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**TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICTS AND  
PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES IN KIBERA URBAN SLUM-  
NAIROBI, 1991 – 2012 //**

**BY**

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**REG. NO. C50/70705/2009**

**M.A PROJECT**

**SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
ARTS IN ARMED CONFLICT AND PEACE STUDIES**

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## DECLARATION

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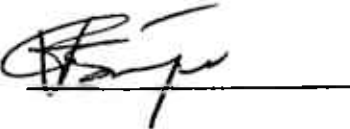
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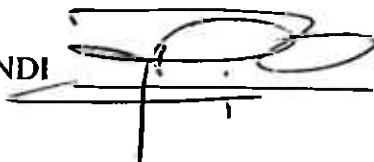
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Date 27/11/2012

DR. MARY C. MWIANDI



Date 27/11/2012

## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work to my loving daughters, Stecy Mutheu and Sandra Mutanu with special reference to my dear wife Irene Katunge.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty God for bringing me this far. Again, this study would not have been possible had it not been for the support of numerous individuals and Institutions. Without my reservations, I owe the greatest debt to my advisors Prof. Vincent Simiyu and Dr. Mary Mwiandi. Their comments, suggestions and constructive criticism assisted me shape this study from its early forms through major revisions and additions to its present state. My many thanks go to my lecturers; Prof. Godfrey Muriuki, Dr. George Gona, Dr. Ebrahim Wahome, and Dr. Amatsimbi Misigo.

To the Department of History, University of Nairobi, support staff, and colleagues in Armed Conflict and Peace Studies especially Ms Caroline Lintari, Mr. Raphael Kioko, Mr. Peter Kirimi, Stephen Khamisi and Mr. Charles Imbiakha. I would also like to acknowledge the Kenya National Achievers, Ministry of Education, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Peace Net-Kenya, and the National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management.

Moreover, the support and interest shown by my family members towards my pursuit for knowledge is highly appreciated. In this regard, I extend my gratitude to my dear wife Irene and daughters Stecy and Sandra for their unfailing support and unconditional love.

I want to acknowledge my loving parents Agnes Mwendu and John Ng'ombe for encouraging me to always aim higher. Very special thanks to my loving brothers and sisters; Eliud Mutemi; Twisdon Musyoka, and John Muema, Ruth Musenya and Esther Kavutha. God bless you all.

Last and not the least, special thanks to all my colleagues at Muthangari Police Station. I sincerely appreciate the support of the OCS Muthangari Mr. Anthony Nderitu, and his support staff Mr. Saleh Mulama, Mr. Adinan Wayu and Mr. Peter Njiru.

## ABSTRACT

The focus of the Research was an attempt towards an understanding of Conflicts and Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera informal settlement, Nairobi; 1991-2012. The study began with an examination of the history of the Kibera conflicts since the slum emerged in 1904 after the Nubians (Sudanese ex-soldiers serving the British crown) first settled in the area. The research further examined and analysed the relationships of the multi-ethnic communities living in Kibera during the period and how the re-introduction of Multi-partyism in 1991 impacted on those relations.

Using both secondary and primary sources of data, a number of defining factors in Kibera ranging from Socio-economic to Political were analysed in an effort to understand why conflicts escalated in Kibera after 1991 and majorly around or during election periods. One of the salient findings was that Kibera had been a precarious settlement since colonialism and its volatility in post independence Kenya was a perpetuation of what the colonialists established. Furthermore, conflicts in Kibera defied the drama of monocausal explanation. The prebendary brand of Politics dominant in Kibera served to entrench poverty while enriching a select few. From the historical and archival information, land has been under contestation in both colonial and post colonial periods not only in Kibera but in Kenya as a whole. Lack of political will within successive governments to address the land question was a key factor emphasized in the report.

There was also focus on the Structural Conflict and Sustainable development Theories as the prism for understanding the causes of Conflicts and interpretation of how such conflicts could be avoided in Kibera in the future and in a long lasting manners. The study established that although various Peacebuilding efforts by different actors existed in the slum, there was first the need for all the actors to understand the complex state of conflicts and how they impacted on the local residents. The knowledge would assist them in addressing the problem in a more realistic and practical manner.

The politicization of the land question in Kibera was largely to blame for most of the conflicts in the slum. The running theme was therefore that; as long as the land and the high poverty level issues remained unresolved in Kibera slum, it would be hard to contain the persistent tensions in the informal settlement. While Peacebuilding Initiatives by various actors to some extent played significant role towards return to peace in Kibera, the Government held the key to Stability, Peace, and development through investment of massive resources and provision of essential government sponsored services.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>AMREF</b>	African Medical Research Foundation
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>CBOs</b>	Community Based Organizations
<b>CEWERU</b>	Conflict Early Warning Response Unit
<b>CIPEV</b>	Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence
<b>DC</b>	District Commissioner
<b>DO</b>	District Officer
<b>ECK</b>	Electoral Commission of Kenya
<b>EMB</b>	Electoral Management Body
<b>EVRI</b>	Electoral Violence Response Initiative
<b>GEMA</b>	Gikuyu, Embu, Meru Association
<b>GJLO-S</b>	Governance Justice, law and Order Sectors
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>JKML</b>	Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library
<b>KADU</b>	Kenya African Democratic Union
<b>KANU</b>	Kenya African National Union
<b>KAR</b>	King's African Rifles
<b>KEPSA</b>	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
<b>KNCHR</b>	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
<b>KNDR</b>	Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation
<b>KYPPEDE</b>	Kibera Youth Programme for Peace and Development
<b>LDPC</b>	Langata District Peace Committee
<b>MCK</b>	Media Council of Kenya
<b>MHS</b>	Mutually Hurting Stalemate
<b>NCBDA</b>	Nairobi Central Business District Association
<b>NCCK</b>	National Council of Churches of Kenya
<b>NIP</b>	Nairobi Initiative for peace
<b>NPI</b>	Nairobi peace Initiative
<b>NSC</b>	National Steering Committee
<b>OCPDs</b>	Officers Commanding Police Divisions
<b>ODM</b>	Orange Democratic Movement
<b>PA</b>	Peace Agreements / Peace Accords
<b>PEV</b>	Post-Election Violence
<b>PFP</b>	Partnership for Peace Network
<b>PNU</b>	Party of National Unity
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

**Civil society:** Voluntary associations independent of the state, not constituting business entities; and which are oriented towards common fundamental values such as justice, democracy and non violence by acting in (and thereby actually helping creat) the “public sphere” that forms the foundation and arena for much political discourse and action in a democratic society.<sup>1</sup>

**Conflict Resolution:** Refers to methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of some social conflicts; “where the conflicting or warring parties enter into an agreement that seeks to end their central incompatibilities, accept each others’ continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other.”<sup>2</sup>

**Conflicts:** Disagreements through which the parties involved perceive threat to their needs, interests or concerns.

**Landlord:** One who meets the cost of building a house or structure for renting out irrespective of whether it was built on a legally acquired land or not.

**Peace Agreement /Accord:** A formal document of understanding signed under more or less public and formal conditions that signal the intention to end hostilities and indicate how and when this is to be done.

**Peacebuilding Initiatives:** Involves all measures targeted to reduce the risks of lapsing or relapsing into Conflicts by strengthening Local and National capacities at all levels of Conflict Management, and to lay the foundation of ‘Sustainable Peace’ and Development.<sup>3</sup>

**Peace:** A state of harmony characterized by the lack of violent conflict; and includes existence of healthy or newly healed interpersonal or international relationships,

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<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Boll Stiftung, *Civil Society and Governance in Kenya Since 2002: Between Transition and Crisis*. African Research and Resource Forum (ARRF), 2010 P. II.

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/conflict\\_resolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/conflict_resolution). Accessed on 13/03/2012.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Lund, “What Kind of Peace is Being Built? Assessing the Records of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, Charting Future Direction,” Prepared for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). 2003 P. 13.

prosperity in matters of social or economic welfare, the establishment of equality, and a working political order that serves the true interests of all.

**Tenant:** One who rents a house or structure and agrees to pay the agreed rates at the end of an agreed period.

**Urban Slum:** A low-income human settlement with poor living conditions, a refuge for marginal activities including crime, 'vice' and drug abuse; a heavily populated area characterized by substandard housing and squalor; likely source for many epidemics that ravage urban areas; and a place apart from all that is decent and wholesome.<sup>4</sup>

**Youth:** United Nations defines "Youth" as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years; without prejudice to other definitions by Member States.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Heritage and Sports define "Kenya Youth" as those persons aged between 15 and 30 years.<sup>6</sup> However, for the purpose of this study, the term "Youth" refers to persons aged between 15 and 35 years.

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<sup>4</sup> UN Habitat. "Sustainable Urbanization; Local Action for Urban Poverty Reduction, Emphasis on Finance and Planning."

<sup>5</sup> "Youth and United Nations." <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm>. Accessed on 05/05/2011.

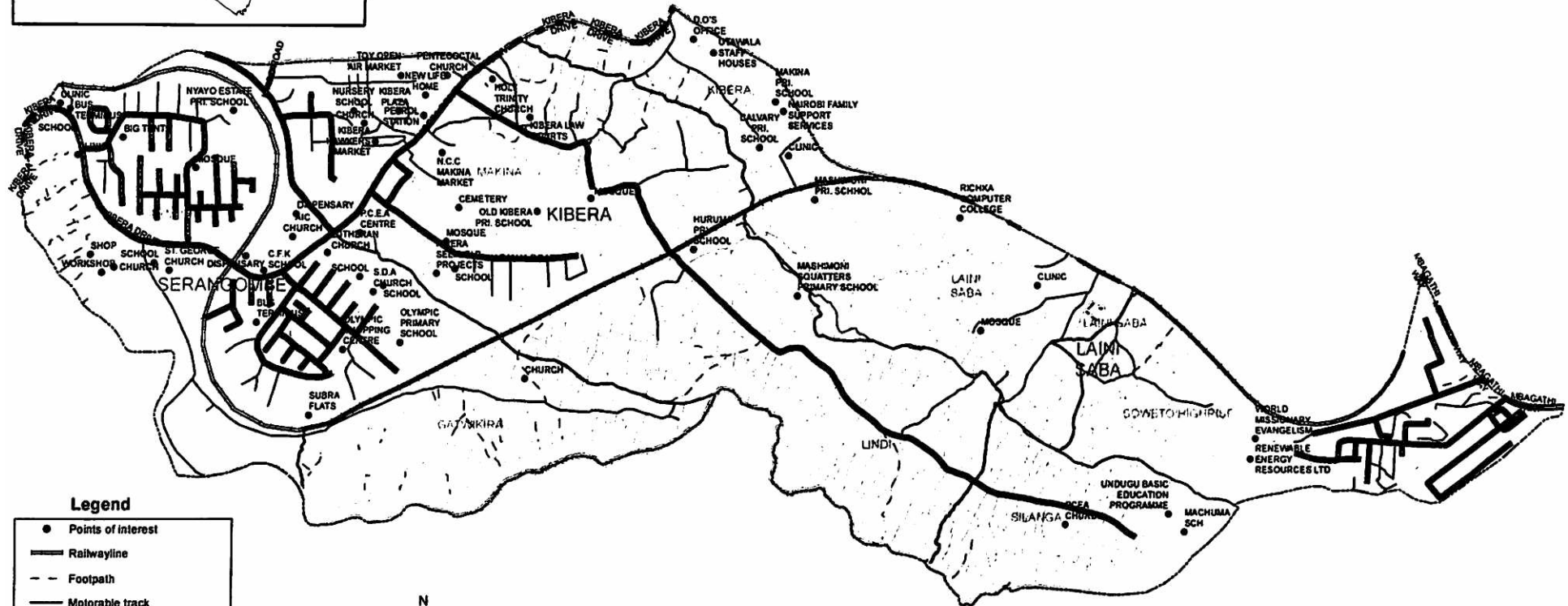
<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Home Affairs, Heritage and Sports, "Kenya National Youth Policy," Final Draft 2002. <http://www.youth.policy.com/policies/Kenya> National Youth Policy. Accessed on 05/05/2011.

KENYA PROVINCIAL BOUNDARIES

### KIBERA SLUM (STUDY AREA)

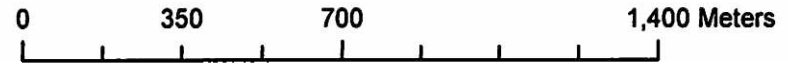
NAIROBI DIVISION BOUNDARIES

KIBERA SLUM STUDY AREA



#### Legend

- Points of interest
- Railwayline
- - - Footpath
- Motorable track
- Murrum
- Tarmac
- River
- Kibera slum boundary
- Locations
- Sub-locations
- Villages



## CHAPTER ONE

### The Introduction of the Study

#### 1.1.Introduction

Since the introduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya in 1991, elections thereafter were either preceded or followed by ethnic violence. The pre-election violence was mainly intended to influence Kenyans to vote in a particular way that ensured the Kenya African National Union (KANU) gained victories by any means possible. The post-election conflicts were aimed at punishing those viewed as not having voted for KANU.<sup>7</sup> Notwithstanding the foregoing, immediately some form of calmness or return to peace situations would also be witnessed in many conflict prone areas. Despite the existence of above conflict situations, none of the previous violence was as destructive or drew much international interest as the 2007/2008 post election violence. There were spontaneous protests accompanied by opportunistic crime and violent repression by supporters of different candidates and to some extent the security forces. In the Rift Valley, there were widespread organized attacks on non-indigenous communities.<sup>8</sup> The violence quickly spread to urban areas particularly in slum regions where the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) party had strong following. The crisis also had the potential of growing into a civil war as both the government/Party of National Unity (PNU) and the main opposition political party ODM, hardened their positions.

The crisis brought to the surface deep-seated grievances and divisions among people on ethnic lines in Kenya threatening the very existence that Kenya was an icon of lasting peace in the conflict prone continent of Africa as the country was rapidly getting divided into ethno-regional blocks.<sup>9</sup> The carnage was horrific leaving not less than 1300 people dead, at least 3000 women raped, and over 600,000 people internally displaced.<sup>10</sup> Indeed the severity of the conflict unfolded in a span of 59 days between Elections Day,

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<sup>7</sup> Peter Kangwanja, "Killing the Vote; State Sponsored Violence and Flawed Elections in Kenya," *The Kenya Human Rights Commission*, 2001 P. 70.

<sup>8</sup> Mwandawiro Mghanga, *Usipoziba Ufa Utajenga Ukuta. Land, Elections, and Conflict in Kenya's Coast Province*, Berlin. Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 2010 P. V.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, P. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Herve Maupu, *Revisiting Post-Election Violence: The General Elections in Kenya, 2007*. Dar es Salaam; Mkuki na Nyota Publishers Ltd, 2008 PP. 187-223.

December 27, 2007 and February 28, 2008, when a political compromise was reached between PNU and ODM. Initial efforts by African Union led by President John Kufor of Ghana failed in bringing the two parties to negotiations.<sup>11</sup>

The former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan assisted by a panel of Eminent African Personalities actively got involved in the negotiations and on January 24, 2008 succeeded to broker peace between the two principals; Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga.<sup>12</sup> The two principals signed the “Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government”. Under the framework of the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR), the parties agreed to enact the National Accord and Reconciliation Act 2008 not only to end the political crisis but also to ensure that peace prevailed in Kenya. Power-sharing played an important role in resolving the conflict and durability of peace. It reduced the risk of violence and provided an umbrella under which war protagonists felt adequately (though not optimally) represented to pursue more long-term solutions to the underlying issues.<sup>13</sup> In Nairobi, violent conflicts were mostly felt in major slums of Kibera and Mathare. Interestingly, Kibera slum is part of Raila’s Lang’ata Constituency and has been engulfed by violence of unprecedented scale in the post cold war period.

## 1.2. Historical Background of Kibera Slum

Kibera is an informal settlement (slum) within the city of Nairobi. Located Five Kilometers South west of the city, the slum encompassed an area of 2.5 square Kilometers, which accounted for less than 1% of Nairobi’s total area, while holding more than 25% of the city’s population, at a population density of 2000 persons per hectare.<sup>14</sup> Although reliable population data and statistics for the Kibera slum were sparse and often conflicting, Mike Davis, a well known expert of urban slum placed Kibera population to

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Mara, “Conflict Analysis of the 2007 Post- Election Violence in Kenya.”2009. <http://ndmetrics.com/paper/kenyaconflict2007Pdf>. Accessed on 22/03/2010.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Kingsley Moghalu, “Electoral Conflicts in Africa: Is Power-Sharing the New Democracy?” *Accord*, 2009 PP. 32-37.

<sup>14</sup> Stell Lawder, *The Geography of Third World Cities*. Totowa, N.J: Barnes Noble Books, 1986 P.14.

about 800,000 people depending on the season.<sup>15</sup> From the 2009 Kenyan population and housing census results, the figure was put at 355,188 people covering an area of 223.2 square Kilometers.<sup>16</sup> Out of this figure, 185,836 were males while 169,352 were females.<sup>17</sup>

Administratively, Kibera slum is situated within Langata District. The District has four Divisions namely; Kibera, Laini Saba, Nairobi West, and Karengata. The slum spread in two of the divisions; Kibera and Laini Saba. The two divisions are further sub-divided into four Administrative Locations namely Kibera, Sarang'ombe, Laini Saba and Lindi with each headed by a Chief. The slum is further broken into thirteen villages namely; Kianda, Soweto, Gatwekera, Kisumu Ndogo, Raila, Kichinjio, Lindi, Laini Saba, Silanga/Undugu, Mamo Okinda, Makina, Mashimoni, and other smaller villages. Although the slum villages are homes for many people from different ethnic groups, each of them has dominant groups. For example, Kisumu Ndogo and Gatwekera are Luo dominated while Kikuyu and Kambas dominate in Laini Saba and Mashimoni villages respectively. The borders of the villages are not always clearly defined but mostly consist of artificial boundary markers such as walking paths, rail/roads tracks, and streams. The larger part of Kibera slum is under Langata Constituency which covers more than 90% of the area while the remaining 10 % is under Dagoretti Constituency. The slum also spreads within five Civic Wards; Lindi, Kibera, Mugumoini, Sarang'ombe, and Laini Saba.<sup>18</sup>

Kibera slum is bordered by the Royal Nairobi Golf Club to the Northeast, the Nairobi Dam to the Southeast, and Ngong Forest to the Southwest.<sup>19</sup> The slum also neighbours a number of well built up Estates where the affluent live. The estates includes; Olympic,

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<sup>15</sup> Irin News, "Kenya: Kibera the Forgotten City." <http://www.Irinnews.org/Report=62409>. Accessed on 11/06/2011.

<sup>16</sup> Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, *2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census, Vol. 1A; Population Distribution by Administrative Units*, Nairobi: KNBS, 2010 P. 34.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, P. 34.

<sup>18</sup> Irin News, "Kenya: Kibera, the Forgotten City." <http://www.Irinnews.org/Report=62409>. Accessed on 11/06/2011.

<sup>19</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA. Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 581-598.



Woodley, Karanja, and Ayany to the Northwest, Wilson, Langata, Otiende and Nairobi dam estates to the Southeast, and Ngummo and Highrise to the Northeast. There are no absolute agreements on whether the estates should be included as part of Kibera, because estate homes are officially sanctioned by the government and therefore are made with permanent materials like concrete and stone. In contrast, homes in the slum are largely made of wood, metal sheeting, mud, and some semi-permanent materials.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the village homes rent for between Kenya shillings (KSH) 400 and 1200 a month depending on their quality and location, while estate homes are considerably more expensive, costing 10,000 to 14,000 KSH for a single bedroom and more for a multi-roomed home. Therefore, the estates are not considerable part of the slum.<sup>21</sup>

Kibera informal settlement has a long history which stems back to over 100 years ago when the retired Sudanese (Nubians) soldiers returning after serving the British colonial masters to suppress rebellions against the British Rule in Somalia and later against the Germans in the present day Tanzania were settled in the forests outside Nairobi by the colonial government in return for their efforts. The Nubians had also been used by the British to repress visiting Africans in Nairobi. The British colonial government of the time allowed the settlements to grow informally, primarily because the 'Nubians' status as former servants of the British Crown; put the colonial regime (British) in their debt. Furthermore, the Nubians being "Detribalized Natives" had no claim on land in "Native Reserves.

In 1904, the King's African Rifles (KAR) was established and its officials set up Army barracks a few kilometers southwest of the city along Ngong Road.<sup>22</sup> The military was also allocated a large forested area next to the barracks, which the Sudanese soldiers called "*Kibra*", or forest. The location was purposely chosen so that soldiers would be available to the central government and could reach the city centre on short notice.<sup>23</sup> The military established a shooting range near the barracks, but largely let the soldiers use

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<sup>20</sup> S.O. Akatch, & S.O. Kasuku, "Informal Settlements and the Role of Infrastructure; The case of Kibera, Kenya." *Discovery and Innovation*, 14 (1), 2002 PP. 32-37.

<sup>21</sup> Joel Makeni, "Kibera's Rail as a Protest Tool." *Daily Nation*, May 2, 2009.

<sup>22</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election violence at the Kibera Grassroots." in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 581-598.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

remainder of the land as they saw fit. As the soldiers grew older and became unable to continue their military service, they began to set up more permanent residences on the land. In 1912, the KAR permitted nearly 300 Sudanese soldiers to settle in the area rent free, as an “unofficial pension” for 12 years of military service.<sup>24</sup> Over time, other tribes moved into the area to rent land or houses (structures) from the Nubian landlords. Kibera quickly became a thorn in the side of government officials as they grew weary of increasing crime and declining living conditions on land they “deemed too valuable and too near European settlements to be left to Africans.”<sup>25</sup>

During the remaining years of colonial control in Kenya, the colonial government repeatedly tried, with little success, to either reorganize Kibera or demolish it entirely. After the 1919 attempt to relocate Kibera residents which deemed too expensive to be implemented, the KAR ordered for the withdrawal of original residency passes, announced that no more permits would be given, and transferred authority of Kibera to Civil Administration.<sup>26</sup> The Government attempted to force new settlers to prove their relationship to original permit owners, but it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between those the Administration believed were entitled to the land and those who were not.

From independence until the mid-1970s, the independent government of Kenya also tried to eliminate slums throughout Nairobi by demolishing some and withholding basic municipal services from others. Yet Nairobi’s population exploded following independence, as rural Kenyans felt more incentive to move into the city, and Kibera’s numbers increased by thousands.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1980s and 1990s, Kibera continued to grow in population as more rural Kenyans and immigrants from nearby countries migrated to Nairobi in search of work.

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<sup>24</sup> Timothy, Parsons, “Kibera is our blood; The Sudanese Military Legacy in Nairobi’s Kibera Location, 1902-1968.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 30(1), 1997 PP. 87-122.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Patrick Amis, “Squatters or Tenants?: The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi,” *World Development*, 12(1), 1984 PP. 87-96.

While conditions in Nairobi's slums were less than ideal, a 1971 survey of the city's slum residents found that respondents had more pressing concerns than acquiring better housing, including paying school fees and contributing money to extended family members.<sup>28</sup> As the commercial housing sector became more institutionalized in Kibera, conflicts between the government and slum residents became less important than the growing tension between tenants and landlords.<sup>29</sup> Tenants became less concerned with the possibility of slum clearance and more worried about evictions for failure to pay their rent.<sup>30</sup> Housing conditions continued to deteriorate as tenants blamed landlords for failing to maintain proper housing and services, while landlords blamed tenants for the poor maintenance of their rented properties.<sup>31</sup> While most housing issues in Kibera were resolved by the local chief or the courts, Kibera had experienced two notable clashes between tenants and landlords in the past two decades.

Following the re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991, the political landscape entirely changed in the country. Cases of violent conflicts became a common phenomenon in some parts of the country with urban slums such as Mathare, Korogocho and Kibera included. Such scenarios were majorly witnessed around electioneering periods. Losses of human lives and property through looting, burning and deliberate destruction were common during conflicts in this informal settlement.<sup>32</sup> Since then, Kibera remained an epicenter of violent conflicts which had serious impacts to the residents of the slum.

### **1.3. Statement of the Problem**

For almost nine decades after the emergence of Kibera informal settlement in 1904, the slum had witnessed minimal cases of socio-economic and political related conflicts among residents. For many years the multi-ethnic community of the slum had remained dependant and interdependent on each other despite instances of dominance by certain

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> J. Kunguru, and M. Mwiraria, "NGO Support to Informal Settlements; A Case Study of Kibera-Nairobi." UNDP-World Bank Regional Water and Sanitation Program Group – Eastern and Southern Africa, 1991 PP. 47-58.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

ethnic groups in some of the villages of Kibera. This trend is quite evident in the villages of Kisumu Ndogo, Gatwekera, Raila, and Kichinjio where majority of the residents are of Luo ethnic group; with Kikuyu and Kamba dominating the villages of Laini Saba and Silanga, while the Nubians largely occupy Makina, Mashimoni and Lindi vilages.<sup>33</sup> The ethnic clustering in some villages generally offers or provides Kibera residents a platform on which they perceive to draw mutual and social support from each other and majorly during conflict episodes. Thus, irrespective of the diverse and complex social and cultural differences existing among the various ethnic groups, cases of political instigated violence were quite few before 1991; and whenever they arose, they were resolved amicably and through locally owned processes within the shortest time possible.<sup>34</sup>

Suprisingly, following the re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991, cases of violent conflicts especially around election periods became common in Kenya with urban slums like Kibera not exempted. While violent incidents were also witnessed in the slums of Mathare and Korogocho for instance, the intensity and magnitude of the violence was not like in the cases of Kibera. Kibera slum has remained an epicenter of violence before, during or after the elections. Losses in form of burning and destruction of property, human killings, looting of neighbors'property and other common crimes have been experienced in Kibera slum in the last four general elections period. Interestingly, the violence has always been followed by situations of immediate resumption to some form of normalcy once elections are concluded except in the 2007/2008 electoral violence case.

The persisted violent situation in Kibera slum around election periods in the multi party era had therefore remained an alarming one. It was a situation that called for interrogation in order to understand why the multi-ethnic community of the slum who had co-existed peacefully for many decades lapsed into fighting one another after 1991. It was also of great significance to establish why conflicts always re-occured in the multi-ethnic slum of Kibera where almost all the 42 tribes of Kenya live unlike in the other areas like Rift

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<sup>33</sup> Westen Kwatemala Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 21.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

Valley Province where fightings occurred mainly between two or three communities. The Study endeavoured to unearth what factors kept on igniting the violence with a view of identifying who the drivers of the violence were, especially around election periods.

Moreover, different Scholars of Armed conflicts and Conflict Resolution extensively offered various explanations about the causes of conflicts in Kenya following the re-introduction of multi-partysm in 1991. However, inspite of this quest to unravel the puzzle, very limited and scanty Scholarly studies were done on the Kibera case and particularly on the causes of conflicts in the slum. Infact, urban slum conflicts in general and particularly Kibera informal settlement are just mentioned in passing. Indeed, the violent situations in Kibera slum had escaped the attention of many scholars. Similarly, the Scholars had also provided detailed and relevant information on Peacebuilding Initiatives during and in post conflict situations. Interestingly, very little scholarly information had been documented about Peace efforts in Kibera slum. The situation in the slum therefore calls for interrogation inorder to understand how the Kibera slum community has been able to overcome such violent situations and continue coexisting peacefully even after conflicts.

#### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

1. To establish the history and causes of Kibera slum conflicts
2. To assess the impact of conflict in Kibera slum on the residents
3. . To examine Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera Slum; and assess their successes or failures.

#### **1.5. Justification of the Study**

Kibera Urban Slum was purposely chosen as it was the largest slum in Kenya with almost all the 42 ethnic communities of Kenya living there. The slum, located near the city centre of Nairobi, witnessed a numbers of pronounced violent conflicts around electioneering periods since 1991 unlike other urban slums such as Mathare, Korogocho, and Kariobangi among others. However, Contrary to the existence of this scenario in Kibera, no systematic scholarly studies had been done about the conflicts and Peace

Initiatives in the slum; and where it had been, it was just mentioned in passing. Therefore, by understanding the Kibera slum conflicts and the underlying causes of the election related violence in the slum would be a critical contributing step towards finding a lasting solution to the violence. In addition, by understanding Peace Initiatives that may have been entered with regard to the conflicts in Kibera and how the residents were able to live together after the violence would contribute towards fresh initiatives that could bring about more lasting peace. Finally, the study would also provide important information to future studies about Kibera slum.

### **1.6. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The study examined conflicts in Kibera slum between 1991 and 2008; and the subsequent Peace Initiatives that were established in regard to addressing the issues of peace in the area to date (2012). While appreciating the existence of some conflicts in the slum prior to re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991, it was not to the magnitude witnessed thereafter. Following the escalation of conflicts during the period, the slum also experienced emergence of multifaceted approaches to peace initiatives by different actors. The study ended in the present (2012) because the peace efforts were still on going. Moreover, the research was limited to 13 villages of the Kibera urban slum and not the entire Administrative division of Kibera which is quite big. The villages included: Kianda, Soweto, Gatwekera, Kisumu Ndogo, Raila, Kichinjio, Lindi, Laini Saba, Shiranga, Undugu, Makina, Mashimoni and Kambi Muru and in other smaller villages of the slum. Due to the fact that Kibera slum was an epicenter of conflicts that had spill over effects to the neighbouring areas, focusing on the smaller area made it easier to achieve a comprehensive picture and understanding of the conflict and peace initiatives in the slum.

### **1.7. Literature Review**

Scholars of armed conflict and conflict resolution provided different understanding and explanations about causes of conflicts and how lasting peace would be attained in post conflict situations. Most of the literature stressed on the critical role played by some key state institutions and social groups in society in ending conflicts and achievement of

peace. The main groups studied included; the State, political parties, civil society organizations such as the religious groups, women groups, Non governmental organizations, Academics and other professional organizations among others.

### **1.7.1. Literature on Conflicts and Peace in Kenya and Africa**

According to Karuti Kanyinga, the demand for the re-introduction of multi-party democracy in Kenya was through efforts of Christian churches and disengaged politicians among other actors.<sup>35</sup> He further says that the early months of 1990 marked clear beginning of this struggle, which was backed by underground groups such as 'Mwakenya.' The opposition succeeded in establishing a common front in the name of Forum For the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) which later split into various factions. Most of these factions were based on ethnic and class interests with end results of a divided country along ethnic lines. Although Karuti's work lays the ground in understanding why cases of violent conflicts increased after 1991, the work falls short of explaining how such situations shaped the politics of Kenya in general and Kibera in particular; especially with Raila Odinga being one of the pioneers of the call for the re-introduction of multi-party democracy in Kenya.

Henry Beinen argues that since the advent of colonialism, Land continued to be a divisive feature among Kenyans. He contends that distribution of former white- held lands was a major aim of Kenya's independence government. Bienen maintained that ethnic conflicts were focused on land issues. The situation was similar in towns of Rift valley, western and Coast Provinces. The migration of Kikuyu and Luo produced fears of the domination by new-comers over the indigenous inhabitants.<sup>36</sup> Although Beinens work excessively focused on how land issues continued to divide Kenyans mainly after independence, it also offers valuable information on evaluating the ethnic interactions in Kibera slum. The works also assists in assessing whether Land related issues were a cause of conflicts in the slum.

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<sup>35</sup> Karuti Kanyinga "Limitation of Political Liberation; parties and electoral politics in Kenya, 1992-2002" in Walter Oyugi, Peter Wanyande and Odhiambo Mbai , *Politics of Transition in Kenya from KANU to NARC*, Nairobi, Henrich Ball Foundation, 2003 PP. 96-124.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Bienen, *Kenya; The Politics of Participation and Control*, Princeton; Princeton university press, 1974 P. 49.

Andrew Morton in his article explains that during the call for multiparty and the repeal of section 2 of the Kenyan Constitution, serious ethnic clashes occurred in some parts of Kenya because of the hate speeches given by political leaders especially from Rift Valley and Coast Provinces.<sup>37</sup> The author agrees that leaders made political remarks and rallied their ethnic groups to vote for them in the 1992 and 1997 general elections. Morton's arguments provide important insight into the study on conflicts in Kibera slum. The arguments will help in investigating whether political leaders in Kibera slum played any role in the conflicts and especially through political pronouncements.

According to Patrick Asingo the run-up to the 1992 elections was characterized by violence, particularly the politically instigated ethnic clashes. He contends that the ethnic clashes were well planned and executed especially in Rift valley province where political elites intimidated and blackmailed opposition candidates by influencing the Banks to issue bankruptcy threats to the opposition figures<sup>38</sup>. Asingo's work was critical for the study as it acknowledged that the violence was well planned and executed. However, the work falls short of disclosing who planned the violence. It will also be a pointer in the Kibera slum case as the study attempts to discover whether the continuous outbreak of violence in the slum since 1991 was a planned endeavor and by whom?

In his study on politicized ethnic conflicts in Kenya, Walter Oyugi observed that the outbreak of violent conflicts in the coastal region of Kenya had a direct link to the Resource struggle between the indigenous and immigrant ethnic communities.<sup>39</sup> Oyugi also links the outbreak of the 1992 and 1997 Likoni Constituency violence to the Acts of senior politicians and businessmen in Mombasa. He further indicates that the Security apparatus there acted minimally in their pursuit of the perpetrators. Oyugi thus concludes that the way in which the government agencies handled the violence was a pointer to the government or powerful people in government actively supporting the

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<sup>37</sup> Andrew Morton, *MOI: The making of an African Statesman*. London; Michael Mara Books limited, 1999 P. 46.

<sup>38</sup> Patrick Asingo; "The Political Economy of Transition in Kenya" in Walter Oyugi, Peter Wanyande and Odhiambo Mbai, *Politics of Transition in Kenya from KANU to NARC*. Nairobi. Henrich Ball Foundation, 2003 PP. 15-51.

<sup>39</sup> Walter Oyugi, "Politicized Ethnic Conflicts in Kenya; A Periodic Phenomena." Addis Ababa, 2000. [www.UNFPAN.org](http://www.UNFPAN.org). Accessed on 29/10/2010.



violence. Oyugi's observation in the Likoni case provides the study with important insights on Kibera case. It will assist in the quest of understanding how conflicts in the slum started and who the drivers of violence were.

Following the 2007 post election violence, President Kibaki appointed a six-member commission to inquire into the contentious aspect of the 2007 general election. The commission chaired by Justice Johann Kriegler was to investigate the organization and implementation of the 2007 electoral polls. Importantly, one of its findings was that the implementation of the electoral process was flawed and that the electoral environment was polluted by the conduct of many public participants mainly Political Parties and the Media.<sup>40</sup> The commission also found out that the Constitution of Kenya and the Legal framework contained various weaknesses which resulted to a culture of electoral lawlessness for many years. Based on Krieglers findings, it will be of great importance to find out whether existence such as situation in the country contributed all the conflicts that were witnessed in Kenya and particularly in Kibera slum especially after re-introduction of multiparty politics in 1991.

Writing on "sustainability and peace building in post war period," Kirsti Samuels explains of the need for institutional transformation on three interrelated fronts: (a) transformation of the society from one that resorts to violence to one that resorts to political means to resolve conflicts, requiring that the elite negotiate and that there should be wide spread social dialogue and reconciliation; (b) reform of the governance framework to seek to ensure that a negotiated governance arrangement between parties prevents future conflicts and the adoption of basic democratic institutions; and (c) the creation of meaningful institutions that are sustainable and sufficiently robust to deal with the vicissitudes of human nature and political activity. Such institutions cannot be imposed from outside the affected area, but must be bodies that are able to perform their core functions and are committed to doing so.<sup>41</sup> Samuels' arguments are very important

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<sup>40</sup> Justice Johann Kriegler, "The Report of the Independent Review Commission on the General Elections Held in Kenya on December 27, 2007." Nairobi, Government Printer, 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Kirsti Samuels, "Sustainability and Peace Building; A Key Challenge." *The Journal of Development in Practice*, Vol. 15, No. 6, (Nov.2005) PP. 728-736, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4030095>. Accessed on 13/07/2009

and informative to the present study and will help in the quest of finding out whether such situations exist in the case of Kenya and particularly in Kibera.

Paul-Henri Bischof argues that only substantive peace agreements which create institutions that actively afford groups and individuals Rights, protection and advancement can be the basis for lasting peace.<sup>42</sup> The author believes that peace cannot be achieved unless the problems of the vulnerable groups and other victims have been addressed. This includes involving the victims, marginalized groups and those that had previously been excluded from decision making under the previous political and social dispensation of decision making. This assertion assists the study in understanding the steps involved and conditions required before any peace model is developed. It will also help in finding out whether the Kibera residents were involved in the peace efforts and their grievances addressed.

According to Michael Comerford, the role of the Civil Society Organizations and other non state actors including churches, women groups, traditional authorities, historians, political parties and academicians and other key personalities is very important when peace efforts are being discussed. The inclusion of such groups helps in establishing more comprehensive settlements as they tend to possess better knowledge and understanding of conflicts.<sup>43</sup> While examining the Angolan Peace Agreements of 1978 and 2002 (Bicesse Accords), Comerford contends that the peace settlements failed because only those at war were granted a place in the negotiation table to discuss peace and the future of Angola. To him, had the peace agreement included the main civic voices in Angola, peace would have been achieved. The involvement of these “civil voices” would have brought more transparency and accountability to the governance system which is an important ingredient for durability of peace too. Comerford’s arguments assisted in finding out whether all stake holders and specifically Kibera residents were directly involved in all

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<sup>42</sup>Paul-Henri Bischof, “Towards Continental Transformation: Understanding Sustainable Peace Agreements in Africa.” The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Michael Comerford, “Peace Agreements in Angola and Implications for Governance.” *Conflict Trends*, 2009 PP. 14-19.

peace efforts affecting the slum. It also helped in finding out how their involvement may have shaped the outcome of peace efforts in Kibera.

Virginia Page Fortna says that maintaining peace in the aftermath of war requires cooperation among warring parties. She observes that signing of cease fire agreements do not automatically lead to peace as belligerents have deeply conflicting interests and strong incentives to take advantage over each other. Fortna maintains that the more belligerents cooperate and eliminate such fears, the more peace settlements will endure and last.<sup>44</sup> Fortna provided useful knowledge in understanding peace processes in Kibera as we seek to unearth the belligerents in Kibera conflicts.

According to William Zartman,<sup>45</sup> ending conflicts and attainment of peace requires all parties to the conflict to have reached a 'Mutually Hurting Stalemate' (MHS) situation.<sup>46</sup> This is a state where warring parties draw no more value in blood shed and each of them is seeking for a peaceful way of addressing their underlying incompatible issues. Once such a situation arises, it becomes the 'ripe moment' to resolve the conflict. This is an opportunity that should be seized as it may pass without being noticed and conflicts will continue. Thus, to Zartman, unless such condition is reached, peace remains elusive. Following Zartman's arguments, it was of interest to find out if the seemingly peaceful situation in Kenya and Kibera in particular following the signing of the National accord was such "Ripe Moments.

Martinho Chachua and Mark Malan argue that unless people themselves decide to end conflicts and embrace peace initiatives, peace will always remain elusive. The people must distinctively stand out for peace and ignore any ethnic or political affiliations that threaten peace. Examining the Mozambican peace process of 1992, for instance, the

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<sup>44</sup> Virginia Page Fortna, "Scrapes of Paper? Agreements and the Durability of Peace" *Journal of International Organization*, Vol. 57, No. 2, 2003, PP 337-372. <http://www.istor.org/stable/3594855>. Accessed on 13/07/2009.

<sup>45</sup> William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*. London, Oxford University Press, 1989 PP. 255-288.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

Authors attributed its success to the “will” of the people to end war.<sup>47</sup> They point out that in the Mozambique case; the people had also lost trust in the warring parties’ capacity to provide for their future well-being and to provide resources for their basic immediate needs. Former combatants also staged mutinies as a sign of disapproval of the leadership of their former armies. Chachiua and Malan’s work was very instrumental in analysing peace efforts in Kibera. It also acted as a directory in the search for information on the nature and pioneers of Peace Initiatives in Kibera. The work also assisted in finding out whether the Peace Initiatives in the slum were people driven, and locally owned processes or were models imposed from outside.

According to Shukria Dini, women are bridge-builders whose participation in peace-building efforts is critical to establishing peace in their communities. Citing Somali women for instance, they used methods of anti-war protests traditionally open to women. They wore white headscarves, held prayer meetings and composed peace poems. They used the female poetry of *Baraanburs* to rally for peace, by describing their own personal losses.<sup>48</sup> Dini’s work was critical in the unvailing and understanding different strategies employed by various actors in their pursuit of achieving peace in Kibera slum and assessing whether the efforts bore any tangible results.

Chris Alden and Mark Simpson,<sup>49</sup> explains that comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants and armed militia groups is a necessary requirement before any model on peace and security is established in the aftermath of a peace negotiation. The two authors argue that many disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes tend to be primarily tailored towards staging of peaceful elections, thus neglecting safety and security issues. Furthermore, ineffective or non-existent disarmament components in a peace process fuel proliferation of small arms at regional levels and assists in the rise of crime, instability and political

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<sup>47</sup> Martinho Chachiua and Mark Malan, “Anomalies and Acquiescence: The Mozambican Peace Process Revisited.” *African Security Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1998 PP. 01-10.

<sup>48</sup> Shukria Dini, “Gender, Society, and Politics in Somalia” in Heinrich Boll Stiftung, *Somalia: Current Conflicts and the New Chances for State Building*. Nairobi, Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2008 PP. 88-107.

<sup>49</sup> Chris Alden and Mark Simpson, “Mozambique: A Delicate Peace.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1. Cambridge University Press, Mar. 1993 PP. 109-130.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/161346>. Accessed on 15/07/2008.

violence.<sup>50</sup>The authors' further stresses that a professional military (Army) and police forces are necessary institutions in enforcing such programmes and for the maintenance of peace and security after a peace settlement. Based on their arguments, the present study will attempt to find out what steps the government of Kenya had put in place towards disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes to deal with militia groups in Kibera especially after the 2007/8 post election violence. The arguments will also help in assessing whether the New State Laws on Organized crimes especially by militia groups helped in ending militia activities in Kibera urban slum.

Richard Dicker in his article, "Uganda: No Amnesty for Atrocities" stresses that there is "no peace without justice." Acknowledging the past and venting grievances through justice are inseparable components of building durable peace. To him, granting Amnesty for war crimes is promoting impunity and continuity of conflicts. Amnesty for war crimes doesn't resolve conflicts, but merely suppresses injustices and discontent. Human right abusers should be made accountable for their crime. They must be arrested, prosecuted, and punished for their crimes. Accountability consolidates the rule of law and strengthens the legitimacy of emerging post-conflict institutions. Securing justice was thus a valuable for peace.<sup>51</sup> The study will strive to find out whether these conditions were met in the Kibera slum case. If yes, did they lead to end of conflicts? If no, were all Peace Initiative in Kibera doomed to fail? The study will seek to investigate this.

### **1.7.2. Literature on Conflicts and Peace in Kibera Slum**

Western Kwatemala Shilaho in his study on conflicts in Kibera observes that the outbreak of the 2001 conflict in the slum was due to politicization of the rent issue. He believes that were it not for the political pronouncements by president Moi and the area MP Raila Odinga during the fund raising rally held on October 31, 2001, conflicts would not have risen. Kwatemala further maintains that the sentiments by the two politicians in calling for the reduction of house rent by half was a well calculated move meant to woo voters from

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Richard, Dicker, "Uganda: No Amnesty for Atrocities" in *Human Rights Watch Report, 2006*.  
[http://www.iccnw.org/documents/HRW-Ugandapress release-No Amnesty](http://www.iccnw.org/documents/HRW-Ugandapress%20release-No%20Amnesty). Accessed on 21/07/2010.

the slum and incite them against landlords who were mainly Kikuyu and Nubians<sup>52</sup>. While Kwatamba's work provides very important insights towards an understanding of causes of conflicts in Kibera slum, it was only limited to the political cause (aspect) of the 2001 case. The research would attempt to know whether that has always been the only cause of conflicts in the slum since 1991 to 2008 and whether there were other factors. This is one of the main objectives the present study.

Okoth Okombo Olang'sana in his article, Balaa Mtaani "The challenge of mending ethnic violence relations in Nairobi slums" observes that following the outbreak of the 2007/2008 post election violence in Kenya, cases of intimate interactions between members of Kikuyu and Luo and Luhya ethnic groups in many slums of Nairobi reduced significantly<sup>53</sup>. He further says that the significant disintegration of the intermarriages in the wake of the 2007 ethnic violence was rooted in the existing perceived historical animosity and suspicions after Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga were shortchanged by the Kenyatta and Moi governments. To Olang'sana, ethnicity had become intense and rampant in the slums thus laying a ground for outbreak of future conflicts. The argument by Olang'sana will help in the quest for interrogating the causes of conflicts in Kibera and how such conflicts impacted on the social interactions of communities living in the slum.

While examining the role of women in peace building in Kibera, Robert Neuwirth in his book *Shadow Cities* argues that women have played a major role in advocating for peace and restoration of peoples rights and liberties.<sup>54</sup> Citing "the Kibera Women for Peace and Fairness group;" started by the slum women following the 2007/2008 post election violence as an example, the group championed for peace by holding peace talks every Saturday at Kibera D.O.'s open grounds. The peace talks ended up with organized food distributions for women members through well wishers. Occasionally, they held Kibera

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<sup>52</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 37.

<sup>53</sup> Okoth Okombo Olang'sana, "Balaa Mtaani; The Challenge of Mending Ethnic Violence Relations in Nairobi Slums." Nairobi. Friedrich Elbert Stiffing (FES), 2010 PP. 39-40.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Neiwirth, *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, a New Urban Word*. New York, Routledge, 2006 P. 17.

women's peace march within the slum to preach peace.<sup>55</sup> The work by Neuwirth provided important insights on some of the peace efforts by Kibera residents. It was a directory to finding out other actors involved in peace efforts. The work also helped in examining how Peace Initiatives by different actors helped in bringing peace in Kibera slum.

In the work by Jack Mboya, the church in Kibera played an important role in Conflict Resolution, Peace Building, Reconciliation and Healing. Under the auspice of 'Kibera Inter-denomination fellowship (KIF)' the church helped in reconciling land lords and tenants. The church also provided humanitarian assistance to the victims of post-election violence, and organized special Kibera leaders' workshops mainly focusing on conflict resolution and peace building. They also focused on rebuilding churches in Kibera slums which were either destroyed or burnt down during violence.<sup>56</sup> Jack's arguments offered very important insights about the critical role played by the religious groups in the slum. However, the work only focused on the Church and failed to show whether other faith based groups played any important roles towards peace efforts. The work will assist in finding out whether the church worked independently or in collaboration with other organizations.

### 1.8. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Johan Galtung Structural Conflict Theory. According to the theory, meaning is produced and reproduced within a culture through various practices, phenomena and activities that serves as systems of significance<sup>57</sup>. The theory first emerged from linguistics and later modified and applied in other fields. Building on Galtung theoretical foundations, Richard Little observed that the aggregates of human behavior precipitates structures of which individuals are unaware of.<sup>58</sup> He further

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Jack Mboya, "Reconciliation and Healing in Kibera Slums." Kibera Inter-Denomination Fellowship (KIF) Report. <http://www.kifkenya.org/en>. Accessed on 20/08/2010.

<sup>57</sup> Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research", *Journal of Peace Research* vol 3, 1969 PP. 167-191; and Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence" in *Journal of Peace Research* vol. 27, 1999 PP. 291-305.

<sup>58</sup> Richard Little, "Structuralism and Neo-Realism" in Margot Light and AJR Groom, (Eds), *International Relations: A Handbook of Current Theory*. London, Printer Publisher, 1985 PP. 74-78.

explains that such structures though not necessarily consciously produced, can be reproduced consciously in the future.

Galtung stresses on the need to probe beneath the surface manifestations of human motivation and identify the invisible but powerful structures which mould and guide behavior. Galtung further says that conflicts do not progress in linear manner or cyclical form, but occurs due to structural and proximate causes and triggers. To him structural causes are mainly the underlying causes of the discontent that deals with the relationship between the citizens and the state. Such includes but not limited to inequality and poverty, breakdown of the rule of law, unequal access to the means of production and institutional deficiencies. Thus, once a significant level of inequality is reached in society, there is likelihood of outbreak of violent conflicts.<sup>59</sup>

The theory therefore stresses that the existence of structural conflicts implies that it is necessary to look beyond the immediate manifestations of physical violence and instead take into account the structure that underlies social relationships, since it might be in itself a source of conflict<sup>60</sup>. Indeed it's a theory that deals with the questions of "whom" and "what" is responsible for the generations of conflicts. It also deals with who "identifies" the conflicts and hence who will take action to solve the conflict.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, structural conflicts theory is about structure that generates or causes conflicts in society. Such structures can be legal, social, economic, psychological; religious and political.

In his criticism E.P Thompson argues that Structural Conflict Theory had a dehumanizing views of the human world, where systems and sub systems elements and structures are drilled up and down, pretending to be people. In other words, the theory was criticized for favoring deterministic structural forces over the ability of individual people to act.

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<sup>59</sup> Makumi Mwangi, *Conflict; Theory Processes and Institutions of management*, Nairobi; Water mark, 2000 P. 56.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> E. P, Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*. London, Merlin Press, 1978 P. 45.



Despite the criticism, the theory was very relevant to the study as it helped in scrutinizing the structures of relations and interactions whether conscious or unconscious and how such structures influenced Kibera residents' behaviour. It further assisted in explaining how psychological dominations were mobilized to influence perceptions of local residents often with negative consequences on the communities' existence. The theory also helped in explaining the structure of relationships between various communities in Kibera slum and the National electoral politics. Finally, the theory was critical in explaining political manipulation of the local group's identities for political purposes and interests. It was a theory that was important in explaining and understanding the causes and personalities responsible for the persistent election related violent conflicts in Kibera slum since 1991.

In order to fill gaps in Galtung's structural conflict theory, it was complemented by the Gro Harlem Brundtlands' theory of Sustainable development theory; that refers to development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>62</sup> The theory emphasizes on relevance to reality, while designing any analytical and normative policy framework which should address present pressing issues. This involves building something genuine and solid, attributes whose truth will be revealed via endurance over time. The concept of sustainability rests on ideas such as system quality, dynamic equilibrium and carrying capacity. The theory takes stock of the main ethical and practical aspects of sustainability, with a particular emphasis on communication.<sup>63</sup> The theory achieved international public prominence during the 1987 report at the world Commission on Environment and development.<sup>64</sup> It was used successfully to study peace institutions in Rwanda after the genocide and how these institutions assisted to sustain peace in the country.

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<sup>62</sup> Gro Harlem Brundtlands, *Sustainable Development, Our Common Future*; in the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), New York, Oxford University Press, 1987 PP. 11-13.

<sup>63</sup> Francesco Strazzari, "Between 'Messy Aftermath' and 'Frozen Conflicts'; Chimeras and Realities of Sustainable Peace," *Humsec Journal, Issue, 2*. The University of Amsterdam, 2001.

<sup>64</sup> United Nations, "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development," *General Assembly Resolution 42/187, December 11, 1987*. Accessed on 14/11/ 2010.

The theory addresses the main social and economic issues against whose background sustainable communication take place as efforts to codify corporate social responsibility and their effects on peace practices. It also deals with the risks involved and shows how transparency and strategic planning are essential prerequisites for sustaining peace. It concludes with the methodologies employed by actors and professionals to communicate whilst managing risk.<sup>65</sup> Sustainable development theory calls for socially sustainable system which must achieve distributional equity, adequate provision of social services including security, health and education, gender equity, and political accountability and participation.<sup>66</sup> The theory fits well in this study in various ways. First it will assist in developing genuine and realistic strategies, systems, and policies in Kibera slum which are fundamental towards attainment of lasting peace. The theory will also assist in designing the best way causes of conflicts in Kibera could be addressed. Again, it provides a road map on how Peace Initiatives in the informal settlement can successfully be designed and implemented. This is another important goal of the present research.

### **1.9. Hypothesis**

1. Conflict in Kibera slum since 1991 were politically instigated.
2. Conflicts have had significantly negative impact on development in Kibera.
3. "Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera Slum had yielded some positive results"

### **1.10. Research Methodology**

The study used both secondary and primary sources of data. Secondary sources included books and articles published in scholarly journals and periodicals. The reading materials were sourced from libraries like the Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library (JKML) within the University of Nairobi, the Kenya National Library, Kenya National Archives, the African Peace Forum, and Peace and Development Network (Peace-net). Gaps found in these sources were filled by use of primary sources.

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<sup>65</sup> UNEP, "Sustainability Communications: A Tool Kit for Marketing and Advertising Courses, Nairobi:" Division for Technology, Industry and Economic, [http://www.unep.fr/pc/sustain/10year/SCP\\_Resource\\_Kit.htm](http://www.unep.fr/pc/sustain/10year/SCP_Resource_Kit.htm).

<sup>66</sup> Harris, Jonathan, "Basic Principles of Sustainable Development," Global Development and Environment Institute Working Paper 00-04. USA, Tufts University. Medford M.A. 02155, 2000 PP. 51-70. <http://ase.tufts.edu/gdae>. Accessed on 20/8/2010.

The research also used archival materials from Kenya National Archives (hereafter, KNA). Such materials included provincial annual reports, handing over reports, letters, Minutes of *barazas* held and personal diaries of officials of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) that worked in Kibera slum. Newspapers such as the Daily Nation and East African Standard, and Website articles were also used with a date of retrieval noted.

The archival materials were critical in providing a historical perspective that helped in showing how Kibera urban slum of Nairobi came to existence from 1904. It also helped in understanding how communities from outside Nairobi moved into the slum. Being aware of the thirty year rule tied to archive materials, I used different institutions archives to complement what I got from the KNA. These institutions included the Catholic Peace and Justice Resource Centre, Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) Centre, and the National Steering Committee on Peace Building and Conflict Management centre in Bruce House. In addition, the researcher went to the field to collect data after acquiring a study permit from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. While in the field, the researcher worked closely with the Provincial Administration leaders including Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs and village headmen (elders). This enabled the researcher to counter the problem of insecurity and suspicion from local community.

The study used oral interviews and focused group discussions that were done on area residents and leaders. They included; Church leaders, Local Administration Officers, Police officers, Volunteers, Humanitarian Aid Workers who worked or lived in Kibera during and after the conflicts. Academicians, Political and Social Conflict Analysts were also interviewed in the process of data collection. Major local residents interviewed included women, youth leaders, elders, landlords, tenants, businessmen and men in general.

Due to the sensitive nature of the information sought, the research employed services of three research assistants namely; Philip Omondi, Bakari Musa, and Fridah Makuthi from the local communities who had thorough knowledge of the area and who helped in data

collection. Thorough briefing on the academic importance of the study was given to the respondents, with strict assurance of confidentiality of the research findings obtained. During the study a total of thirty respondents were interviewed. Snow bow sampling technique to select respondent was employed. It was a method where the initial key informants and opinion leaders named other subjects with desired characteristics (relevant information) sought for interview, until the required sample was obtained.<sup>67</sup> They were all selected from the targeted thirteen major villages in Kibera slum where conflict had been persistent. Through purposive sampling technique, the villages were first identified after obtaining the Map of Kibera area from the Kenya National Beureau of Statistic in Nyayo house-Nairobi.

During oral interviews, information was recorded through Note taking. Tape recording was utilized only with express consent of respondents. The recorded data was transcribed and relevant information drawn. Observation method was also used. By looking at the respondents, the reseacher was able to tell that the conflict was not yet over. Quanlitative method of analyzing data collected was employed too. It was an important method of data analysis as it explored diverse issues underlying the subject under study.

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<sup>67</sup>Olive,Mugenda, and Abel, Mugenda, *Research Methods: Quantitative & Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi, Acts Press, 1999 PP. 50-51.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The History Kibera Slum Conflicts; 1904 – 2008

#### 2.1. Introduction

The chapter examines the historical development of Kibera informal settlement and the subsequent conflicts witnessed in the slum since its emergence. The chapter starts by tracing the origin of Kibera slums and the ethnic composition of the population. It will also have an elaborate examination onto how conflicts evolved over the years since emergence of Kibera slum in 1904. The introductory part of the chapter shows that a large number of Nairobi's populations live in informal settlements within the city where they face many challenges.<sup>68</sup> The situation renders most of the people to become easy targets of increased ethnic violence and insecurity due to various factors among them corruption, nepotism, political patronage and a devastated economy. The end effects being the increasing deviance and crime rate, ethnic hatred, discrimination and social welfare problems.

#### 2.2. The Historical Background of Nairobi

Considering its size, Nairobi has a very short history as an urban space; one which owes its very existence to the forces of colonialism.<sup>69</sup> The area was identified in 1889 when railway authorities determined that the area's central location, flat landscape, and moderate climate made it an ideal setting for a colonial administrative centre that could service the rural economies.<sup>70</sup> The colonial government chose not to establish an industrial base in Nairobi and intended to keep the town a home for non-African and temporary, male, African migrant workers. Therefore, many African laborers in Nairobi were brought in on short-term contracts to work in the service sector, while a second group of mission-educated, literate Africans filled lower level administrative posts in the

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<sup>68</sup> Winnie Mitullah and Kivutha Kibwana, "A Tale of Two Cities: Policy, Law, and Illegal Settlements in Kenya," in Edesio Fernandes and Ann Varley, (ed.) *Illegal Cities: Law and Urban Change in Developing Countries*, London. Zed books, 1998 PP. 196-199.

<sup>69</sup> Ferraro, G.P, "Nairobi: Overview of an East African City," in *African Urban Studies*, 3(Winter), 1978/9 PP. 1-14.

<sup>70</sup> Gatabaki Kamau & Karirah Gitau, "Actors and Interests: The development of an informal settlement in Nairobi, Kenya" in K.T. Hansen & M.Vaa (Eds.), *Reconsidering Informality: Perspectives from Urban Africa*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 2004 PP. 52-55.

colonial government.<sup>71</sup> The government tried to limit the number of Africans living in the Nairobi, their movement, and their settlement by instituting pass laws and the 1932 Vagrancy Act, which declared that “unauthorized huts” could be demolished and unemployed Africans were forcibly removed from the town.<sup>72</sup> Within Nairobi, , Africans were assigned to live in “native reserves” at the edge of the city, where they were separated by ethnic group and provided temporary accommodation and minimal services.<sup>73</sup> The segregated housing policy was justified as part of a strategy to separate “diseased” Africans from healthy Europeans. But as sanctioned Africans, housing became scarce and a host of unauthorized African migrants moved to Nairobi in search of wage labor, leading to development of informal settlements throughout the town.<sup>74</sup> One of the major such informal settlements was Kibera, a slum that witnessed very high influx of migrants from rural areas and subsequently becoming the largest urban slum in Kenya.<sup>75</sup>

### 2.3. The Emergence of Kibera Urban Slum; 1902-1920

The emergence of Kibera urban slum goes back to 1904 when the Sudanese ex-soldiers at Machakos and Kiambu were ordered by the District Commissioners-in-charge of those areas Mr. R. W. Humphreys at Machakos to find other homes for themselves. The Nubians were enlisted as early as 1897 and were used to suppress rebellions against British rule in Somalia and later during World War I when they fought against the Germans in present day Tanzania. In return for their services to the Crown, they were allowed to settle in different parts of the British Empire. Notably, the Nubians were Muslims who followed the religious practices and traditions of the Islamic faith.<sup>76</sup>

The Nubians were ex- Kings African Rifles (K.A.R) men, and it was the responsibility of the K.A.R authorities to find a suitable area for them to live in. The men, therefore, found

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<sup>71</sup> F. Furedi, “The African Crown in Nairobi: Population Movements and Elite Politics.” *Journal of African History*, 14(2), 1973 PP. 275-290.

<sup>72</sup> Kamau, Macharia, “Slum Clearance and the Informal Economy in Nairobi.” *The Journal of modern African Studies*, 30(2), 1992 PP. 221-236.

<sup>73</sup> Winnie Mitullah and Kivutha Kibwana, “A Tale of Two Cities: Policy, Law and Illegal Settlements in Kenya,” in Edesio Fernandes and Ann Varley, (ed.) *Illegal Cities: Law and Urban Change in Developing Countries*, London. Zed books, 1998, PP 113-134.

<sup>74</sup> Kamau Macharia. “Slum Clearance and the Informal Economy in Nairobi.” *The Journal of modern African Studies*, 30(2), 1992 PP. 221-236.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> KNA, MAA/2/5/172, III, “The Colony and Protectorate of Kenya.”

their way to Nairobi, some of them squatting at Kileleshwa and others at Kibera area. The report by S.H. Fontain indicated that the British government was to formulate a plan for concentrating the scattered Kibera Sudanese Settlement into a more compact unit within land titled L.O. 1702.<sup>77</sup> In response Col. Brading, the Commanding Officer of the K.A.R Battalion at the time, faced with the problem of finding homes for all the ex-soldiers, took up the matter of the land allocated to the K.R.A in 1904 as a Military Reserve to settle the ex-soldiers.<sup>78</sup> The land was surveyed in 1911 as mentioned in the Carter Commission Report.<sup>79</sup>

The Kibera settlement formally started in 1912 when the British colonial government settled Nubian Sudanese ex-soldiers on an area of land that came to be known as *Kibra*.<sup>80</sup> They were encouraged to settle near existing government stations so that they could act as an informal military reserve should their services be needed again on short notice.<sup>81</sup> By 1918, Kibera had become a home for 600 Nubian soldiers and their families. In the same year the colonial government officially gazetted the area as a military reserve. At the time, Kibera was a dense forest of 4,000 acres. Any person wishing to settle there was required to have served in the British Army and to have a residential permit from the Army. The residential permits allowed them to stay rent-free as a form of unofficial pension from the Army. The allocations given to the Nubians were temporary and given only to those soldiers who had at least twelve years of service. During that time, almost everyone granted a permit was Nubian and all were living in the area known today as Makina.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> KNA/MAA/8/117, *Resettlement of the Sudanese Residents at Kibera*, by Mr. S.H. LA Fontain, DSO, OBE, M C.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> KNA, GoK. *The Carter Land Commission report*, 1934. Nairobi: Government Printer

<sup>80</sup> "*Kibra*" is a Nubian Word Meaning Forest or Jungle in English Language.

<sup>81</sup> Timothy Parsons, "Kibera is Our blood: The Sudanese Military Legacy in Nairobi's Kibera Location," in *the International journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 30, no. 1, 1997 PP. 19-24.

<sup>82</sup> Winnie Mitullah and Kivutha Kibwana, "A Tale of Two Cities: Policy, Law, and Illegal Settlements in Kenya," in Edesio Fernandes and Ann Varley, (ed.) *Illegal Cities: Law and Urban Change in Developing Countries*, London: Zed books, 1998 PP. 267-271.

### **2.3.1. The Colonial Government's Reaction to the Emergence of Kibera Slum; 1920-1963**

By the 1920's, Kibera's reputation grew as a site for receiving stolen property and the illegal distillation of what became known as the Nubian Gin. In 1926, Kenya's Colonial Secretary, G.A.S. Northcote, expressed concern that former government employees "squatting" in urban areas would tend to crowd out towns and produce a shiftless population, utilizing ground which was required for other purposes. The population in Kibera increased when the colonial government declared Kileleshwa a European settlement. All Africans living in the region were forcefully evicted in 1927 under the Resident Natives Ordinance. Among those evicted were the Kikuyu, Kamba and other African communities living in the area. Most of these communities moved to Kibera area.<sup>83</sup> In 1928, the British Army transferred the administration of Kibera to the Municipal Council of Nairobi. All existing permits were cancelled paving way for scrutiny of Kibera inhabitants to prove their Nubian history. At this time the Nubians became tenants of the Crown. The Commissioner of Lands was now given powers to terminate the Nubian tenancy at any time that he/she wished. Similarly, all structures built in Kibera were expected to be temporary because the land belonged to the government. This resulted to conflicts of interest that threatened the stability of not only Kibera but also that of the neighboring European settlements.<sup>84</sup>

To ensure peace prevailed in the area, in 1932, the Kenya Land Commission or the Carter Commission was asked to resolve numerous land disputes in the country including that of Kibera. In the Kibera case, the opinion of the government was that the Nubians held no title deeds of the land in Kibera. On the other hand, the Nubians argued that Kibera was their pension. The Nubians claimed that they had served in the institution of military 'slavery' hence they deserved compensation by land. Although the findings of the Carter Commission did not advocate for the eviction of the Sudanese, likewise, it did not find an

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<sup>83</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 457-465.

<sup>84</sup> Schwartz Barcotte, "Youth Culture, NGO Involvement, and Collective Violence in Kibera, Nairobi; East Africa's Largest Slum," University of North Carolina, (Unpublished Honours Thesis), 2001.



alternative nor did it mention if the Nubians could stay forever in Kibera.<sup>85</sup> The Carter Commission recommended that the colonial government had a duty to accommodate its ex-soldiers and that they should not be moved without receiving suitable land elsewhere.

In addition, the Carter Land Commission recorded that half of the householders of Kibera were women, many of whom were described as prostitutes, and that two-thirds of the population of the region was Kenyan and not Sudanese.<sup>86</sup> The findings of the Carter Commission pleased no one for two reasons. First, the government was prohibited from evicting the Nubians and secondly, the Nubians were denied their claim over the land in Kibera. By 1940s, Kibera had become a sanctuary for native-born Africans who wanted to escape the rules and regulations of the colonial government. This was not pleasant on the government side, although it was forced to accept the status quo on condition that nobody had an obligation to develop the area since it was only a temporary settlement.<sup>87</sup> The non-Sudanese population worried the colonial government as indicated in Fontain report,

“There is a large number of pseudo Sudanese who are represented as adopted sons and daughters of the Sudanese; these include members of various indigenous tribes of both sexes and are most difficult to identify as they have adopted Mohammedan names and surname of their adopted parent. It is not clear why they should have been adopted or if there is any ulterior motive behind the adoption. When a survey is held, the names of these persons are freely given and they are claimed as their offsprings and only if very exacting enquiries are made it is divulged that they are not of the same blood as their so called parents. There are many natives employed by the Sudanese as domestic servants, water carriers, shamba boys, herds etc. There is a large population of unauthorized and unregistered persons of both sexes of which no figures even approximate can be furnished as they are not admitted by the Sudanese to be resident there. They comprise a large number of prostitutes, wives of serving soldiers who have no accommodation provided by the military, and may include males of all kinds and tribes.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Johan de Smedt, “No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots,” in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 504-523.

<sup>87</sup> Centre for Housing Rights and Evictions, “Listening to the Poor? Housing Rights in Nairobi; a fact-finding Mission to Nairobi, Kenya.” Draft Consultation Report; July 2004 P. 16.

<sup>88</sup> KNA/MAA/8/117-*Resettlement of the Sudanese Residents at Kibera*, by Mr. S. H. LA Fontain, DSO, OBE, M.C.

Furthermore, the colonial administration opted to begin a silent measure to force people out of Kibera by adopting a policy of neglect which was meant to render Kibera unlivable. In the 1940s, the colonial government issued a number of orders forbidding a permanent water supply, schools and other amenities in Kibera. Similarly, in 1948, the Chief Secretary warned that giving the Sudanese land would spark similar demands from the Somali and Swahili communities.<sup>89</sup> The British administration claimed that, all the land that was available was urgently required for Kenyan indigenous groups to use.

In the 1950, the colonial government plan to compensate Nubians for their structures and move them elsewhere began to wane and eventually died. The Kenyan indigenous communities' population dramatically increased in Kibera although the colonial government had put in place strict rules limiting numbers of newcomers in region. In October 1952 the outbreak of Mau Mau rebellion against the British colonial rule led to the declaration of a state of emergency in Kenya.<sup>90</sup>

During the Mau Mau Emergency, many members of the Kikuyu ethnic group left the city by choice and by force, but they were replaced by a steady stream of new migrants, including many people from western Kenyan who settled in Kibera.<sup>91</sup> The Sudanese, anticipating independence, saw this as their last opportunity to take advantage of their favored status with the British administration and again requested permanent land rights. But Nubians had slipped from their privileged position with the British, partially because Nubians were less interested in institutional education than other ethnic groups such as the Kikuyu.<sup>92</sup> Ultimately the Nubians were unsuccessful in gaining permanent land rights, as "the British government lacked the influence or the desire to convince African politicians to uphold colonial obligations to the Sudanese."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Oral interview, Douglas Ouma Nyakech, Chief Sarang'ombe Location-Kibera, 15/10/2010.

<sup>90</sup> Emilly Lugano and Julius Ngundo, *Final Report: A Participatory Urban Appraisal Study of Mashimoni, Kambi Muru, Lindi and Shilanga Villages- Kibera Informal Settlement*, London: Oxfarm GB, May 2001 P. 2.

<sup>91</sup> D. Clark, "Kibera: Social Dynamics of a Low Income Neighborhood in Nairobi. Kampala, Makerere University, 1972 PP. 23-27.

<sup>92</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, 108/433, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 274-289.

<sup>93</sup> Timothy Parsons. "Kibra is our blood: The Sudanese Military Legacy in Nairobi's Kibera Location, 1902-1968." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 30(1), 1997 PP. 87 – 122.

#### 2.4. Kibera slum in Post-Independence Era; 1963-1990

After independence, as expected, the first post independence government of Kenya had no intention of granting land rights to the Nubians and in 1969 it declared that the land comprising Kibera was a state property.<sup>94</sup> From 1963 until the mid-1970s, the government tried to eliminate slums throughout Nairobi by demolishing some and withholding basic Municipal services from others.<sup>95</sup> Yet Nairobi's population exploded following independence, as rural Kenyans felt more incentive to move into the city, and Kibera's numbers increased by the thousands. The estimate of Kibera's population grew from 3,000 in 1960 to 8,000 in 1968 and to 15,500-17,000 by 1972.<sup>96</sup>

In the late 1960s, the Ministry of Lands and Settlement had approached landlords in Kibera about demolishing the slum and offered them compensation and relocation assistance in response.<sup>97</sup> The landlords refused the offer, likely questioning the government's ability to forcibly evict them from Kibera and feeling a strong sense to ownership of the land. A 1972 housing survey of Kibera found that 95 percent of landlords had lived in Kibera 9 years or longer and 51 percent had lived there for over 27 years.<sup>98</sup> The same survey found that 71 percent of owners were Nubians and 23 percent were Kikuyu, while only 4 percent of renters were Nubian and 16 percent were Kikuyu. But in the late-1970s, the ratio of Nubian-to-Kikuyu owners was about to change, as was the government's policies toward Kibera.

When the government realized it could not clear all of Nairobi's slums, it changed the approach from hostile to tactic of acceptance. In fact, residents of Nairobi's slums could no longer be considered squatters; most were paying rent for their accommodation; and they were not living in shanty towns. Most of the residences were comparable to homes

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<sup>94</sup> D. Clark, *Kibera: Social Dynamics of a Low Income Neighborhood in Nairobi*. Kampala, Makerere University, 1972 PP. 23-27.

<sup>95</sup> O. K' Akumu, & W. Olima, "The Dynamics and Implications of Residential Segregation in Nairobi." *Habitat International*, 31 (1), 2007 PP. 87-99.

<sup>96</sup> Peter Amis, "Commercialized rental housing in Nairobi, Kenya" In C.V. Patton (Ed.), *Spontaneous Shelter: International Perspectives and prospective*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1988 PP. 235-357.

<sup>97</sup> D. Etherton, *Mathare Valley: A case study of uncontrolled settlements in Nairobi*. Housing Research and Development Unit; University of Nairobi, 1971 PP. 17-19.

<sup>98</sup> N.W. Temple, "Housing Preferences and Policy in Kibera-Nairobi." University of Nairobi Institute for Development Studies, 1974 P. 49.

in upcountry Kenya and far more permanent than their “temporary” label implied.<sup>99</sup> So the Administration asserted its authority in this otherwise unauthorized housing sector by offering government permits to build in Kibera and threatening to demolish any new, non-permitted constructions.<sup>100</sup> But critics point out that most of the permits were to members of the same ethnic group as President Jomo Kenyatta, the Kikuyu.<sup>101</sup> Land allocation permits were granted as political patronage, “paying back favors, consolidating potential clients, rewarding friends or fellow tribesmen by informally giving out free land for urban development.”<sup>102</sup> While the Kikuyu were the most aggressive in acquiring land permits and building up housing during the time, Nubians also participated in the rental economy. As a result, “Kibera filled up very fast.”<sup>103</sup>

The Nubians’ initial hesitancy to build and rent homes in Kibera cost them their dominant position in Kibera. By 1984, 66 percent of Kibera landlords were Kikuyu while only 22 percent were Nubians.<sup>104</sup> Most of the new homes were single-block rooms, rather than the multi-room residences or U-shaped Swahili homes previously found in Kibera, as these cheap constructions were the most profitable.<sup>105</sup> Even if a bribe was required to obtain a land permit, building a home in Kibera and renting it out was a very lucrative venture, and offered one a return on investment in two years or less.<sup>106</sup> Consequently, between 1974 and 1979, Kibera experienced “a real estate bonanza” that led to three-fold population growth in five years, with Kibera reaching an estimated 62,000 residents by

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<sup>99</sup> A. Hake, *African Metropolis*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1977 PP. 112-117.

<sup>100</sup> Peter Amis, “Commercialized Rental Housing in Nairobi, Kenya” In C.V. Patton (Ed.), *Spontaneous Shelter: International Perspectives and Prospective*. Philadelphia; Temple University Press, 1988 PP. 312-318.

<sup>101</sup> J. E. Hardoy, & D. Satterwaite, *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 1989 PP. 67-77.

<sup>102</sup> Peter Amis. “Squatters or Tenants? The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi.” *World Development*, 12 (1), 1984 PP. 87-96.

<sup>103</sup> Johan de Smedt, “No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots”, in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 P. 218.

<sup>104</sup> Peter Amis, “Squatters or Tenants: the Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi.” *World Development*, 12 (1), 1984 PP. 87-96.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> J. Kunguru, & M. Mwiraria, “NGO support to informal settlements: A case study of Kibera, Nairobi.” Nairobi: UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, Regional water and Sanitation Group-Eastern and Southern Africa, 1991 P. 84.

1979.<sup>107</sup> While Kikuyus and Nubians dominated the rental industry, much of the growing tenant population came from Luo and Luhya ethnic groups from western Kenya.

At the same time the real estate growth filled Kibera with cheaply constructed homes, as the government was also encouraging low-cost formal housing developments on the edge of the city through a site-and-services program. Through the program, "plots of land on the periphery of the city with access to water supply, roads, and other social services were made available through low-cost loans, to encourage private development."<sup>108</sup> In exchange for the low-cost loans, homes built on such pieces of land would meet government regulations for housing standards. While the government envisioned that the housing scheme would lead to private sectors solutions for the city's low-income housing issues, it did little to curb the growth of slums like Kibera. One issue was that most of the site-and-services developments were located on Nairobi's periphery, which was an unattractive solution for Kenya's poor who desired to be close to employment opportunities.

Also, the majority of low-income Kenyans were too poor to participate in the program; and so much of the land was sold to middle class instead.<sup>109</sup> Consequently, some formal housing estates on the northern boarder of Kibera became settled by middle-class Kenyans. For example, the housing development that became Ayany Estate was originally "intended for the low income population of Kibera."<sup>110</sup> But even in the initial report on this development, the architects of the scheme estimated such homes would only be affordable to 20 percent of the target population, which was for those making between 300 and 800 Kenya Shillings a month, a salary much higher than the average Kibera resident. Planners hoped that more residents could acquire the housing initiative

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<sup>107</sup> Peter Amis, "Squatters or Tenants? The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi." *World Development*, 12 (1), 1984 PP. 87-96.

<sup>108</sup> J. Muwonge, "Urban Policy and Patterns of Low-Settlements in Nairobi, Kenya." *Population and Development Review*, 6(4), 1980 PP. 544-577.

<sup>109</sup> R. A. Obudho, & G. O. Aduwa, "Slum and Squatters; Settlements in Urban Centres of Kenya: Towards a Planning Strategy," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 4(1), 1989 PP. 17-30.

<sup>110</sup> O. Kaszner, "The Kibera Experimental Self-Help Schemes: Explanatory Notes of the Planning of Low-cost Housing Schemes in Nairobi." University of Nairobi Housing Research and Development unit, 1976 P. 4.

by sub-letting plots to supplement their monthly expenses. Still the the government's site-and-services scheme "should have thus been seen as one possible solution to the urban housing problem, rather than the solution."<sup>111</sup> Another neighborhood constructed during the period was Olympic Estate, which was completed in 1975.<sup>112</sup>

During the 1980s and 1990s, Kibera continued to grow in population as more rural Kenyans and immigrants from nearby countries migrated to Nairobi in search of work. While conditions in Nairobi's slums were less than ideal, a 1971 survey of the city's slum residents found that respondents had more pressing concerns than acquiring better housing, including paying school fees and contributing money to extended family members.<sup>113</sup> And as commercial housing sector became more institutionalized in Kibera, conflicts between the government and slum residents became less important than the growing tension between tenants and landlords.<sup>114</sup> Tenants became less concerned with the possibility of slum clearance and more worried about eviction from failure to pay their rent. Housing conditions continued to deteriorate as tenants blamed landlords for failing to maintain proper housing and services, and landlords blamed tenants for the poor conditions of their rental properties.<sup>115</sup>

## 2.5. Kibera Slum after 1991 to 2012

In the last two decades, Kibera residents became less reliant and trusting on the state. The Slum's informal economy grew, providing more employment.<sup>116</sup> At the same time, community and international organizations became the main providers of health care and community development in the area. As on 1991 report claims, "in the absence of strong

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid, P.16.

<sup>112</sup> P. W. Muraya, "Urban Planning and Small-Scale Enterprises in Nairobi, Kenya." *Habitat International*, 30, 2006 PP. 127-143.

<sup>113</sup> J. W. Muwonge, "Urban Policy and Patterns of Low-Settlements in Nairobi, Kenya." *Population and Development Review*, 6(4), 1980 PP. 595-613.

<sup>114</sup> Peter Amis, "Squatters or Tenants? The Commercialization of Unauthorized Housing in Nairobi." *World Development*, 12 (1), 1984 PP. 87-96.

<sup>115</sup> J. Kunguru, & M. Mwiraria, "NGO support to informal settlements: A Case Study of Kibera, Nairobi." *Nairobi.* UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, Regional Water and Sanitation Group-Eastern and Southern Africa, 1991 P. 84.

<sup>116</sup> P. W. Muraya, "Urban Planning and Small-Scale Enterprises in Nairobi, Kenya:" *Habitat International*, 30, 2006 PP. 153-163.

Government involvement, NGOs are the primary agencies involved in the development of Kibera.”<sup>117</sup>

Residents also grew weary of the government’s efforts to upgrade slum housing, which they found to be either corrupt or ineffective. For example, in the 1990s, the National Housing Corporation constructed the Kibera Highrise on the southeast corner in order to provide quality housing for slum residents. But upon completion, the government changed its tune, deciding to grant and sell the units to middle-class Kenyans instead.<sup>118</sup> More recently, the government partnered with UN-HABITAT on another slum-upgrading project in Kibera. While some residents moved to the new housing developments in 2009, the process was very slow and many residents were hesitant to relocate their homes and businesses. The upgrades were typically more expensive, less hospitable to informal economic activities, and also were received with great caution by Kibera residents who had known the government to deceive them in the past. Ultimately, instead of improving the lives of slum dwellers by enabling access to adequate housing, poorly targeted slum upgrading only improved the lives of the better-offs and displaced the original residents into expanding or newly forming slums.<sup>119</sup> Although it was too early to assess the success of the UN-HABITAT slum-upgrading program, there was little indication that it had stemmed population growth in Kibera.

The re-introduction of multi-partyism in Kenya in 1991 also had significant impact to the residents of Kibera. As cases of election related violent conflicts became common in the country, Kibera slum remained a theatre of such violent confrontations. The initial land and rent disputes acquired a political angle. Politicians in the slum started politicizing the land and rent issues in order to gain votes. Politics of segregation and ethnic hatred came to the fore leading to new forms of conflict among residents.

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<sup>117</sup> J. Kunguru, & M. Mwiraria, “NGO support to informal settlements: A Case Study of Kibera, Nairobi.” UNDP-World Bank Water and Sanitation Program, Regional Water and Sanitation Group-Eastern and Southern Africa, 1991 P. 89.

<sup>118</sup> M. Huchzermeyer, “Slum Upgrading in Nairobi Within the Housing and Basic Services Markets: A Housing Rights Concern.” *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 43,(10 2008) PP. 19-3.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, P. 25.

While most housing issues in Kibera were resolved by the local chiefs or the courts, Kibera had experienced two notable clashes between tenants and landlords in the past two decades. In 1992, Raila Odinga, the son of Kenya's first vice president, ran for a seat in Kenyan Parliament representing the Langata Constituency, a district that includes Kibera. Prior to the election, several members of Odinga's ethnic group, the Luo, moved from Nyanza province to Kibera to help ensure his victory.<sup>120</sup> As a result of the growing number of Luo migrants to Kibera during the period, a few major conflicts arose between Luo tenants and Nubian landlords over rent prices. While Kikuyu landlords were not directly involved in the fighting, some had properties destroyed in the fighting and others were chased away from Kibera entirely.<sup>121</sup>

Ten years later, violence again broke out between Luo tenants and Nubian landlords. In October 2001, then-President Daniel Arap Moi attended a fundraising event for Odinga, at which he declared that rents in Kibera should be lowered by half.<sup>122</sup> In the following weeks, a number of Kibera tenants took Moi at his word and refused to pay their landlords until the government brokered a deal for decreased rents. Over the next two months, tensions increased until fighting ultimately led to the death of at least 25 people, a destruction of a number of homes, and the displacement of thousands of Kibera residents. After the violence settled, some landlords agreed to lower their rents, but the event continued to be a source of great tension between tenants and landlords.<sup>123</sup> While income inequalities separate Kibera and other slums from the rest of Nairobi, there were also significant distinctions within Kibera.

In early 2008, Kibera experienced perhaps the darkest chapter in its 100-year history. The period leading up to the December 27, 2007 presidential elections, Raila Odinga was entangled in a hotly contested campaign against incumbent Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu. Most polling experts predicted Odinga would defeat Kibaki, and early election results indicated Odinga was on his way to winning the presidency. But after the Electoral

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<sup>120</sup>Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 P. 243.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> M. Gaithe, "Why Kibera slum-dwellers revolted." *Daily Nation* 2001 November 20.

<sup>123</sup> Robert Neuwirth, *Raila Wants*. New York: Routledge, 2007 P. 10.



Commission tallied the final votes behind closed doors, they re-emerged to announce Kibaki had won the election. The announcement triggered intense fighting throughout Kenya carried out by supporters of both parties. According to the *Waki Report*, Kenya's comprehensive account of the post-election violence, more than 1,000 Kenyans died during the two-month period following the election including at least 700 from the Rift Valley and another 125 from Nairobi.<sup>124</sup>

Within Nairobi, Kibera was a major site of death, injury, destruction of property, displacement, and sexual violence. While violent conflicts largely fell along ethnic and political lines, hostilities between Odinga and Kibaki supporters in Kibera were intensified by existing tensions between Luo tenants and Kikuyu landlords. Many Kikuyu residents were chased out of Kibera, and a great number of them never returned.<sup>125</sup> Both Human Rights Watch and Kenya's international investigation assigned responsibility for the post-election violence to major political actors in both parties for mobilizing their supporters along ethnic lines before and after the election. Yet in Kibera, it was the residents who were left to deal with a fractured community suffering from loss of life and property. During my fieldwork, it was clear that memories of the post-election violence were still very present in the minds of Kibera residents. Several NGOs sponsored projects and events meant to promote peace among Kibera's many ethnic groups, and many residents expressed sorrow over what became of their community during those few months.

## 2.6. Conclusion

From the discussions raised in the chapter, it was evident that the emergence of Kibera informal settlement between 1904 to 1920 was not a planned endeavour. The Nubian community comprising of Sudanese ex-soldiers was the first ethnic group to settle in the area. While its emergence rubbed the colonial masters the wrong way forcing the government to make various attempts to eliminate the slum, its population continued to grow. By 1940, many native-born African communities escaping the Rules and

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<sup>124</sup> Justice Philip Waki; *The Report by the Commission of Inquiry into the 2007 Post -Election Violence*, (2008); [http:// www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki_Report.pdf). Accessed on 13/12/ 2009.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

Regulations of the colonial government moved to Kibera. After Kenya got her Independence in 1963, Kibera's population grew with almost all ethnic communities flocking the city to look for work settling there. By 1991, Kibera had become Kenya in microcosm as the Nubian ethnic group had slowly but surely been displaced by the incoming people mainly from Central, Nyanza, and Western provinces of Kenya. Indeed, the slum had become a home of migrant workers who sought cheap accommodation and easy access to Industrial Area where most of the residents worked.

Moreover, the failure by both the British colonial government and the immediate Independence government of Kenya to address the plight of the Nubian community in Kibera led to some conflicts especially those related to land ownership and rent issues. Later, following the re-introduction of Multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991, more violent conflicts of political nature became common especially around and during electioneering periods.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Multi-Partyism and its Implication in Kibera Slum; 1991- 2008

#### 3.1. Introduction

Since Independence in 1963, the Kenyan Constitution was amended many times. The most serious amendment was the 1981 one which introduced section 2A that made Kenya a 'de facto one party (KANU) State and not a 'de jure one. Most of the amendments were aimed at strengthening the presidency. Following the amendments, the president was given immense powers and Moi's (KANU) government exploited every opportunity to ensure his political opponent were kept at bay and anyone who dared to challenge his leadership faced the full force of the law. Many politicians who rubbed him the wrong way ended up in the popularly known "Nyayo Torture Chambers" while others would be detained for years without trial.

During the time, many "personal" Rulers in Africa in general and President Moi in particular also enjoyed maximum support from the American and Soviet Union (former Yugoslavian) Governments as this was at the peak of the cold war period. The end of the cold war and subsequent collapse of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe saw America remaining as the only super power. Thereafter, new wave of democracy started sweeping across the world and majorly in Africa, and many African leaders were left as political "orphans". The push by America for the opening up of the democratic space affected many countries; that started experiencing constant demonstrations and demands for political pluralism. It was against that back-drop that led to the Constitutional amendment of December 1991 that removed Section 2A, re-introducing the so-called second Multi-party era. The amendment changed the political arena in Kenya marking a new beginning. Conflicts would be experienced in various parts of the country and especially around election periods. One of the most affected areas by violence was Kibera urban slum.<sup>126</sup> The chapter therefore attempts to provide a detailed account of how the re-

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<sup>126</sup>Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, 108/433. USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 P. 454.

introduction of multi-partys rolled in Kenya and how the National political struggles have affected and continued affecting this urban informal settlement.

### **3.2. Re-introduction of Multi-partyism in Kenya and its Implications in Kibera Slum**

Many conflicts that erupted in Kenya in general and in Kibera urban slum in particular can be traced to the call of re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991. It was after the collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, which brought to an end the Cold War era. The new global political dispensation had a big impact on the political behavior not only in Kenya but to the entire African continent as a whole. For the first time donor countries made demands of democratic development and placed pressure on countries that were never seen as violating the democratic rights such as the government of Kenya. At the same time Kenyans began demanding for multiparty system of government as was with other countries in Africa.<sup>127</sup>

As pressure mounted on the Kenya National African Union (KANU) government to embrace the new world order, the party began employing violent tricks to suppress the proponents of the multiparty system of government. The Youth for KANU 92 (YK92) group was now to be legally used as pro-government trouble makers more so in regions such as Kibera where the opposition had a strong following. The KANU Youths were used to harass opposition members and provoke riots in democratic and peaceful demonstrations. The YK 92 was therefore used as a tool of unleashing violence and igniting of ethnic clashes in some parts of the country with Kibera not being exempted, although the proponents of multiparty did not relent.<sup>128</sup>

Opposition members forged on with their struggle against the autocratic KANU regime. In July 7, 1990 they organized a demonstration which the government termed as illegal. The so called illegal demonstration was known as the '*Saba Saba protests*.'<sup>129</sup> The government responded to the demonstration by sending the police and military which

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<sup>127</sup>Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots", in *African Affairs*, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 598–604.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>"*Saba saba*" is Swahili Word, Meaning the Demonstrations were held on Seventh day of July, 1990.

killed at least 20 people and arresting hundred of the demonstrators, including politicians, human rights activists and journalists.<sup>130</sup> Among those arrested was Raila Amolo Odinga an aspiring parliamentary candidate in Langata.<sup>131</sup> Other Leaders arrested were; Martin Shikuku, Masinde Muliro, Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia among others. The arrests did not in any way deter the movement for the introduction of multiparty politics. A new opposition party was formed in 1991 under the name Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD). The party was at first banned by President Moi. Most Western countries responded to KANU government's behavior by suspending their economic Aid to Kenya in condemnation of the political oppression and abuses of human rights. Moi finally gave in and allowed the re-introduction of the multiparty system in Kenya after the repeal of section 2 A of the Kenyan constitution.<sup>132</sup>

Although Moi had given in to political change, his government was determined to maintain the status quo by devising new ways of suppressing the opposition. Political discussions slowly become more common on the streets and some people even advocated for the change of the presidency. As Kenya approached the first multi-party elections in 1992, violent conflicts became a common phenomenon in some parts of the Country especially in Rift valley, Coast, and Nairobi Provinces among others. In Nairobi, most of the conflicts were witnessed in the city slum areas such as Mathare, Kariobangi and Kibera.<sup>133</sup>

The failure by the opposition (FORD) to agree on leadership, disputes over nomination of candidates in some constituencies and the subsequent split of the party contributed to some violence too. Old ethnic divisions were brought to the fore with supporters of Kenneth Matiba and Raila Odinga confronting one another. In Nairobi, where Raila and Matiba factions had considerable support, there were outbreaks of violence, especially in Langata constituency where Raila Odinga hoped to be selected as FORD's Parliamentary

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<sup>130</sup>David Throup & Charles Hornsby; *The Multi-Party Politics in Kenya: The Kenyatta & Moi States & the Triumph of the System in the 1992 Election*. USA, Ohio University Press, 1998 PP. 242-278.

<sup>131</sup> Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant-Chief, Sarang'ombe Location, 06/10/2010.

<sup>132</sup>Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots", in *African Affairs*, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 598-604.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

candidate against intense opposition from Kimani Rugendo, a Kikuyu aligned with Matiba. There were serious clashes in Kibera, the constituency's largest shanty town.<sup>134</sup> One of the clashes left an Odinga supporter dead, and during the FORD preliminary elections, a supporter of Rugendo was stabbed to death when he attempted to run off with some ballot papers.<sup>135</sup>

Prior to the December, 29, 1992 General Elections, Langata was the only constituency in the entire country that had an MP, Philip Leakey, a Kenyan of white descent. Following the announcement of election results in that year, Raila Odinga won the Langata parliamentary seat on a FORD-Kenya ticket and for the first time succeeded Leakey. Raila Odinga had a history as one of the longest serving detainees who constantly rubbed President Moi's regime up the wrong side while clamoring for political pluralism during the one party state in the 1980s. It appeared that Raila's maiden entry into parliament did not appease his seemingly confrontational political spirit.<sup>136</sup>

On January 20, 1994 Odinga, the national chairman of Forum for Restoration of Democracy-Kenya (FORD-K) died. A vicious contestation over party's chairmanship erupted pitting the young Odinga, the Deputy Director of Elections of Ford-Kenya against one Michael Kijana Wamalwa who was the Vice Chairman of the party. Initially, Paul Muite held the position of the first Vice-Chairman of FORD-Kenya. However, after he resigned, the Second Vice-Chairman, Kijana Wamalwa became the Vice-Chairman. The post of the second Vice-Chairman was abolished.<sup>137</sup> Youths allied to the two politicians' camps engaged in running battles in which crude weapons such as *pangas* (machetes), knives, whips and Axes were used to settle scores. Differences between the two politicians, as often has been the case in Kenya's politics, took the form of personality clashes and ethnic calculations rather than being ideologically based.

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<sup>134</sup>D. Rusenburg, *Weekly Review*, August 7, 1992 PP. 8-10; and Summary of the World Broadcast, August 4, 1992 PP. 4-5.

<sup>135</sup>David Throup & Charles Hornsby, *The Multi-Party Politics in Kenya: The Kenyatta & Moi States & the Triumph of the System in the 1992 Election*. USA, Ohio University Press, 1998 P. 134.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ajulu Rok. "Kenya: A Reflection on the 2002 election: Third Time Lucky or More of the Same?" Braamfontein-Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2002 P. 121.

A serious fighting between Luhyas of Kichinjio and Luos of Gatwekera and Kisumu ndogo broke out. The Luhyas mobilized themselves and held their meetings at Kichinjio village within the slum which they later branded "*Bukhungu*." <sup>138</sup> On the other hand, the Luo held their meetings to strategise on how to counter the Luhyas along the railway line in Gatwekera village. Thereafter, they started holding meetings at the place which they later branded "*Kamukunji*." <sup>139</sup> To date, the names still exist and the two groups normally hold meetings in their respective areas every Sunday. The conflict left three people dead and several injured. <sup>140</sup>

In 1996, following the intense FORK-Kenya leadership wrangles, Raila resigned from the party, forsook his parliamentary seat and took up a little known party, the National Development Party of Kenya (NDP) on which he sought re-election in the Langata constituency in a subsequent by-election. The KANU government backed one Okiki Amayo, a fellow Luo to Raila but from south Nyanza to offer him a steep competition in the by-election. Raila hails from Central Nyanza. The move by KANU was meant to revive the old rivalry between Raila's father Jaramogi Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya. KANU was sure that by nominating a fellow Luo would divide the Luo vote in Kibera and Okiki Amayo would also gain the KANU support from the Nubians and Kikuyus in Kibera. <sup>141</sup> To the contrary, Raila easily retained his seat hence going down in the political history of Kenya once again as the first politician to have resigned from Parliament under the multiparty democracy, sought fresh mandate from the electorates and overwhelmingly received it. Although KANU was very influential in the by-election, very minimal violence was witnessed between supporters of the two opposing groups. <sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> "*Bukhungu*" A Luhya cultural phrase or term used to describe the famous public Bukhungu Stadium in Kakamega where most of the public functions including the traditional or cultural activities by the Luhya Community are held.

<sup>139</sup> "*Kamukunji*" A term popularly used by the Luo to refer to the famous Kamukunji grounds in the city of Nairobi where the multi-party proponents including Jaramogi Oginga Odinga used to hold public rallies in early 1990's to push the KANU government allow multi party democracy.

<sup>140</sup> Oral Interview, Justus Mutinda, Pastor with African Inland Church Mashimoni; Kibera 11/11/2011.

<sup>141</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 42.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

Raila invigorated NDP turning it into one of the most prominent political party in Kenya at the time. He contested the presidency in 1997 on the party ticket and ended respectable third behind the incumbent president Moi; and his closest challenger Mwai Kibaki.<sup>143</sup> He teamed up with other presidential losers like Mwai Kibaki, to denounce the elections on the grounds of irregularities; but soon after changed his tune and congratulated Moi following the latter's re-election. Before long Raila's NDP and Moi's KANU began working together under a formula loosely referred to as 'Cooperation' through which KANU with a razor-thin majority in parliament relied on Raila to marshal his MPs to counter opposition onslaught. The relationship between KANU and NDP metamorphosed into a 'Partnership' then a merger on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2002 before the general elections that year after which Raila became the Secretary General of KANU or 'New KANU' as he preferred to call it.

By October 2001, the two politicians appeared to have struck a winning formula with a section of Kikuyu, Luhya, and Luo ethnic groups joining KANU. The alliance would easily have vanquished any opposition challenge in the general elections that were a year away. The meticulously crafted ethnic calculus, as it was known in Kenya's political parlance, was about to be officially cemented through the KANU and NDP merger. It was to be a culmination of the alliance between the two erstwhile rivals following Moi's appointment of Raila and four of his NDP colleagues to the cabinet. Since Kibera was supposed to be a NDP stronghold and in order to stem any resistance to the merger, it became imperative to make statements that would likely make the people support the event. In other words, political populism came to the fore.<sup>144</sup>

On October 22, 2001, the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Land Law Systems in Kenya popularly known as the "Njonjo Land Commission" Visited Kibera as part of its Country wide visits to collect and collate views of Kenyans on the land laws reform process. In the run up to the visit, tensions had been brewing pitting Nubians against non-Nubians over land ownership. During its sittings, the Nubian community claimed

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Law Society of Kenya, "Land Reforms Programme: Mission to Kibera-Nairobi 2002."



ancestral, rightful and “Constitutional” ownership of the land in Kibera arguing that they had lived there for over one hundred years. Moreover, the Nubians were reported to have made a submission to the effect that all non-Nubian residents were ‘squatters’ and therefore did not deserve to live in Kibera. They asserted that all land in the area be given to them as they were the original allottees.<sup>145</sup>

The area Member of Parliament (MP) Honorable Raila Odinga was ambivalent in his comments on the controversial Kibera land ownership. He supported neither the Nubians nor the other communities’ claims. He simply stated that lack of land security had led to the mushrooming of the slum, as owners of shanties feared demolitions of decently built houses. The sitting ended acrimoniously in heckling, name-calling near fight as pandemonium, confusion and commotion reigned.<sup>146</sup> At that stage, the conflict put the Nubian community on a collision course with all other tenant/ resident communities over land ownership.<sup>147</sup>

Exactly ten days later as tensions began rising, Moi went to Kibera on October 31, 2001, to preside over a fund drive in aid of Langata Bursary Fund. During the function, Raila raised the controversial issue of land ownership and asked the president to intervene so as to save the tenants from high rent the same way he (Moi) had intervened on behalf of tenants in other Nairobi slums such as Korogocho and Mathare.<sup>148</sup> He decried the poor living conditions in which the tenants lived besides being terrorized by goons hired by landlords to deal with rent defaulters.<sup>149</sup>

In his address to the rally, Moi stated that the land in Kibera belonged to the government and those levying rent on the temporary structures were breaching the law.<sup>150</sup> Moi ordered the then Nairobi Provincial Commissioner (PC) Cyrus Maina to arbitrate between the

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<sup>145</sup>Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, “Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya.” Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 44.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Law Society of Kenya, “Land Reforms Programme: A Mission to Kibera -Nairobi, 2002.”

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, P. 7.

<sup>150</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, “Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya.” Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 78.

landlords and the tenants over the rent issue. The PC called for a consultative meeting between the two parties during which he seemed to contradict his senior by ordering tenants to continue paying rent as they waited further negotiations. At that point violence erupted since the tenants took it that the Provincial Commissioner had sided with the landlords.<sup>151</sup>

On the October 9, 2001, at another meeting called by the PC which representatives of landlords and tenants attended, Landlords dug their heels and appeared as if they were determined to maintain their optimum income. They did concede to proposals for rent reductions. Rents of between Kshs. 100 and 200 would be reduced by Kshs. 50; those of Kshs 300 to 900 by kshs 100, Kshs 1,500 to 2,500 by Kshs 200 and Kshs 3,000 to 10,000 by Kshs 500. Tenants on their part maintained that a half cut and even non-payment of rents for other structures.<sup>152</sup> The message that the tenants got from Moi's speech was that they could after all stay in houses without paying rent as doubts had been cast by none other than the President of the Republic of Kenya as to the title of the land purportedly claimed by landlords.<sup>153</sup> Moi significantly upped the stakes in the fostering conflict with tenants being then in a position to challenge the legitimacy of the hitherto, undisputed landlords by reference to Moi's directives.

On December 3, 2001, Raila Odinga again attended a rally in Kibera and demanded that rent be reduced by 50%. Unlike the president, the MP was unequivocal and as such was seen to have sided with tenants. Indeed the pronouncements resulted in physical violence that very night.<sup>154</sup> When a Landlord went to ask for rent from his tenants, they refused to pay, no doubt relying on statements made by the two politicians. The landlord in turn mobilized youth who went and beat up the tenants. The Tenants fought back in defense and overpowered the landlord and his gang. Being a Muslim, the landlord sought refuge in a mosque from where he proceeded to raise alarm. The intension was to create the

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid, P. 22.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Law Society of Kenya, "Land Reforms Programme: A Mission to Kibera- Nairobi 2002."

impression that a Muslim was being attacked by non-Muslims in the mosque.<sup>155</sup> For the following two days, the violence spread throughout Kibera as it sucked in more and more members of the public all fighting on one side or the other. The police then moved in, in an attempt to restore order. Thousands of residents fled their houses and sought refuge in church compounds, mosques and administration offices.<sup>156</sup>

The 2001 violent clashes were very destructive leading to at least 15 people being killed, houses being burned and displacement of thousands of innocent people evicted from their houses. Most members of the Luo community refused generally to pay rent particularly in areas where they dominated such as Gatwikira and Kisumu Ndogo.<sup>157</sup> Consequently, other ethnic groups living in Kibera also took advantage of the situation and temporarily stopped paying rent worsening the situation. Some of the landlords removed rooftops to evict tenants who had defied rent payment, while others particularly those from the Kikuyu community and the Nubians lost control over their houses during violence. Most of them were forced to flee because of threats over their lives. Others were forced to completely stop going to Kibera to collect rent.<sup>158</sup> Indeed, many people were maimed, houses burnt and property destroyed. For those who were fighting, every destruction, death or damage was sought to be similarly avenged on their adversary. Although some negotiations took place and some tenants resumed paying rent, in the main Luo-dominated areas, it remained both difficult and risky for landlords to take action against non-paying tenants. The situation of non-payment of rent persisted up to the elections of 2007.<sup>159</sup>

Amidst the violence, the Provincial Commissioner; Cyrus Maina confirmed that a survey of the slum was underway. He said that the government was in the process of establishing the boundaries of the land that was allocated to the members of the Nubian community in the colonial time and that once they had been established; the Provincial Administration would have to decide whether to give a communal title deed or individual ones to the

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid, P. 23.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> David Rowan, "Kenya: 15 Killed in Slum Clashes." *Daily Nation*, December 14, 2001.

<sup>158</sup> Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant-Chief Sarang'ombe Location, Kibera; 06/10/2010.

<sup>159</sup> Oral Interview, Douglas Ouma Nyakech, Chief Sarang'ombe Location, Kibera; 15/10/2010.

members of the community.<sup>160</sup> The process was never heard again after normalcy was restored and people started going their daily business.

A couple of months before the 2002 December General Elections, the delicate ethnic mix that Moi had so deftly brought together under KANU in preparation for his succession imploded after he imposed Uhuru Muigai; Kenyatta's son, on the party as a presidential candidate.<sup>161</sup> The choreographed elevation of Uhuru to the pinnacle of the party elicited stiff opposition from within the party and among a cross section of Kenyans. Moi and Raila faced each other as fierce opponents supporting different presidential candidates. Moi supported Uhuru while Raila supported Mwai Kibaki's presidential candidature. Given that Moi's rent directive was a populist pronouncement opposed to a policy statement; no follow-up was made after he left office in 2002.

Following the 2002 December general elections, Mwai Kibaki of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) won with a massive landslide of 64% of the total votes cast against Moi's choice Uhuru Kenyatta gunning 35%.<sup>162</sup> For the first time, Kenya had a new President after more than three decades of Moi's rule. The transition of power from Moi to Kibaki was peaceful with a massive crowd attending the handing over ceremony at Uhuru park in Nairobi. Raila Odinga, Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka, and Prof. George Saitoti of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) were all appointed to the Cabinet in the NARC government as Ministers. Other members of affiliate parties forming NARC were Charity Ngilu and Michael Kijana Wamalwa of Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Ford Kenya (FORD-k) respectively and who had earlier formed the National Alliance of Kenya (NAK) with Kibaki's Democratic Party (DP) prior to the formation of NARC. Michael Wamalwa was appointed the Vice President while Uhuru Kenyatta of KANU became the official opposition leader in Parliament.

After assuming power on December 31, 2002, Kibaki and Raila worked well and in harmony until and after the November 4, 2005 Referendum when they broke ranks

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<sup>160</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 46.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Law Society of Kenya, "Land Reforms Programme: A Mission to Kibera –Nairobi, 2002."

following a dispute over the proposed Constitution of Kenya. Raila joined hands with the opposition party leader-Uhuru Kenyatta of KANU. Raila's call for the rejection of the proposed Constitution of Kenya triumphed against Kibaki who supported it. The triumph gave birth to the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) which Raila used later to challenge Kibaki's presidential re-election bid in the 2007 General Elections. The outcome of the referendum also saw Kibaki dissolving his Cabinet before appointing another one where he dropped Raila and his team including Kalonzo Musyoka. That revived the previously known animosity between Raila and Kibaki.

Immediately after the referendum, political tension and sporadic violence became a common occurrence in Kibera. Raila's political opponents could not be peacefully allowed to hold political rallies as the Luo youth frequently disrupted the meetings mostly after incitement by ODM politicians. On the Election date (December 27, 2007), tensions were evident within the Kibera slum after some voter names including that of the ODM Presidential candidate Raila Odinga were discovered missing from the voters registers in some polling stations.<sup>163</sup> Calm was only restored after the presiding officers in those polling centres sorted out the problem and allowed voters to cast their votes. Many Kibera residents and especially ODM supporters mainly Luos and Luhyas among other communities had high hopes that their MP and ODM presidential candidate would win the elections. Indeed they were sure Raila was to become the fourth president of the Republic of Kenya.<sup>164</sup> The voting within Langata constituency just like in other constituencies within the city went on well and concluded peacefully and within the specified time.

The Kibera residents thereafter followed vote counting keenly and even prepared for victory celebrations. The situation in Kibera was also tense as word went round that elections would be rigged hence most of them flocked in thousands to the election nerve centre at Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC) to await the results. The move prompted the government to deploy a high number of GSU, Regular Police and Administration Police at (KICC) to ensure security. However, the situation turned chaotic

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<sup>163</sup>Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant-Chief, Sarang'ombe Location; 06/10/2010.

<sup>164</sup>Oral Interview, Justus Mutinda, Pastor with Africal Inland Church Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2011.

when the ODM politicians claimed that there was doctoring of the results and that the people would not accept the results. There was intense friction and commotion at the KICC between PNU and ODM politicians sending panic signals around the country.<sup>165</sup>

On December 30, 2007, the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) Declared that Kibaki had won the Presidential Elections and he was subsequently sworn in that evening at State House, Nairobi, at a ceremony attended by few of his lieutenants. The events immediately led to spontaneous outbreak of demonstrations and violence in various parts of the country. In Kibera slum; one of Railas strongholds turned into violence as its residents joined hands in the street demonstrations. They went on rampage, destroying property mostly belonging to the Kikuyu, Kamba and other pro-PNU supporters forcing thousands to relocate to safer zones. There was looting of property from Kikuyu houses and businesses.<sup>166</sup> The Luo youths mainly from Gatwekera and Kisumu Ndogo villages would from time to time during the violence attack traders and businesses within Laini Saba and Mashimoni villages. The villages were mainly inhabited by wealthy Kikuyus, Kambas and Kisiis. The motive for the attacks was to loot. They had nicknamed the area “Dubai.”<sup>167</sup>

During the interviews, Pastor Justus Mutinda said;

“Within one hour after the announcement of the results houses and business premises went on fire. There was looting and destruction of property, killings and maiming of people. In this particular case, the Luo were the main perpetrators. They armed themselves with stones, pangas, and with other crude weapons. The Luos accompanied by their Luyha counter-parts blockaded roads and the railway line. They specifically targeted other communities with an exemption of Nubians, Luyhas, Kalenjin, and Kisii. They mainly targeted Kikuyus and later Kambas who were viewed as traitors for having helped Kibaki rig the elections.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Peace-Net-Kenya, “The Quest for Human Dignity: Kibera violence, Nairobi.” Acken Media Services, 2001 P. 34.

<sup>167</sup> “Dubai.” This a local phrase or term used to denote an area where good things or items are found or manufactured. This includes goods like Electronics, Clothes, and Mobile phones, among others.

<sup>168</sup> Oral Interview, Justus Mutinda, Pastor with African Inland Church. Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2011.

On December 31, 2007, Olympic market, Toi market and other business premises including residential houses were burnt down completely. Churches such as AIC Kibera, St. Emmanuel Coptic church in Olympic, and PCEA Karanja road were burnt. The Government workshop belonging to Housing Finance next to AIC Kibera with machinery and vehicles worth millions of Kenya shillings was burnt down into ashes. Before the burnings started, looting took place first.<sup>169</sup>

Indeed the most affected areas by looting were Kianda and Olympic villages where the perceived relatively richer people of Kibera lived. The areas did not have vigilant groups that would have protected their property like in other parts of the slum. Most of the businesses were also owned by non-Kikuyu residents. To the contrary, Kikuyu, Kamba and Kisii traders in Laini Saba areas and Mashimoni recruited Kikuyu vigilantes among them the feared "*Mungiki*"<sup>170</sup> to protect them against the Luo and Luhya attacks. The areas therefore had very minimal cases of looting of property.<sup>171</sup>

The vigilante groups carried out retaliation attacks in Luo and Luhya dominated areas. They remained on watch out by carrying out routine checks on people during day time, asking residents for identity (ID) cards, and attacking those perceived to be from opposing ethnic groups. In Laini Saba area, vigilante groups targeted men suspected to be Luos and they would undress them in order to confirm their identities. Some Luos men were forcefully circumcised by Mungiki as they went and came from their places of work. Many people especially those from the Luo ethnic group who lived in the areas were also beaten up and forced to relocate to the Luo dominated villages where they sought refuge.<sup>172</sup> The adaptation of the new strategies by the Kikuyu and Kamba traders led to subsequent reduction of the fighting till when a peace agreement was reached between Kibaki and Raila.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> "*Mungiki*," An Organized Militia group alleged to draw most of its members and supports from Central and Mount Kenya Regions of Kenya; and known for its deadly Acts.

<sup>171</sup> Oral Interview, Justus Mutinda, Pastor with African Inland Church, Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2011.

<sup>172</sup> Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant Chief Sarang'ombe Location, Kibera; 06/10/2010.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

Following the appointment of Kalonzo Musyoka as the vice president, the war changed. It became a war between Luos, Kalenjins, and Luhyas against Kikuyus and Kambas. Pastor Mutinda remembers that;

“One Wednesday in the month of January 2008, in the mid-morning hours, there was a fierce fighting in Mashomoni area along the railway line. The fighting was mainly between Lous and Kambas. The Kambas had armed themselves with bows and poisoned arrows. On that day, five Luos were shot with poisoned arrows.”<sup>174</sup>

From January 1, 2008, the railway line was removed between Lindi and Gatwekira areas. Patrick Njiru Total petrol station in Makina next to the court was also burnt down. During the conflict many people were killed. Not less than 100 people in total lost their lives in Kibera. Pastor Mutinda said; “I do remember that there was one morning when five bodies were collected by the police at Laini Saba grounds.”<sup>175</sup>

There were also clashes between different vigilante groups, notably the groups from Gatwikira and the ‘defence force’ of Laini Saba, in which a number of people were reported to have been killed. In order to maintain their operations, the vigilant groups started levying “protection fees or taxes” especially when out in the streets at night. Some put up roadblocks along Kibera drive to collect money from passing traffic. Others offered their services to members of the Kikuyu community who needed to transport their belongings out of Kibera or to newly arrived Luo and Luhya, chased away from Kikuyu dominated areas.<sup>176</sup>

As conflict in Kibera continued, life became a nightmare as most shops closed for security purposes. There was no food supply leading to price inflation as the region was codoned by the security personnel deployed to stop any further destruction. The security agents used water cannon and teargas, resulting in more clashes in the Kibera slum. The youth who had gotten used to looting engaged the police in street battles which resulted

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Oral Interview, Bonita Ayuko, Kibera; 03/11/2010.



into more killings; mostly when the police applied excessive force against unarmed civilians.

The continuity of intense violence in various parts of the country with Kibera being one of the hot spots, attracted National and Regional, Continental, and Global attention. The United States of America (USA) and some major European powers including Britain, France, and Germany among others played a leading role into bringing the two warring parties to a negotiating table. A committee of eminent persons led by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan was appointed to foresee the negotiations between PNU and ODM which would culminate into the signing of the Serena negotiation Accord.<sup>177</sup>

The situation in Kibera remained very tense, pending negotiations between ODM and PNU. After former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan arrived on January 22, 2008 to mediate, the situation improved and most vigilante groups stopped their nightly vigils. The calmness was however disrupted by the assassination of the ODM Member of Parliament (MP) elect for Embakasi Constituency in Nairobi Melitus Mugabe Were. He was shot dead by armed Robbers outside his house on the January 29, 2008 along Joseph Kang'ethe road next to Makina village.<sup>178</sup> To some Kibera residents and especially ODM supporters saw the killings as being politically motivated. The killings triggered some renewed attacks on members of the Kikuyu community. The month of February witnessed fighting but on a small scale in Kibera slum. On February 28, 2008, the negotiations ended with the signing of the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation Accord (KNDR) where Kibaki remained President and Raila became Prime Minister. The country soon realized peace although ethnic mistrust remained a major problem in the country and in any government decision.

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<sup>177</sup> Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant Chief, Sarang'ombe Location; 06/10/2010.

<sup>178</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*. USA, Published by Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 381–398. Accessed on 14/03/2011.

### **3.3. Conclusion**

The re-introduction of multi partyism in Kenya in 1991 marked the beginning of ethnic instigated violence in the country. The re-current outbreak of violence strained ethnic relations in Kibera slum with the 'big mans politics' with influential families (especially the Raila Odinga family) being at the centre of Kibera slum politics playing a significant role by ensuring other political competitors were allowed little space to source for votes there. Politics of ethnic hatred and affiliation also came to the fore during electioneering periods. These were indeed some of the key serious contributing factors to the subsequent conflicts in Kibera since 1991. Thus, it was very clear that most of the conflicts in Kibera slum after 1991 (during multi-party era) were politically instigated.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Causes of Conflicts in Kibera Urban Slum; 1904-2008

#### 4.1. Introduction

More than eight decades since Kibera emerged as an informal settlement in 1904, the slum had been characterized by constant disputes between the Nubians and the subsequent governments over ownership of Kibera land. Similarly, there have been reported cases of disputes over rents payments involving “landlords” and tenants. Most of the disputes had degenerated into physical violence between various interest groups and to some extent leading to losses of lives and property. Following the re-introduction of multi-party politics in the country in 1991, the slum just like many other parts of the country continued witnessing more violent conflicts mainly around election times. While various explanations were advanced by many scholars of Armed Conflict and Conflict Resolution to explain why this was the case in Kenya, very little scholarly explanation were documented about the violence in urban slums and particularly in the case of Kibera slum. The chapter therefore, provides a critical examination of the conflicts in Kibera Slum and to specifically attempt to understand their causes. It would be of great interest to find out whether political influential families, big man politics and local socio-economic dynamics including land related issues were responsible for the conflicts.

#### 4.2. Socio-Economic causes

##### 4.2.1. Kibera Land Ownership dispute

The land question in Kibera was an emotive and polarizing one. It had been so since colonialism. The subsequent governments maintained that it owned it while the Nubian community advanced the argument that having settled in the area for close to a century, thus, they were the rightful owners of the land.<sup>179</sup>The government ownership of the land was officially declared in 1933 when the Kenya Land Commission clarified that the area was crown land with the implication that the Nubians were then tenants of the crown.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Macharia Waweru, “Hundreds Left Homeless in Kibera Evictions,” *Daily Nation Newspaper*, December 7, 2001 P. 6.

<sup>180</sup> Kyppede, “Kibera Violence and the Need for More Elaborate Monitoring and Research Work about the Violence.” (Unpublished Report), 2002.

In 1932 and 1933, the “Kibera problem” was brought before the Kenya Land Commission (KLC) otherwise known as the ‘Carter Judicial Commission.’ The government of Kenya hoped the Commission would provide legal sanction for the removal of the settlement, and marshaled a great deal of evidence to show that the Sudanese had no title deeds to the land and were a source of crime and disorder.<sup>181</sup> C.H. Adams, the District Commissioner (DC) of Nairobi told the KLC that “land around big towns was much too valuable to start ‘native farms’ adjoining them,” and argued that the Sudanese were in fact “tenants at the will of the Crown” who could be evicted by the Minister of Lands at any time. Adams maintained that the Sudanese veterans received a discharge gratuity in cash payment, and not legal title to Kibera. Colonel R. Wilkinson, the commander of KAR’s Northern Brigade and the highest ranking officer in the colony, did nothing to defend the Sudanese. He favored relocating Kibera because the Sudanese were no longer enlisted in appreciable numbers. Captain B.F. Montgomery, the adjutant of 5KAR, was more sympathetic. He argued that only the second generation of Sudanese who failed to fulfill the residency requirement through military service should be evicted. The older ex-askaris (ex-soldiers), he argued, should still be allowed to spend their final days in Kibera<sup>182</sup>.

The Sudanese themselves were allowed to offer testimony to the Commission, and in a joint memorandum repeated their claim that Kibera was their pension.<sup>183</sup> While a formidable group of European witnesses testified against the Sudanese, the Commission declined to sanction their outright eviction. It did find that “... there is nothing whatever to support the contention of the Sudanese that the whole area was given to them as a reserve forever. They were merely given permission to live there.” However, it qualified the statement by noting that they were also owed certain obligations:

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<sup>181</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, “Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya.” Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 52.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Timothy Parsons. “Kibra is our blood”: The Sudanese Military Legacy in Nairobi’s Kibera Location, 1902-1968.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 30(1), 1997 PP. 87-122.

“We consider that the Government had a clear duty to these ex-askaris either to repatriate them or find accommodation for them. They were told that they might make their homes at Kibera and in our judgement they ought not to be moved without receiving suitable land elsewhere and compensation for disturbance, and we consider that a similar obligation exists in respect of their widows, or sons who are already house holders in Kibera.”<sup>184</sup>

The Sudanese were expected to die out slowly, and their presence could be tolerated until old age moved them. The Commission denied the Sudanese the right to build more houses in Kibera as it accepted the argument that the settlement had become “useless” as a military recruiting ground. Houses were to be destroyed after the death of veterans and widows, with the second generation of Sudanese eventually moving to the Muslim neighborhood of Pumwani.<sup>185</sup>

The Commission felt that if relocation was necessary, the government had the obligation to settle the Sudanese on good land within easy reach of Nairobi. The Commission singled out the non-Sudanese in Kibera as the primary cause of disorder in the community. They were to receive the “bare cost” of their houses and crops, and were to move to Pumwani or their home reserves.<sup>186</sup> Therefore, the Kenya Land Commission’s recommendations pleased neither the Civil Administration nor the Sudanese. The Sudanese claim to Kibera was repudiated, but the government was not given the sanction to summarily evict them. Furthermore, the optimistic hope that order could be imposed on the settlement until the *ex askaris* conveniently died of old age proved to be entirely unfounded.<sup>187</sup>

Following the recommendations by the Commission, a number of developments came to the fore; many unauthorized housing units were destroyed and occupants evicted with only partial compensation. The latter seemed a strategy expressly to limit the exponential local population growth. With concerns over the area’s continued deterioration into a

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid, P. 96.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid, PP. 96-97.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, PP. 97-98.

slum, a development plan presented to the Council of Ministers in 1960 for approval officially allocated 500 acres to settle about 15 000 African residents.<sup>188</sup> Nubians were allowed to remain in Kibera. Sewage and water connections to Kibera were recommended. These modernization efforts continued leading to the construction of modern estates in the post-colonial period.

The irony however was that Nubians never benefited from those modernization efforts as villages were razed to the ground to pave way for modern housing. Instead most of the houses in those estates were allocated to other Kenyans from outside Kibera.<sup>189</sup> As a result Nubians were compelled to seek refuge among relatives in villages that had not been affected, thus putting more pressure on dwindling vacant land within the remaining villages. The remaining villages with Nubian were Lindi, Kambi Lendu, Kambi Aluru, Kambi Muru, Mashimoni, and Makongeni that had attracted other Kenyans from outside Kibera thus further contributing to the marginalization of Nubians.<sup>190</sup>

The government seemed to be in no hurry to resolve the dispute over land ownership in Kibera. It was curious to note that a presidential Commission of Inquiry into the Land Law system in Kenya (otherwise known as the Njonjo Commission) appointed in 1999 and that handed in its report in 2002 mentioned neither Kibera nor the Nubian community despite having held a sitting in the area. Instead the report said;

“The rights founded on historical claims based on colonial or recent expropriations are at present a serious phenomenon in Kenya. They could receive legitimacy as a result of pressures being exerted by representatives of certain communities particularly the Maasai, the Pokot, the Sengwer, the Endorois, the Pokomo, the Orma, the Ogiek, the Talai, the Bajuni, the Boni and the Mijikenda communities.”<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid, P. 120.

<sup>189</sup> A. Hake, *African Metropolis*. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1977 P. 96.

<sup>190</sup> Macharia Waweru, “Hundreds Left Homeless in Kibera Evictions,” *Daily Nation* December 7, 2001.

<sup>191</sup> The Njonjo Land Commission, “Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Land Law System of Kenya on Principles of a National Land Policy Framework on Constitutional Position of Land and the New Institutional Framework for Land Administration.” Nairobi, Government Printer, (2002).

The grievances these communities had over land dispossession were similar to those of the Nubian community. The silence over Kibera land ownership reflected reluctance by the government to deal with the Nubian issue. In its recommendation, the Commission counselled that mechanisms be put in place to investigate and resolve historical claims by communities particularly in the Rift Valley and Coast Provinces and conspicuously left out Kibera.<sup>192</sup> The neglect by government of the land dispute in Kibera meant that all sorts of people had emerged over the years laying claim to the land in Kibera. However, the Nubian community maintained that Kibera belonged to them.

In 1931, the Nairobi DC, E.B Hosking, accompanied by the municipal Native affairs officer and the police inspector of Kilimani, held a *baraza* (meeting) with the Sudanese of Kibera. During the meeting, “Kiberans” holding legal residence permits received round door metal plates stamped with the letters “KAR” and numbered from 1 to 350.<sup>193</sup>

From the interviews on some members of the Nubian community, it was clear to them that Kibera was their home, ancestral land, pride, an identity and nationality. Any “invasion of Kibera” amounts to invasion of their sovereignty. The Nubian community in Kibera had the feeling of “illegal” occupancy of their land, exploitation and domination by the populous and powerful outsiders’.<sup>194</sup> The Nubians demonstrated their determination to reclaim their land through a suit they filed against the government of Kenya before the African Union’s African Commission on Human and People’s Rights. It was scheduled for hearing during the 40th Ordinary Session, from November 9 to 15, 2006 in Banjul, the Gambia. They took the move after what they considered as the Kenyan government’s failure to address their grievances.<sup>195</sup>

In its slum upgrading strategy of 2005, the government admitted that a common denominator in the urban slums and informal settlements of Kenya was the lack of

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Timothy Parsons, “Kibra is Our Blood”: The Sudanese Military Legacy in Nairobi’s Kibera Location, 1902-1968.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 30(1), 1997 P. 46.

<sup>194</sup> Kyppede, “Kibera Violence and the Need for More Elaborate Monitoring and Research Work about the Violence.”(Unpublished Report), 2002.

<sup>195</sup> Peter Oyuke, “Kibera Land Issues to Feature in Banjul Talks.”*The Standard Newspaper*; October 5, 2006 P. 7.

security of tenure and or residency. Although the government committed to regularize land for purposes of integrating the settlements into the formal physical and economic frameworks of urban centres, nothing was done for the Kibera case.<sup>196</sup> The fact that there was, by and large, no security of tenure in Kibera informal settlements and slums helped to explain the reluctance to improve housing and related infrastructure the people sometimes refused to pay rent leading to conflict. The fact explains the long held grievances that led to eviction of landlords during the 2001 conflicts and the 2008 post election violence in Kibera.

#### 4.2.1.1. Forced Ejections

The failure by the government to address the land issue in Kibera was also complicated by the problem of forced evictions. The Kibera informal settlement dwellers are particularly vulnerable to forced evictions, often carried out on masses with catastrophic consequences for individuals and families. In fact, since the establishment of the very first informal settlements in Kibera, large-scale forced evictions had regularly occurred in a manner that contravened the people's rights. Sometimes mass forced evictions were carried out by private developers claiming ownership of land on which some of the settlements stand, or government projects.<sup>197</sup>

The government of Kenya seemed to lack a clear evictions policy and specific legislation in this regard, hence allowing the process to be carried out in a very dehumanizing manner. Under such conditions the residents of Kibera would rise in arms, sometimes engaging the police in battles, destroying property and sometimes causing death. In response the government pledged to develop guidelines on evictions and in 2006 formed a task force to address the problem but there has, however, been no discernible progress in the task force's work.<sup>198</sup> As per the UN requirements to which Kenya is a signatory, the government was under an immediate obligation to provide a minimum degree of legal

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<sup>196</sup>Maina wa Kinyatti, "History of Resistance in Kenya; 1884-2002." Nairobi: Mau Mau Research Centre, 2008, P. 30.

<sup>197</sup>Africa Watch, *Divide and Rule: State-Sponsored Ethnic violence in Kenya* Nairobi: Africa Watch, 1993 P. 3.

<sup>198</sup>Maina wa Kinyatti, "History of Resistance in Kenya 1884-2002." Nairobi: Mau Mau Research Centre, 2008 PP. 31-32.



security of tenure to everyone, including protection from forced evictions, harassment and other threats. That was because the government was not meeting its obligations under international Human Rights Law to prohibit and prevent forced evictions. It also failed to ban on domestic law forced evictions; or stop forced evictions by public and private actors. Forced evictions therefore become a contributing factor not only to poverty but also to the conflict that was frequently witnessed in Kibera.<sup>199</sup>

#### 4.2.1.2. Government- “Landlords” Tussle over Land Ownership

‘Landlords’ in Kibera were in essence not real landlords, having regard to the government’s claim and ‘tenants’ were again not real tenants for their tenancy was derived from people with no better title than theirs. According to the government, anyone who purported to own land in Kibera was engaging in an illegal action and should be prosecuted. On October 31, 2001 while addressing a fund drive in aid of Langa’ta Bursary Fund in Kibera, Moi said; “...Those illegally occupying land in Kibera would have been prosecuted but had to reduce rent to the level...”<sup>200</sup>

One of the findings of the study was that not many people in Kibera, including those who were there in 2001 knew exactly what the then Head of State had specifically said on the above-mentioned date. There were those who erroneously attributed the words about fifty per cent reduction in rentals to him while in actual fact it was a figure arbitrarily arrived at by Raila Odinga. While carrying out my research at the Sarang’ombe location chief’s office, two members of his council of elders differed with each other in front of me. When I asked what the cause of the conflict was, one answered that: “The conflict was due to landlords refusing to lower rents by 50% which was to be lowered as per the directions of MP Hon. Raila Odinga and President Moi.”<sup>201</sup> The other countered by saying: “Moi did not make any commitment on the rent issue. The 50% figure was part of

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<sup>199</sup> Peter Kangwanja, “Killing the Vote: State Sponsored Violence and Flawed Elections in Kenya.” Nairobi: *Kenya Human Rights Commission*, 2001 P. 70.

<sup>200</sup> Moi, Video Tape of Speeches during the Lang’ata Constituency Bursary Fund Rally on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2001 that I watched in Cllr Opette’s House, Kibera; 19/09/2010.

<sup>201</sup> Oral Interview, Hussein Ali, Kibera; 19/06/2011.

Raila's re-election bid and should have been seen within the framework of politics of grandstanding and brinkmanship."<sup>202</sup>

The government persistently argued that Kibera land was its property and all those who occupied it whether as owners of houses and other premises or tenants were all tenants. Raila Odinga was quoted in a local newspaper as saying: "The landlords must reduce rents because the land on which Kibera slum is built is government land. You cannot be called a landlord if you do not own land; those who have constructed houses on government land are the government's tenants."<sup>203</sup> Raila, the then Energy Minister, maintained this line of argument and he was once again quoted saying that there were no landlords in Kibera but "land tenants," who had leased land from government and added that the government issued the "landtenants" with Temporary Occupation Licenses (TOLs) and not Title deeds.<sup>204</sup> The government had the force of the law on its side because none of those who had property in Kibera had title for proof of ownership. There was no legal system of permanent allocation of land in informal settlements in Nairobi.

Chiefs appointed by city authorities only issued Temporary Occupation Licenses that could be revoked anytime by the government. The chiefs determined at their discretion those that may have a TOL and at what price, thereby establishing a system of discrimination and patronage.<sup>205</sup> The president's remarks served to underscore the status of landlords as mere squatters and even exposed them as fraudsters who had no better claim to the land than those from whom they demanded rent. To the tenants, the president's remarks simply meant non payment of rent and it was at this point that battle lines became drawn between landlords and tenants that culminated in a conflagration.<sup>206</sup> One of the landlords interviewed during the study questioned the motive behind Moi and Raila's comments on rent;

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<sup>202</sup> Oral Interview, Peter Omondi, Kibera; 19/06/2011.

<sup>203</sup> Wakholi George, 'Rent Disputes, a Key Challenge to Peace in Kibera.' *Daily Nation*; December 3, 2001.

<sup>204</sup> Moses Koech, "Kibera is a Governments Land, Claims Raila." *Daily Nation Newspaper*; December 8, 2001.

<sup>205</sup> Kituo Cha Sheria, "Participatory Urban Appraisal Report: 'Strengthening Tenants Association Rights and Tools for Negotiations and Effective Dialogue,'" Nairobi, (unpublished manuscript), 2004.

<sup>206</sup> Law Society of Kenya, "Land Reforms Programme, A Mission to Kibera- Nairobi." 2002.

“I have saved and gone through a lot to construct these structures. They are my only source of livelihood. A tenant has to negotiate with me if he realizes that the rent is too high. Through negotiation, I can reduce rent.”<sup>207</sup>

The president might have had good intentions for the inhabitants of Kibera but the act that his remarks were equivocal on the volatile issue of rent and making them after the commission he had appointed had held a sitting in the area, he succeeded in adding fuel to burning embers in Kibera rather than extinguishing them.

However, the violence that rocked Kibera for many years could not be solely attributed to political statements. The violence has been as a consequence of a larger problem which was as old as Kenya itself.<sup>208</sup> Although the colonial government did not give the settled Nubian soldiers titles, the Nubians believed they had ancestral claim to the land. In other places in Kenya, lack of Title deeds did not necessarily mean the occupants were squatters. There were hundreds of thousands of occupants whose only claim was some ancestral right.<sup>209</sup> A common feature of African land tenure was its tendency to permit very widespread, even universal rights, to land and therefore land in Kenya could be regarded as “belonging” (in broad sense) to one tribe or importance<sup>210</sup>.

Government neglect of the Nubian concern was expressed by one of the residents during the interviews, “Since the era of Moi, the government promised to issue Title Deeds to us but we have waited in vain. *Imekuwa kitendawili* (It has become a riddle). Both Moi and Kibaki governments are the same. Kibaki is insensitive to our plight. So was Moi.”<sup>211</sup> Nubians had arguments to back up their claim to land in Kibera which deserved attention. For instance, they argued that unlike the Luo, the Kikuyu and other tenants (and landlords) in the slums, did not have any ancestral land they could go back to as the

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<sup>207</sup> Oral Interview, Sharriff Abdulwahab, Kibera; 20/06/2011.

<sup>208</sup> Ombati Geoffrey, “Colonialism and its Legacy in Kibera.” *Daily Nation*; December 6, 2001.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Simon Kariuki, “A Comparative Study of Land Reform Policy and Implementation Programme in Post-Independent Kenya (1963) and Post-Apartheid South Africa (1994),” Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, (2003).

<sup>211</sup> Oral Interview, Shaban Ahmed, Kibera; 19/06/2011.

British had rooted them out of Sudan. According to one Nubian landlady, “Luos have their home in Kisumu; we do not have any home. Once we die we are buried here (in our cemetery)”<sup>212</sup>

According to the former Councillor Opette Opette of Sarang’ombe ward, he was sympathetic to the Nubians’ concerns and seemed to have a quick fix to the issue with remarks that nonetheless, appeared incendiary;

“Nubians should be given 300 acres since Kibera is about 450 acres. The remainder 150 acres should be given to other communities. Nubians have settled in Kibera for long and should be given Kibera as their home. Other communities residing here have their ancestral homes. Luos should go to Luoland. Kikuyus and Luhyas should likewise go to their respective ancestral homes.”<sup>213</sup>

The embers of the conflicts in Kibera pitting landlords against tenants were still smouldering several years on. Kibera was a dangerous place because, “Kuna chemba chemba” (the area is still smouldering).<sup>214</sup> Some tenants had continued to defy rent payment ever since Moi and Raila made their remarks in 2001. In Kianda village, for example, some tenants had appropriated houses in which they were staying without paying rent. There were fears that the aggrieved landlords were planning to hire *Mungiki*, a rag tag militia gang mostly composed of young people from the Kikuyu community, to evict them.<sup>215</sup> There were those who insisted on paying half of what they used to pay before the directives from Moi and Raila in 2001. Still others simply moved out of houses without paying rent. Some landlords were uncomfortable with tenants who had stayed in their houses for more than ten years. The category of tenants was seen to be recalcitrant and would hear nothing about rent increment. To counter them, certain landlords resorted to hood winking them into temporarily vacating their houses for renovations, only for the same houses to be given out to new and seemingly ‘cooperative’

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid, P. 45.

<sup>213</sup> Oral Interview, Opette Opette, Kibera; 17/09/2010.

<sup>214</sup> Oral Interview, Mohammed Ibrahim, Kibera; 23/08/2010.

<sup>215</sup> Oral Interview, , Kenedy Osiako, Pastoral Teachear at Christ the King Catholic Church, Kibera; 21/01/2011.

tenants.<sup>216</sup> On the part of landlords, there were those whose houses had been taken over by tenants and had never dared to go back and claim them for fear of their lives.<sup>217</sup>

To Councillor Opette Opette, some landlords were still unyielding ten years down the line and treated tenants inhumanely. He stated that sometime before our interview, a landlady had plotted the murder of one of her tenants over a rent dispute in Kianda village. In retaliation twenty houses of hers were torched by irate residents. Furthermore he alleged that a landlord had stabbed a tenant to death in Gatwekera village over a rent dispute as well and both cases were said to be with the police. "Since 2001 no landlord/lady has been killed but they continue killing tenants."<sup>218</sup> Separately another interviewee graphically narrated how an incident in Kianda village unfolded. According to him, the said landlady (a Luhya) gave her houses a facelift before arbitrarily increasing rent per room from Kshs 400 to Kshs 1500 upon which tenants complained prompting her to go to the chief for arbitration. It seemed the Administrator was of little or no help to her. She allegedly hired a hit squad and had one of her tenants murdered (probably the ring leader). Consequently the rest of her enraged tenants burnt the entire plot. The landlady was arrested but she was alleged to have bought her way out.

Her husband and children were reportedly arrested and locked up for three weeks but she had them released. The respondent went further to state that some landlords pressed false charges against some arrested tenants once they reached the police station. One of the charges fabricated against some tenants included robbery with violence which carried capital punishment within the laws of Kenya once convicted.<sup>219</sup>

In summary, ownership of land had remained an area of contest since the Mau Mau liberation struggle in Kenya. It seemed that at every turn in Kenya's history, there was a struggle over land. The situation was made worse by post colonial politicians who turned

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Oral Interview, Julius Odenya, Kibera; 13/01/2011.

<sup>218</sup> Oral Interview, Opette Opette, Kibera; 17/09/2010.

<sup>219</sup> Oral interview, Michael Ouma, Pastoral Teacher at Christ the King Catholic Church-Mashomoni, Kibera; 21/01/2011.

the politics of land ownership into a battle ground for political supremacy as well as personal enrichment. The violence in Kibera over time was a reflection of a countrywide practice in Kenya whereby politicians and government leaders invariably invoked the ever-volatile land issue to settle political scores. The violence in Kibera was a clear indication that unless the government put in place structures to comprehensively address the land question in Kenya, violence and its attendant loss of property and life would be constant in the country.

#### **4.2.2. Religious differences as a divider in Kibera slum**

The Religious factor cannot go unmentioned in this analysis of the conflicts in Kibera. Nubians were predominantly Muslim while tenants such as Luo were Christian.<sup>220</sup> However, during conflict times, religious differences seemed not to have played any role in them. Most respondents Nubian and non-Nubian alike stated that religion was a non issue in conflicts. In fact it emerged that places of worship such as mosques and churches offered sanctuary to all those affected by the violence with their religious affiliation notwithstanding. It was from the precincts of these places that relief supplies were distributed to victims of the violence.<sup>221</sup> A Muslim teacher stated that there had been inter-religious dialogue sessions in Kibera between Muslim and Christian youth for many years and there had never been any chaos even when they discussed religious matters so animatedly. He added that it was merely coincidental that the protagonists in the conflicts happened to belong to different religions:

“The owners of Kibera (Nubians) are Muslim while their tenants are Christians. If religion was an issue Muslims would insist on staying with fellow Muslims and so would Christians. I do not expect violence to erupt due to religious differences unless politicians refuse to check their utterances.”<sup>222</sup>

In its report entitled ‘Mission to Kibera,’ the Law Society of Kenya noted that certain politicians had the propensity to regard Kibera as nothing else but a reservoir of votes. In

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<sup>220</sup>Law Society of Kenya, “Land Reform Programme; A mission to Kibera-Nairobi.” 2002.

<sup>221</sup>Oral interview, Kenedy Osiako, Pastoral Teacher at Christ the King Catholic Church-Mashimoni Kibera, 21/01/2011

<sup>222</sup> Oral interview, Juma Shabban, Teacher at Laini Saba Mosque; 15/01/2011

that connection they appeared so callous that they played on the differences among the residents in a populist attempt to win support from some groups within the informal inflammatory statements at times led to an all-out war as in 2001 and the 2007/8 cases as examples.<sup>223</sup>

There were reported cases in which a mosque was razed to the ground by an angry mob ostensibly to smoke out a gang of Nubian youth that had committed murder and turned it into a hideout.<sup>224</sup> The police reportedly lobbed tear gas into a mosque but an Islamic teacher played down the incident as inconsequential as far as religious sensibilities were concerned.<sup>225</sup> In addition, some Muslim women complained that some of the police officers handled them in a manner that was offensive to the Islamic tenets. Consequently, Muslim police officers were informally sent to the area as a counter measure.<sup>226</sup> According to Osiako, in 2008 a Roman Catholic Centre was torched by arsonists in retaliation following Osiako's revelation to the police that weapons had been hidden in a mosque from where five guns were recovered. Upon finding out that he was the one providing information to the police as well as to the press, the Nubians ordered him to leave Kibera slum.<sup>227</sup> Besides, a Jehova's Witness hall in Kambi Muru was burnt down during 2003 skirmishes.<sup>228</sup>

Those could be said to be incidents characteristic of a state of violence and lawlessness whereby even places of worship lost their sanctity and were desecrated as combatants used them to advance their intentions. The issue of weapons being found in a mosque could be termed as an act of criminality. Most likely, those who had kept the guns in it were people trying to hide under the veneer of Religion to commit nefarious acts. Peter Lihanda, who preferred to be identified as a Luhya tenant as well as a member of a Luhya

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<sup>223</sup> Law Society of Kenya, "Land Reform Programme, A Mission to Kibera- Nairobi." 2002.

<sup>224</sup> Oral Interview, Martin Shikuku, Tenant in Kibera, 12/01/2011.

<sup>225</sup> Oral Interview, Juma Shabban, A Teacher Laini Saba Mosque, 15/01/2011.

<sup>226</sup> Oral Interview, Salma Abdallah, a Landlady, Kibera, 12/01/2011.

<sup>227</sup> Oral Interview, Kenedy Osiako, Pastoral Teachear at Christ the King Catholic Church, Kibera, 21/01/2011.

<sup>228</sup> Ombati Geoffrey, "Colonialism and its Legacy in Kibera." *Daily Nation*, December 6, 2001 P. 8.

welfare association, said that the interaction between Nubians and most other ethnic groups in Kibera was restricted to the landlord/tenant relationship. He hastened to add that Nubian young men 'cooperated' with their counterparts from the Luhya and Luo ethnic groups in committing crime.<sup>229</sup>

On the contrary, some conflicts among different ethnic groups in Kibera also brought Religious differences to the fore. On February 4, 1992 for instance, a bloody fighting broke out at Kibera Darajani within Kambi Muru village between Luos and Nubians. The conflict started after a Nubi youth was killed after an alleged incident of robbery with violence. Due to the long time existing animosity between KANU supporters mostly Nubians and FORD supporters majorly Luos before the incident, Nubians alleged that the dead youth was killed by Luos (Christians). The allegation changed the whole issue from a normal case of mob injustice to a Religious/political one.<sup>230</sup>

The following morning, the Nubians proceeded to Makina mosque where they held a lengthy meeting. At about 11.00 am, the Nubians left the meeting, and collected the dead body from the scene and proceeded to Kariakor cemetery for burial. Later in the day at about 1300 hrs, the Nubians went back to Kibera and mobilized themselves in large numbers for a revenge attack. They armed themselves with machets, pangas, knives and other crude weapons before proceeding to the Luo dominated areas of Gatwekira and Kisumu Ndogo villages.<sup>231</sup>

The clashes left, five people dead and several others seriously injured from both sides that particular afternoon. The situation normalised after the police and GSU personnel arrived at the scene. Following the deadly fighting incident, the area chief of Kibera Mr. Ezekiel Kosgei organized an inter-ethnic meeting. Elders from the two warring communities (the Luo and Nubians) attended the meeting held at the chief's office in Kibera. After lengthy deliberations, the elders resolved to end the conflict. The situation

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<sup>229</sup> Oral Interview, Peter Lihanda, Tenant Silanga Village and Member of Luhya Welfare Association 15/01/2010.

<sup>230</sup> Oral Interview, Justus Mutinda, Pastor with African Inland Church-Mashimoni; Kibera, 11/11/2011.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.



normalized but also brought about ethnic enmity between the two communities.<sup>232</sup> Critically, the violent situation did not qualify the conflict to be as a result of religious differences and one where religion was brought in especially by the Nubians to mobilize support to counter the Luo.

There was also a category of residents who were caught in a dilemma with regard to identity during violence; with some members of the Kikuyu and Luo ethnic groups converting to Islam. Based on religion, they were seen as members of their ethnic groups as Nubians while Nubian in turn regarded them as either Kikuyu or Luo.<sup>233</sup> However, a Muslim teacher, Musa Maalim held strong views on the issue. He stated that according to the Koran, it was absolutely unthinkable that one could expect to take a Muslim owned property (in reference to refusal by some tenants to pay rent) and expect to get away with it. He said that owners of houses in Kibera had worked hard and sacrificed a lot to build them. To him, Kibera belonged to Nubians and that was non-negotiable.<sup>234</sup> In the interview he was bitter and had yet to recover from the effects of 2007/2008 electoral violence.

The unfairness of the treatment of Nubians overrode any restrictions in the Koran and the Islamic faith. His view was that Nubians had a right to get even against whoever they believed had wronged the Nubian community at large.<sup>235</sup> When the researcher approached him for an interview he spoke in anger:

“What are you reminding us about? What do you want me to tell you? We do not want to remember what happened during fightings in this area. This hall (pointing at a double storey building) was full of women and children from ground floor to the top. Some of us lost our people and would not like to remember what happened!”<sup>236</sup>

Mustafah Khalif, a landlord, was one of those few respondents of the view that religion was a factor in the conflicts. According to him, the 2007/8 conflict for instance progressed

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Oral Interview, Paul Makhoha, Tenant, Kibera; 17/01/2010.

<sup>234</sup> Oral Interview, Musa Maalim, Teacher, Makina Mosque; 12/01/2011.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

from tribal to religion in the sense that some of the combatants almost burned down mosques. The argument he advanced to bolster his view was that: "When I am fighting against a Luo, the conflict takes a religious angle once I start burning the Church."<sup>237</sup> Much as it was widely believed that religion had no role in conflicts, some people seemed to read religion in it. For instance, it was left to speculation why the Jamia Mosque Committee met in Nairobi and described the 2001 clashes as a form of ethnic cleansing. In addition, it called for the dismissal of Raila for incitement.<sup>238</sup> It was highly likely that their position was informed by their faith and they felt compelled to side with the Nubians on religious grounds.<sup>239</sup>

#### **4.2.3. High levels Poverty, Poor Infrastructure, and Inadequacy of Social Amenities, and State Institutions**

Poverty levels in many urban slums in Kenya and particularly in Kibera were still very high leading to frequent competition over little resources available. Kibera was one of the most densely populated slums of Nairobi. Similarly, it was one of the most undeveloped areas of the city with almost every resident living below the poverty line. Severe deprivation was still a way of life for entire populations in Kibera where more than 300,000 people in the slum continued to survive on less than US \$ 2 a day. While the political elite class enjoyed tremendous advancements in health, education and living standards, the largest percentage of the Kibera population were faced with the threat of severe poverty. The experience of unequal distribution of resources due to political segregation had the potential of a wider conflagration.<sup>240</sup>

Inadequacy of important social amenities such as government schools, hospitals, sewage system, proper housing and absence of good infrastructure like roads had worsened the state of life in Kibera. In spite of its large population, slum had only five government primary schools namely; Olympic, Ayany, old Kibera, Langata road and Shadrack Kimalal. There

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<sup>237</sup> Oral Interview, Mohammed Ibrahim, Kibera; 23/08/2010.

<sup>238</sup> Omanga Henry, "Sack Raila, Muslims Urges President." *Saturday Nation*, December 8, 2001.

<sup>239</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 77.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Maina wa Kinyatti, "History of Resistance in Kenya 1884-2002, Nairobi." Mau Mau Research Centre, 2008 P. 30.

were only two secondary schools; Olympic and Shadrack Kimalal. The rest of the schools were privately owned. Due to poverty, very few parents afforded to educate their children in the private schools due to the high fees charged. The government owned schools were majorly located on the periphery of the slum and were congested thus compromising the quality of education. The situation led to high rates of school drop out with very limited education and skills thus limiting their chances of getting employment and capital to start small businesses.

Many families struggled for survival and securing a good meal was difficult. The rise in numbers of idle youth forced many of them to join illegal militia gangs like 'mungiki and jeshi la mzee' where they had opportunities of extort money through cartels and intimidation. Others engaged in illegal trade and consumption of drugs. The demands of life and the deplorable conditions in the slum made it very hard to make ends meet thus rendering many residents idle. The conditions presented politicians with good opportunities to recruit the youth whom they paid as little as Ksh.200 to cause chaos. Those supporting opposing candidates in the slum were targeted and suffered most.<sup>241</sup>

Lack of good infrastructure also made it difficult to open up the slum for development. It also made it hard for security officers to access the slum especially during crises. The social decay in morals and lack of vital institutions on the ground offered Kibera residents with good opportunities to thrive in the illegal activities and fertile grounds for conflicts to emerge.

The situation in Kibera was also worsened by lack of a strong state Institutions such as the police which would have served as a guarantor of a groups' safety and security and thereby prevent conflict escalation. Whenever State Institutions weaken, or/and unwilling to mediate group relations, episodes of violence are typically presumed to intensify individuals' attachment to ethnicity. Inter-personal trust becomes a more important factor

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<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

in social interactions, and the diversity of an individual's contacts correspondingly shrinks.<sup>242</sup>

Moreover, lack of strong state institutions led to easy access to light weapons due to proliferation of arms from conflict-ridden neighboring countries of the region which offered militia groups the opportunity to execute deadly and destructive attacks. Most importantly, the attacks took criminal and political dimensions. It was common knowledge to many residents that economically powerful individuals aspiring for political positions funded the militia groups. With the introduction of small arms to the slums, conflict became a deadly practice accounting for much loss of human lives. Some criminals had even gone to the extent of renting out guns for the purpose of armed robbery and making money, and thereby commercializing robbery.<sup>243</sup> In that regard, increasing insecurity in the Kibera slum, and inter-ethnic conflicts had been exacerbated with the small arms becoming essential household assets. Mostly, the youth were the ones who used the weapons with some being well known to the residents of Kibera and even to the security agents. Moreover, the high unemployment and inadequate economic opportunities in the slum had also created a fertile ground for the youth to arm themselves with illegal arms, and to resort to robbery as a source livelihood too<sup>244</sup>

In addition, Kenya lacked well-institutionalized party systems and elections that are free, fair, and genuinely uncertain. The elections in Kenya were characterized by extents such as vote buying, violence, and other violations of democratic norms. Such practices yielded several insights into vote choice and trust in government institutions. Indeed acceptable political behavior remained surprisingly fluid in Kenya and in particular Kibera. Violations of democratic norms had differential effects on satisfaction with democracy and trust in government institutions. Attitudes towards clientele and violence were also malleable not only in Kibera but in the entire country.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>242</sup>Peter Kangwanja, "Killing the Vote: State Sponsored Violence and Flawed Elections in Kenya, Nairobi." *Kenya Human Rights Commission*, 2001 P. 70.

<sup>243</sup>Ibid.

<sup>244</sup>Africa Watch, "Divide and Rule: State-Sponsored Ethnic violence in Kenya Nairobi." *Africa Watch*, 1993 P. 3.

<sup>245</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng', Coordinator Usalama Peace Forum and Peace-net Kenya.; 03/11/2011.

### 4.3. Political Causes

#### 4.3.1. Politics of Segregation and Inter-ethnic hatred

Residents of Kibera urban slum included people from almost all the ethnic communities in Kenya. Its ethnic mix qualified it appear like Kenya writ small. A resident, Ali Hassan, 32, who lived with his wife and four children in a structure that housed Kikuyu, Maasai, Turkana, and Kamba families, said that, “We all relate very well. No one is concerned about his neighbour’s ethnicity. Most of the tribal conflicts here are either fanned by politicians while others stem from differences between individuals who rally communal support.”<sup>246</sup> Hassan’s view dovetails with the explanation that middle-class careerist interests that strike resonance with mass sentiments, and apprehensions had been a prominent part of ethnic conflicts.<sup>247</sup> Perhaps it was with such knowledge in mind that president Moi during the 2001 rally in Kibera, he cautioned the residents and Kenyans at large against ethnicity and urged them to embrace unity. He used Somalia and Burundi to warn Kenyans to shun ethnicity unless they wanted to go the fratricidal route (the extreme case of killings including that between close relatives such as blood brothers and sisters); the one taken by the two countries.<sup>248</sup> The correlation between politics and ethnicity in Kibera informal settlement was a nuanced one (the two factors were greatly intertwined). While Ethnicity was central to most of the conflicts in Kibera slum, to some of the residents believed that conflicts in the slum were primarily over rent. One of the interviewees maintained that:

‘The major cause of the conflicts in Kibera has been over rent but the animosity was always turned to be tribal. After the eruption of violence there arises ethnicity which is now rife. Kikuyu landlords do not want Luo tenants to stay in their houses. They were told to go and get a house in Kisumu (their ancestral home in western Kenya). Alternatively they would be told to go to Raila [Odinga] and get a house. Currently I am looking for a house but cannot get one since I am a Luo.’<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Oral Interview, Ali Hassan; Resident Makina village; 22/06/2011.

<sup>247</sup> David Horowitz, *Ethnic groups in Conflict*, Berkeley. University of California Press, 1985 P. 105.

<sup>248</sup> Video Tape of speeches during the Lang’ata Constituency Bursary Fund Rally on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011 that I watched in Cllr. Opette’s House, Kibera on 17/09/2010.

<sup>249</sup> Oral Interview, Michael Ouma, Pastoral Teachear at Guadalupe Catholic Church, Kibera; 21/01/2011.

Beyond the local politics of Kibera which sometimes made people from various ethnic communities residing in the area see one another along ethnic lines, the suspicion between Luo and Kikuyu dated back to the first republic when Kenyatta and a cabal of Kikuyu political elite systematically marginalized their two erstwhile Luo allies, Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya.<sup>250</sup> One resident argued that the ultimate intention of the move was to exclude the Luo from the inner sanctums of power throughout Kenyatta's reign.<sup>251</sup> Even under Moi and Kibaki leadership, the Luo were treated with mistrust and Moi invariably had to invoke the divide and rule tactic to stave off Luo opposition during the single party rule. Under the Third Republic, that started on December 31, 2002, following the swearing in of Mwai Kibaki as the president, Raila Odinga and his Luo supporters had once again found himself in the opposition in spite of having been instrumental in Kibaki's ascendancy to power in 2002.

The Kibera conflicts seemed to always take an ethnic trajectory after fightings erupted. First, most landlords in Kibera were Nubian followed by Kikuyu while majority of their tenants were Luo and Luhya. The arrangement seemed to validate the view that social stratification is synonymous with ethnic identity in the sense that the social structure of the nation-state is characterised by one ethnic group being subordinate to the other. It simply means that ethnicity and class coincide. Social mobility of the subordinate group members was therefore restricted by the ascriptive criteria of ethnic makers. Consequently, ethnic identity was reinforced and ethnic solidarity was intensified because one's ethnic identity cannot be divorced from one's economic status and political interests.<sup>252</sup>

Secondly, there was a railway line which passes through the area and was something of a border between Luo and Nubian occupied villages. It was against this backdrop of spatial division that the ethnic dimension of the conflicts must be understood. If a tenant,

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<sup>250</sup> Atieno Odhiambo, "Hegemonic Enterprises and Instrumentalists of Survival; Ethnicity and Democracy in Kenya" in *African Studies Journal* Vol. 61 No. 2, 2000 PP. 226-227.

<sup>251</sup> Oral Interview, Peter Odhiambo, Gatwekera Resident; 19/07/2011.

<sup>252</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, "Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya." Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 79.

for instance chose to run after a landlord, chances were that the latter would be either Nubian or Kikuyu. In the same vein if a landlord attacked a tenant on the lower side of the railway line, the person would most likely be a Luo.

Of all the ethnic groups that formed the majority of tenants, Luo were seen as the most militant and in the frontline to ensure that rents were reduced not through negotiation; for instance as Moi's remarks in 2001 case seemed to imply but reduced by half as directed by the MP or even payment of rent to be done away with completely since Kibera was government land. Youth from that community mobilised themselves and arrogated to themselves the responsibility of overseeing rent reductions in those villages that were predominantly Luo.<sup>253</sup>

In all cases of conflicts in Kibera (1991-2008), the rivalry between Luos and Nubians and Kikuyus surfaced. Paradoxically the first two ethnic groups had the same provenance in Southern Sudan and were both of the Nilotic group of people. However, there seemed to be no love lost between them and they could fight one another at the earliest opportunity. One respondent when asked why the two communities seemed to be the only protagonists in the Kibera fray said; "There is rivalry between Nubian and Luo. Whenever a member of either community is suspected to have been killed by members of the other, the affected community retaliates."<sup>254</sup> Another respondent went further and gave what he thought were some of the reasons why most members of the two communities seemed not to get along:

"The two communities are related since they both originally came from Sudan. However most of the landlords in Makina and Karanja Road are Nubian while their tenants are Luo. Secondly both are temperamental and have big egos. Consequently they can fight one another at the slightest provocation. At some point they had a dispute over a football match and ended up fighting for two days as other variables such as girl friends came into play".<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid, P. 68

<sup>254</sup> Oral interview Peter Lihanda , Tenant Silanga Village and Member of Luhya Welfare Association; 15/01/2010.

<sup>255</sup> Oral interview, George Kidakwa, a leader of a Welfare Association and Member of Luhya Ethnic Group; 21/01/2010.

Nubians as a community were also seen to be highly sensitive to outsider interference and had striven hard to maintain their culture intact. They lived in a closely-knit community and often defended each other in incidents where members of the community clashed with outsiders. Furthermore, they did not allow their girls to move out with young men from other communities and had been known to beat up young men who broke that 'Rite.'<sup>256</sup> Their interaction with members of other ethnic communities in Kibera was largely restricted to those who had migrated to the area before or soon after Kenya's independence. However, cultural and religious differences made it hard for them to interact with those who had not stayed in Kibera for long.<sup>257</sup>

Besides Nubians, members of the Kikuyu community owned a substantial amount of property in Kibera. They constituted landlords and owned business premises having been the first communities to move into Kibera. It was clear that both Kikuyu and Nubian had lived together for so long that there were Kikuyu who were fluent in Nubian in the same way there were Nubian who spoke Kikuyu fluently.<sup>258</sup> The tension that characterised the relationship between Nubian and Luo also extended to that between Luo and Kikuyu in cases where Luo found themselves renting houses owned by the latter. In Gatwekera village predominantly inhabited by Luo, Kikuyu owned business premises were raided everytime violence erupted. Sometimes Kikuyu landlords would be assaulted and their houses razed to the ground. Most of them were driven out of the area and had never gone back to claim their property.<sup>259</sup>

Again, the challenges that faced the people of Kibera seemed to be aggravated by the very government that was expected to alleviate them. The conduct of the City Council of Nairobi on Kibera residents; majorly out to better their living standards beggared comprehension. The saving grace was that in spite of the seemingly intractable problems

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<sup>256</sup> Opiyo Tom, "Blood Shed in Kibera Slum." *Daily Nation*; December 6, 2001.

<sup>257</sup> Oral Interview, Arbe Dube, Landlady Makina Village, Kibera; 13/01/2010.

<sup>258</sup> Khaemba Ken, "Evictions in Kibera Leave Hundreds Homeless." *Daily Nation*, December 7, 2001.

<sup>259</sup> Oral Interview, Justus Makuthi, a Pastor with African Inland Church-Mashimoni, Kibera; 16/01/2010.



that the Kibera people had to contend with, there were some among them who were determined to surmount them such as the young entrepreneurs.<sup>260</sup>

In an area where living conditions were appalling such as Kibera, sometimes people got mobilised along ethnic lines. Furthermore, some people tended to see their frustrations as being caused by people from the other ethnic group(s) and that was why the age-old Kikuyu-Luo rivalry reared its head. In the same vein, though being from the same group of people and having the same origin, many members of the Luo and Nubian communities could not see eye to eye. The Kibera situation was complex and volatile because people from certain ethnic groups occupied higher ranks on the socio-economic ladder while others were at the bottom of the heap. Due to historical reasons, that setting appeared immutable. A shopkeeper, Peter Mburu who had lived in the area since 1980, appeared to capture the true identity of the protagonists in Kibera: “Kibera has only two tribes – landlords and tenants.”<sup>261</sup>

#### 4.4. Conclusion

From the discussion in the chapter, it was quite clear that conflicts in Kibera informal settlement resulted from multiple causes. The causes were social, economic, political, and to some extent psychological. One of the salient findings of the study was that the Land question in Kibera was central to many conflicts. The failure by successive governments to address the plight of the Nubian claims of owning the Kibera land significantly contributed to conflicts. For several decades, the Nubian argued that Kibera was their ancestral lands and demanded to be issued with Title Deeds. The tussle between the community and the government provided other communities with a window of opportunity to lay claim over the same land. Even the persistent Rent disputes witnessed in the slum were tied to the land issues. Consequently, politicians in the area took advantage of the situation to politicize the rent issue arguing that the land on which Kibera stood was a government one. Thus, the landlords were government’s sub-tenants and therefore demanding for a total reduction of rent.

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<sup>260</sup> Westen Kwatamba Shihalo, “Ethnic or Class Conflict? The Politics of Conflicts in Kibera of Nairobi, Kenya.” Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, M.A Project Paper, 2006 P. 57.

<sup>261</sup> Oral Interview, Peter Mburu; Businessman Laini-Saba Village; 20/08/2011.

It was also evident that the move by the government of Kenya to withhold certain essential services in the slum and its failure to address poverty levels in the slum also contributed to conflicts. Thus, there was dire need for the government to address the land issue and massive investment of resources to upgrade the slum. Furthermore, it was very clear that most of the conflicts in the slum were politically instigated and therefore, if all the above identified causes remained unresolved, politicians of the area will keep on taking advantage of the situation by inciting the resident to violence.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Impacts of Kibera Slum Conflicts; 1991-2012

#### 5.1 Introduction

Conflicts in many instances leave behind residues of fractured society. There are normally situations of dilemma on the way forward as communities contemplate on the losses suffered during violence. The suffering leaves many families with very little or no means of livelihood. Many school going children drop out of school especially once the key bread winner of the family dies through the conflict. In general, victims suffer in many different ways in the aftermath of fighting and societies are faced with enormous challenges as they struggle to reconstruct their lives. Thus, with such idea in mind, it was of great importance to the research to understand how the re-current electoral related violence impacted on the lives of Kibera residents. While impact of conflicts in some cases is a painful and personal experience, the Study will strive to reach those directly as well as indirectly affected by conflicts. It will also be of interest to get opinions from experts and other informants whose experiences about impacts of the conflict will help in understanding the subject better.

#### 5.2. Deaths

The conflicts in Kibera informal settlement resulted into direct deaths of perpetrators of the violence as well as of the targeted victims. In some cases, conflicts led to the deaths of innocent residents who were caught up in the middle of the fightings and who neither supported any of the warring parties. Between 1991 and 2001, not less than 100 people lost their lives through violent conflicts, with hundreds injured and thousands displaced.<sup>262</sup> There were also those who died later as a result of the injuries sustained during the fighting and attacks.

According to Report by the Waki Commission<sup>263</sup> on the 2007/8 Post Election violence, the scale of conflict was high, leaving behind not less than 1300 people across the country

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<sup>262</sup> David Rowan, "Kenya: 15 Killed in Slum Clashes." *Daily Nation*, December 14, 2001.

<sup>263</sup> Justice Philip Waki; *The Report by the Commission of Inquiry into the 2007 Post -Election Violence*, (2008): [http:// www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki_Report.pdf). Accessed on 13/12/ 2009.

dead. Most of the deaths occurred within a span of 59 days that is between December 30, 2007 and 28, February 2008 when a political compromise was reached between Kibaki and Raila. In Nairobi Province alone, a total of 125 people died as a result of the violence. Most of the deaths were reported from slum areas within the city including Kibera, Mathare, Sinai, and Korogocho. The Commission documented that most of the victims died immediately or after a shortwhile as a result of injuries suffered through burns, cases of mob injustice, guns and arrow shots, and stab wounds. Others died of excessive bleeding, strangulation, suffocation, shock, sexual violence and hypothermia among other causes.<sup>264</sup>

In analyzing the deaths, the Commission relied on specific sources of data, including: Medical and post-mortem reports submitted to the Commission by various medical officers and government doctors through the Ministry of Medical Services, Various Police Returns, Reports and Statements submitted by Officers Commanding Police Divisions (OCPDs), Reports received from Private hospitals and institutions and various Witness Statements, depositions and Oral testimony.

Despite this official documentation of deaths, the Commission acknowledged that some deaths may not have been reported to the hospitals or to Police Stations due to the prevailing security concerns at the time. In some areas victims did not report to hospitals or health centres for fear of their safety and others due to the ordinary scheme of things where they considered their injuries minor compared to other problems they were experiencing at the time. In other situations, injuries were also not properly documented due to the fact that hospitals were understaffed and supply of drugs and other medical necessities were disrupted.<sup>265</sup>

The untimely deaths and demise of men especially those who had families left leadership gaps in their families. Many families were left with no one to provide for their basic means of livelihood. Considering that most of Kibera residents are poor, and living

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

below the poverty line of less than \$1 US dollar per day, families found it difficult to come into terms with the untimely demise of their loved ones and the economic challenges that followed. Many immediate family members found it difficult to meet the burial expenses of the departed ones such as the coffin, mortuary fees and transport costs. The families had to seek assistance from the local political leaders including Councillors and from the local Member of Parliament, Honourable Raila Odinga. Although deaths occurred in all ethnic groups in Kibera, it was only those from the Luo Community who benefitted from this arrangement.<sup>266</sup> Families from other communities had to seek for alternative means. Some of them sought assistance from religious groups or organizations such as the churches and mosques. Those who did not get assistance from such entities organized fund raising harambees while others held funeral arrangement meetings even upto three months.<sup>267</sup>

In spite of these efforts, families that did not meet the target especially due to continuity rise of the daily mortuary charges, abandoned their plans of burying the dead at their rural homes and instead ended up burying them in the open Langata Cemetery, Nairobi. Those who were completely strained abandoned the bodies at both Kenyatta National Hospital and the City Mortuaries-Nairobi where the bodies were not properly preserved hence decaying beyond recognition. Most of the bodies were later disposed off by the City Council of Nairobi after the expiry of the recommended three months preservation period and also due to non claimance from their kins.<sup>268</sup>

As families struggled to come into terms with the departure of their loved ones, they were also faced by other challenges. Difficulties in meeting their daily basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing were evident. Very few families could afford a good meal while others relied on well wishers for support. Some families would skip several meals and in extreme cases, others would go for days without a proper meal. Payment of rent presented another challenge to the affected families where some relocated to cheaper houses and others left for rural areas. The absence of the key bread winner from families

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<sup>266</sup> Oral Interview, Ruth Musenya, Pastor's Wife and a Tenant in Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2012.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Oral Interview, Dan Caleb Omullo, Disability Focus Africa; 12/11/2010.

especially men forced women to take leadership roles in the affected families. Equally, the families with school going children found it difficult to continue supporting for their education, thus changing them from one school to another while others dropped from school completely. Many single parents (mothers) were unable to provide for the essential needs including school fees, uniforms and books among others.<sup>269</sup>

In cases where women were housewives, some sought for alternative means of livelihood. There were those who sought employments from the nearby estates like Ngummo, Woodley, Magiwa, Nairobi West, South B, South C, Langata and Mugoya as househelps. Others got casual employment within the slums where they worked as cooks, waiters and stewards in food kiosks. For some whose husbands had left behind small businesses and were able to raise some capital started small retail business where they sold vegetables, second hand clothes and food in temporary Kiosks within the slum. In Laini Saba for instance, some women sold clothes, vegetables and food along the railway line. In Silanga, Mashimoni, Lindi, Kisumu Ndogo, Gatwikira and Upper Soweto most widowed women sold food stuff such as boiled maize, fried fish, cereals and fruits. Most of the women who did not get employment and could not manage to raise the required capital sought alternative means of survival. They started frequenting bars and illicit brew dens (joints). Some of the widowed women re-married while others got sexual partners from the bars, and others 'courted' as concubines.<sup>270</sup> This led to the rise in cohabitation cases.

The exposure to consumption of illicit brew in Kibera slum and the demands of basic needs led to the rise in prostitution activities. Young girls aged between ten and fifteen years became consumers of the brew including chang'aa, busaa and Miti ni dawa while others engaged in prostitution to earn a living. Women and young girls also engaged in the sell and consumption of hard drugs such as bhang, cocaine and heroine in the slum. The illegal drug trade was rampant in Laini Saba, Siranga, Gatwikira and Upper Soweto.

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<sup>269</sup> Oral Interview, Ruth Musenya, Pastor's Wife and a Tenant in Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2011.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Prostitution led to increased cases of sexually transmitted diseases infections like syphilis, gonorrhoea, and HIV and AIDS. Cases of unwanted pregnancies and abortions by the young girls increased too. The situation resulted to rise in deaths related to HIV and AIDS complications. Incidents of rise in deaths while procuring abortions and during delivery due to lack of proper medical care were reported too. The availability and continued use of hard drugs resulted to increased cases of drug addicts and crime in the slum. The state presented a big challenge to the government of Kenya in fighting crime and other vices in the slum. It was also very expensive and difficult to treat drug addicts and provision of Anti retrovirals medications to those infected with HIV and AIDS virus.

On the other hand young boys who dropped out of school joined militia groups including Mungiki, Taliban and Bagdad boys which provided them with opportunities to earn their living. Others became juvenile delinquents where they engaged in petty crimes. Those who did not fit in such groupings sought casual employment within the slum leading to increased cases of child labour. Many young boys aged between seven and fourteen years also moved to city centre of Nairobi where they became street urchins while others collected garbage and cleaned human waste from pit latrines within the slum. Lack of parental care and guidance left many boys vulnerable to manipulation and mistreatment by their “purported” employers. Boys were also used as drug peddlers, spies and smugglers of stolen goods. Similarly such boys were very vulnerable and contracted terminal diseases as they were not provided with safety gadgets while clearing pit latrines leading to deaths as a result of failure to access proper medical treatment after outbreak of diseases. Increased cases of disappearance and mysterious deaths were also reported where such boys were killed by their employers especially when they volunteered any information to the police or public.<sup>272</sup>

Cases of mob injustice also increased with Kibera residents’ metting their anger on the perpetrators of crime. To contain high rates of crime, insecurity, and other vices, local

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Oral Interview, Dan Caleb Omullo, Disability Focus Africa; 12/11/2010.

communities in the slum also mobilized itself into vigilant groups to deal with menace. Many youths lost their lives through incidents of mob injustice metted on them. To confirm this assertion, Ruth Musenya explained that; “In 2010, four men who had stolen a television set in Laini Saba, were burnt to death at Mashimoni area by irate mob which caught up with them while trying to sell the TV to an unsuspecting buyer.”<sup>273</sup>

### 5.3. Sexual violence

Sexual violence against women was another common vice in Kibera during the conflicts. Although women feared disclosing the atrocities they went through during conflicts, reports indicated that, different kinds of rapes and motivation for rapes were carried out in Kibera. For example, rape of women by the security personnel, or by men of different ethnic groups, and rape of women seeking refuge in the other peoples’ houses and IDP camps. In some instances, rape was used as a weapon of war, aimed at humiliating men of the opposing ethnic groups. The cultural significance of raping enemy’s women or women of a different ethnicity or political affiliation was prominent in sectarian conflict experienced in Kibera.<sup>274</sup> Significantly, this was a clear indication of the failure on the part of government to provide security, and its negligence of the tormenting situation in Kibera slum.<sup>275</sup>

In discussing their attackers during the 2007/2008 post election violence at the Waki Commission for instance, victims of sexual violence singled out members of various security forces meant to have protected them.<sup>276</sup> This argument was also supported by three victims. They included a 50 year old widow, resident of Kibera who had lived there for ten years and who had children, and a 46 year old married woman with ten children, who ran a Kiosk-selling vegetables and charcoal who described their experiences of being gang raped by GSU officers to me. They narrated how officers entered their houses under the pretext of looking for weapons and young men who were barricading roads and the railway line in Kibera and raped them. Another 55 year old woman from Kibera Laini

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<sup>273</sup> Oral interview, Ruth Musenya, a Pastor’s wife, Mashimoni, Kibera 11/11/2011

<sup>274</sup> Oral interview, Dan Caleb Omullo, Disability Focus Africa, 12/11/2010

<sup>275</sup> Ibid

<sup>276</sup> Waki Report, “*The report of the commission to investigate the 2007/2008 Post Election Violence.*” Nairobi; Government Printer, PP. 193-237.



Saba interviewed also recalled a similar horrendous experience. In her statement she told of looking outside, seeing that there were security officers, and therefore not bothering to lock her house. Worse still, as they were security officers, she let them in after which, they ransacked her house while pretending to look for the members of the illegal group, Mungiki, and gang raped her when they could not find the group they were looking for . She narrated her life altering story that;

“I went to my house. The GSU followed me and said they were looking for young men who were involved in the violence. They were 3 (three) G.S.U men who got into my house. I had not locked my house and when they came in I did not bother to lock because they were security men who were supposed to care for us. One of the G.S.U officers stood at the door, the other two got in. They told me they were going door to door looking for the young men who were involved in the violence. I told them that they would check since I was not hiding anyone. I told them that I was alone. By that time I was alone in the house. They told me that we, women, were the ones encouraging the young men because we were preparing food for the “Mungiki”. They were using Swahili language. I insisted I was alone and I have never seen Mungiki. They told me that if they could not find Mungiki at least I was available. I asked them “what have I done. “One G.S.U grabbed me and said “we can’t leave you alone.” He then threw me on the bed and hit me on the face. He tore my inner pants and then raped me. Then the second one raped me....”<sup>277</sup>

From the experience of this woman, her life changed completely after the incident. She could no longer bear the pain and embarrassment. Consequently, she relocated to Lindi village as result of stigmatization and negative treatment she got from her neighbours. Due to stress, the lady developed various body complications and was hospitalized in Kenyatta National Hospital several times suffering from ulcers and severe headache. To her, these health complications strained her and her family as they sought for financial assistance from well wishers in order to put off the hospital bills.

Moreover, from the impressions I got from other victims of sexual violence, it was very clear that majority of them were still suffering from stigmatization. Many shied away from people and were not ready to discuss the issue. Even their husbands did not want to discuss this life threatening experiences. Sexual violence was also witnessed in Soweto, a

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<sup>277</sup> Oral Interview, Anonymuos Tenant; 13/1/ 2011.

village that was inhabited by people of different ethnic groups. Although many families did not break up as a result of rape incidents, evidence of psychological traumas was still 'visible.'

Victims of the sexual violence also experienced unintended consequences such as infection with HIV/Aids, and desertion by their spouses, unwanted pregnancy, and loss of trust that they previously had in state security agencies. Some of the victims of sexual violence already had HIV/ AIDs while others contracted the disease as a result of being raped. The situation was worsened by the inability to access medical services in time to reduce the chances of getting infected and to prevent the spread of infections. In addition, some victims informed me that even when they advised their perpetrators of their HIV status and showed them their medication, their attackers went ahead to rape or gang raped them, thereby perversely choosing to risk becoming infected. As Millicent Obaso, of Care Kenya explained,

Some of the women declared to the perpetrators that they were HIV positive, but the men ignored and went ahead and raped them. This is very dangerous because most of the perpetrators, the youth gangs, were between 20 and 25 years. They have spouses or they are planning to marry or have wives and they may be spreading this virus, but who knows, maybe some of these perpetrators themselves were HIV+ and they also infected the women they raped who were not HIV+. I would urge the Kenyan government to monitor the HIV/AIDS prevalence in Mathare and Kibera over the next one year or two years to see to what extent the prevalence is going up.<sup>278</sup>

Moreover, many victims of sexual violence in Kibera sustained serious bodily injuries and suffered enormous psychological trauma. In describing the psychological effects of sexual violence, Ms Obaso further explained that the encounters of other women who did not want to talk to the researcher because of fear and humiliation, as follows; "The sexual violence happened on many. Some women were seriously violated. They had bottles and sticks pushed up their private parts".<sup>279</sup> The execution of this beastly acts left many victims with permanent sexual organs disfigurements. Victims had also to undergo

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<sup>278</sup> Oral Interview, Millicent Obaso, Care Kenya; 21/8/2011.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

corrective surgery which presented a big challenge due to the cost involved. Women who had no children and faced difficulties to engage in sex were divorced leaving behind a frustrated and fractured society.

Indeed, Rape was an aspect of political, economic, and social violence in the gendered continuum of violence, because women were raped by men to obtain or maintain political, economic and social power. The reports by the UN Special Rapporteur Professor Alston on the Kenyan 2007 electoral violence indicated how women, mostly from opposing groups in Kibera were raped and gang raped during at the time. There were also reported cases of rape and murder conducted by members of militia groups operating in Kibera. Surprisingly, most of the perpetrators arrested and charged before courts of law were on several occasions acquitted due to lack of evidence during judicial hearings. Male residents of Kibera exploited the disorder of the social and political situation to commit sexual violence against women without the fear of punishment.<sup>280</sup>

To most of the Kibera women, even if women victims of sexual harassment were to come forward and seek legal justice for what had happened to them, there was always another obstacle of where to hunt for the justice. Due to lack of a professional police force and political good will, women were first put into a position to detect the exact spot to receive justice. Kibera slum residents entirely blamed the government's legal system for being too slow and considered it 'partial' when it came to deal with issues where the security forces were mentioned.<sup>281</sup>

During conflict, men just like women also suffered from similar sexual ordeals. Many men were sodomized and others forcefully circumcised. During my interviews with Mrs. Musenya, she narrated of two men, whom she knew as victims of sodomy during the 2007/8 electoral violence that;

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<sup>280</sup> Justice Philip Waki; The Report by the Commission of Inquiry into the 2007 Post -Election Violence, (2008); [http:// www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eastandard.net/downloads/Waki_Report.pdf). Accessed on 13/12/ 2009.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

“One of the victims used to live in Kijiji near Laini Saba while the other in Laini Saba area. The two men were sexually assaulted by police officers who inserted sticks and other weapons in their rectum after arresting them in Laini Saba village one night during the violence while from work. The first victim living in Kijiji still has difficulties in walking. He even moved from where he used to live before (Kijiji) to the streets. He can’t even visit his rural home due to stigma. He stopped working and has not even gotten married. He even left his fiancé whom he was about to marry. He has a lot of mental stress.”<sup>282</sup>

She further narrated that;

“The other victim is called James Waingo (not his real name). He was seriously assaulted sexually by security officers. He sustained internal injuries and suffered stroke. He was later taken to Nairobi women hospital by his family for treatment where he was admitted for some days before he was discharged. After sometimes, he was re-admitted at IDH hospital currently Mbagathi District Hospital where he later died. He was married with three children. Two of the children had finished school while the last born was in Alliance Girls High School. The wife is widowed and has no means of livelihood. She does casual work for survival while the children cannot go to college. The first born is a tout and the second one sells chang’aa in Laini Saba. The last born girl is in the university but relies on well wishers to support her university education.”<sup>283</sup>

In addition, conflicts and particularly the 2007/8 post election violence left a good number of men especially Luos forcefully circumcised. Most of them were ambushed while on their way to or from work. Most of them were circumcised in Laini Saba along the railway line by Kikuyus and Kambas. Many of the victims were forced to remove their inner pants as that enabled the perpetrators to easily identify them. Traditionally Luo men were rarely circumcised. A number of them were circumcised with some dying due to excessive bleeding. The circumcision was employed as a way of revenge and others suffered parmanent disfigurement of their private parts. The failure to access proper medical attention for corrective surgery in time due to insecurity and poverty rendered many of the victims sexually mulfunctional. The state led to seperations with spouses in some families while in other cases women especially those who had just gotted married walking out of marriage. Many young women remarried while a good number of them

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<sup>282</sup> Oral Interview, Ruth Musenya, pastor’s Wife and a Tenant in Mashimoni- Kibera; 11/11/2012.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

began extra marital affairs. The family bond that holds families together was broken leading to complete fragmentation of some families.<sup>284</sup> Equally, some victims could not bear the pain and shame brought to the family. Some men committed suicide while others moved out of the slum to other areas in the city or permanently to their rural homes. Psychological traumas and stigmatization continued hitting most of the victims.

Forced circumcision further gave birth to voluntary consent to circumcision by the Luo men in the slum. The new trend led to opening of some special health centers within Kibera and its environs to carry out circumcision procedures. Such centres were opened in Sarang'ombe location, D.O's compound in Makina, at African Medical Research Foundation (Amref) premises in Laini Saba and in Langata Women Prisons health facility. Most of the men who consented to the exercise were those below 40 years. The consent to circumcision was mainly; to prevent future forced circumcision incase conflicts arose. This acted as a disguising mechanism of identifying who a Luo is and who is not. There were also those who did it for political reasons. Luos had politically been portrayed as inferior for not undergoing the Cultural Rite of Passage in the name of circumcision. Previously, some political leaders like Honourable Uhuru Kenyatta who was opposed to the Luo leader Raila Amollo Odinga's presidential bid had mocked him publically claiming that uncircumcised man could not lead Kenyans.<sup>285</sup> The move was meant to make the public abandoned the nationally held negative cultural view about Luo men as cowards and not men enough as they were afraid of facing the knife. Finally, there were others who were circumcised for medical reasons. Inorder to prevent the spread of HIV and Aids, there had been health campaigns urging those who had not been circumcised to do so. There were medical claims that men who were not circumcised stood high chances of getting infected with or transmitting HIV and Aids virus.

#### **5.4. Displacements**

Major conflicts in Kibera also resulted to temporary or permanent displacement of residents. Some residents relocated to the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. Others joined their relatives in the neighbouring slums and estates while others moved to

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

their rural homes without coming back. The 2001 conflict led to not less than one thousand people displaced while during the 2007/2008 post election violence, the number of registered adults and children in Jamhuri park IDP camp in early January 2008 was 6,000 people from Kibera slum alone.<sup>286</sup>

Indeed, numerous displacements had taken place since eruption of ethnic conflicts in Kibera. During conflicts, people had no choice but to leave their homes, in many cases remaining uprooted for years. Though internal displacements caused several problems that were common to both men and women, women suffered most. Majority of the IDPs from Kibera were women and girls and many of them were widowed or separated from their spouses and family. The state of widowhood, husbandlessness and sexual harassment forced women in the IDP camps to seek for food and safety for their children and extended family members.<sup>287</sup>

Due to lack of space and security, women in the IDP camps had limited freedom. It was difficult for them to find a place to change clothes or to have a space to sleep. Moreover, lack of sanitary facilities, lack of privacy with the family and the living together camp life triggered some difficulties especially to women including domestic violence. Cases of outbreak of communicable diseases like tuberculosis were common in the camps especially among victim of HIV and AIDS due to lack of Anti Retroviral medication (ARVs). Lack of adequate lavatory and bathing facilities led to spread of skin diseases, cholera and vomiting among the IDPs and resulted to deaths in severe cases. Congestion and poor ventilation especially at night caused babies and young children breathing problems while some children died due respiratory complications. Pregnant mothers too faced challenges in the IDP camps. There were no maternity facilities or the mother care centres located nearby. Pregnant mothers had to walk long distances to seek hospital service.<sup>288</sup> Some women lost their pregnancies for lack of proper medical attention and

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<sup>286</sup>Ted Dagne. "Kenya: "Current Conditions and the Challenges Ahead." Congressional Research Services Specialist; in *African Affairs*, 2009 P. 06.

<sup>287</sup>Oral Interview, Hannah Wanjiru, Tenant Laini Saba, Kibera; 14/11/2010.

<sup>288</sup>Oral Interview, Maness Yusuf, Kibera; 12/11/2010.

others died during delivery. Displacements also led to the practice of early marriages of young girls and engagement in illegal activities like prostitution.<sup>289</sup>

The loss of social support system and the community solidarity especially towards the vulnerable women led women to loose women social and cultural ties. Domestic violence became a common major problem experienced as a result of conflict and internal displacement. Family break down and the loss of social and cultural ties were clear effects suffered by women after conflicts. Wife battering was also common in many families even during peace time. Oral interviews also indicated that domestic violence increased in Kibera during conflict time too.<sup>290</sup>

The Research also noted that the stress, uncertainty and deprivation caused by indiscriminate fightings led men generally to taking out their frustration on women, thus technically leading to domestic violence and family breakdown. Their inability to protect their families during conflicts, their helplessness in feeding their families; and the failure in being powerful put them into state of depression thus displacing their frustrations to wife battering. Similar situation were still rampant even after conflicts as well. However, some women of Kibera stood against the challenges of conflict in spite of the losses and miseries they faced. The shift of women's traditional to strategic roles occurred when women moved out of domestic spheres and took up males' roles. The emergence of the new social roles of women amidst the ethnic armed conflicts was a milestone in the history of Kibera women that did not only challenge the war and violence, but rather changed the gender positions of women, and therefore transforming the gender structure. The Kibera Women for Peace and Fairness for instance, was formed as a result of 2007/8 violence<sup>291</sup>

Conflicts in Kibera also had a big influence over the gender structure of the Kibera society. After men left to engage in violence women took over leadership functions both in the households and in the communities leading to social change and the change in the

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Oral Interview, Dan Caleb Omullo, Disability Focus Africa; 12/11/2010.

<sup>291</sup> Oral Interview, Maness Yusuf, Kibera; 12/11/2010.

gender roles and relations. Considering the fact that conflict made the changes in the gender structure of the society, men and women from the society reckon the event of the changes from various referring points. While recognizing the destruction of conflicts that made women being sufferers, the women of Kibera did not fail to declare how the consequences of conflict led them to take on new social roles and therefore offering them the opportunities to take part in the process of social reconstruction.<sup>292</sup>

Another cause indicated by the Kibera women is the economic sanction which assisted them to enter in public domain. It was very hard to raise money for survival hence as a result, every adult of a house was in need to earn money to survive in the midst of the starvation and women were in no way excluded. Hence the women clarified that they had to earn money for the survival of their families as the cost of living was so high during those days of conflict. This subsequently led women to take on the role of income generator even in the presence of their earning male family members.<sup>293</sup>

### **5.5. Economic impacts of the conflicts**

The conflict in Kibera had adverse impact on the economy of the residents. The conflicts had influenced economic history profoundly across time and space. Residents who benefited shaped economic institutions and trade patterns in the slum. To some the conflict brought some benefits and developments. Above all, recurring conflict in Kibera drained wealth, disrupted markets, and depressed economic growth. Conflicts were expensive, destructive (of capital and human capital), and disruptive (of trade, resource availability, and labour management). Conflicts constituted severe shocks to the economies of the slum. Notwithstanding some positive aspects of short-term stimulation and long-term destruction and rebuilding, conflict generally impeded economic development and undermined prosperity. Several specific economic effects of conflict recurred across the slum.

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<sup>292</sup>Joireman Sandra and Rachel Sweet Vanderpoel, "In Search of Order: Property Rights enforcement in Kibera Settlement, Kenya", Department of Politics and International Relations, Wheaton College, 2010 PP. 10-20.

<sup>293</sup>Oral Interview, Maness Yusuf, Kibera; 12/11/2010.



The most consistent short-term economic effect of the conflict in Kibera was the push up of prices, and consequently the reduction of living standards. Conflict-induced inflation was described in ancient China by the strategist Sun Tzu who stated that: "Where the army is, prices are high; and when prices go up, the wealth of the people is exhausted".<sup>294</sup> Paying for restoration of peace was a central problem for the Kenyan state. This was especially true in Kibera, when conflict relied heavily on militia groups that exhorted finances from the local community and the government funding of the security operations through taxes. One way that the government paid for conflict was to raise taxes (which in turn reduced civilian spending and investment).<sup>295</sup> Another way to pay for security operation was to borrow money, which increased government debt. The conflict-related debts can drive states into bankruptcy. A third way to fund conflict related operations is to print more currency, which fuels inflation as witnessed in Kenya recently.<sup>296</sup> Inflation thus often acts as an indirect tax on a national economy.

In addition, conflicts in Kibera created zones of intense destruction of infrastructure and capital like the Railway line, Churches, government buildings, and business premises. Such effects severely depressed economic output. The famine and plague that accompanied the aftermath of conflict affected a large population in Kenya. Battling casualties, conflict-induced epidemics, and other demographic disruptions had far-reaching effects on Kenyan economy. Security forces and gang raping sparked the spread of AIDS epidemic which not only burdened the economy through the provision of free ARVs to victims.<sup>297</sup>

The politically instigated ethnic violence in Kibera had direct damage, destruction, and over consumption of material and mechanical infrastructure, resources, and surpluses such as production facilities, storage, transport networks, vehicles, water supplies, food and medical supplies. Further, the conflict in Kibera had an indirect damage to the society's resource and infrastructure bases namely the opportunity costs through the

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<sup>294</sup> Seligman Edwin, "The Cost of the War and How It Was Met," in the *American Economic Review* 9, 1991 PP. 739-770.

<sup>295</sup> Hamilton Earl. "War and Prices in Spain, 1651-1800." Cambridge University, MA Thesis, 1947.

<sup>296</sup> Gilpin Robert. *War and Change in World Politics*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1981 PP. 65-72.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

official diversion of resources and funding to the extra expenses caused by the conflict such as caring of IDPs.<sup>298</sup>

Further, the devastating experiences arising out of the post-2007 election violence introduced new dimensions in landlord-tenant relations. The violence entrenched a culture of mistrust between the conflicting parties to the extent that most owners of residential and commercial structures today use agents to collect rent on their behalf, especially in enclaves where 'the Challenge of Mending Ethnic Relations in the Kibera Slum' are still perceived as the "enemy". Most tenants are generally uncomfortable with the agents because of their uncompromising attitude, and many have since relocated.<sup>299</sup> Many landlords also agree to or reject tenancy applications on the basis of ethnic and political affiliation.<sup>300</sup>

Some landlords also insist on three-month deposits from applicants before assumption of occupancy due to the state of uncertainty that still obtained in the Kibera slum after the violence. With the mounting uncertainty about the future of the country, fewer people are likely to invest in the Kibera slum rental structures because of the high risks involved in the enterprise. Already, a number of structure owners had sold out their parcels and shifted to areas considered less risky. Consequently, the demand for housing had surged in the slums against a sharp drop in supply, thereby increasing rental costs. There were also indications that some investors who chose to stay put employed the subtle use of militias to enforce compliance from errant tenants. In general, it was difficult to make a concrete generalization on the future of landlord-tenant relations in Kibera slum. Perhaps, the relations will be influenced more by the character and dispositions of the parties in a contract, so that good landlords get good tenants and vice versa. However, there were

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<sup>298</sup> Joireman Sandra and Rachel Sweet Vanderpoel, "In Search of Order: Property Rights enforcement in Kibera Settlement, Kenya", Department of Politics and International Relations, Wheaton College, 2010 PP. 10-20.

<sup>299</sup> Oral Interview, Hannah Wanjiru, Tenant in Laini Saba, Kibera; 14/11/2010.

<sup>300</sup> Okoth Okombo, Olang'sana, *Balaa Mtaani: The challenge of mending Ethnic Violence Relations in Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi, Friedrich Elbert Stiftung (FES), 2010 PP. 39-40.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

indications that landlords were likely to become more selective, uncompromising and innovative in dealing with tenants.<sup>301</sup>

The existence of violent ethnic conflicts and mostly the post-election violence also instilled criminal tendencies, defiance and impunity among large sections of the Kibera youth population which the state apparatus found challenging. The three months period of lawlessness and breakdown in state security surveillance in early 2008 influenced a significant number of youths to take advantage of the situation by venturing into crime and profiting from looting and “free housing” from the displaced. Not only had youth become an obstacle to recovery efforts, but were willing to create another scenario of lawlessness from which they can benefit materially.<sup>302</sup>

The extent to which the activities of Mungiki (in many ways the most organized and resilient of the militia groups) inspired the emergence of similar groups. In the Kibera slums, where Mungiki had stayed out mainly due to Luo dominance, three similar groups had emerged, each controlling a terminus at which every vehicle had to pay Sh100 per day. The Citi Hoppa Bus Company cancelled its operations in Kibera at the height of the violence after its busses were targeted for attack due to its alleged connection with some Kikuyu political elite. There were allegations that the company (buses) was allowed to return only after paying out “protection fee” to the groups controlling the termini, and none of its buses has been burnt since then. Even in a situation where there was little material, many Kibera youths had become willing participants in acts of lawlessness, in the belief that they were untouchable.<sup>303</sup>

In January 2008, the youth in Kibera uprooted a section of the railway line near the Ayany estate to protest against alleged rigging of the elections by the PNU. Later in April 2009, they again uprooted a section of the railway in protest over the alleged annexation by Uganda of Migingo Island on Lake Victoria. The government’s perceived helplessness in responding in such situations had only strengthened impunity tendencies among the

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<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Okoth Okombo Olang’sana, *Balaa Mtaani: The challenge of Mending Ethnic Violence Relations in Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi, Friedrich Elbert Stiftung (FES), 2010 PP. 44-47.

<sup>303</sup> Oral Interview, Dan Caleb Omullo, Disability Focus Africa; 12/11/2010.

youth in Kibera. In April 2009, they violently attacked Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) technicians who had gone there to disconnect illegal power connections in sections of the estate. In sum, the emerging culture of defiance and overt crime will in the long-term impede the institutionalization of the rule of law in Kibera urban slum.<sup>304</sup>

Conflict in Kibera was not without economic benefits, however. The benefits were not limited to having misfortune strike trade rivals. At certain historical times and places, conflict can stimulate a national economy in the short term. The conflict assisted in clearing away outdated infrastructure and allowed economy-wide rebuilding, generating long-term benefits as seen through efforts towards implementing the new constitution which aimed at devolving funds for equitable development.<sup>305</sup> The slum upgrading programme was started in 2009 and a new tarmack road in Soweto was halfway complete. Slum electrification program by the Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) was already complete. Technological development often followed the conflict. The government initiated various researches and development to prevent recurrence of such conflict.<sup>306</sup>

Another lesson from the violence was that structure owners had realized the vulnerability of shanty houses to the arson compared to stone houses. Consequently, future structures were comparatively more permanent and better planned than the previous mud and carton structures. The overall result was a massive improvement in shelter in the slums. The risks associated with slum forced voluntary slum dwellers (those who were financially able but voluntarily choose to live in the slums) to relocate to middle class estates. Also, a sizeable number of the unemployed returned to their rural homes. That came at time when a significant number were also preparing to relocate permanently to the rural areas to escape what they believed will be more serious ethnic violence in the run up to 2013 polls.

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Oral Interview, Tom Oketch, La Vie Foundation; 11/11/2010.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

In the end, it eased housing pressure in the overcrowded slums, leaving only those that had no alternative homes or means of survival. Finally, violence drew the attention of the government, development partners, and civil society groups to the conditions in Kibera slum, which constantly contributed to the violent character. That also led to advocacy for slum upgrading. As long as the Kibera urban Slum remained in its condition, it will serve as permanent centre of violence. Consequently, a multi-pronged intervention strategy was already in the offing involving a number of agencies to give the slum a new face.

### **5.6. Political impacts of the conflicts**

Following the 2007/2008 electoral violence for instance, whereas the majority of the 42 Kenyan tribes were expected to have taken sides with either ODM or PNU/ODM-K in the post-election hostilities, the violence particularly aggravated ethnic relations between the Gikuyu, Embu, and Meru Association (GEMA) communities on the one side and the three major communities that supported ODM like the Luo, Luhya and Kalenjin on the other. In particular, the violence revived traditional Luo-Kikuyu hatred that began after the assassination of Tom Mboya but intensified with the introduction of multi-party politics in the early 1990s. The research confirmed from the community leaders who participated in the Kibera intra-slum peace meetings that ethnic tension, killings and destruction was more severe between the Luo and the Kikuyu.

The post-election ethnic rivalry dynamics was interesting. The fact that the Kalenjin Ethnic community constitutes a small population in the Kibera slum had made them a lesser subject of Kikuyu aggression than the Luo. But the Luhya had since joined the Luo as a part of Kikuyu target. Likewise, the Kamba became automatic targets of the Luo-Luhya aggression when ODM-K presidential candidate, Hon. Kalonzo Musyoka, joined PNU. Some Luhya residents therefore believed they had been made a target of GEMA aggressions over a Luo cause. In the same vain, a significant number of the Kamba slum residents held that they had been sacrificed for a GEMA cause. It was worth noting, therefore that despite the ethnic alliances, the Luo and Kikuyu still remained as the epicentre of rivalry.

The power-sharing arrangement spelt out in the National Accord therefore introduced significant challenges about the future of Luo-Kikuyu rivalry. In perception of many Kenyans, the faces of the key personalities in the Grand Coalition - the President and the Prime Minister – had only served to sustain the hostilities, hence dragging the recovery process. To his opponents, the president represents the face of Kikuyu cultural prejudice mixed with dishonesty while the Prime Minister is the very personification of Luo arrogance. Many Luo residents were inclined towards reminding the Kikuyu with whom they work or interact that “their man was eating a stolen thing.” Equally the Kikuyu constantly reminded the Luo about their resolve now and in future never to allow an uncircumcised Kavirondo person to lead them. The personalization of Luo-Kikuyu differences together with the rejuvenation of ethnic stereo-typing casted aspersions about prospects of recovery and normalization.

In addition, not only had intimate interactions between the Kikuyu and Luo and Luhya reduced in Kibera slum communities, but marriages involving a Kikuyu on the one side and either a Luo or Luhya on the other, were seriously affected following the violence. Although it was difficult to obtain a concrete number of the casualties, the study confirmed that many such marriages had since disintegrated in the wake of ethnic violence. Indeed, some couples voluntarily separated for safety reasons. The problem, however, was that a significant number of such families had not re-united even after the National Accord peace deal was signed. In a number of situations, either one or both couples had been forced to separate due to intense family pressure or ethnic threats. The emergence of ethnic boundaries in Kibera slum encouraged the trend. At the height of the violence, a Kikuyu man who hosted a Luo or Luhya wife was considered a betrayer who deserved punishment. A similar verdict was made on a Luo or Luhya who hosted a Kikuyu man or wife. Even with the positive strides towards the restoration of normalcy, the situation had not improved much.<sup>307</sup>

Couples who were determined to stay together had either been forced to relocate to areas where residents were less sensitive to issues of inter-marriages. In some extreme

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<sup>307</sup> Okoth Okombo, Olang'sana, *Balaa Mtaani: The challenge of mending Ethnic Violence Relations in Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi, Friedrich Elbert Stiftung (FES), 2010 PP. 45-46.

situations where divorce was inevitable, children were divided between the parents. The children with Luo/Luhya names (e.g. Onyango, Atieno, Nekesa, or Wafula) went to the Luo/Luhya parent while those with Kikuyu names (e.g. Njoroge, Kamau, Njeri) went to the Kikuyu parent.<sup>308</sup> Little thought had been given to the long term effect that such forced separations were to have on such children. Such children were faced with the threat of remaining with a single parent and becoming social misfits in the society in the future.<sup>309</sup>

The post-election violence also affected future marriage trends in Kibera which had been the epicentres of the conflict. Many young Luo men would prefer to marry girls from other ethnic groups and not the Kikuyu. Likewise a Kibera slum Kikuyu resident actively avoided the prospect of marrying a Luo or Luhya partner. When political differences get to the level of affecting marital relations, the slum community can only get more separate out of the rigid prejudices that each group nurses against the other. Tension that brews out of such arrangements can likely breed the seeds of intolerance and renewed violence.<sup>310</sup>

Further, the extent to which the Kibera communities were likely to preserve “ethnic village” arrangements was a matter of great concern to advocates of peace and integration. It was a fact that many survivors of the post-election violence owed their safety not to the police but to protection in their ethnic enclaves which acted as barriers against opponent groups. The *tribe* therefore provided protection to its members at a time when state intervention failed. Even with the easing of tension and hostilities, ethnic-village arrangements were still vital to the Kibera slum residents’ life in terms of their role as safety providers of the last resort. The more slum residents were left to entrust their security to these primordial institutions, the higher the chances were that they were to disregard the state-provided security arrangements even to the extent of defying government directives. Nothing confirmed this more than the mushrooming of young

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<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

vigilantes that had emerged to fill the gap created by the lack of an effective state security apparatus in the slum.<sup>311</sup>

As trends point to high possibilities of retreating to the ethnic enclaves as the nation contemplates the next general elections in 2013, the emerging popularity of the ethnic villages had the potential of introducing new challenges to which the government and other development actors must be prepared to respond. First, the existence of the villages confirms Kibera residents' distrust of government security provided through the Police, Provincial Administration and other state organs. Secondly, the obtaining system threatens the security of the property and investments of non-villagers who fall on the opposite end of the political divide. And thirdly, the ethnic-enclave system discouraged outsiders from investing in the areas where they do not belong or feel secure.<sup>312</sup>

In fact, investors who acquired land in the enclaves less dominated by members of their community were already in a rush selling them to locals before the next elections. Meanwhile, they had relocated their investments to the enclaves where their particular community resides. By and large, the existing enclave arrangements contravened the provisions in the Kenya Constitution, which gives every Kenyan the right to reside, own, and acquire property in any part of the country. Indeed, the very existence of the ethnic enclaves was a constant reminder to the residents of the prevailing "us" versus "them" divisions. Even petty conflicts such as those that occasionally arose between drunkards could degenerate into violent inter-ethnic battles.<sup>313</sup>

Conflict experts believed that violence such as the one exhibited during Kenya's post-2007 elections was not wholesomely negative. Indeed, under the shadow of violence lied some lessons that were regarded as positive in the long run. First, the crisis "empowered" the close to one million slum residents to reflect on their collective situation in relation to the state and other members of the society. Indeed, they had since

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<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 581–598.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.



discovered the vulnerability of the state and its Elite class. The poor performance of the Grand Coalition Government in addressing economic problems almost five years into its term in office had heightened the level of class consciousness. Within the slums, the residents could ignore tribalism in favour of creating a united front against an exploitative state, politicians and other privileged groups, that took advantage of their situation and petty divisions.

### **5.7. Conclusion**

The empirical evidence on the impacts of conflict in Kibera informal settlement presented a paradox. Conflicts which had social, economic, political as well as psychological impacts destroyed the social fabric of unity that held the multi-ethnic community of the slum together. Conflicts brought intense enmity and animosity among families and ethnic groups that had co-existed peacefully for many years. Many people lost their family members through the untimely deaths due to fighting. Families lost their key bread winners while others were displaced from their rented houses to IDP camps and without going back. It was also evident that cases of personal violence on both men and women through sexual violence and physical injury were perpetrated without discrimination irrespective of age and sex of victims. Conflict also had serious impact on the economic status of people leading rise in poverty levels. Equally, political impacts were inevitable. Although normalcy resumed in many cases immediately after elections, the impacts of conflict continue to be experienced even today.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera Slum; 1991-2012

#### 6.1. Introduction

The re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991 came after many years of KANU dominance. It was after many years of one party system of government. The KANU government employed a divide and rule system of governance.<sup>314</sup> Both Kenyatta and Moi effectively used the Provincial Administration and the police to ensure control through intimidation and arbitrary arrests of those against their governments. The Special Branch, the most powerful unit of the Kenya police force then (today the National Security intelligence service) was deployed everywhere around the country and worked around the clock. The unit would make arrests of anyone believed to be against the KANU government including politicians. Some were detained for days or months without trial; while others suffered seriously torture.<sup>315</sup> The state of affairs instilled fear to Kenyans and execution of any potential threat or conflict throughout the country was kept at bay. Thus, between 1904 and 1991 there were no major Community based Peace initiatives geared towards peace building in Kibera slum. Precisely, substantial Peace-building initiatives in Kibera were first witnessed in 1992 after the first Multi-party - election in Kenya. Therefore, Peace-building Initiatives in Kibera were quite linked to political developments relevant in area.

In fact the opening up of the democratic space in Kenya changed the political land scape around the country leading to a number of violent conflicts in various parts of Kenya, with Kibera not being excused. The outbreak of conflicts in Kibera in many cases took ethnic dimension and called for immediate interventions by the state, the local and international community as well as by other non- state actors. It was against that background that the chapter discusses peace-building initiatives by different actors in

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<sup>314</sup> Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 578-623. Accessed on 14/03/2011.

<sup>315</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng; Coordinator Usalama Forum and Programmes' Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

Kibera aimed at peace building in the slum. The chapter further attempts to understand how the peace efforts had helped in ending violence in Kibera and the challenges faced.

## **6.2. Peacebuilding Initiatives by the Government of Kenya in Kibera Slum**

The government of Kenya played a critical and leading role in ensuring peace, security, and normalcy was restored within the shortest time possible following outbreaks of violence in Kibera slum. As indicated in earlier chapters in this project paper, some conflicts in Kibera resulted from rent payment and land disputes and therefore called for the intervention of the Rent Tribunal. The Rent Tribunal was established under the Kenyan Rent Restriction Act of 1982 as a formal mechanism for arbitrating rent disputes in low-income areas with Kibera included. The Rent Restriction Act required that landlords must receive permission from the Tribunal before evicting or increasing rent of any tenant paying below Kshs, 3000 per month.<sup>316</sup>

Additionally, both tenants and landlords were given a chance to bring cases before the Rent Tribunal in cases where either of the parties had failed to honour terms and conditions of their contract. Although the government claimed ownership of Kibera land and the subsequent assertion that any resulting property regime was not formally recognized, the Rent Tribunal nonetheless claimed jurisdiction over the settlement to protect the terms of landlord-tenant agreements so as to avoid conflict. The Tribunal offered formal protection to tenants of Kibera by working together with the Provincial Administration in order to lessen tensions in Kibera laying good foundation by providing a platform for deliberations.<sup>317</sup> The Njonjo Land Commission also visited the slum and collected view from residents. That was a government endeavour to address land problem in Kibera.

Again, the Provincial Administration in the area represented by District Commissioners, District Officers, Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs and Village Elders in collaboration with police

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<sup>316</sup>Johan de Smedt, "No Raila, No Peace: Big Man Politics and Election Violence at the Kibera Grassroots," in *African Affairs*, USA, Oxford University Press, 2009 PP. 556–601. Accessed on 14/03/2011.

<sup>317</sup>Oral interview, Douglas Ouma Nyakech, Chief Sarang'ombe Location, Kibera; 15/10/2010.

officers from Kilimani and Langata police divisions visited the slum whenever conflicts broke. More police officers in addition to the Administration Police Officers seconded to the local chiefs were always sent in the conflict prone areas of the slum to quell the violence. Even though before 1992 there were Administration Police Officers in Kibera Slum, majority were based at the District Officer's office in Makina. As the new districts, divisions, locations as well as sub-location boundaries were drawn, more officers were posted at every location in the Kibera (at least ten officers).<sup>318</sup> Currently there are officers stationed at Nairobi west, Langata, Kibera, Sarang'ombe, Laini Saba and Lindi locations.

Following the outbreak of the 2007/8 electoral violence, the police were viewed as having been torn in the middle with many challenges. Poor preparation and lack of modern equipments to control riots were sighted as some of the reasons why the police failed. The police were also accused of being perpetrators of the the violence through violation and abuse of Human Rights. Most of the deaths reported in Kibera were as a result of bullet wounds. The police were also notorious for sodomy, rapes and looting of victim's property in Kibera.<sup>319</sup>

In spite of the above shortcomings, the role of the police in restoring and maintaining peace could not be under estimated. Police officers were able to create buffer zones between warring groups. During my interviews, retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, the chairman of Langata District Peace Committee (LDPC), explained that;

“Since Kibera slum was established in 1904, it has never had a police station. The area has been under Kilimani and Langata police stations. The two stations are located in the developed part of the area and about three and five Kilometers away from the slum respectively. From January 2011, a police patrol base was opened in Ayany area. Customer care desks in both Kilimani and Langata police stations were established. In addition, plans are under way to put up a Police Station and several Police Posts within Kibera slum to address the volatile security issue. Unlike in Eldoret and other areas within

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<sup>318</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>319</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng, Coordinator Usalama Forum and Programmes' Manager Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

Rift valley where police stations were established after the 2007/2008 post election violence, Kibera still does not have a police station.”<sup>320</sup>

He further informed me that;

“Since the events of 2007/8, the Police officers have been very active and pro-active and quick to respond to any crime or disturbance in Kibera area. Police officers have been showing more need and the desire to get reports from community members on matters related to conflicts in Kibera. Indeed police officers are yearning for information from the Kibera people. There is now a more cordial relationship between the Regular police and Administration police officers in the area. There are frequent meetings at least thrice a month.”

The government through the provincial Administration in Kibera also played a major role of restoring peace in Kibera. Whenever conflicts arose in the area, the Administrators normally organized *Barazas* where they talked to the warring parties and passed peace messages especially to the community leaders. They also facilitated meetings between different religious groups including Christians and Muslims. The Administrators also organized seminars or symposium where they urged Religious leaders to go and preach peace to their congregation. That was normally seen as easier ways of reaching many people. They also talked to women, men as well as with youth leaders. Moreover, the Provincial Administrators in collaboration with other peace organisation and partners including NGOs, Faith based organizations; women and the youth joined hands during conflicts and assisted in food distribution to victims, reconstruction of damaged houses and resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons in the slum.<sup>321</sup>

The roles of Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs in Kibera could not be under estimated. It offered an informal system of dispute resolution as a mechanism of restoring peace. Chiefs in Kenya are government appointees with legally defined responsibilities and specific territorial jurisdictions. The chiefs and their assistants are deployed by the Provincial Administration under the Office of the President. They also played an important role in Conflict Resolution by exhibiting rent-seeking behavior through

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<sup>320</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

exploiting their powers to ensure rent collection was done without causing any conflict.<sup>322</sup> The chiefs worked in collaboration with the Village Elders to ensure peaceful coexistence among the communities living in the slum. Throughout the history of the Kibera slum, chiefs have played an active role in allocating land to prospective structure owners thus lessening the probability for conflict re-occurrence.<sup>323</sup>

They also acted as guarantors in cases of land and rent related transactions. In fact whenever Kibera residents experienced rent disputes or eviction threat, they took their cases to the Chief with jurisdiction over their village. In such cases chiefs intervened by having the two parties signing documents on the mode of payment so as to avoid eviction which could cause conflict between the people.<sup>324</sup> Chiefs in Kibera were therefore very instrumental in peace building and sustainability of peace.

As Ruth Musenya explained during interviews, chiefs were also very instrumental during conflicts and acted as bridges of promoting peace between warring parties. Citing the the February 4, 1992 case as an example, she asserted that;

“Following the deadly fighting that left six people dead at Darajani; the area chief of Kibera Mr. Ezekiel Kosgei organized an inter-ethnic meeting. Elders from the two warring communities (the Luo and Nubians) attended the meeting that was held at the chief’s office in Kibera. After lengthy deliberations, the elders resolved to end the fighting. The situation normalized but also brought in a lot of enmity between the two communities. There was no major conflict that was witnessed again even during the election period in December 1992.”<sup>325</sup>

### **6.2.1 Community Policing Peace Initiative in Kibera slum**

Community policing was a government engineered Peace Initiative where the police and the community worked in partnership with an objective of fighting crime and

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<sup>322</sup>Oral Interview, George Omungweso, Assistant chief Sarang’ombe Location; 06/10/2010.

<sup>323</sup>Ibid.

<sup>324</sup>Oral Interview, Douglas Ouma Nyakech, Chief Sarang’ombe Location- Kibera; 06/10/2010.

<sup>325</sup>Oral Interview, Ruth Musenya, Pastor’s wife and a Tenant Mashimoni, Kibera; 11/11/2011.

maintaining peace and security.<sup>326</sup> In the year 2000, the Nairobi Central Business District Association (NCBDA) chairman then Mr. Philip Kisia initiated the NCBD community policing initiative. In 2001, a community policing (CP) pilot project was started in Langata division, currently Langata District. The main objective was to deal with security issues. A committee with a chairman and twelve members was formed and its major mandate was to give recommendations to the police on patrol areas, crime prone hotspots, criminal gangs and reporting areas of law requirement failures.<sup>327</sup>

By the year 2002 the government of Kenya had recognized the importance of Kisia's concept of community policing and started to develop it. When President Mwai Kibaki took over power from Daniel Moi in the same year, immediately a vacuum in terms of community policing was witnessed not only in Langata area, but also in the entire country. In 2004, the Initiative was revived and got support from the government. President Kibaki launched Community Policing (CP) pilot projects in Ruai Police Station in Nairobi. In the same year, another pilot project was started in Makina village in Kibera. The initiative had new ideas and was generally referred to as "the Kibaki Era community policing concept." The same year, the Commissioner of Police Major Hussein Ali embraced the initiative and spearheaded the process by directing all the Provincial police officers (PPO's), Divisional police Commanders (OCPD's) and every Station Commander (OCS) to roll out community policing (CP) projects within their areas. At every station level, CP committees were established, each with different perceptions depending on the officer commanding Police station (OCS).<sup>328</sup>

In Langata, a committee was established as per the guidelines of the Commissioner of Police and the Office of the President (OOP). A Committee of twenty stake holders including educationists, religious leaders, business community, Local Authority such as ward managers, representatives of different politicians within the area, local MP, and local councilors was formed. The Matatu sector, the Kibera slum community, and the

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<sup>326</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

neighborhood Associations such as Estates were all represented.. With that configuration, the scope of community policing was broadened from not only dealing with matters of security but also incorporated peace issues. Consequently, the committee came up with community based organization called Langata Peace and Security Concern (LAPSCO).<sup>329</sup>

By 2007 General Elections, the policy was still being fine tuned in terms of what was to be included in the police Reforms. Between August 2007 and the election date of December 27, 2007, community policing was dormant as campaigns were at the peak. The failure or dormancy of CP in some way contributed to the outbreak of the post election violence that rocked the country after the announcement of the disputed results on December 30, 2007 and particularly in Kibera. Due to the vacuum between August 2007 and December 30, 2007, there was no one to monitor what was going on in Kibera area. Community policing initially acted as a shock absorber. Community policing would have created a psychological effect in the minds of Kibera people and to some extent people would not have fought the way they did. CP would have stabilized the Post Election Violence (PEV).<sup>330</sup>

Following the violence, the community in Kibera was forced to look for intervention mechanisms and address the violent situation which was getting out of hand. Residents of Kibera came together and marched to the Langata DO'S office in Kibera and requested the then District Officer (DO) to allow them form peace committes. They were allowed and a committee of 20 members was formed. The bulk of the peace committee mainly comprised of former Community policing members. They formed "the Kibera Division Peace Building Committee (KID-PBC)."<sup>331</sup>

Immediately the committee was put in place, it embarked on Reconciliation efforts. That was to bring the Kibera community together through seminars, forums and workshops. The committee worked in collaboration with local Religious leaders, Politicians and Administrators. Most meetings were held at different churches within Kibera and at the

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<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.



DO's social hall. Meetings were also held in hotels where issues on peace in Kibera were discussed. The meetings also discussed issues touching on Ethnicity, Political notions and ill feelings of the community members towards each others. Also mitigating mechanisms to the problems would be extensively discussed. The efforts went on till the month of June 2008<sup>332</sup>.

Following the success of the peace Initiative, the African Evangelistic Enterprise (a foreign humanitarian church organization) offered financial assistance and helped the committee to construct houses for the internally displaced persons (IDP's) whose houses had been burnt down. The exercise was done in the whole of Kibera area. A total of 61 houses were burnt down in Sarang'ombe, Laini Saba and Lindi villages within Kibera during the violence. Other donors who supported the initiative were; Shelter Forum, World vision, UNDP volunteers and Jamii Bora. The donors provided the committee with building materials and labor. A total of 61 IDPs were resettled in their original homes or elsewhere. The committee also sought another intervention of guaranteeing peace in the area. They assured the IDPs at Dagoretti, Kikuyu, Thika and Jamhuri that the ground was peaceful and were free to come go and resettle peacefully.<sup>333</sup> The efforts continued until the month of June 2009. In the same year (2009), Kibera Division was upgraded and became Langata District.<sup>334</sup>

As a result of such developments, the committee was dissolved and a new Langata District Peace Committee of fifteen (15) members with a Chairman was formed with guidelines of the National Steering Committee of peace building and conflict management (NSC). NSC was a government National peace initiative, Started after 2007/8 post election violence and was coordinated by the Office of the President with a Secretariate based in Bruce House 14<sup>th</sup> Floor in Nairobi. Similar guidelines were

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<sup>332</sup>Oral Interview, Philip Omondi; Secretary Langata District Peace Committee and Former Youth Leader-Makina Village; 28/09/2011.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

replicated at all the districts in Kenya. In Kibera Slum, the structure extended upto the divisions and locational levels. KID-PBC was then run majorly by Kibera residents.<sup>335</sup>

The NSC also established the Conflict Early Warning Response Unit (CEWERU), comprising; the National Conflict Early Warning Response Unit, Representative from Parliament, Civil society groups, Religious Organizations, the Provincial Administration, Police, Military, Academic institutions, Research institutions, and any other representatives that were designated by the government which had a large presence in Kibera. CEWERU collected and shared relevant information on conflict, gave early warnings and helped in instituting timely responses. It also liaised and coordinated relevant institutions including civil society groups, undertook preliminary analysis of collected information, prepared periodic early warning reports, and communicated information gathered to CEWERU unit for action by security agents.<sup>336</sup>In support of the Peace Initiative and Reconciliation process in Kibera, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) put in place volunteers (UN volunteers-UNV's) in every village to gather intelligence in cases of any looming threats of conflict outbreak.<sup>337</sup>

On its part, the Provincial Administration in Kibera area greatly reinforced the Langata DPC. It ensured there was control and complimented the District Peace Committee's efforts. However in some instances, the committee accused it for sabotaging its work by failing to provide the committee with an office in the DC's office Compound, and the failure to invite the committee members in any of its meetings. The Committee also established Peace Committee offices up to the location levels. Each office was manned daily (from Monday to Friday) by at least two members of the committee on volunteer basis.<sup>338</sup>The government of Kenya working in partnership with others stake holders has generally succeeded and continued to ensure a peaceful situation remained in Kibera slum in particular and in the entire country as a whole.

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<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Oral Interview, Simon Njuguna Mungai, Kianda; 13/11/2010.

<sup>337</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng, Coordinator Usalama Forum and a Programmes' Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

<sup>338</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

### 6.3. Peacebuilding Initiatives by the Youth

The Youth (male and female) made a sizable percentage of the Kibera urban slum population. With rising problems of unemployment and poverty in Kenya, the youth suffered most and particularly those living in urban slum such as Kibera. Cases of high levels of school dropouts, availability of hard drugs and proliferation of small arms in the slum also attracted many young people in Kibera. It provided them with opportunities of engaging in illegal and criminal acts. The volatile situation in Kibera rendered most of the youth vulnerable and easy targets by politicians who used them to cause chaos during election periods. It was also the same category of the Kibera population that perpetrated most of violence during conflicts and the same who suffered most the consequences of war through deaths and bodily injuries.<sup>339</sup>

The continued use and participation of the youth in conflicts attracted the attention of various stakeholders in peace building and conflict resolution. Kibera youth also realized that they were victims of their own actions and decided to engage in constructive endeavours. Before the 2007/2008 post election violence broke out, there existed over 1000 ad hoc youth peace organizations in Kibera. Most of those organizations were registered by the government through the Lang'ata District Social Services Office. As early as 1995 the Kibera Youth Programme for Peace and Development (KYPPEDE) was formed.<sup>340</sup> The group was basically spearheaded by the youth in Kibera. The main rationale was that 'it was the youth who were involved in violence and it was only the youth to solve conflicts.'<sup>341</sup> It was a network of more than fourteen (14) community based organizations with each organization coming from a village (every village was represented). It was the most legitimate youth peace initiative ever existed in Kibera. The organizations coordinated peace meetings within Kibera and actively engaged young people drawn from different ethnic groups in peace negotiations. Following its success in restoring peace in Kibera, KYPPEDE got a lot of donor support and empowerment programmes. The success of KYPPEDE also led to the emergence of other peace

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<sup>339</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Omondi, Secretary Langata District Peace Committee and Former Youth Leader-Makina Village; 28/09/2011.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid.

initiatives like 'The Kibera Inter-religious Peace Forum, Mchanganyiko and other Women groupings. The organizations worked hand in hand with KYPPEDE and with a lot of synergy.<sup>342</sup>

After the peaceful conclusion of the 2002 elections, the influence of KYPPEDE started waning. Nationally there was strain on support to peace initiatives as much of the money used by donor countries and governments went to Governance, Justice, Law and Order sectors (GJLOs). Consequently, groups like KYPPEDE, Mchanganyiko and other women organizations changed their focus and started supporting other programmes including fight against proliferation of small arms in Kibera and community policing peace initiatives. KYPPEDE in partnership with other peace groups then formed the Makina pilot site community policing committee in 2004.

Similarly, after the events of 2007/2008 electoral violence many peace programmes targeting the youth were also established in Kibera. In order to ensure that the programmes did not contradict one another and met the security arrangements on the ground, the Lang'ata District Peace Committee (LDPC) was mandated by the government to advise donor communities on which projects to channel their funds. Some of the youth programmes included sports programmes for both boys and girls within the thirteen (13) villages of Kibera. The sports included Football tournaments, Netball and Boxing contests.<sup>343</sup> There was also the Wasanii programme that tapped youth talents from all the villages in Kibera. Its main area of focus was drama. The Kibera Community Development Agenda running the Kibera Community Newsletter was also started. It was a youth based Media Initiative for highlighting issues of security, peace and developments in the area. Also the Pamoja FM Radio was started and it spread messages and programmes on peace within the slum.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

The youth in Kibera also participated in Environmental Cleaning Programmes, sponsored by Global Peace Festivals, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Roads and other stakeholders. There were also outdoor Cinema shows targeting the youth. During the shows, effects of 2007/2008 post election violence, the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 and many other serious incidents of human rights violations across the world would be shown. Sometimes the shows would be paused and a session of discussion allowed before resumption. There were also inter-estate, inter-constituency and inter-village talk shows and exchange programmes on how conflicts affected the youth; and how they managed to get out of it.<sup>345</sup> In general, the youth in Kibera have embraced peace efforts for a very long time and have continued to play a leading role in ensuring peace and normalcy prevails in the slum.

#### **6.4. Peacebuilding Efforts in Kibera Slum by Women**

The ethnic clashes that rocked Kibera slum since 1991 left women and children as the major victims. During conflicts, many women were raped and their property looted by the perpetrators including the security personnel who were deployed to restore calm in the slum.<sup>346</sup> Many women were left widowed after their husbands were killed through the violence, thus bearing the burden of being heads of their families. Women in Kibera also participated in conflicts directly and indirectly. They cooked and offered moral and sexual supports to their husbands and the youth who took part in conflicts. They also offered financial assistance to those fighting and facilitated their escape to other slums or rural homes whenever the police sought them. Indeed, women played critical roles in sustaining conflicts in Kibera. In some instances they were the major beneficiaries of looted property.<sup>347</sup>

Contrary to the leading roles they played in facilitating conflicts, many years of suffering by Kibera women became the defining moments for participation in Peace Efforts. Conflicts led to panic among women, particularly mothers, as even children were not excluded from the violence. Women in different capacities worked towards confronting

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<sup>345</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng, Coordinator Usalama Forum and a Programmes Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

<sup>346</sup> Okoth Okombo, Olang'sana, *Balaa Mtaani; The challenge of Mending Ethnic Violence Relations in Nairobi Slums*. Nairobi, Friedrich Elbert Stiftung (FES), 2010 PP. 39-40.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

conflicts. They decided to approach each other to address violence and find ways of dealing with it. The study revealed that most women were visibly frustrated with the situation and did not require much persuasion to be convinced of the senselessness of the prevailing situations.<sup>348</sup>

Based on the success of the Kibera Youth Programme for peace and Development (KYPPEDE), Mchanganyiko women group was formed in 1999. The women movement drew support from women of all ethnic communities living in Kibera. Every village had a woman representative. The movement formed committees headed by elderly women leaders. After initial discussions, the women resolved to monitor the situation in Kibera on daily basis and ensure peace prevailed. They also agreed to fight ethnicity through sharing of market spaces and conducting businesses among themselves without discrimination on ethnic basis. Any woman who failed to follow the rules was expelled from the group. Gradually, violence abated.<sup>349</sup>

Consequently, the success of the group in restoring peace encouraged the women to pursue peace in the wider community. They brought on board other women working with the Civil Service such as teachers, health workers, social workers, and those from NGOs like Oxfam. To avoid being identified with any particular ethnic group, the women formed the 'Kibera Women for Peace group.' In collaboration with other peace organizations like KYPPEDE, the group broadened its scope and supported other programmes including the fight against proliferation of small arms in Kibera slum and the Community Policing Peace Initiative too. In cases where women were culturally not allowed to talk before men (like the Nubian and Luo Women), they participated in peace matters by engaging in activities organized by religious or faith based organization such as the churches and by presenting their ideas through seminars organized by Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

<sup>349</sup> Oral Interview, Peninnah Kerubo, Resident Soweto Village; 26/09/2011.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

At the peak of the 2007/8 electoral violence, when the police went to the slum to look for the youth who had purportedly pulled down the Kenya-Uganda railway line that runs across Kibera, a serious confrontation ensued. The confrontations left two people dead and several others injured including women who had organised a peaceful march to Uhuru Park.<sup>351</sup> It was at that point that women came together and formed the 'Kibera Women for Peace and Fairness Organization.'<sup>352</sup> The organization offered women a platform to air out their tabulations and let the whole world know what was happening in Kibera. The women stopped engaging in violence and began meaningful activities. They advised men and the youth to shun violence. They talked to their husbands and youth to stop fighting.<sup>353</sup> They also assisted in constructing house through donor support for the victims of violence. The group began 'Merry go Round' Welfare Associations for members where they contributed money and other development materials. They supported the elderly during conflict by providing them with food. The group was also very influential during resettlement of IDPs whereby members talked to the local communities to accept and receive the IDPs back.<sup>354</sup>

Currently, the organization has attracted a membership of over 400 women, some who started groups according to different themes that include; Women's Rights and Protection, Sports, Enterprenueship and HIV and AIDS. They work under the umbrella of peace that brought them together.<sup>355</sup> The group has remained as one of the most successful women organization whose efforts have significantly helped in restoring peact in Kibera slum.

### **6.5. Peacebuilding Efforts by Elders**

Elders living in Kibera from different ethnic groups played a leading role in peace building and conflict management. After witnessing several incidents of violence around election period since 1991, Kibera elders were the first group to form a formal Peace group. After the 1996 parliamentary by-election in Langata Constituency and the violent

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<sup>351</sup> Oral Interview, Fanice Muhonja, Chair lady Kibera Women for Peace and Fairness; 28/09/2011.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

scenarios that surrounded the elections, elders in Kibera formed “the Amani ya Mungu Kibera”, a community based Peace Initiative in the early 1997.<sup>356</sup> It was an initiative of elders from different ethnic groups particularly Nubians and Luos. The Initiative mainly did peace campaigns within the slum. It got support from NGOs, and Religious groups like Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI), National council of churches of Kenya (NCCK), the Catholic Church, and the Pentecostal Federation of Kenya among others. It was a very powerful elders’ peace initiative and very influential and at the community level in the whole of Kibera slum. The initiative was active throughout until the end of 2002 when it went down due to financial and leadership difficulties. It lacked local support and later lost legitimacy.<sup>357</sup>

Another key elders grouping was ‘The Kibra Land Committee’ mainly comprising of Nubian elders. The group was established in 2002 to look and address the Nubian community land related issues. It was mandated with the responsibility of pushing the government to grant title deeds to the Nubians who claimed Kibera was their ancestral land. In 2004, in partnership with other stake holders in peace joined hands and formed the Mikina community policing Pilot Site committee. The initiative actively held peace campaigns under community policing programme. It was able to promote peace and security in the whole Kibera till the 2007 elections.<sup>358</sup>

Elder also engaged in rapid response and peace work. Most of those involved were without permanent employment, those retired, and businessmen. Most elders were motivated by their own commitment rather than by financial gains. They initiated peace negotiations among warring parties with the assistance of local Administrators. They collected intelligence and passed the same to the Chiefs and assistant chiefs during meetings. They also called on communities to forgive each others and live harmoniously. Their efforts helped in restoring confidence among communities and promoted peaceful

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<sup>356</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng, Coordinator Usalama Forum and a Programmes Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

<sup>357</sup> Oral Interview, Abdul Issa, Chairman Kibra Land Committee; 27/10/2011.

<sup>358</sup> Oral Interview, Kassin Ali, Member of the Kibera Nubian Elders Association; 12/11/2011.



co-existence.<sup>359</sup> Today the Role and services of elders have remained central in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building in the slum.

#### **6.6. Peacebuilding Efforts by Faith based and Religious groups**

For quite a long time, Faith based and Religious groups (Christians and Muslims) played a major role in peace building in Kibera area. Whenever conflict broke out, Church compounds and Mosques in Kibera acted as safe zone to those displaced. Such compounds were used as temporary IDP camps where victims were assisted with food and clothings. Although Mosques many at times were used as meeting points during conflicts by Muslims to deliberate on how to counter their attackers, they were also used as centres for distributing humanterian Aid to victims and specifically Muslims.<sup>360</sup>

The “Kibera inter-religious peace forum” a faith based organization of both Christians and Muslims was started in August 2002, before the general elections. It was a very active member on peace matters and during conflicts in Kibera. The organization working hand in hand with KYPPEDE, Mchanganyiko, Kibera Land Committee and other women peace organizations also formed the Makina Community policing pilot project in 2004.<sup>361</sup>

Moreover, the Church under the umbrella “Kibera Inter-denomintion Fellowship (KIF), a Christian group formed by various churches in Kibera in 1998 was always in the forefront of urging communities to stop fighting and maintain peace. Some of the members of the group were Nairobi Pentecostal Church (NPC), Redeemed Gospel Church, the Catholic Church, Jesus Cares Church and Christ Pentecostal church among others. In 2001, serious conflicts arose between tenants and landlords over rent disputes (mainly between Nubians who were the landlords and predominantly Muslims and Luos, majorly tenants and Christians by faith). KIF immediately convened a special general meeting during which members resolved to use all avenues available to restore peace in

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<sup>359</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng. Coordinator Usalama Forum and a Programmes Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

<sup>360</sup> Oral Interview, Pastor Jack Mboya. Chairman Kibera Inter-Denomination Fellowship; (KIF) 12/14/2012.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

Kibera.<sup>362</sup> Consequently, the group engaged a section of both landlords and tenants with a view of having them negotiate on the best way forward. Working in collaboration with the Provincial Administration (the then Special District Commissioner posted to Kibera to help restore peace), KIF finally organized a stakeholders meeting at the DC's office on December 28, 2001. The meeting was attended by tenants and landlords representatives, the 'special DC,' area District Officer (DO), the Director of Police Operations in Nairobi Province, Officer Commanding Kilimani Police Station (OCS), Kilimani divisional Criminal Investigation Officer (DCIO), Local Chiefs and pastors. Following lengthy deliberations in that meeting, violence stopped immediately, and peace was restored.<sup>363</sup>

Again in its efforts to promote peace and harmony in Kibera, KIF in 2002 successfully mediated and reconciled parties in a dispute pitting Gospel Believers Fellowship church and the National Development Party, Langata Branch (on one side) against World Missionary Evangelism, a U.S.A based Christian Organization running youth Projects in Kibera and the Provincial Administration (on the other side) over land dispute.<sup>364</sup>

During the 2007/8 post election violence, KIF launched a conflict Resolution, Peace Building and Healing Project in Kibera Slum. The Project got financial assistance of US Dollars 4,500 from a Christian Organisation in the United States of America (USA). The project purposely dealt with reconciliation of different communities living in the slum with a view of helping them cope with their traumatic experiences; resuscitate their confidence and trust, and to restore sustainable peace in Kibera Slum as a whole. The projects also gave financial assistance to twelve pastors and a widow whose houses were looted and burnt down before being evicted from Kibera slum by the warring groups. In a nutshell, religious groups played critical role of supporting victims of violence both spiritually and materially. It was also in the forefront of ensuring conflicts ended within the shortest time possible and peace prevailed.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

### **6.7. Peacebuilding Efforts by Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Civil Society, and the International Community**

Kibera was one of the slums that had attracted good number of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other International Partners since 1991. The influx of NGOs was necessitated by constant outbreak of violent conflicts and the incentives that accrued from donor funding. Kibera was one of the most studied slums in Nairobi and it even featured in Fernando Meirelle's film, "The Constant Gardener."<sup>366</sup> In spite of that great fame, it remained one of the poorest and undeveloped slum. Following constant complains from residents and local leaders on how NGOs manipulated the local communities to get funding through shoddy projects and programmes, many NGOs abandoned the approach. After the incident of 2007/2008, NGOs went to Kibera through the Provincial Administration and religious groups. They gathered information from Provincial Administrators and church leaders particularly on areas of need, which programmes to support and the best ways of going about it.<sup>367</sup>

Although NGOs received constant criticisms from the locals, they played central role in conflict resolution and peace building. During conflicts, NGOs in partnership with other stakeholders were always in the forefront in ensuring the extent of destruction to human life and property was minimal and victims got all the necessary support required. NGOs including; CARE Kenya, Afya 2, NGOA in Kenya, World Concern, African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF) and USAID offered victims with social and material Aid such as food, clothing and building materials.<sup>368</sup> They also pitched tents in Kibera especially in Laini Saba where the sick and injured victims were treated free of charge. The services were offered without discrimination and to people from all ethnic groups. NGOs were also actively involved in supporting youth, women, elders, religious and government pioneered peace programmes.<sup>369</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> Oral Interview, Philip Ochieng. Coordinator Usalama Forum and a Programmes Manager, Peace Net Kenya; 26/09/2011.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>369</sup> Oral Interview, Pastor Justus Mutinda, African Inland Church Mashimoni; 11/11/2011.

In January 2007 various organizations including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), Maendeleo ya Wanawake (MYW), Peace Net, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), Nairobi Initiative for Peace (NIP), and Religious groups like the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK), and the Nairobi Pentecostal Church (NPC) came together purposely calling for the nation to observe peace during election campaigns. They unveiled the National Peace slogan “Chagua Amani Zuia Noma”. The slogan later became very popular among the youth in Kibera.<sup>370</sup>

NGOs were also actively involved in peace education and training. CARE Kenya, Nairobi Peace Initiative, Peace Net, Safer World, World Vision, Global Peace Foundation, Shelter Forum, African Peace Forum and Jamii Bora in collaboration with Equity Bank, Kenya Power and Lighting Co. (KPLC) and Rift Valley Railways organized peace seminars and workshops for youth and women leaders in various hotels in Nairobi. They also offered training on peace and reconciliation to all the members of the Lang’ata District Peace committee upto sub-location level.<sup>371</sup>

In cases where governments and other international partners were not represented by NGOs participated in peace efforts through funding development programmes. For example; the Kibera slum upgrading programme funded by the World Bank. The US President Barak Obama once visited Kibera when he was the senator of Illinois to inspect the progress of the project.<sup>372</sup> Among other prominent international personalities who visited Kibera included; the former UN Habitat Director, Hanna Tibainchuka, the current UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon and the current USA Secretary of State, Mrs. Hillary Clinton. After inspecting the project(s), each of them talked to the Kibera residents and urged them to maintain peace all the time and willfully support all peace programmes and development works mainly initiated by NGOs.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

<sup>371</sup> Oral Interview, Retired Colonel Francis Charles Mugambi, Chairman Langata District Peace Committee; 28/09/2011.

<sup>372</sup> Oral Interview, Pastor Justus Mutinda, African Inland Church Mashimoni. 11/11/2011.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

## 6.8. Assessment of the Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera Slum

The main objective of this section is to critically analyse of the Peacebuilding Initiatives by various actors discussed above with a view of finding out whether they succeeded or failed in Peace building in the slum. From the onset, it was quite clear that both external and internal factors in some way contributed to peace peacebuilding in Kibera informal settlement. However, as the Kibera residents struggled to sustain peace in the slum, they were also faced with various challenges.

One of the greatest resources for peacebuilding in Kibera in the long term was always rooted in the local slum residents and their culture. Different parties strived to understand the cultural dimension of conflicts, and identified the mechanisms for handling conflicts that existed within that cultural setting. Building on cultural resources and utilizing local mechanisms for handling disputes was quite effective in solving conflicts and transforming relationships. Initiatives that incorporated citizen-based peace-building included; community peace projects in schools and villages, local peace Commissions, and problem-solving workshops and a variety of other grassroots initiatives. Effective peacebuilding in Kibera also required public-private partnerships in addressing conflicts and greater coordination of the various actors among them, actors in conflicts. The International community that came for the rescue, the Kenya government, bilateral donors, and international and local NGOs coordinated to ensure that every cent invested in peace-building was spent wisely.<sup>374</sup>

There were also various ways by which the actors in Kibera attempted to coordinate peace-building efforts. One way was to develop a peace inventory to keep track on which agents were doing various peacebuilding activities. A second way was to develop clearer channels of communication and more points of contact between the elite and middle classes. In addition, a coordination committee on peace-building was instituted so that agreements reached at the top level were actually capable of being implemented on the ground. The third way to better coordinate peacebuilding efforts in Kibera was to create peace-donor meetings that brought together representatives from humanitarian

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

organizations, NGOs, and the government personnel. The Kibera peacebuilding efforts greatly benefited from cross-fertilization of ideas and expertise, and the bringing together of people working in relief, development and conflict resolution. There were also efforts to link internal and external actors. Any external initiatives in Kibera were to enhance the capacity of internal resources to build peace-enhancing structures that supported reconciliation efforts throughout the Kibera slum community<sup>375</sup>

The internal and external factors employed use of early warning system to attain peace. This involved collection of sensitive intelligence information concerning other communities' security and external threats. A number of methods are employed in collection and disseminating information to the required guardians of peace such as the chiefs and village elders so as to take preventive measures. Sometimes the elders used the information to foretell an impending attack on their community or village. Other elders could verify such information and if similar findings were obtained, then the intelligence report was disseminated to the community and government agencies. The militia groups were stationed in strategic places to ward off possible attacks or engage in pre-emptive strikes. The militia groups in Kibera spied their territory for any foreign intrusion in the slum. The use of early warning system helped in peacebuilding through the approach of structural dimension.<sup>376</sup>

Similarly, the various peace actors focused on the social conditions that fostered violent conflict in Kibera. Most of the actors noted that stable peace must be built on Social, Economic, and Political foundations that serve the needs of the populace in Kibera. In many cases, crises arise in Kibera out of systemic roots. Such root causes are typically complex, but includes skewed land distribution, environmental degradation, and unequal political representation. The state and other actors in peacebuilding tried to broker peace by addressing these problems in order to achieve lasting peace. The Kenya government tried to establish durable peace, by analyzing the structural causes of the conflict and

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<sup>375</sup> A. S. Erulkar, J. Bruce, A. Dondo, et al. "Tap and Reposition the Youth (TRY): Providing Social Support, Savings, and Micro-Credit Opportunities for Young Women in Areas with High HIV Prevalence," *SEEDS Documentation Series, No. 23*, January 8, 2006.

<sup>376</sup> Oral Interview, Peter Okemo, Kibera; 12/11/2010.

initiating social structural change. The government promoted substantive and procedural justice by institutional building and strengthening of the civil society working in Kibera.<sup>377</sup>

By setting up the National steering committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management, the Kenyan government was opening up in the country and Kibera in particular avenues of political and economic transformation which included social structural change to remedy political and economic transformation which included social structural change to remedy political and economic injustice. Banks such as Equity Bank and Kenya Women Finance Trust, and the government and other stakeholders in peace building in Kibera were spearheading reconstruction programs which were designed to help communities, and the Institutions of effective and Legitimate Restorative Justice systems. Peacebuilding initiatives in Kibera aimed to promote non-violent mechanisms that would eliminate violence, foster structures that meet basic human needs in Kibera and at the same time maximizing public participation in such projects so that they also take part in protecting them in times of conflicts. The joint efforts initiated by such stakeholders in peace building in Kibera slum was a significant step towards attainment of peace.<sup>378</sup>

## 6.9. Conclusion

Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kibera kept on evolving as new demands (political developments) arose. As the efforts promised a lot, community based peace initiatives were resilient and managed to stand the pressure of the area. During conflict time, various actor or entities would come together with a view of propagating for peace, and by employing different strategies, and subsequently fighting would stop. It was also evident that most these efforts helped in ending conflicts and promoting reconciliation. Therefore, to a great extent peacebuilding Initiatives succeeded in minimizing conflicts in Kibera informal settlement and towards return to peaceful situations. The peacebuilding

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<sup>377</sup> Oral Interview, Douglas Ouma Nyakech, Chief Sarang'ombe Location; 15/10/2010.

<sup>378</sup> African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC), "Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi's Informal Settlements," Nairobi, 2002 PP. 12-23.

efforts also did a lot of inter-communal dialogue that shaped peoples perspectives about local conflict dynamics.

To the contrary however, it was observable that most of the peace initiatives were only located at the community level (grass roots). They had not been able to address the major causes of the conflicts such as the land question, tenant/landlord disputes, housing problems, and social exclusion related problems among others. The initiatives were not able to address long term issues because they were not purposely formed to deal with such issues.

Moreover, most past and ongoing government interventions were poorly implemented because of mismanagement. The projects were also riddled with suspicion over claims of government partisanship along party lines. Government security response had been weak as evidenced by the mushrooming of vigilantes and *jeshi*. Such trends attested to the fact that the residents had taken over the task of security management in the absence of reliable services from the police. Interestingly, selected government interventions had been joint ventures and their overall success depended on the goodwill and financial support of development partners. An example was the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded slum upgrading programme and the Langata District Peace Committees (DPCs).

Civil society therefore seemed to have been more focused and rigorous in the initiation and implementation of recovery programs involving a multi-faceted approach, such as capacity building, advocacy, sensitization, and development. However, even among the Civil Society, there had been a lot of duplicity, replication and lack of coordination which served to reduce the general effectiveness of the Initiatives. Other than Shelter Afrique, which had initiated a house reconstruction project, most of the Civil Society interventions were a continuation of previous Peacebuilding efforts.



## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **Conclusion**

The chapter attempts to synthesis the issues raised in the research report. The introductory part of the report lays the background against which this narrative analysis has been set. The main theme of the report was that for many decades since Kibera informal settlement came to existence in 1904, the multi-ethnic community of the slum relatively co- existed peacefully. Although cases of ethnic clustering in some villages within the slum were evident, the residents of Kibera continued to be dependent and interdependent on each other for their day to day survival. However, following the re-introduction of multi-party politics in Kenya in 1991, the situation in the slum changed. Cases of election related violence in some parts of the country and Kibera slum in particular came to the fore. As different scholars of armed conflict and conflict resolution advanced significant explanation as to why this was the case in Kenya, it was quite clear that very little that had been said about the Kibera slum conflicts despite its massive impacts to the residents.

Significantly, Theories of Structural Conflict by Johan Galtung and Sustainable development by Gro Harlem BrundtlandS helped in understanding why conflicts occur in society, and how best such situation could be overcome. Galtung observed that there were certain structures in society which normally caused conflicts. Such structures are legal, social, economic, psychological, religious and political. He asserted that structural causes were the underlying issues including but not limited to inequality and poverty, breakdown of the Rule of Law, unequal access to the Means of Production, and Institutional deficiencies. Harlem Brundtland on the other hand stressed on the relevance of reality, with reference to designing an analytical and normative policy framework which addresses present pressing issues without compromising the ability of future generations. The work assisted in explaining how an atmosphere for a lasting peace could be cultivated. It recognized all peace initiatives whether social, political, and economic which can assist in the achievement of peace in society.

Following an elaborate analysis of the history of Kibera slum conflicts, it was evident that the settlement informally emerged in 1904 after the Nubians (Sudanese ex-soldiers) at Machakos and Kiambu settled in the area. The Nubians were enlisted by the British as early as 1897 and were used to suppress rebellion against the British Rule in Somalia and later during the World War I when they fought against Germany in the present day Tanzania. Following the emergence of the slum, the colonial government felt that the former government employees "Squatting" in urban area tended to crowd outside towns and produced a shiftless population, utilizing ground which was required for other purposes, and therefore declaring some of the areas occupied by Nubians as European settlements. The move contributed to rise in population in the slum.

By the 1920's, Kibera reputation grew as a site for receiving stolen property and the distillation of what became known as the 'Nubian Gin'. Thereafter, the colonial government made every effort to eliminate slums near European settlements. The move rubbed the Nubians the wrong way leading to a serious tussle about ownership of the Kibera land. The government maintained that the Nubians held no Tittle deeds. On their part, the Nubians asserted they had served in the institution of military slavery and hence deserved compensation with land. Efforts to resolve the conflict between the colonial masters and the Nubians through the Kenya Land Commission (Carter Commission) bore no fruits. There were also various other attempts to remove the Nubians from Kibera, but this was worsened by penetration of the slum by other communities from rural Kenya especially the Kikuyu, Luo, Kamba and Luhya. The continuous confrontations between the Nubians and government led to withdraw essential services to slum in order to discourage settlement there.

The emergent wave of constant demands characterized by violence across African for independence and in Kenya in particular complicated the situation in Kibera. The emergence of the Mau Mau Rebellion forced the British to abandon the move to evict Nubians to deal with the new situation. The attainment of independence of Kenya in 1963 did not make things any better for the Nubians. The immediate post independence governments of Kenya also ignored the plight of the Nubians in Kibera. Both the

Kenyatta and Moi's governments insisted that the Nubian were servants of the British crown and it was the responsibility of the British to settle its people. The assertion left the Nubians with no solution and subsequently the community was excluded from the national politics. Similarly, the attainment of independence was accompanied by high influx of migrants from other parts of the country to Kibera in search of employment. Subsequently, rural communities outnumbered the Nubians and therefore pushing them to the periphery.

Following these developments, political leaders in Kibera started politicizing the land issue. Demands by other communities in the slum that they were also entitled for equal share of the Kibera slum land just as the Nubians came in handy. The situation was worsened by the government assertion that Kibera was a government land. The government maintained that even those who owned structures in the slum were government's sub-tenants. As the government and the Nubians tussled over land ownership especially in 2001, politicians also took advantage of the situation inciting tenants not to pay rent. The pronouncement led to outbreak of violence leaving scores of people dead and others injured. The Nubians and Kikuyus being the majoriry 'landlords,' the conflict had massive negative effects on their income. Many landlords lost their houses while others were beaten and chased away.

During the study, various causes of the conflicts in Kibera slum were also identified. One of the salient findings was that Land had been central to most of the conflicts in the slum. The failure by successive governments to address the land issue in Kibera provided a window of exploitation by other communities living there to make demand for equal share of the land just as the Nubians did. Even when politicians pressed for the reduction of rent by half, they pegged their claims on land ownership issue. This was evident in the 2001 case where fighting broke out between "Landlords" and tenants after political pronouncements by president Moi and area MP Raila Odinga when they attended a fund drive at Olympic grounds on October 31, 2001.

Problem of forced evictions of residents by private developers under the protection of security agencies and that by landlord on tenants contributed to conflicts too. Similarly, high levels of poverty, lack of good infrastructure like good roads, clean water, and sewage systems in the slum and inadequacy of essential social amenities including government schools, hospitals and colleges were largely some of the underlying causes of the conflicts. In addition, the absence of tangible government institutions including a police station and other ministries had rendered the slum a place of anarchy where the law of the jungle prevailed. Many years of continued neglect had also reduced the slum a place of social decay, where the poorest of the city lived. Today Kibera slum is regarded as the largest, the dirtiest, most insecure and overcrowded slum in Kenya. Due to this fact, it has been quite impossible to security apparatus to penetrate the slum during conflicts.

High levels of poverty had also reduced the slum dwellers to easy targets for political manipulation during search for votes. For a long time, Kibera has been a reservoir of votes and a source of manpower of fighting political opponents. In addition, the study established that although religious differences among residents of the slum especially the Nubians (majorly Muslims) and the other communities who are Christians existed, it played minimal direct role as a cause of the conflicts. Religious differences only came to the fore whenever a Mosque or a Church was attacked by faithfuls of the other religion. Mosques in many cases were only used to mobilise the Nubians to deliberate and strategise on the way forward whenever they were overwhelmed by the actions of the other communities.

While examining the impact of conflicts in Kibera slum in general, the report established that conflicts impacted negatively to the residents. Indeed during fightings, women and children suffered most through sexual violence. Mothers and daughters would be raped without discrimination by their attackers even in the presence of other family members. It was also evident that most of the perpetrators of the violence were militia groups and security personnel. Conflicts caused many families a great deal of loss especially where key bread winners were killed. Cases of displacement of families from their rented

houses to IDP camps also presented Kibera slum residents with serious challenges too. Conflicts resulted to the rise in cases of children dropping from schools, cases of prostitution by both women and young girls, emergence of militia groups leading to more deaths and fragile society. In general, conflicts left behind a fractured Kibera society, facing multiplicity of challenges as the slum multi-ethnic community struggled to reconstruct their lives.

Lastly, the report argues that various actors took significant steps to end conflicts in Kibera slum through Peace Initiatives. The research observed that Peace Initiatives in the slum emerged as new political developments evolved. This was mainly after 1994. Previously the Moi's government had ruled the country with an iron fist. Cases of conflicts were minimal as the government used the Provincial Administration and Special Branch Police Unit to deal with perpetrators of violence. However, following the re-introduction of multi-partyism in 1991, the state of affairs changed. As elections thereafter were characterized by violence, the state in collaboration with other non state actors took every step necessary to ensure violence was kept at bay.

Through the Provincial Administration and other State Agencies, the government would send extra personnel to quell conflicts in the slum. It also started the Community Policing Programmes in Kibera. Following the event of 2007 electoral violence, the government also started the Early Warning Response Units under the National Steering Committee on peace building and conflict management, with Monitors stationed at every village in Kibera. The Monitors would send early warning signals to the NCS in cases of any looming threats.

Equally, many peace efforts pioneered by Kibera residents and supported by donor partners including the Civil Society and NGOs emerged. It was quite evident that most of the peace efforts in Kibera were locally owned processes but with massive support from the Civil Society. During conflicts, Civil Society groups, NGOs, and faith-based organizations in partnership with the Provincial Administration in Kibera slum provided humanitarian aid to victims of violence. They also supported various projects by different

groups in Kibera including the ones started Youth, Women, Elders, Men and even by Religious and Faith based organization.

In general, during the endeavour to understand conflicts and peace initiatives in Kibera slum. it came out clearly that most of the conflicts in Kibera were politically instigated especially when rent disputes arose among residents. There was also dire the need for the government to address the plight of the Nubian claim of owning the land on which Kibera stands. It was also paramount for the government of Kenya to develop a very realistic and comprehensive development policy framework geared towards addressing each of the causes of conflicts identified in this study to minimize areas of conflicts. Conflicts in Kibera are preventable if the government provided the essential services to the residents of Kibera slum.

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