

Abstract

Relatively little has been recorded about the relationships among ethnicity, corruption and conflict over urban land, especially at community level. The stories of land matters in four lower-income settlements in Nairobi, Kenya, drawn from extensive interviews with their occupants and officials and field observations, shed light on the roles of corruption and ethnicity in land conflicts and the character of violence involved. At the same time, they reveal new details of competition for urban land rights. In these cases, land conflict seemed to promote corruption and the use of ethnicity, while corruption and ethnicity were able to alter the relationship of this conflict to violence. There are findings here regarding sources of urban violence in general.