverty alleviation is concerned. Secondly, under the nature of poverty, the study probes poverty as a lack of access to social power

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid pg. 133

<sup>93</sup> Report by *James D. Wolfensohn*, the 9th president of the World Bank, appointed in 1995 by U.S. President Bill Clinton. On an Interview at International Peace Foundation held in Bangkok. Available at <http://peace-foundation.net/>

## **2.2:2 Poverty as a Lack of Access to Social Power.**

Lack of access to social power excludes the poor from the social cycle thus creating a need to empower them. John Friedman a professor of urban planning at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and also a promoter of "alternative development" describes poverty by focusing on powerlessness as a lack of access to social power. He sees household as the social unit of the poor and sees it within four overlapping domains of social practice: State, political community, civil society and corporate economy<sup>94</sup>. Each domain has a distinctive type of power, state power, social power, political power and economic power.

The core of the state consists of the formal executive and judicial elements of the government. The core of the political community consists of independent political organizations. In the overlap between the state and the political community Friedman places the legislative and regulatory bodies. The core of the civil society is the household. Where the domains of the civil society and the state overlap we find churches, and voluntary organizations (NGOs). The core of the corporate economy is the corporations. This domain is open to and profoundly interconnected with the global economy and trans-national corporations (TNCs). Where the corporate economy overlaps with the political community, we find political parties, protest movements, and environmental groups. Where the corporate economy overlaps with the civil society, we find the non-formal economic sector and popular economic groups. These interacting domains are the system within which the poor household struggles to find space, locations and influence. Friedman then describes eight bases of social power that are available to the poor as avenues of creating social space and influence: social networks, information for self-development, surplus time, instruments of work and

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<sup>94</sup> Friedman John. *Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development*. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell. 1992  
Pg. 26-31

livelihood, social organization, knowledge and skill, defensible life space and financial resources.<sup>95</sup>

The understanding of poverty brings a more sophisticated angle. It is not just a lack of things or a lack of knowledge. It also inserts poor household into the global economy. This is where we find our study population (Kawangware slum dwellers). Friedman also introduces the psychological dimension to poverty and power.

*“For eight years now my ties have hung on the door; for eight years I have not gone to work. This is killing me. I feel useless to myself and my family”.*<sup>96</sup>

Poor people in the slums often experience deep feelings of alienation and hopelessness in their encounters with the state and private sector institutions such as NGOs. They have low expectations and little hope that things will change with new initiatives. There is need to address hopelessness cautiously especially for the NGOs focusing on poverty alleviation in slum areas which seem to have a psychological depression that many NGOs address either through self-esteem development and/or spiritual aspect of an individual as a holistic approach.

The study analyses the views of the poor on the presence of the NGOs in Kawangware and at the same time what the NGOs think should be done in future in order to improve their achievements in the slums.

Thirdly we discuss the nature of poverty as a lack of freedom to grow.

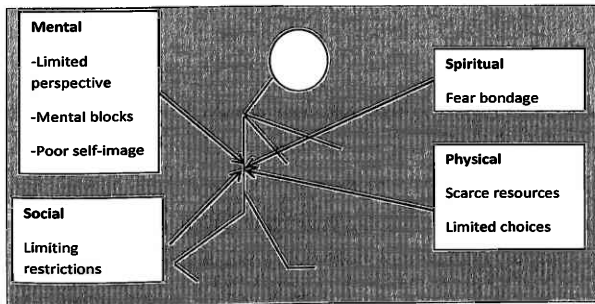
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<sup>95</sup> Ibid pg. 67

<sup>96</sup> Narayan Deepa and Patti Petesh, *Voices of the poor from many Lands*. Oxford University Press and the World Bank. New York 2002. (A displaced man in Tombak, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

## 2.2: 3 Poverty as a lack of Freedom to Grow

Figure 3: Indication of the poor in a series of limitations.



Adopted from: Jayakaran Ravi. "Holistic Participatory Learning and Action: User Guide and Manual. Madras, World Vision. India. 1996

The poor are pictured as wrapped in a series of restrictions and limitations<sup>97</sup> in four areas: physical, mental, social, and spiritual. Jayakaran further points out that behind each of these limitations position's powerful stakeholders, people whose interests are served by the limitations and who have a stake in sustaining the illusion that such limitations can never be changed. With this focus the causes of poverty are located in people not abstract concepts. It is easy to blame the system, greed, the market and culture but these are abstractions and cannot be directly changed. People, the poor and non-poor can be changed. Jayakaran further points out that the stakeholders are themselves operating in limitations kept in place by still more powerful stakeholders. In this context the study indicates how poverty in a local slum

<sup>97</sup> Jayakaran's framework for poverty as limitation echoes Friedman's observation that, while we do not know what a flourishing human life is, we "can know what inhibits it": hunger, poor health, poor education, a life of backbreaking labor, a constant fear of dispossession and chaotic social relations. Sourced at Jayakaran Ravi. "Holistic Participatory Learning and Action: User Guide and Manual. Madras, World Vision. India. 1996

affects the international arena. The staircase of oppression goes all the way from the household to the village, to the area, to the nation and the global level. Linthicum calls this "systems above systems"<sup>98</sup>. This is the nature of poverty; everyone has something to do with everything.

Having looked at the different dimensions of the nature of poverty we appreciate the need to work hard at seeing all there is to poverty because, there is a wide angle, we cannot afford to view it through narrow lenses. With the above guideline the study exposes the reader to all angles of the nature of poverty in Kawangware slum hence spearheading in alleviating urban poverty in a more prolific manner. Next the study discusses the causes of poverty.

## **2.3 The Causes of Poverty**

This is a very vital area, the way we understand the causes determines the approach to the strategies of alleviating poverty. The understanding of the causes of poverty can be diverse; care is taken to avoid un-intended biases. First the study looks at the vicious cycle of poverty.

### **2.3.1 Vicious Cycle of Poverty**

Economists argue that people's willingness to save for the future consumption grows with their incomes. The poorer people are, the less they can afford to plan for the future and save. In economics, the cycle of poverty is the "set of factors or events by which poverty, once started, is likely to continue unless there is outside intervention."<sup>99</sup>The cycle of poverty has been defined as a phenomenon where poor families become trapped in poverty for at least

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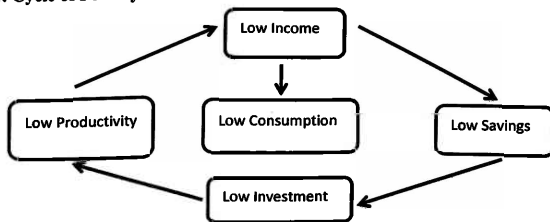
<sup>98</sup> Linthicum, Robert C. *Empowering the Poor*. Monrovia, California: MARC 1991 pg. 19

<sup>99</sup> <http://encyclopedia.farlex.com/Cycle+of+poverty>



three generations. These families have either limited or no resources. There are many disadvantages examples of these disadvantages working in a circular process would be: economic decline, low personal income, no funds for school, leading to lack of education. The lack of education results in unemployment and lastly low national productivity that collectively work in a circular process making it virtually impossible for individuals to break the cycle.<sup>100</sup> This occurs when the people in the slums lack the resources necessary to get out of poverty, such as financial capital, education or connections. In other words, poverty-stricken individuals in Kawangware slum experience disadvantages as a result of their poverty, which in turn increases their poverty. This would mean that the poor remain poor throughout their lives. This cycle has also been referred to as a "pattern" of behaviors and situations which cannot easily be changed.<sup>101</sup> In many cases breaking the cycle of poverty requires long term solutions such as provision of education to Kawangware slum children which empowers a generation to gain milestones in job placements thus higher savings, higher chances of investment leading to more productivity and finally higher income which allows to break out of the poverty cycle. The following figure illustrates a case of poverty cycle that results from a low Income.

**Figure 4: Cycle of Poverty**



<sup>100</sup> Marger "Social Inequality: Patterns and Processes." McGraw Hill publishing. New York. 2008. 4th edition.  
<sup>101</sup> Valentine, C. A. Culture and Poverty. University of Chicago: London, 1968

Poverty cycle works to the disadvantage of the Kawangware residents in that generations after generations are trapped due to low income, the study highlights how NGOs intervention strategies provides avenues to break out of the cycle.

Secondly the study probes the physical causes of poverty.

### **2.3:2 Physical Causes of poverty**

People need food, shelter, water clean air. Chambers categories of material poverty and physical weakness speak to this. People need an environment that supports life. If these aspects are largely absent poverty is the result. This is mainly the case in Kawangware slum. United Nations development report states that, 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water, and 2.6 billion lacks basic sanitation<sup>102</sup>. In Kawangware slum, water is not guaranteed, the environment is filthy due to poor sanitation and improper waste disposal mechanisms. The poor environment leads to poor business due to the customer base limitations which locks the businesses to slum dwellers customer base. Shelter is poor too. Through observations the study indicates the houses are made out of poor material ( Tin, Carton boxes, mad, plastic bags or poor wood) resulting to poor weather reaching the people and causing havoc such as diseases.

Thirdly the study delves in social causes of poverty.

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<sup>102</sup> 2006 United Nations Human Development Report available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2006/>

### **2.3:3 Social Causes of Poverty**

The physical causes are intensified by the social causes. "There are large-scale social practices and a whole system of social roles, often firmly approved by the members of society generally that cause or perpetuate injustice and misery"<sup>103</sup>. Chambers develops this and Friedman enhances it. These systems are pointed as tools and legitimating narratives by those who play god in the lives of the poor by creating a web of lies. Jayakaran identifies the causes of poverty by pointing at the stakeholders standing behind each limitation of growth. The question is; are NGOs strategies in urban poverty alleviation maintaining the status quo? This area is looked into as we analyse the NGOs strategies and see what the residents of Kawangware slum have in mind concerning the existence of NGOs in their community.

Fourth, the study delves into mental causes of poverty.

### **2.3:4 Mental Causes of Poverty**

Other causes of poverty have to do with the mental condition of the poor. At the simplest level it is known that lack of knowledge and technical information puts one at a disadvantage. Poor mental state due to poor nutrition, drugs, alcoholism also creates and sustains poverty. There is a need to go beyond this simple and obvious state where by hopelessness is deeply embedded in the minds of the urban poor. Hopelessness being, a condition of losing faith in oneself to overcome the poor living standards.

Where does this hopelessness come from? The web of lies that the poor believe ends up disempowering them<sup>104</sup>. Maggay gives a further description of this kind of poverty:

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<sup>103</sup> Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*. Grand Rapids, Michigan 1983 pg. 24

<sup>104</sup> Christian Jayakumar. "A different Way to look at Poverty" *Body and Soul*. World Vision. London. 1998a

He argues that it is the spirit that always denies, the annoying yet darkly seductive doubt that constantly questions the best we believe. The result for some is a creeping disillusionment, an intemperate realism that, in the end, takes away the spring and lightness in our step, stoops our shoulders and makes us bitterly huddle in corners<sup>105</sup>.

The identity of the poor is marred on the inside. This is the deeper, more insidious cause of poverty. A research done by World Vision development programs in Tanzania illustrates the dilemma created by these internalized deceptions<sup>106</sup>

**Table 1. Community vs. World Vision Staff View on causes of poverty**

<u>Cause</u>	<u>Community View</u>	<u>WV Staff View</u>
Ignorance	Agree	Disagree
Laziness	Agree	Disagree
Lack of entrepreneurial spirit	Agree	Disagree
Lack of community spirit	Agree	Disagree
<u>Injustice</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>

*Community vs. World Vision Staff View*

In every case the community blames itself for its poverty; having internalized the very descriptors of the poor, those that chambers warns development workers to avoid<sup>107</sup>. We however need to be careful not to imply that the poor make themselves mentally poor. Wink reminds us that “powerlessness is not simply a problem of attitude ... There are structures-

<sup>105</sup> Maggay, Melba. *Transforming Society*. Regnum, London. 1994 pg. 97

<sup>106</sup> Johnson Richard Boyd. *World View and International Development: A Critical Study of the Idea of Progress in Development Work of World Vision Tanzania*. Ph.D. thesis, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, UK. Oxford 1998.

<sup>107</sup> Chambers Robert. *Rural Development. Putting the First Last*. London: Longman. 1983 pg. 107

economic, political, religious and only then psychological, that oppress people and resist all attempts to end their oppression”<sup>108</sup>.

The hopelessness also has its roots in the history of the poor which is normally distorted by the non-poor in a bid to affirm their position. What has already happened has a way of shaping the way we think of the future. The past can become a limitation to the future. *Those who “do not make history... tend to become the utensils of the history makers as well as mere objects of history”*<sup>109</sup>. Poorly thought development intervention modes can exacerbate the distorted view the poor has of their own history. Friere exposes the negative contribution that educational system can have if they teach the poor to read their world and their past through the lenses that the powerful, the history makers and writers, lend to them in the form of educational system. His strategy for literacy and education is designed to allow “each man to win back his right to say his own word, to name the world”<sup>110</sup>. History making and history telling are tools for making the poor captive to the god-complexes of the non-poor. Our study probes into the poor’s perspective on what they think about NGOs role in urban poverty alleviation. Who they think is best suited in achieving urban poverty alleviation.

Fifth, the study probes the cultural causes of poverty.

### **2.3:5 Cultural Causes of Poverty**

This is a very interesting and significant contributor to poverty especially when targeting Third world countries. In this case Kenya. Most scholars ignore this aspect which many at times undermines the development strategies. An example of a cultural aspect working

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<sup>108</sup> Wink Walter. *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Fortress Press. Minneapolis, Minnesota. 1992

<sup>109</sup> Mills Wright. “The Structure of Power in America Society” In *Power in Modern Societies*, ed. Marvin E Olsen and Martin N. Marger. Westview Press. Colorado 1993

<sup>110</sup> Friere, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum Books. New York. 1990

against development efforts is; a lady in the Kawangware slums says she cannot stop having children despite the fact that she is not in a position to take care of the four children she already has in her squalid poverty ridden condition. The reason she gives is that in her culture she is expected to have as many children as her husband wishes for, failure to adhere to his desire would result to him marrying another wife. This is an eye opener especially for the NGOs using population control as a strategy of alleviating poverty. A problem like this requires addressing the cultural aspects before bringing in the birth control measures. This being one example of how culture can undermine the programs put in place by NGOs if they do not do their research of the target community well.

Another cause closely related to this is the spiritual cause of poverty. Money is often spent on charms for protection and time is lost on feast days which in urban areas imply travelling long distances to ancestral homes to fulfil a certain spiritual requirement. A good example is the charms placed on children's wrists and waist upon birth. The ceremony of cutting the new born baby's hair by the grandmother who is normally located in the rural area forcing the parent(s) to spend money and time travelling to their ancestral home to secure this requirement. Though this may be ignored by scholars, it is a reality that certain beliefs in a people's culture are detrimental to development and afflict the poor and dent their savings. The study observes this aspect and sees how much it affects the urban poor in terms of depleting resources and the effects it has on NGOs strategies of poverty alleviation.

Finally, we look at other causes of poverty commonly referred to whilst dealing with African poverty.

### 2.3:6 Other Causes of Poverty

The most commonly pointed out cause of African poverty is corruption. Sachs argues that critics of African governance and the Western violence and meddling have it wrong.<sup>111</sup> The argument that Africa's corruption is the source of the problem fails to hold water. Transparency international conducted a research on certain African countries (Ghana, Senegal, Mali and Malawi) which are perceived to have good governance in comparison with East Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Bangladesh) which are perceived to be under good governance however they had less economic growth compared to their Asian counterparts who are perceived to be corrupt.

**Table 2: Corruption and Economic Growth**

	Corruption Perception Rank	average Yearly GDP per capita Growth 1980-2000	
<b>Sub Saharan Africa</b>			
	<b>Ghana</b>	70	0.3
	<b>Senegal</b>	76	0.5
	<b>Mali</b>	78	-0.5
	<b>Malawi</b>	83	0.2
<b>East Asia</b>			
	<b>India</b>	83	3.5
	<b>Pakistan</b>	92	2.4
	<b>Indonesia</b>	122	3.5
	<b>Bangladesh</b>	133	2.0

Source: Transparency International, Global Corruption Report. Pluto Press. London. 2004. (A higher rank indicates greater perceived corruption)

<sup>111</sup> Sachs D. Jeffrey. The End of Poverty. Economic Possibilities for Our Time. The Penguin Press. New York. 2005. pg. 190

Africa's per capita income economic growth is significantly lower, by around 3% points per year compared with other developing countries with comparable levels of corruption and income. The devastating colonial legacy in Africa and the West's depredation in the post-colonial period cannot explain the long-term development crisis. This is because other countries experienced the harsh colonial legacy and post-colonial meddling. A case example is Vietnam which fought for independence for decades yet emerged and experienced very rapid economic growth. In Africa therefore more is needed to explain the economic crisis and for the sake of this research we shall dwell more on the earlier explained causes.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The Nature and causes of poverty are very complex. The nature of poverty outlines itself in three dimensions. First poverty as an entanglement, meaning living in a cluster of disadvantages, second, poverty as a lack of access to power, in this case the poor are inserted in the global economy and thus struggle in the interacting domains to find space, finally poverty as a lack of freedom to grow due to powerful stakeholders whose interest are served by the poor's limitations.

The causes of poverty in the slums includes, physical, social, mental, cultural and vicious cycle of poverty. Physical causes manifests as lack of basic needs such as food, shelter clothing, water and clean air. Social causes manifests as social norms generally approved by society that brings forth injustices and misery. Mental causes involve lack of sufficient knowledge/skills putting the poor at a disadvantage. Cultural causes are norms and expectations that deplete the resources of the poor. Vicious cycle of poverty is a series of disadvantages that locks the urban poor into poverty. Therefore nature and causes of poverty portrays as a multifaceted phenomenon.



The chapter concludes that urban poverty requires us to be multi-disciplinary; we need anthropology, development studies, history, sociology, social psychology, spiritual discipline, theology and international relations all integrated together. Urban Poverty is not only restricted to one discipline because its tentacles go beyond one discipline of study. Thus NGOs require an in depth field research in order to holistically understand and tackle the causes of urban poverty.

### 3 CHAPTER THREE: STRATEGIES USED BY NGO'S AND OTHERS

#### 3:1 Strategies used by NGO's

##### Introduction

Urban poverty is mainly concentrated in slum areas. Slum in this study is defined as per UN-HABITAT definition which states that a slum is “a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following: First, durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions. Secondly, sufficient living space meaning not more than three people sharing the same room. Thirdly, easy access to safe water, in sufficient amounts, at an affordable price. Fourth, access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people and finally security of tenure that prevents forced evictions”<sup>112</sup>

Various disciplines approach towards urban poverty alleviation differs in that, the sociologists concern themselves largely with social structures and patterns of behaviour in the slum, the political scientists are interested in their lack of power and influence, the economists are concerned with the relation of the slum productivity, markets, and real estate, and the planner is primarily occupied with the physical environment<sup>113</sup>. This study largely concentrates on the economic physical and social psychological problems found in the slum dwellers way of living resulting in the NGOs interest in improving the poor's self-image, motivation and opportunities to lead a better life.

NGO programs hopes strategies providing more economic boosts and services to the poor in urban areas are likely to lead to automatic solution to the poverty problems. Where conditions

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<sup>112</sup> Sourced at <http://www.unhabitat.org>

<sup>113</sup> Ibid Pg. 326

have not improved the tendency has been to provide more funds and technical manpower for opportunities and services. International NGOs continues to send more human resources from abroad to train the slum dweller. However, the problem of persistent poverty prevails. The question is what strategies are the NGOs using? We find the answer to this question by looking at the various strategies put in place by the NGOs in this chapter. How can it be improved? At the end of the following chapter, the study probes the NGOs on their proposal of what should be done in future to improve their achievements in the slums. The problem of poverty as organizations voices is a solvable one. Many continue to assume the problem of the urban poor and the slum arise from failure to provide adequate or sufficiently broad services, or what has been termed the *illusion of services*<sup>114</sup>. Therefore the study focuses on the strategies in use by the NGOs and others, the challenges they come across and how these challenges can be overcome.

### **Broad Overview of the strategies in use in Poverty reduction**

Lampman an economist<sup>115</sup> recommends three approaches to the reduction of poverty. One is to prevent the occurrence of events over which the individual has no control. Among the specific countermeasures are the reduction of unemployment, re-training and relocation of workers, and remedial measures such as a guaranteed annual income. A second approach to reducing poverty is to remove the barriers that trap particular categories of people in poverty. Specific remedies here include legislation directed toward insuring equal employment practices and equal educational opportunities regardless of class or other characteristics of the group membership.

The third approach recommended by Lampman is to initiate programs designed to enhance the motivation and ability of persons in poverty in order to improve their chances of escaping

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<sup>114</sup> Hunter, D. R. *The Slums: Challenge and Response*. Free Press: New York, 1964 pg. 594

<sup>115</sup> Lampman, R.J. *Approaches to the Reduction of Poverty*. *American Economic Review* 1965, NO. 2, 521-29

poverty through their own efforts. It is in relation to some of these approaches that NGOs play roles that can make notable contributions.

In NGOs strategies in urban poverty alleviation the study looks at; First provision of health care, second combating HIV/AIDS and the culture of stigma surrounding it, third population control, fourth, provision of education, and finally motivation of slum people through reference groups. On strategies in use by others we look at Cash transfer program, rapid economic growth through trickle down approach, micro-finance, Provision of free primary education and provision of water. First, the study delves in the Provision of health care under strategies used by NGOs.

### **3.1:1 Provision of Health Care**

Several factors specific to the informal settlement context contributes to the poorer health of the residents. Environmental factors include; physical factors that have a direct effect on health such as, overcrowding, insufficient clean water, poor sanitation and poor hygiene leads to increase in the risk of communicable diseases and social factors such as alienation, unemployment, ethnic tensions and violence which tend to have a more indirect effect on health.

The explosive growth of urban informal settlements, and the poor health status of the residents, challenges the commonly held assumption that the health and economic circumstances of urban poor is superior to rural conditions. Emerging evidence indicates that the African urban poor have less access to health services, and consequently exhibit higher mortality rates than residents from other population sub-groups including rural residents<sup>116</sup>.

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<sup>116</sup> African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC). *Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi Informal Settlements*. African Population and Health Research Centre. Nairobi: 2002

Nairobi typifies the current urban population boom and associated urban health and poverty problems. Its population was only 120,000 in 1948<sup>117</sup>. After 1948, with the abolition of the 'pass' system, and the relaxation of migration rules following Kenya's independence in 1963, Nairobi's population reached 350,000 in 1962, and 500,000 in 1971 with an estimated one third living in unauthorized housing<sup>118</sup>. The 1999 Kenyan Population Census estimated the population of Nairobi then to 2.3 million<sup>119</sup>. By 2010 Nairobi's population is estimated at 4million during the day. However, the city's health and social services have not kept pace with its urbanization trends. Such rapid urbanization has resulted in high rates of unemployment, poverty and poor health outcomes among the most disadvantaged of the city's residents, the urban poor slum dwellers.

Nairobi exemplifies the linked crises of rapidly growing urban population and rapidly deteriorating health conditions throughout the African region; the city's population has been growing at seven per cent per annum since the 1970s, and it is estimated that more than half of its population live in slum settlements. While the proportion of people living below the poverty line in Kenya increased from 45 to 52 per cent between 1992 and 1997, in the city of Nairobi it doubled during the same period from 26 to 50 per cent.<sup>120</sup>

The impact of health on the productive capacity of society is easier to measure. Ill health imposes economic costs by; reducing the availability of labour, impairing the productivity of

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<sup>117</sup> Muwonge, J. W. "Urban policy and patterns of low-income settlement in Nairobi, Kenya", *Population and Development Review*, 6:595-613. 1980.

<sup>118</sup> Macharia, K., "Slum clearance and the informal economy in Nairobi", *The Journal of African Studies*, 30(2): 221-236. 1992.

<sup>119</sup> Republic of Kenya, *1999 population and Housing Census*, volume I, Central Bureau of Statistics. Nairobi: 2001

<sup>120</sup> NGO major group discussion paper on water, sanitation and human settlements *Review of progress in achieving implementation on water, sanitation and human settlements in Africa at AMCOW/Regional preparatory meeting, Addis Ababa, 10 - 11 December 2003*

employed/employable workers and capital goods, wasting current resources, particularly nutrients; and impeding the development of natural resources<sup>121</sup>. A healthy nation is a working nation, in a bid to help the people out of abject poverty NGOs in Kawangware directs their efforts in provision of health care and or health care facilities.

Health contributes directly to human well-being and is regarded as one measure of welfare. Good health permits participation in personal, family, social and political activities. Healthcare has an important human support function in comforting the afflicted and counselling the anxious. Healthcare satisfies a felt human need. It is in this perspective that NGOs provides healthcare to the slum dwellers in Kawangware in form of medical camps that reaches out to the whole community in the slum (annually/by-annually) and or continuous medical coverage for the groups under their programs such as orphans and vulnerable children.<sup>122</sup> This is done in conjunction with local clinics approved by the NGOs as credible upon which the NGO clientele is taken care of health-wise and NGO is billed.<sup>123</sup> CCP NGO states that “Medical Camps are held three times in a year to meet the health needs of all sponsored children, guardians and their family members. The sponsored families are also given an opportunity to reach out to their sick friends from the community and invites them into the medical camps”<sup>124</sup>. A healthy child is able to attend school and healthy adults are able to work and earn a living hence a reduction in the possibility of falling into absolute poverty due to poor health.

Secondly the study further explores combating HIV/AIDs and the culture of stigma associated with it.

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<sup>121</sup> McNamara S. Robert, *The Assault on Poverty, Problems of Rural Development, Education and Health*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London 1971

<sup>122</sup> Chosen Children of Promise, Kawangware. Found at <http://www.ccpnow.org>

<sup>123</sup> Ibid

<sup>124</sup> <http://www.ccpnow.org/article.php?num=427>

### 3.1:2 combating HIV/AIDS and the culture of stigma surrounding it

Closely related to poor health is the spread of HIV and AIDS across the continent of Africa which continues to be a major obstacle towards the achievement of many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's)<sup>125</sup>. NGOs in Kawangware combat HIV/AIDS daily due to the magnitude of the afflicted.

According to the Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey (KAIS) 2007, the prevalence of HIV in Nairobi Province (9.3%) is the second highest after Nyanza (15.4%) and higher than the national average (7.8%). Disaggregated data for the slum population is not available. However, the urban poor are significantly more likely than their rural counterparts to have an early sexual debut and a greater incidence of multiple sexual partnerships<sup>126</sup>. This increases the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behavior that puts the urban poor at greater risk of contracting HIV. The impacts of HIV and AIDS go far beyond the individual sufferer and affect all aspects of community and national life. A culture of denial, stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV and AIDS commonly observed in Kawangware slum by the NGOs dealing with HIV/AIDS is the greatest obstacle to a concerted and holistic effort to dealing with the problem. Lea Toto NGO in Kawangware indicates that as an organization dealing with HIV/AIDS minors, people in the Community do not want to associate with them for fear of being labelled as HIV/AIDS candidates.<sup>127</sup> This makes their work hard as their clientele more often have to sneak to the organization to get the medication and or counselling. The NGOs in Kawangware ( Lea Toto and CCP) have in place programs that handle the HIV/AIDS patients that specifically gives

<sup>125</sup> Care International UK 2/3 December 2004

<sup>126</sup> Nii-Amoo Dodoo F, Zulu EM and Ezech AC: Urban-rural differences in the socioeconomic deprivation-sexual behaviour link in Kenya. *Social Science and Medicine*: 2007. 64; 1019-1031

<sup>127</sup> [http://www.nyumbani.org/lea\\_need.htm](http://www.nyumbani.org/lea_need.htm):

specific food supplies tailored towards boosting the health of the HIV/AIDS afflicted, medication and counselling. The programs goal is to ensure the afflicted children stay healthy and pursue education and the afflicted adults stay healthy and continue working and taking care of the family to avoid creation of more orphans and vulnerable children through HIV/AIDS related deaths. The strategy of these NGOs is a pro-active role to prevent further creation of orphans and vulnerable children who are more likely to fall into child-headed households in absolute poverty. NGOs in Kawangware slums encourages the community to get tested, know their HIV status, and support each other through community based programs enacted by the NGOs. The NGOs believe by acknowledging and freely talking about the HIV status helps their clientele in eliminating stigma associated with HIV/AIDs. 'Fadhili' a CCPs NGO support group in Kawangware meets regularly, discusses obstacles facing them, has in place home based care which undertakes to help the HIV/AIDs afflicted to overcome the stigma and health challenges. To the support group, talking about their situation and sharing their experiences has made the magnitude of their problem to be bearable and acceptable as a challenge in life that can be overcome by change of attitude<sup>128</sup>. CCP NGO deals with education of the orphans in Kawangware has gone further and expanded their target group to education of children from single parents who are HIV/AIDS positive, the logic behind the latter's inclusion is to prevent children from getting orphaned by taking care of the HIV/AIDs single parents through health care to a point where the parent is healthy and able to work. Chances are the child gets education and overcomes the absolute poverty situation in the foresee-able future unlike if the parent is to die leading to orphans, child headed household and dropping out of school that leads to continuous cycle of poverty.

Third, the study delves in population control in poverty alleviation by the NGOs.

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<sup>128</sup> Chosen Children of Promise. Fadhili women Group. Kawangware slum, Nairobi. Kenya. Available at <http://www.ccpnow.org/>



### 3.1:3 Population Controls in Poverty Alleviation by the NGOs

Persistent high fertility in poor nations is the driving force of population growth.<sup>129</sup> Families with eight or more children, rare aberrations in the rich nations are quite normal in poor countries, where the average completed family size of about five children is more than twice that of the rich nations. Even the average hides the fact that in most developing countries most people have more than five children<sup>130</sup>. The same seem to replicate it-self in the richer families versus the poor in developing countries. For example Joyce recounts that “soon after reaching puberty, I got married to a man from my village. We had eleven children, but six of them died” Joyce’s first husband died, and she remarried a man whose wife had died. She says of her current marriage, “We do not have any children together yet, but he also has some eight children by his late wife. She says that the good thing is that the husband accepts her as she is and is not worried that she hasn’t given him any children<sup>131</sup>. A number of economists have given a good deal of thought into providing an economic theory of fertility. Note that there are some general disagreements over the details<sup>132</sup>. The fundamental notion is that family size is determined by parent’s motivation. The motivation reflects rational and broadly economic decisions.

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<sup>129</sup> Murdoch W. William, *The Poverty of Nations. The Political Economy of Hunger and Population*. The John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London. 1980

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid* pg. 16

<sup>131</sup> Narayan Deepa and Patti Petesh, *Voices of the poor From many Lands*. Oxford University Press and the world Bank. New York 2002

<sup>132</sup> Check footnote 6 poverty of nations

**Table 3. Factors affecting motivation to have a large family as economic wellbeing increases**

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Motivation of poor parents</u>	<u>Motivation of rich</u>
1. Consumption benefit	does not change	does not change
2. Labour and /or income benefit	high	low
3. Security benefit (old age)	high	low
<u>Costs</u>	low	high
<u>Competition from other consumption</u>	low	high

Source: *Murdoch W. William, The Poverty of Nations. The Political Economy of Hunger and Population. The John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London. 1980 pg. 21*

First it is assumed that the first child is wanted for itself, the pleasure and emotional satisfaction it brings. The benefit is believed not to vary with the parent's level of economic income. Secondly we have work and or income benefits. It may be difficult for those who live in an industrial society income. From an early age children in Kawangware slum carry out crucial work. Collecting water, helping with household chores, running vegetable stalls as sales people on behalf of the parent(s) and/ or getting employment in the rich neighbourhood as house-helpers. Finally we have security benefit. In the absence of social security system children from urban poor households are the main source of security in old age. This may take form of cash, food or shelter.

In most cases the cost of raising the children is mainly food cost. Child bearing thus becomes the opportunity cost of equalizing the income the mother could earn doing other work. The economic motivation therefore is the benefits exceeding the costs of having an extra child who sends help to the household.

The crux of the above discussion is that parents balance economic benefits against economic costs in deciding whether to have another child especially the fourth or later child. (The first three children do not cause population growth, thus the latter children characterized by developing countries/ poor household trends and in the study Kawangware slum are of concern).

High population growth-rate results in insufficient income earned to sustain the family needs. This leads to large families living in a single room or 'two roomed' house a common phenomenon in Kawangware slum. NGOs in Kawangware in their efforts to alleviate poverty educate and disseminate information on family planning to their target groups. This is a crucial strategy in poverty alleviation since its succession implies smaller families per household enabling the households to take care of the families financially leading to higher income earned hence better chances of investing and saving leading to breaking out of the poverty cycle. However there is more that NGOs need to deal with in order to create higher chances of success. The cultural aspect that requires the wife/woman to bear as many children as the husband wishes for needs to be conquered implies including men in family planning counselling sessions by getting a way that can make the sessions alluring to the men.

CCP, Lea Toto, and Maisha Poa NGOs educate young girls and women on the danger of premarital sex and lack of information and knowledge on birth control. A good measure on family planning knowledge empowers an individual. It is also noted economic and educational development may encourage family planning<sup>133</sup>. Family planning improves

<sup>133</sup> Education for women, See U.N Secretariat. "Women's Right and Fertility." U.N. World population conference, Bucharest Romania August 1974, Conference Background paper, E/CONF.60/CB/5pp.3-9. New York: United nations, 1974 Many of the factors affecting fertility have been discussed in World Bank,

nutrition; nutrition improves health; health improves attitude to family planning, reduces absenteeism at work places, increases labour availability and productivity and facilitates exploitation of natural resources. These chain of events if acceptable and practiced by the urban poor leads to economic development and poverty alleviation.

Fourth, the study probes provision of education by the NGOs in urban poverty alleviation.

### 3.1:4 Provision of Education by NGOs

World Bank indicates education as one of the most powerful instruments for reducing poverty.<sup>134</sup> The importance of education credentials in getting access to wage employment generates social pressures for the expansion of formal education beyond the absorptive capacity of the modern sector. The problem can be tackled by increasing the demand for educated manpower and adapting education to job requirements. However it is of no doubt that provision of a minimum education is an essential condition for the effective participation of the masses in the development process. Over the long term such access increases productivity and incomes<sup>135</sup>. Low cost, functional mass education is required. Educational system in Kenya currently favours middle and upper income groups. These groups therefore have a definite advantage in terms of access to and promotion within the system. In Kawangware slum, education though valued by the people it is not affordable due to low income that leads to lack of funds for school which leads to a lack of education resulting to lack of skills for employment opportunities. To mitigate this cycle of poverty, NGOs in Kawangware (World Vision, CCP, Compassion International, Lea Toto and Maisha Poa)

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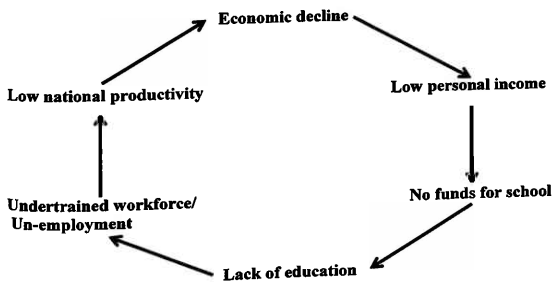
population policies and economic Development, Appendices A and B, pp. 141-163. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1974.

<sup>134</sup> World Bank on Education at, <http://data.worldbank.org/topic/education> 2010

<sup>135</sup> Lionel Demery and Tony Addison. The Alleviation of Poverty Under Structural Adjustment, A World Bank Publication, Washington D.C. 1995

Provide education opportunities to the low income earner urban poor. This enables the child of the low income earner to attain basic education and minimal learning packages that is needed for effective participation in development process. The following figure indicates how lack of education traps the poor in the poverty cycle.

**Figure 5: Effects of low personal income on education**



Education bridges the gap between the poor and the middle class by providing the opportunity to attain primary, secondary and or tertiary level of education. Although primary education is free in Kenya, children in Kawangware slum are not enrolling due to lack of basic necessities. These include; uniform, food, clothes and shelter. This is the group NGOs in Kawangware are reaching out to<sup>136</sup>. In providing education to the children of the poor, the children are able to secure employment opportunities leading to higher personal income and thus break out of poverty cycle.

<sup>136</sup> Daily Nation. Free Uniforms campaign keeps orphans in class. Friday July 21, 2007

Fifth, the study delves in NGOs training and technical support as a strategy in use in poverty alleviation

### **3.1:5 NGOs Training and Technical Support**

Training helps to increase the capacity of unskilled workers, thereby enabling the worker to earn higher wages. It further helps micro-entrepreneurs to secure higher rates of return. NGOs offer training to extend existing skills and to improve production efficiency and product choice. NGO's in Kawangware provides trainings for their target groups. NGOs further provide trainings for micro-entrepreneurs in conjunction with micro-finance institutions. They also provide trainings for their employees to enhance output capacity and quality. For example, Maisha Poa NGO works with the rehabilitation of the street youth. It rehabilitates the street youth by providing vocational training that gives the youth a chance at securing employment opportunity and or starting small scale businesses. CCP NGO works with groups interested in starting micro-businesses by providing training in entrepreneurship and once the group finishes the training, they are further referred to Equity bank entrepreneurship training classes where they get micro-finance loans upon qualifying. CCP NGO also offers micro-loans to 5% of its clientele after going through entrepreneurship classes. Training provides the trainees a chance to increase their income and move out of poverty. Unfortunately the total numbers under NGOs that undergo such trainings successfully are very minimal implying very low scale in tackling poverty in Kawangware.

Furthermore NGOs in Kawangware train their employees in their area of specialization in order to achieve better output to their clientele. This is in form of annual and by-annual trainings through expatriates from the funding countries. An example is the annual trainings

by the nurses from Queen of the Valley Hospital, California, USA, to CCP community nurse and social workers. This gives support groups trainings on various medical issues such as fever, Pneumonia and the importance of taking drugs as prescribed.<sup>137</sup> The annual integration of local employees with foreign Masters and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) students from Azusa Pacific University (APU), California USA, helps CCP's NGO social workers, on various areas of counseling such as, family, distress, loss among other topics empowering them with counseling skills<sup>138</sup>. This training empowers the local staff with broad based skills in counseling, nursing, social work and teaching. This not only increases the skills but also motivates the employees thus better output and handling of the clientele.

Finally the study analyses motivation through reference groups

### **3.1:6 Motivation through Reference Groups.**

Reference groups have been used to alleviate poverty through motivational behaviour. These include what an "individual notices, does, feels, and think while pursuing a certain goal"<sup>139</sup>. The wants and needs of an individual in a group are not necessarily the same. What a person needs are, depends on the conditions a person wants and the way in which existing conditions differ in achieving them. The programs of change agents, such as those in provision by NGOs in Kawangware slum, respond generally to what the NGOs agents understand to be the observed needs. Conceptually there are not only the "observed needs" of an outsider but the "felt needs" of a particular people. The NGOs together with the targeted groups forms groupings that target to mitigate problems encountered on the ground.

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<sup>137</sup> <http://www.ccpnow.org/article.php?num=424>

<sup>138</sup> <http://www.ccpnow.org/article.php?num=419>

<sup>139</sup> Newcomb, T. M., Turner, R. H., and Converse P. E. *Social Psychology: The Study of Human Interaction*. Holt Rinehart & Winston, New York 1965.

In Kawangware 60% of the NGOs are succeeding in formulating groups with similar needs and encourages them to meet together and further on start businesses as a team. In Kawangware slum, NGOs target groups such as those infected with the HIV/AIDS virus for example CCP's *Fadhili* group which started by targeting women and later on expanded to include men afflicted with HIV/AIDS. Maisha Poa NGO a FIDA sponsored centre for street children deals with the rehabilitation of the street children/youth. Lea Toto NGO deals with children and families afflicted with HIV/AIDS. These NGOs have formulated groups that motivate their clientele thus giving them hope for the future and determination to overcome their current helplessness. Formulating a motivational group whose main goal is emotional support through shared experiences is the first step, from which the group goes ahead and formulates a business together. The feeling of shared need motivates such groups to go ahead and desire to solve their problems. To acquire financial resources needed to cater for the health problems, they develop projects with support from the NGOs that raise money leading to higher living standards from resources earned through the business ventures.

Unless behaviour can be sufficiently motivated, therefore social change cannot take place. Such change can, in general, be activated only when groups of persons perceive the need for it and want to cooperate with outside agencies in bringing about this change.

Having looked at the strategies used by the NGOs, the study next probes the strategies used by other stakeholders in urban poverty alleviation in Kawangware slum.

### **3.2 Strategies used by others.**

Broad indications suggest that poverty in urban areas is both increasing and changing in nature. To respond to the needs of urban residents and to the growing number of urban



dwellers, more development agencies are working in urban areas. What interventions are in use in urban poverty alleviation? To address this question, this section explores some of the different strategies that development agencies are using and, in particular looks at the critical contribution in investing towards improving basic services. The strategies includes; cash transfers programs, economic growth leading to trickle down approach, micro-finance, free primary education and finally provision of water.

The study begins by delving in cash transfer program.

### **3.2:1 Cash Transfer Programme**

This is a strategy that the NGOs have been using for a long time. The money is sourced from the developed world mostly from individuals or groups and sent to the poor household in developing countries through locally established NGOs, the recipients being individual households supporting orphans and or vulnerable children and single parent women. The Government of Kenya started the programme in 2004<sup>140</sup> with the support of UNICEF as a pilot project in Garissa, Kwale and Nairobi. At the initiative it started with 500 families but has since grown and gained support from DFID, UNICEF and World Bank. The programme offers Ksh1500 a month to the poor families who are caretakers of the orphans and vulnerable children. In Kawangware the study reveals 2.91% of the study population as recipients of the government cash transfer initiative. This helps the beneficiaries but overall it is below the poverty line and has recently been criticised to be facing unique challenges as it grows. The greatest challenge being, the risk of... "Failure to sustain the programme as it grows too fast. Failure to deliver the required support owing to the many complex systems

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<sup>140</sup> Daily Nation Newspaper Thursday, June 2010-06-29

and mechanisms that require being coordinated to ensure effective service delivery<sup>141</sup> The money received per household cannot sustain the beneficiaries especially where the household head is too old to gain any other form of employment that can supplement the governments cash transfer initiative. This implies that poverty alleviation goal is not met, however immediate needs of the poor households are met hence relief in life sustenance.

Secondly the study probes rapid economic growth leading to trickle down approach.

### **3.2:2 Rapid Economic Growth leading to Trickle-down Approach**

Rapid economic growth strategy believes with achievement in rapid economic growth of the country the benefits s down to the absolute poor who in turn experience growth through higher employment opportunities and social benefits that leads to higher incomes hence poverty alleviation. This is an illusion held by agents of globalization, who believe economic development spreads everywhere once its wheels spin in one part. In 2007 the Kenyan government reported a growth in the economy by 6.1%. The response from the majority of Nairobi residents was however not pleasant. The government's report was met with complaints and grumbling. Nairobi residents especially slum dwellers did not experience change in their lifestyle as a result of the economic growth. World Bank is said to have reported that economic growth in the past five years had not translated to better lives for many people, leading to hopelessness and resentment.<sup>142</sup> Trickle down approach has been dominant in the Kenyan economic development policy. The goal is gains from economic growth leads to creation of more economic opportunities which in-turn generates employment and other social opportunities for the urban poor. The experience of 1970s and 1980s economic difficulties in Kenya shows the trickledown strategy is inadequate. The

<sup>141</sup> Ibid pg. 44

<sup>142</sup> Daily Nation, Wednesday August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

increasing forms of poverty and the devastating nature of poverty prove the benefits of economic growth do not necessarily lead to poverty alleviation in the lives of the absolute poor. This opposes scholars like Horton Bird who argues that benefits of economic growth would inevitably trickle down<sup>143</sup>.

Failure of the trickle-down effect leads to other measures in use by the government which includes redistribution as economic development strategy. This mainly focuses on poverty reduction through equity and employment provision with the economic growth. However, this can be feasible if resources are abundant; however with diminishing resources the government of Kenya has hit a snag with this move implying the urban poor cannot rely on this strategy for poverty alleviation.

The conclusion we get from the above analysis is that economic growth is necessary condition for the realization of basic human wants but not a sufficient tool on its own to alleviate poverty. Poverty alleviation requires more approaches, commitments and conscious decisions from all development agents. Without these...real development fails to take place and is replaced by mere illusions of progress and some mockery of modernization.<sup>144</sup>

Third the study indicates micro-finance as a strategy used by local banks and micro-finance institutions

### **3.2:3 Micro-Finance by Local Banks**

Micro-finance availability is an area where local banks in Kawangware are concentrating their effort on. Equity bank in Kawangware has entrepreneurship classes where by groups of ten to fifteen people are taken through various stages of training and upon qualification which

<sup>143</sup> Bird M R and S. Horton. (Ed) Government Policy and Poor in Developing Countries. University of Toronto. Toronto. 1989

<sup>144</sup> Thompson A. R. Education and Development in Africa. The Macmillan Book Press. London. 1981

involves passing certain tests the groups are given loans to start businesses with repayment periods having been stipulated before the loans are given. Equity bank further works with local NGOs where by the NGOs can forward groups of people having trained them, the groups goes for further trainings at the bank upon qualification they are given loans. Faulu Kenya bank gives loans to groups consisting of 15 people or more in Kawangware slum. Local institutions like savings groups enable the poor to access credit from, micro-finance institutions and local banks. This gives the members of the group the capacity to initiate small businesses. Should this scheme continuously work, the poor in Kawangware slum can meaningfully decide their own way to get a first foothold on the ladder of development

Fourth the study analyses free primary education by the Kenyan Government.

### **3.2:4 Free Primary Education by the Kenyan Government**

In Kenya, free primary education (FPE) is viewed as a step toward achieving universal basic education and as part of scaling up poverty reduction. The removal of school fees contributes to poverty reduction by ensuring universal access to basic education, which in turn helps break the cycle of poverty. It is a significant intervention in Sub-Saharan Africa, which is lagging behind in achieving universal primary education (UPE). Universal basic education is largely understood as universal primary schooling. After the Jomtien conference on Education for All (EFA) in 1990 it understood that by making primary education free it includes children from poor families and thereby perhaps become universal. Schooling costs for families are a major constraint to achieving free primary education (FPE). Direct costs include general fees, examination fees, salary top-ups, textbooks, materials, uniform, feeding, transportation, sports and culture. Indirect costs are the opportunity cost of labor at home or work. By eliminating direct costs of schooling, families can send their children to primary

school, thus increasing demand. On the supply side, very few school systems in Africa are keyed to education for all from the outset, and a strategy combining the elimination of fees together with the reform of the education for all (EFA) system is needed. Children in the Nairobi slums cannot afford the direct costs that go hand in hand with the free primary education, to culminate the matter opportunity cost of children providing labour at home or work in the slums results in poor attendance or failure to attend school. Young girls are mainly used by the parent(s) to earn a living by selling cheap wares like onions, tomatoes, vegetables so as to bring in an additional source of income. Thus free primary education misses the mark in helping the absolute poor population. The NGOs is supplementing the government's initiative meets the direct costs and disseminates information to the parents on the importance of education. This seems to work out better for the benefit of the Kawangware community and the government of Kenya in general. Thus cost-sharing in education needs give the children of the poor a chance of advancing themselves contributing in breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. The fact that bursaries are available at university level and sometimes at secondary school level may not benefit the poor slum dwellers as they rarely make it to secondary and or university level due to early drop-outs linked to the various costs of education in primary schools. With the NGO's input, it implies a step forward towards attaining basic education needed to climb a first foothold in breaking from the poverty cycle.

Finally the study looks at provision of water in urban poverty alleviation

### **3.2:5 Provision of Water.**

The water and sanitation services of the informal settlements in Nairobi are a major public health and livelihood problem. Between 60 and 93% of slum households are dependent on

water vendors for their water supply<sup>145, 146, 147</sup>. In general, water purchased in the informal settlements from water kiosks is 4-5 times higher per litre than tariffs charged by Nairobi Water and Sewerages Company<sup>148</sup>. According to Kenya Food Security Steering Group, the 2008/'09 Short Rains Assessment Report (KFSSG SRA) February 2009, the cost of water in Nairobi slums increased by 114%, from KES 1.62 per litre to KES 3.47 per litre, from December 2007 and December 2008<sup>149</sup>. Furthermore Johnson concludes that the poor may spend up to 30 per cent of their income on water and often pay significantly more than richer groups connected to the public network<sup>150</sup>. If 100 households are to get together and invest in a water meter for access to the public supply, the estimated time to pay back their investment is three months (in terms of simple direct costs, not time taken to negotiate licenses, etc.). Illegal tapping of water and electricity in Nairobi slums is a common phenomenon that was exposed on Kenya Television Network<sup>151</sup>; this is mainly due to the inability to pay the bills. NGOs in the rural areas are managing to install boreholes for the poor to cater for their water needs. In the urban slums, there is a deep need that is yet to be adequately addressed. NGOs in Kawangware do not focus on water provision. However churches in Kawangware offer water on a small scale basis by giving street children and vulnerable widows access to borehole water to shower and use in their daily needs. In general water provision is an area

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<sup>145</sup> World Bank. Kenya Inside Informality: Poverty, Jobs, Housing and Services in Nairobi's Slums. Water and Urban Unit 1. Africa region, World Bank. Report No. 36347-KE. May 31 2006.

<sup>146</sup> Taylor W. and Maithya H. Urban families under pressure in Kenya and the impact of HIV/AIDS. Working paper 2., International Development Department, University of Birmingham, UK 2007

<sup>147</sup> KEMRI/CDC. Nutritional status of pre-school children living in informal settlement, Nairobi, Kenya power point presentation. 2008

<sup>148</sup> Umande Trust, the Economic and Social Rights Centre (Hakijamii) and Christina Flodmann. From Stakeholders to Shareholders: Enlightening water and sanitation services in Nairobi's Peoples' Settlements. 2006.

<sup>149</sup> Kenya Food Security Steering Group. The 2008/'09 Short Rains Assessment Report (KFSSG SRA) February 2009

<sup>150</sup> Johnson, Nick, "Economic Inequality and the Urban Environment: The case of water and sanitation", Discussion paper 97-03, Environmental Economics Programme, London: 1997 2<sup>nd</sup> ED

<sup>151</sup> KTN news July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007

that development agencies need to concentrate on for with sufficient water circumventing diseases is achievable due to higher hygienic conditions. Sufficient water implies clean food and proper body hygiene leading to good health and able bodied individuals, who can work, earn a living and attend to household needs.

### **Conclusion**

Urban poverty alleviation strategies employed by NGOs includes, provision of health care, combating of HIV/AIDS and the stigma associated with it. This is done proactively through prevention modes and reactively through handling the health issues at hand. Good health brings back the ability to work and or school for a better future. NGOs provide and disseminate information on population control, smaller families implies easy management in terms of resources. Provision of education arms the poor with skills and knowledge to either start a business or gain better milestones in job placements. To curb mental causes, strategies that motivate the poor through reference groups are in use.

Apart from NGOs other stakeholders like the government provide free primary education, cash transfer programs and economic growth through trickle down approach. Local banks provide micro-finance loans, and local churches provide water to street families and children.

Success in the strategies implies breaking the poor out of the series of misfortunes that locks them in poverty hence achieving the goal of urban poverty alleviation.

## **4 CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The study indicates 63.1% of the respondents are female where as 36.9% are men. Looking at the marital status, 73.8% are married with singles parents accounting for 8.7%. Over 99% of the study population has no reservation in discussing their Monthly income and its source. 68.9% of the respondents are wage employees and only 28.2% are in business/self- employment. Over 90% earn less than \$100 per month implying that they are in absolute poverty. With the openness in discussing their monthly income and its source the study is made easier to fulfil the objectives.

The chapter starts with the general background information of the study population; age, level of education, marital status and type of families they are engaging in, the number of children and the number of dependants in each household.

Secondly the chapter examines the economic circumstances of the households this includes, occupation, major source of income, the approximate income per month and the improvement they would like to see in boosting the economic circumstances and who should play the major role in the economic empowerment.

Third, the chapter indicates the community perception of the NGOs, whether the community benefitting, how they are benefitting, what they would like the NGOs to do for them in future and the general view on the presence of the NGOs in the community. Finally the study delves into the NGOs. This involves; the strategies in place, whether they have an exit strategy or not, the challenges they are encountering and what they foresee as the way forward to achieving better results in the slums.

We begin by looking at the demographic background information of the study population under which the study indicates the outcome of the interviews with wives and husbands.



## **4.1 Interviews with wives and husbands**

Studying the households indicates no reservation by either gender, both genders express themselves freely. 99% of the people in Kawangware slum are very open about their lifestyle and approximate income earned per month. There are no observed reservations in discussing the monthly income. The female respondents are not afraid to talk in the presence of their male counterparts. There is outspokenness by both. In cases of determining how many wives there are per male, the female respondents are not quick to answer but instead wait for the husbands to respond. The research provides an opportunity for the wives to know the truth. There is observed relief when the husband responds he is monogamous. However there are those who know they have a co wife and are not deterred by the fact. The openness by the respondents implies that the study is made easier in terms of fulfilling the objectives.

Next the study looks into the characteristics of the households. We begin by the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

## **4.2 Characteristics of the Study Households.**

### **4.2:1 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Households.**

63.1% of the respondents are women where as 36.9% are men. The study population varies in terms of age as indicated on table 1; with 17.5% falling between the age group may thus incline towards a feminine perspective. It further indicates 73.9% are below the age of 35 implying the views constitutes of a young generation.

**Table 4: Distribution of study population by age and sex**

Age	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
18-24	8	28	36 (34.9%)
25-29	8	14	22 (21.4%)
30-34	10	8	18 (17.5%)
35 and above	12	15	27 (26.2%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38(36.9)</b>	<b>65(63.1)</b>	<b>103 (100%)</b>

Secondly the study looks at the distribution of the study population by marital status and sex.

The following Table 5 shows the distribution of the study population by marital status. It indicates that 73.8% are married at the time of the interview, 1.9% are widowed. It is however important to note that, by married it means living together under one roof not necessarily legal with a marriage certificate or customary marriage. Once two people of the opposite gender live together as husband and wife they refer to it as married. This implies re-marrying is common due to lack of marriage certificate which legally commits a couple. In this cases it implies that commitment to a partner lasts as long as the joined union is smooth and beneficial once challenges set in, it is easier to get out due to lack of legal implications/limitations. 68% of the respondents are in monogamous marriages as opposed to the 6% in polygamous marriages. The following table 5 indicates the above analysis.

**Table 5: Distribution of the study population by marital status and sex**

Marital status	Sex		Total
	No. of Male	No. Of Female	
	9	7	16 (15.5%)
Single	27	49	76 (73.8)
Married	1	1	2 (1.9%)
Widowed	1	8	9 (8.7%)
Single Parent	38	65	103 (100%)
<b>Total</b>			

It is important to note that though 68% are in monogamous marriages, it is not necessarily their first marriage. This is observed through a number of factors. The main one being the number of step children they are living with from a previous marriage of either partner and/or both. This implies staying single in the slum is not easy due to the poverty, as earlier analysed, The study discusses that single women are more vulnerable to poverty than their married counterparts. The table 5 above proves our analogy that women would rather be married/re-married rather than be single.

Finally under demographic characteristics the study delves in the distribution of the population by age and marital status the objective is to observe how the issue of marriage is undertaken by the different age groups.

The following table 6 indicates a total of 73.8% of the population are married. Under age group 30-34 we observe that 83% of the respondents are married and 17.5% are single parents. This reinforces our earlier analysis that marriage provides security in form of resources leading to more of the study population preferring to be married than single.

**Table 6: Distribution of the study population by Age and marital status.**

Age-Group		Marital status				Total
		Single	Married	Widowed	Single Parent	
Range	18-24	14	20	1	1	36 (35%)
	25-29	2	18	0	2	22 (21.4%)
	30-34	0	15	0	3	18 (17.5%)
	35 and above	0	23	1	3	27 (26.2%)
<b>Total</b>		<b>16 (15.5)</b>	<b>76(73.8)</b>	<b>2 (1.9%)</b>	<b>9 (8.7)</b>	<b>103 (100%)</b>

The female respondents reveals that getting married early or before pursuing their education is a means of survival because with a male partner chances of securing shelter and food increases. Re-marriages are common based on the same line of thought. A single woman is less secure in terms of resources compared to her male counterpart or a married one. This factor brings to light our earlier analysis of the causes of poverty hence material and mental poverty are seen as the key players in contributing to absolute poverty. The vicious cycle continues through opting to marry and have children to meet their immediate basic needs. The children they bring to the world have no buffer against poverty and are most likely to do the same, hence a vicious cycle of poverty.

Our next analysis focuses on the socio-economic characteristics of the study population. The study looks at the general education background of the study population followed by an analysis on the distribution of the population by sex and education. We begin by the education background.

### **4.3 Socio- Economic Characteristics**

#### **4.3:1 Education Background**

The representation emerging on education level of the respondents is summarized under Table 7 which indicates that, 45.6% of the respondents have a primary level of education. 24.3% has secondary level and another 24.3 % has tertiary level of education. 5.8% has no education at all 5 of whom are women and 1 is male. This implies that 94.2% (primary 45.6%, secondary 24.3% and tertiary 24.3%) of the study population has at-least the basic level of education. However, only 24.3% has tertiary education which provides opportunities in job placements and or starting a business. This implies that 75.7% (primary 45.6%, secondary 24.3% and Nil 5.8%) has insufficient level of education that gives a competitive

edge in jobs placement or skills in starting a business as a result of lack of tertiary level of education. This leads to low income due to poorly paying jobs. The table 7 below indicates the above analysis.

**Table 7: Distribution of study population by sex and education**

Education Level	Sex		Total	Percentage
	Male	Female		
Primary	13	34	47	(45.6%)
Secondary	9	16	25	(24.3%)
Tertiary	15	10	25	(24.3%)
None	1	5	6	(5.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

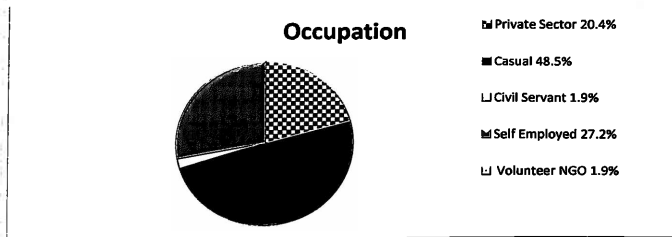
Secondly the study delves in the source of income under which we look at the occupation of the respondents, distribution of the population by monthly income and sex followed by the distribution of the study population by source of income and sex. The study begins with occupation.

#### 4. 3:2 Source of income

The study delves on the occupation of the respondents and the following is what emerges; 48.5% are casual workers, 27.2% are self-employed/ business traders, 20.4% are in private sector, 1.9% in civil service and lastly 1.9% volunteer in NGOs. This implies that 77.6% (48.5% casual workers, 27.2% self-employees/business trader, 1.9% volunteers in NGOs) may not have a medical cover and pension fund thus vulnerable to ailments and absolute poverty currently and in their old age. It further implies medical emergency leads to more expenses and depletion of the low incomes thus decreases chances of investment and savings

hence a continuous cycle of poverty. Figure 6 below depicts the occupation of the study population.

**Figure 6: Occupation of the study population**



Having looked at the occupation, the study next analyses the main source of income of the respondents and the following outlook emerges;

68.9% of the respondents derive their main source of income from wage employment. 28.2% from business/self-employment. The remaining 2.9% have no definite main source of income hence their income comes from various inconsistent sources such as; hand outs, well-wishers and family relations. It is important to note that by income we mean monetary income not material. Therefore education sponsorship for the children by NGOs is not accounted as income. Neither is food donation, clothing or other tangible non-monetary basic needs. No one accounts for receiving cash from NGOs. However, there are acknowledgements in receiving medical care, school fees for their children (school fees is paid directly to the schools by the NGOs) and other material gains from NGOs on a regular/monthly basis. NGOs do not feature anywhere in the answer to this question since they mainly provide non-monetary tangible benefits directly to the respondents. This implies that NGOs in Kawangware slum do not give cash directly to their beneficiaries as a strategy to poverty

alleviation instead they prefer to offer medical care, pay school fees to the schools and or purchase food stuff and deliver the food to their clientele. This ensures that their strategy is implemented and cash is not diverted to other needs or miss-appropriated. The following table 8 displays the above analysis.

**Table 8: Distribution of study population by source of income and sex**

Major source of income	Male	Female	Total
Wage Employment	27	44	71 (68.9%)
Business/self employed	10	19	29 (28.2%)
Financial Org	0	1	1 (1.0%)
Other	1	1	2 (1.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>103 (100%)</b>

Next the study looks at the approximate monthly income of the respondents and the following outcome emerges;

Over 90% of the study population earn US\$ 100 or less a month as the analysis indicates on the following table 9. This implies that the study populations is in absolute poverty and enables us to derive viable analysis concerning the role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation

**Table 9: Distribution of the study population by monthly income and sex**

Income per month (Ksh)	Male	Female	Total Percentage
1000-5000	21	58	79..... (76.7%)
5000-10000	13	6	19..... (18.4%)
10000-20000	3	1	4..... (3.9%)
20000-30000	1	0	1..... (1.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>103..... (100.0%)</b>

We note that when asked what improvement they would like in order to boost their economic empowerment, 99% of the respondents indicate they would like to be given loans to start a business or boost the on-going business. Addressing this question is like talking to one person over and over. In the 7 villages visited, the answer to this question remains consistent 99% states they want to start a business or boost the on-going one. Gender, age, education background does not alter the similar way the respondents think. 99% believes with a business, their economy would improve and hence offer them a better standard of living. Out of all the respondents' only 1% indicates that wage employment would be appropriate having tried operating a business and failed. Our earlier analysis on the source of income for the study population indicates that no one accounts for receiving cash from NGOs, yet the respondents believe getting cash to start a business is the answer to boosting their economic empowerment resulting to poverty alleviation. This area needs further research so as to reconcile the parallel approach in terms of the poor believing getting cash to start a business is the answer to economic empowerment and on the other hand NGOs resisting to give cash directly to the poor as a strategy of poverty alleviation.

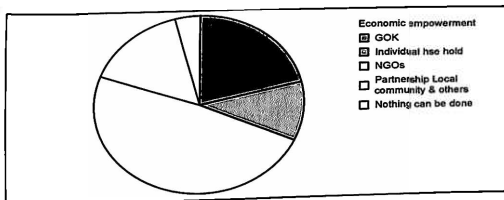
Next the study investigates from the respondents on who should play a major role in boosting their economic empowerment and the following result depicts the response.



### 4.3:3 who should play the major role in boosting the economy of the poor?

Figure 7 below outlines the response from the study population on, who should play a major role in boosting the economic empowerment,

**Figure 7: Who should play a major role in economic empowerment of the poor?**



The study portrays 48.5% of the respondent believes NGOs should play a major role in improving their economic status. 21.4% the Government of Kenya, 10.5% individual households, 15.5% partnership of local community with others and 3.9% nothing can be done to empower the poor economically. The above results imply that NGOs offer hope to the poor. The poor believe in NGOs more because they can place a face of the NGOs in the community. They know most of the officials and hence can place a face to the organizations. The government of Kenya on the other hand is perceived as a huge superfluous faceless organization with which they lack connections to launch their voice. The respondents indicate they are a small insignificant part of the Government with no networking or a channel to voice their opinion. 48.5% insinuates NGOs should provide employment, housing, build roads and sewer system in the slums. Placing hopes on the government is seen as a waste of time and energy. This takes us back to our earlier analogy that the poor are powerless in the society; it proves Chambers right that the household lacks the ability and the knowledge to

influence the life around it and the social systems in which it lives.<sup>152</sup> This could explain why the poor perceives donors/well-wishers/ NGOs as more likely to help. NGOs may not be lifting Kawangware slum residents out of absolute poverty, however, they are active in their lives in one way or the other, and this gives the community a chance to interact with them in different ways. These is in form of medical camps, education for the orphans, care for the HIV positive/ AIDS patients, liaisons with government officials in acquisition of identity cards and birth certificates, technical trainings, support groups associations.

15.5% of the respondent felt community partnership with other groups would work out best. 3.9% indicates nothing can be done about their situation. Despite being in absolute poverty 10.5% believe it is their own duty to work hard and pull their families out of poverty. For example 1% of the respondents quotes that *"if a person is lazy no one can help such a person unless the person is willing to get out of his/ her own situation of poverty"* This implies with sufficient skills and right attitude individual households can work their way out of poverty.

Having looked at first, background information, secondly economic circumstances of the households, thirdly the study delves into the community perception of NGOs.

#### **4.4 Communities Perception of NGOs**

The study inquires if there are any NGOs operating within the community. 63.6% of the respondents acknowledge that, there are NGOs in the community. 34.5% are not aware of

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<sup>152</sup> Chambers Robert. Rural Development. Putting the First Last. London: Longman. 1983 pg103-139

any NGO operating in their immediate community. 1.9% refers to having known of a defunct NGO, they however do not know what caused the NGO to go under.

When asked whether the NGO programs are benefiting to the members of the community, 79.6% acknowledge to benefiting or knowing someone who is benefitting from the NGOs in the community. 19.4% do not benefit or know anybody benefitting from the NGOs in the community. The following includes ways in which they are benefitting; monetary grants in form of school fees for their children, employment, food, clothing, shelter, education, technical trainings, work experience, loans in form of micro-finance, medical care through medical camps held seasonally, counselling, and travelling especially for the children under education sponsorship programs by the NGO's.

On inquiring on what the respondents would like NGOs to do for them in future, over 90% indicates reaching the absolute poor should be prioritized their perception is those who are not absolute poor are benefitting. On further inquisition it is noted people falsify information which leads to registering a person as absolute poor as a result the person enrolls in NGO programs and reaps the benefits available to the absolute poor. In Kawangware slum the strategy of the poor is to live a day at a time with the hope that tomorrow another opportunity presents itself, any opportunity that benefits is utilized, right or wrong not being a concern. A chance to educate a child is taken even if it means pretending the child's parents are dead. This implies trying all means available to reap as much benefits as possible from whichever angle it is coming from. Cases of falsified information; for example passing off own child as an orphan are not a rare phenomenon. The neighbours of such a person would not inform the authorities of the NGO because they do not want to create antagonism. They however suggest

that NGOs should do ground work by visiting neighbours of the supposed beneficiaries before enrolling them in their program.

This confirms our earlier analysis that the non-poor trap resources meant for the poor. One form of exploitation that Chambers high-lights, is that of the local non-poor who often stand as nets between the poorer people in the slums and the outside world by trapping resources and benefits that are meant for the poor<sup>153</sup>. This point is further confirmed by the NGOs. They state that one of the major challenges they encounter in the field is falsification of information by the beneficiaries in order to get into their programs. An example given by the NGOs involves two ladies who claimed to be HIV positive in order to get monthly supply of foodstuff that is meant for HIV single parents donated by an NGO in Kawangware. The ladies went ahead and joined the support group for HIV/AIDS single parent till the point they were discovered when the NGO ran a test on the clientele. The foodstuff is meant to boost the immune system of the HIV positive clients in order to build their strength so as to be able to take care of their children. Despite the respondent's fear of HIV/AIDS, it does not deter others to pass off as sick so as to get the benefits that come with the status. These are cases that have been discovered, implying there is a lot of deceptions, with desperate times calling for desperate measures.

Next the study delves on the views of the respondents on the NGOs presence in the community.

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<sup>153</sup> Chambers Robert. Rural Development. Putting the First Last. London: Longman. 1983 pg103-139

#### **4.4:1 Views on NGOs Presence in the Community**

On the view of NGOs presence in the community, 99% states they are good and should be in the community, the respondents further indicates, there are desperate cases that could have been worse of if not for the intervention of the NGOs. However they recommend NGOs should do more ground work in order to reach the absolute poor. Corruption amongst NGO employees is cited. The respondents indicate that the employees are enriching themselves and thus reaping the benefits meant for the absolute poor. The study pursues this allegation and discovers that such cases are limited. However notes that the employees of the NGOs live in the community too, with stable salaries higher than our target population of \$1.25 a day, the employees are perceived to be "stealing" resources from the absolute poor, however earning more than \$100 a month results to living a higher standard of life in the slums compared to our target population. This is not to dismiss cases of corruption amongst the NGO employees but to expose why the study population views NGOs employees as corrupt. However there is a case in point where an employee dismissal from one of the NGOs happened as a result of taking bribes and promising the poor to get their children into an orphan child sponsorship program. This indicates that there are cases of corruption that needs to be looked into by the organizations.

Note that 99% of the respondents are of the view that in order for the NGOs to succeed in alleviating poverty, they need to give them loans to start businesses so that they in turn can work their way out of poverty. By loans they imply non-refundable cash. An NGO with small scale micro finance program states that, its greatest challenge is the rate of failure encountered by the businesses started by its beneficiaries. Micro- finance which is a repayable loan has drawbacks, with high failure rate in repayments. There are cases of

success but is insignificant compared to the failure rate. This has led to an intense training by the NGO in trying to increase rate of success.

Having looked the respondent's assessment on the NGOs presence in their community the study next probes on the strategies in use by the NGOs and the challenges/ adoption opportunities in the field in the course of their operation. This section is as a result of interviews with NGO heads and or their assistants. First we look at NGOs strategies in Kawangware slum

#### **4.5 The Works of NGOs in Kawangware Community**

The study reveals 99% of the NGOs provide education to orphans and vulnerable children as a way of alleviating poverty. 80% provides medical care to the same group and their immediate family members however the family members are reached through by-annual and annual medical camps. 80% of the NGOs further provides food stuff to the identified families of the orphans and vulnerable children, this enhances the orphan acceptability by extended families due to the lessened burden on the hosting family, also ensures the orphan children are not sent out of the community to orphanages which are considered as a last resort. 80% of the NGOs also provide care to HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children/ single parents. With HIV/AIDS care we find counselling and home based care to the clientele which is mainly done through social work.

Secondly the study looks at the NGOs challenges and adoption opportunities

## 4.6 NGOs Challenges and Adoption Opportunities

Absolute poverty makes the afflicted to live a day at a time trying to meet their basic needs. This implies that NGOs attempting to alleviate absolute poverty are most likely to be faced with many drawbacks. This includes;

First, Cash flow consistency. The challenge facing 60% of the NGOs is the lack of definite strategy for funds for future operations. Donor dependant NGO's operate on hope that the donors are always going to be available to donate the money they need for their programs. This may not be the case for 40% of the re-known NGOs, for example Compassion International and World vision. Though they fully depend on donors they do not foresee cash flow as one of their near future problems due to the diverse location of their donors worldwide. Cash is drawn from different donor countries implying less risk of closing down. However for small scale NGOs lack of an exit strategy is a viable threat to their future operations. This implies long term goals may or may not be achieved and to the poor it implies a probability of staying in the vicious cycle of poverty should the NGOs in the picture fold over.

The problem emerges because our study notes small scale NGOs has closer relationship with the beneficiaries due to their centralization of effort in chosen households and areas. They have a one on one basis of operation with the beneficiaries. The downside being they may not be able to assert their continued operation in the next ten years or even the next five years due to lack of a consistent reliable source of cash.

Finally, the study indicates 80% of the NGOs do not have an exit strategy. The slum dwellers reliance on NGO's to end absolute poverty is in jeopardy. In the past defunct NGOs overlooked the issue of having an exit strategy. This means they operate without a plan on

how the project can go on should they opt to move back to the donor country or out of the community they are helping. In the cases of local NGOs, they operate without a plan on how the beneficiaries can go on should they choose or be forced to close down for one reason or the other. Thus, if the beneficiaries have not reached the self-sustenance point when the NGO leaves prematurely, it implies plunging deeper into poverty.

Third the study delves on the operational challenges facing the NGOs

#### **4.6:1 Operational Challenges Facing NGOs**

The following analysis is as a result of questioning the NGOs on the challenges facing the organizations in the course of operation in the slum.

First, 99.9% of the NGOs reports to having difficulties reaching their target population. The NGOs indicates that the community tries to get into their programs for the benefits using all means available to them whether right or wrong. This is one of the greatest challenges facing the NGOs in the field. It manifests in form of falsifying information, for example for NGOs dealing with orphans, biological parent/parents pass their own child/ children as orphan(s). Other ways include multiple registration of one client in different NGOs, resulting in one person reaping the benefits from different organizations and thus denying others a chance.

Secondly, high expectations by the beneficiaries such as wanting NGOs to pay for them rent, and other forms of benefits which are outside the NGOs mandate. Failure to acquire the benefits leads to the clientele going off “shopping” for other NGOs with most benefits and withdraws from those with least benefits. The client moves to where they can get most



benefits regardless of what suits them. Other beneficiaries withdraw children from an NGO to move to another just because they can get something that they place a higher value on. This is done to the detriment of the child's future whereby a child is withdrawn from a school so as to move to another NGO. This is not healthy for the children's education and stability, however due to ignorance and or selfishness it is done hence propagating poverty. In another scenario a client expects NGO social workers to pick and drop their children from school.

Third, Lack of proper documentations by the clientele. NGOs operate within certain mandate which is determined by their mission and vision. In order for them to be sure of their target population there are documentations required. This has not been easy due to lack of documentations such as birth certificates, death certificates, identity cards. In cases of identity cards the clientele claims they have no need for one since they are not educated and hence cannot go in search for jobs which requires identity cards. Lack of identity cards implies they cannot vote during government election hence muffling their own voice. NGOs when dealing with such cases finds themselves getting involved in helping the beneficiaries to acquire identity card, this takes their time and energy. In cases of birth certificates, most children in the slums are born in the home with the assistance of midwives who do not issue birth certificates. It becomes next to impossible to determine a child's age and parentage. This creates the problem of false orphans. There are NGOs that gives such a guardian a grace period of three months to get a birth certificate or be eliminated from the program. Some are able to do it where as others are not and hence face elimination. This helps the NGOs to keep to their target population. It does not however mean that forged birth and death certificates are not availed, and or true orphans are left out due to the hitch involved in acquiring these documents.

Fourth, competition with other NGOs. Community meetings held by NGOs involves officials from government and community heads. Other functions like sports competitions organized by the NGOs and schools within the community involve invitation of these officials too. NGOs thus expect attendance by the officials without strings attached. This has not been the case since officials expect extravagances dished out to them in form of honorarium, cars to transport them, lunch amongst others. The problem sets in when some NGOs are not able to financially meet these expectations due to their limited financial basis. However, others are able to do it in a big way creating a situation that leads to officials attending functions held by certain NGOs whilst disregarding others making it difficult for small scale NGOs to bring together the stakeholders in the community and get a feedback on their performance. This problem is said to be faced mainly with government officials.

Fifth, High staff turnover is a bottleneck faced by the NGOs. In cases where social workers are trained and gains the trust of the beneficiaries, losing such a person sets the organization back in terms of having to train another social worker and further puts the beneficiary at arm's length when faced with a new person all together. This is mostly sensitive in delicate situations like HIV/AIDS clients who do not open up well to strangers hence making it difficult to chart their progress in terms of positive living. Teenagers too do not open up well to newcomers when it comes to sex education and their lifestyle.

Sixth, misallocation of funds by the middlemen. 20% of the NGOs use churches as middlemen to execute their mandate in the slums. The churches are in turn expected to give an account on funds usage. Due to the churches financial constraint, they divert the funds and use them for buildings. There is a further expectation on the NGO's to give them funds to enhance their own mandate. Instead of helping to build community ownership of the

programs set by the NGOs, it creates antagonism due to the NGOs demands on the churches to pay back the diverted funds. This strains relationships.

Seventh, Stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. The NGOs dealing with HIV/AIDS clientele faces stigma. People would rather suffer than be seen near such NGOs. In cases where the beneficiary has been educated on the matter, cultural beliefs come in the way of the solution. For example, a HIV/AIDS patient continues to bear children despite being advised against it due to her health problems. This is done because in her culture she is expected to have as many children as her husband wishes to have. In cases where a partner discovers she/he has HIV/AIDS virus they do not disclose to their partner and continues to bear children to the detriment of their health and the children born.

Eighth, the study indicates that over 90% of the population earns less than \$100 per month. This implies that the number of people who are in need is staggering. This creates a challenge to the NGOs in that it makes it hard to operate as an all-inclusive organization in terms of ownership of the programs by the community. Those who are not benefiting make it difficult for the NGOs. A case in point is where an employee of one of the NGOs was driving the NGO van in the slum when a man blocked the path and tore the vans side mirror claiming that she could easily replace it since they (NGO's) had money and he is poor. This is a rare occurrence but it does happen especially to newly established NGOs that have not yet gained the trust and acceptance of the people in the community.

Finally, theft of NGOs' property. Internally organized theft, whereby NGO employees operate in liaison with thugs. The employees or ex-employees know where and how to get

hold of the properties they want to steal. Theft by the general public from the community is not reported.

Next the study looks at the views of the NGOs on how to improve operation in the slum.

#### **4.7 NGO's Suggestions on How to improve Their Operation in the Slums**

The study probes the NGOs on foreseen opportunities that can be implemented to improve operation in the urban slums communities, the following suggestions are derived:

First, working together in form of information sharing avoids replication of activities in the slums. This is a way forward to curb multiple registration persons in different NGOs. Information sharing on issues such as children/families under the sponsorship program or micro-finance loans beneficiaries.

Second, creating awareness in the community on the presence and mandate of the NGOs helps NGOs in gaining community support and acceptance.

Third, working with the government for better service output. In cases of infrastructure, documentations and local government leadership support creates harmony making the NGOs operation easier.

Fourth, reinforcing accountability. Holding NGOs employees accountable by their employers avoids corruption.

Finally, discouraging dependency. There is no definite time span for achieving certain mandates such as exit options for food support, education sponsorship programs, health cover. The study notes in order to alleviate poverty there has to be both immediate and mediate means. Therefore for immediate options such as food support, NGOs works better if they can specify a time period for providing such a benefit, for instance 5 years or seven years depending on the situation on the ground. This helps the recipient of the food aid to know he/she has to work hard to be able to provide for his/her family in future hence curb dependency. The same could be implemented for mediate means for example provision of education. Once the beneficiary is aware that the NGO is available for a certain period of time, for example until a child completes primary or secondary level, this ensures the guardians involvement in planning for the next level of education for the child. The guardian works for the future plans and gets self-sufficient and or the child receiving education is able to break out of the cycle of poverty.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The role of NGOs in urban poverty alleviation is a difficult task. However, it is worth learning from other observations conducted on NGO performance in alleviating poverty. In contradiction to Edwards & Hulme<sup>154</sup> who states it is difficult to find general evidence NGOs are close to the poor. The respondents in Kawangware indicate NGOs are closer to the poor than any other development body including the Government of Kenya. Riddell and Robinson provides further evidence after conducting a case study on sixteen NGOs undertaken in four countries in Asia and Africa that while NGO projects reach the poor people, they tend not to reach down to the very poorest. The study contradicts this and we may attribute it to the time

<sup>154</sup> Edwards, Michael & Hulme, David and Wallace, Tina. NGOs in a global future: marrying local delivery to worldwide leverage. Public Administration and Development, No.19, pp. 117-136. 1999

lapse since the study by Riddell and Robinson. The study indicates 79.6% of the poor are benefitting/ know someone who is benefitting from the NGO's, however NGO projects tend to be small scale resulting in small scale upshot to urban poverty alleviation.

In conclusion the study indicates poverty in Kawangware slum and urban slums of Kenya is mainly caused by a poor environment that cannot support life, lack of sufficient nutritious food, poor shelter, lack of sufficient affordable water, lack of clean air, insufficient knowledge/skills to better job placements and or starting a business, cultural demands leading to large families that deplete/diminish resources to insufficient amounts. As predicted by the vicious cycle of poverty theory, these factors contribute to the high poverty level in the slums and works as a catalyst to enhancing the vicious cycle of poverty from one generation to another. Social practices of the slum dwellers such as marrying at early age and or remarriages, continuous childbearing practices depletes the resources since the social practice of marriage and re-marriages brings forth children that a family cannot afford to sufficiently take care of in terms of education, health, food and shelter. Poor health and lack of an adequate nutrition leads to poor state of mind that robs the community/ urban poor the ability to acquire the technical knowledge that can uplift one out of poverty. Poor health and wealth leads to the community's state of hopelessness and hence when asked who should play a major role in boosting the economic empowerment only 10.5% believes individual households should play a major role, 15.5% believes the community partnership with others is the best way 3.9% believes nothing can be done about it and the remaining 70.1% places their hope on alternatives that exonerates their involvement this implies there is a lack of confidence in self and an undermining of self-ability due to the distorted/ poor mind-set of the individuals capabilities. The cultural practice further contributes to poverty by encouraging women to bear many children for fear of the husband marrying another wife.

The lack/ low resources in Kawangware slum and Kenyan urban slums in general results to low income implying the family cannot invest for the future through good nutrition, good health-care, proper shelter, clean sufficient water, sufficient nutritious food and education. Low income contributes to lack of savings implying no investment for the future leading back to low income. This perpetuates the vicious cycle of poverty from generation to generation.

Having looked at the causes of poverty the role of NGOs in Kawangware slum is mapped out by the intervention modes. The NGOs play a key role in breaking the community out of poverty through strategies such as provision of education to the vulnerable groups. The study analyses that 99.9% of the NGOs provide education to orphans and vulnerable children. Low resources of the household imply that education for the children is not a priority therefore NGOs break the cycle of poverty by providing education with the hope that generations to come will earn more than the current ones.

NGOs further intervene by providing health care and most importantly to the HIV/AIDs afflicted, this ensures the children are put in a better position to pursue their education and helps the parents from depleting their resources through taking care of the HIV/AIDs patient(s). To the parent it implies a better state of health to pursue daily activities thus fending for the family. It further implies reduced rate of orphan and vulnerable children since the lifespan of the HIV/AIDs afflicted increases.

NGOs act as a bridge between the community and the solutions to poverty. This mitigates the vicious cycle of poverty and puts the community in a better position in terms of resources such as education, health, food, mental state, and economy. NGO's makes the lives of the urban poor better. NGOs absence would imply the urban absolute poor would be worse off.

## **5 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

Urban Poverty in Kenya is a complex problem, born of many interlocking causes mainly, vicious cycle poverty whose wheels are spun by economical, spiritual, physical, social, cultural and mental causes of poverty. It is difficult to solve poverty in short term therefore the NGOs, together with all stakeholders must continue to put more effort.

The first step towards poverty alleviation by NGOs involves relief through physical intervention with resources such as food, shelter, clothing, drugs and psychological support through counselling. Both relief and alleviation are intervention measures offering welfare and security to the urban poor in Kawangware slum and Kenya in general. However, it is important to note relief processes are immediate while alleviation programs are meant to take the poor out of the poverty spell by offering freedom from the frustration of the poverty cycle.

NGO's contributes in helping the urban poor where the populations live below the poverty line of US\$1.25. We note that the successful program interventions of the NGOs are as a result of long endurance and engagement in working with the poor. From the onset, the NGOs are formed as a part of their response toward the ill-being of the poor. Their long engagement provides worthy experiences and knowledge in dealing with complex and structural problems of poverty. With a background of such experiences and knowledge, the NGO's formulates and implements innovative strategies and approaches of poverty alleviation. We can learn from this that poverty alleviation is not a short term venture. It requires endurance and experience especially when dealing with vulnerable groups like the urban poor.



The main approach of the NGOs should be to put the core problem of the poor first. The program intervention should be designed as an entry point to address the core problem. Given that the core problem varies from poor shelter, lack of/low education, poor health including HIV/AIDS pandemic, lack of clean sufficient water, lack of capital and entrepreneurial skills, poor infrastructure and lack of legal documents that gives one access to legal rights as a citizen. Therefore a similar and rigid program intervention cannot be replicated for other areas. Where the core problem of the poor are addressed, NGOs can expand/scale up their mandate to enhance the well-being of the poor. This fact provides a lesson to be learned that there is no short-cut to sustainable urban poverty alleviation. It is very reasonable to help the poor exit from the poverty trap. Similar with Sach's hypothesis, Kawangware slum dwellers indicate external resources in this case from NGOs can lift them out of poverty, the study shows 48.5% of the respondents believe that NGOs should play a major role in their economic empowerment with only 21.4% stating the government of Kenya should be the main player. The services provided by the NGOs should be designed to facilitate the self-reliance of the poor not day to day survival and poverty alleviation can be achieved.

The study is consistent with Edwards's findings<sup>155</sup> which states in order to make a difference to livelihoods and capacities among poor people, NGOs must foster autonomous grassroots institutions. By working with the local government institutions and other community based organizations (CBOs) the NGOs arm the poor with the tools they need for example education, proper health care, technical training, support groups, right attitude and mind-set, NGOs collaborates with the government to assist urban poor in acquiring important documents such as; birth certificates, death certificates, National identity card, also works

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<sup>155</sup> Edwards, Michael. "NGO Performance – What Breeds Success? New Evidence from South Asia". *World Development*, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 361-374. 1999.

with micro-finance institutions to assist the urban poor to gain access to loans, disseminates knowledge to the urban poor on their rights among others.

The role of NGOs in alleviating urban poverty has changed the life of the urban poor in Kenya albeit small scale. By designing and implementing innovative program interventions, they enhance the quality of life of the poor. They facilitate the poor to reach a first foothold on the development ladder through provision of education, health care access, Provision of medical/Psychological care to the HIV/AIDs afflicted, building support groups, technical training and small scale loan access albeit in a small scale.

The study shows the urban poor conditions improves sometimes quite significantly, as a result of the NGO intervention. There are families that could be in dire situation in the absence of NGOs intervention. Given the NGOs valuable experiences and the development of their organizational capacity, it is most likely that their contributions to poverty reduction increases in the future.

From a macro perspective, given the number of the urban poor in Kenya, NGO contributions in poverty alleviation is reasonably limited. However, they provide an inspiring work to find alternative models or ways in enhancing the standard of living of the urban poor. Their works constitute as islands of excellence in the context of the very slow progress in alleviating urban poverty in Kawangware and Kenya in general. In order to enhance their performance, they need to address the limitations. NGOs have to deal with the challenges through: strengthening local institutions and linking them with supra-local level of development agencies in the cities, scaling up their innovative development program, building synergy with the government and the private sector, and engaging in advocacy for pro-poor

development policy and establishing exit strategies for their programs. The NGO capacity in dealing with these challenges determines NGO contributions in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MGGs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)

Finally the study portrays recommendations for enhancing NGOs achievements in urban poverty alleviation under which it indicates, NGOs performance evaluation, addressing NGOs challenges and Requirements for the government of Kenya. First the study looks at NGOs performance evaluation.

## **5.2 Policy Implications**

### **5.2:1 NGOs Performance Evaluation**

Performance monitoring should be set up in a way that NGOs can be able to analyze the achievements. This enacts a system for the NGOs of analyzing annually where they have been, what they achieved and what they are yet to achieve or need to achieve. For example in cases of orphan and vulnerable child sponsorship, a follow up allows the NGOs to track the performance of the children in the program and trends they are following. In cases of the HIV/AIDS clients, establishing an actual file of CD4 count creates a trend where the health of the beneficiaries is monitored, this enables a follow up in knowing if they are getting better especially to a point where they are able to work and provide for their family without falling back to poor health and relying on NGOs. Therefore performance indicators should be well defined to help determine whether NGOs are meeting targets/ objectives.

## 5.2:2 Addressing NGO Challenges

Poverty is not caused by a single factor at the local level. As the study indicates various variables influence the persistent urban poverty in Kenya. In such context of poverty, to be 'islands of excellence' is not sufficient for NGOs. It is difficult to indicate how NGOs can significantly alleviate Kenya's and eventually Africa and global poverty through stand-alone projects at the local level, funding, or the delivery of basic social and economic services. In this regard, as stated by Edwards et al.,<sup>156</sup> there is an imperative need for NGOs in 'moving from development as delivery to development as leverage'. In order to enlarge their level of achievements, NGOs must deal with challenges that are hindering their effective progress. The study indicates the following measures, strengthening local institutions and building linkages with development agencies at higher levels, scaling up program intervention, creating synergy with the government and business sectors, engaging in policy advocacy and finally establishing an exit strategy;

First model of addressing NGOs challenges involves, strengthening local institutions and building linkages with development agencies at higher levels in urban areas. It is widely confirmed by many studies<sup>157, 158, 159, 160</sup> that strengthening local institutions is the best way for NGOs to make a lasting impact on poverty. It is also evident that one of the keys to

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<sup>156</sup> Edwards, Michael & Hulme, David and Wallace, Tina. NGOs in a global future: marrying local delivery to worldwide leverage. *Public Administration and Development*, No.19, 1999. pp. 117-136.  
<sup>157</sup> Uphoff, Norman. 1986. *Local Institutional Development: An Analytical Sourcebook with Cases*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press

<sup>158</sup> Edwards, Michael & Hulme, David and Wallace, Tina. 1999. NGOs in a global future: marrying local delivery to worldwide leverage. *Public Administration and Development*, No.19, pp. 117-136.

<sup>159</sup> Pettit, Jethro. 2000. "Strengthening Local Organization, Where the Rubber Hits the Road". *IDS Bulletin*, Vol.31 No.3. 23

<sup>160</sup> Howes, Mick. 1997. "NGOs and the Institutional Development of Membership Organizations: the Evidence from Six Cases". *Journal of International Development*, Vol.9, No.4, pp. 597-604

successful program interventions rests on the formation of local institution. However, there is no systematic effort taken by the NGOs to link local institutions with supra city agencies. As concluded by Edwards,<sup>161</sup> in order to make a difference in the livelihoods and capacities among poor people, in the same process, NGOs must foster grassroots local institutions and link them with the markets and the political structures at the higher level. Linking the poor with the markets provides the poor with more access to economic agencies in selling their products. Linkage with political institutions provides the poor more access to engage in decision-making process that in turn influence their life.

Second, scaling up program intervention. Without scaling-up the program intervention, the successful performance of NGOs remain little more than islands of excellence in a wider economic and institutional environment which is detrimental to the poor.<sup>162</sup> Scaling up can be instituted in two ways. One way can be through expansion, whereby NGOs become larger, more professionally managed, and more efficiently programmatic institutions. The five NGOs (World Vision, Chosen Children of Promise, Lea Toto, Compassion International and Maisha Poa seem professionally manned. We may not recommend expansion of activities in Kawangware slum to a wider scale and target group because the study indicates funding is an issue small scale NGOs struggle with, however the NGOs can work together by specializing in areas of their strengths and this way they can tackle various aspects of poverty in depth as a whole hence better chances of increasing the scale of activities and outreach to the target community, this could foster harmony and community development instead of competing amongst each other. The second way of scaling up involves NGOs exploring new models of

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<sup>161</sup> Edwards, Michael. "NGO Performance – What Breeds Success? New Evidence from South Asia". *World Development*, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 361-374. 1999.

<sup>162</sup> Uvin, Peter. Jain, Pankaj S., & Brown, David. "Think Large and Act Small: Toward a New Paradigm for NGO Scaling Up". *World Development*, Vol 28, No.8, pp1409-1419. 2000

scaling up of multiplication and mainstreaming through spinning off organizations, encouraging innovations, creating alternative knowledge, and influencing other social actors. In this model, NGOs are the creators of innovative program that can spin off and/or be integrated in the two mainstream sectors of society: the governments and the markets. The task of NGOs is not to compensate for the government failure or market deficiency. It is also not primarily expected to manage development projects. Rather, the role of NGOs is about innovation and subsequent mainstreaming and multiplication<sup>163</sup>

Third way of addressing NGOs challenges is through; Building synergy with the government and business sectors. In the context of poverty alleviation, although governments place NGOs as partners in development to complement the government development programs, cooperation and collaboration remain difficult to be institutionally developed as indicated by the study under operational challenges. The study portrays government employees make it difficult for NGOs to achieve their mandate, the hindrances and distrust on both sides of NGOs and government makes it difficult to foster genuine collaboration in the development activities, therefore building synergy with the government and business sectors makes it easier for all stakeholders to achieve poverty alleviation in record time. On the other hand the increasing development in realization of corporate social responsibility (CSR) by the private sector provides a strategic opportunity to build collaboration between the corporate sector and the NGOs. In the sense of growing interest to realize CSR, collaboration is fruitful for both parties. Collaboration provides opportunities for both parties to compensate their weaknesses. NGOs provide expertise and experience in running community development projects. The corporation provides funds for financing and sustaining the development projects. The mutual collaboration between NGOs and the corporations are emerging in Kenya. Proper tapping of these collaborations implies prolific implications in the efforts of urban poverty alleviation.

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid PP 1417

Fourth, NGOs engaging in policy advocacy. Consistent with Edwards's findings<sup>164</sup>, NGOs have to move forward to 'development as leverage'. Many NGOs are now combining their delivery of services with advocacy activities. In this context, NGOs work on the demand side of the poor. NGOs play a role as the representative of the urban poor. NGOs may not have any rights to vote in the political process, but they are able to articulate the voice of the poor. This is an area where little is found in NGOs in Kawangware, it is perhaps an area where NGOs need to venture in future.

Finally NGOs addressing lack of an exit strategy. We note that NGOs have in the past failed to attain their objectives due to lack of a proper blueprint on how to go about achieving their mission and vision as a result of overlooking certain areas considered very crucial. As earlier observed 60% of the NGOs do not have an exit strategy, where as those that have one cannot defend their strategy with a clear conviction that, what they have in place would work. It is in this regard that the study recommends that, before any donor or individual or group of individuals establishes an NGO to alleviate urban poverty, the following guidelines need to be put in perspective;

First, establish a clear exit strategy in terms of funds. This should be able to answer the question, what would the NGO do should the donor decide to withdraw its financial aid? Folding up, not being an option. One of the observed ways is through establishing a cash-cow that is able to cater for the financial needs of the target goal. For example, establishing a credible school that has enrolment of children from middle to upper class households paying school fees. On the other hand the needy students/ orphans and vulnerable are incorporated in the schools therefore meeting their financial need without fear of dropping out upon withdrawal of the donors.

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<sup>164</sup> Edwards, Michael. "NGO Performance – What Breeds Success? New Evidence from South Asia". *World Development*, Vol. 28, No. 2, pp. 361-374. 1999.

Second, avail a clear exit strategy for the urban poor beneficiaries. At what point should the NGO let go of a beneficiary and move on to the next? NGOs can achieve this if they are able to measure the milestone in the beneficiaries' life since joining the programs. For example educate an orphan/vulnerable child from age 4years until 18years following a successful completion of high school, or college education.

Finally the NGOs should establish an exit strategy for the founder/ brainchild of the program. What happens to the organization should the founder decide to move on to other organizations? Or should the founder get incapacitated/die. This is an area overlooked by the NGOs. The excitement of starting a project overlooks/blurs the vision and sooner or later a change of leadership from the funding body/rich country leads to the detriment of the NGO in the poor recipient country and hence mars the lives of the poor and shatters their hope. It is therefore very crucial that an NGO establishment follows a well processed answer on what happens should the founder move on? Who keeps the mission and vision in focus? In this regard the study indicates the NGO stands a chance of survival if its establishment is in a manner that a board of directors makes the decision from the funding body rather than an individual reigning leader. This eradicates cases of forming NGOs hurriedly based on the passion of the leader at hand. It further avoids premature exit/death of NGOs in the recipient countries.

### **5.2:3 The Government requires removing barriers to solutions**

The government has to initiate policies and programmes that are urban poverty needs specific; Creation of an enabling environment for civil society partnership in policy design, implementation and monitoring. The communication network needs to be put in place. Poor infrastructure in the slums heavily impacts negatively the effort put in place by the business



owners in the slums. The study indicates 98% of our respondents would like to put up businesses in order to be self-sustaining. The poor infrastructure makes it impossible. Poor drainage system renders the slums un-hygienic for human inhabitants. Further implies less marketable wares. However putting in place good drainage system and infrastructure implies leverage to the local businesses, NGOs mandate and other development partners.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Structured Questionnaire

**TITLE: THE CAUSES OF URBAN POVERTY AND THE ROLE OF NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ITS ALLEVIATION IN KENYA: CASE STUDY OF KAWANGWARE SLUM NAIROBI (2005-2011)**

The goal of this study is to establish the role played by NGOs in alleviating urban poverty. The study addresses the following specific objectives.

1. To find out the major causes of urban poverty in Kenya.
2. To establish the role played by NGOs in alleviating urban poverty.
3. To suggest and recommend workable remedial measures in alleviating urban poverty based on the research findings.

#### A: Identification Details

1.Questionnaire No.	
2.Location	
3. Sub location	
4.Name of interviewer	
5.Date of interview	
6.Name of Respondent	

#### B: Background information

7. Sex  
Male  Female
8. Age in years  
18 - 24  25 - 29   
30 - 34  35 and above
9. Level of education

Primary       Secondary       Tertiary

None       Other specify)

10. Marital status

Single     Married     Widowed     Single parent

11. If married, what type of family

Monogamous       Polygamous

12. If polygamous, how many

Wives.....

Co-wives.....

13. Children born of the respondent.....

14. How many other dependents do you have? .....

**C: Some indices of economic circumstances of the household**

15. What is your occupation?

Farmer

Private Sector

Casual

Civil servant

Business/Trader

Volunteer in an NGO

16. Do you own a bicycle? Yes     No

17. Do you own a Television? Yes     No

18. Which of the following organizations do you belong to?

a) Co-operative society

b) Merry-go round

c) Women/youth group

d) Traders group

e) None

f) Other (specify)

19. What is your major source of income?

a) Farming

b) Wage employment

c) Business (self-employment)

d) Financial organization

e) NGO

f) Other (specify)

20. What is your approximate income per month in Ksh?

a) 1000 – 5000

b) 5000 – 10000

c) 10000 – 20000

d) 20000 – 30000

21. What improvement would you like to see to boost your economic empowerment?

.....  
.....  
.....

22. Who should play the major role in boosting your economic empowerment?

a) The Government of Kenya

b) Individual households

c) NGOs

d) Partnerships between local community and other groups

e) Nothing can be done to change the scenario

f) Other (specify)

**D: Community perception on the role of NGOs**

23. Is there any specific program(s) (NGOs) operating within your community?

Yes

No

24. If yes, did the program(s) benefit you or other members of your community?

Yes

No

25. Is the program(s) still in operation? Please explain.....

.....

26. If No, what happened to the program? Please explain.....

.....

27. How have you or members of your community benefited from existing NGOs

- a) Monetary grants
- b) Material (non-monetary) grants
- c) Employment
- d) Food and clothing
- e) Shelter
- f) Education
- g) Work experiences from voluntary work
- h) Loans/funds to carry out projects
- i) Opportunity to go places
- j) Medical care
- k) Other (specify)

28. What would you like NGOs to do for you and your community in future? Please explain .....

.....  
.....

29. Briefly explain your general view on the presence of the NGO'S in your community

.....  
.....

## APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### KEY INFORMANTS – DIRECTOR NGO

1. What does the organization do in the community?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. What is the mission and vision of the organization?

a) Mission:

.....  
.....  
.....

b) Vision:

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Briefly explain how you came up with the project design:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. How long has the organization been in existence since its establishment?

.....

5. How long further does the organization intend to operate in the community?

.....

.....

6. Do you have an exit strategy?

.....

7. What challenges have been experienced by the organization during operation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

8. What suggestions would you make to improve NGO's operation in the slum.....

.....

.....

.....