

**Mind the Gap!**

**Youth-led development in the informal settlement of Kibera, Nairobi**

Diplomová práce/Masters' Thesis

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*Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci  
vypracovala samostatně s využitím  
uvedených pramenů a literatury.*

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**PART I –**

**Introduction and Theoretical Framework**



## **I. Introduction**

### **1.1 Research problem and purpose of the study**

Before my departure to Nairobi, I tried to prepare myself well for the three-month stay, looking for information on the Internet and meeting people who went to Kenya or particularly to Kibera. Without exceptions, all the written materials I gathered and all the oral testimonies I heard were, to a greater or lesser extent, negative. Let alone the possible quality of my theoretical preparation, I started to have doubts about the very intention of doing a fieldwork in Nairobi's informal settlements.

Another disappointment was my Internet research concerning the youth-led development in Kibera, about which I found almost no information. However, I knew that it existed thanks to the website of an organization, Kibera Community Youth Programme<sup>1</sup> (KCYP). This website gave me some idea and hope. Apart from this single website, the existence of youth groups in Kibera was hidden in silence.

Consequently, the fact, that I actually found many youth-led community-based organizations on spot was quite surprising. I also found that they were not supported and organized from outside. My instant decision was, therefore, to know their work and to communicate my findings in the thesis.

Furthermore, soon after coming to the field I started to see a discrepancy between common discourse on poverty and the actual situation in the particular context. The information I found so threatening when still at home appeared to be far too generalizing since it mentioned always, and only, the negative aspects of the life in slums - the dirty environment, and the incapacities of the inhabitants, making it almost impossible to imagine the presence of positive things. I felt this was an injustice towards all those people I met. Therefore I assumed a position operatively called "Show-the-positive approach", intending to reveal that under the dust and rust, under the so-called poverty line, many things that are impressive in a positive way can be found. This became the single most important task of my work. I hope that it will help to uproot some stereotypes about the inhabitants of slums, especially the youth of Kibera.

One more thing appears to be important for the people in the field, and yet it is only scarcely present in the official literature and research of the major development agencies. It is the psychological aspect of development on an individual level which can nowadays be included in the term 'empowerment'. It is a concept that can cover different dimensions, too often focusing only on the economic outcomes. Seeing the importance of its psychological impact I tried to assess the vast and vague field it covers. What does it mean to be empowered for the policy designers and what does it mean for the youth in Kibera? How is the concept of

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<sup>1</sup>[Http://www.kcyp.net](http://www.kcyp.net)

power perceived and why more attention should be paid to the 'power from within'? I try to answer these questions in Parts I and III.

To sum up, I decided to concentrate on the description of the work of young people from Kibera as members of community-based organizations, but also as individuals with some personal motivations and dreams, and, indeed, as philosophers. I express my regrets on the fact that people, as individuals who try to realize their inner potential, are being ignored in the development literature and project design. The importance of personal development and discovery of the power from within is being neglected at the expense of economic progress.

The head title will draw attention to the three areas where I perceive a gap. Firstly, there is the lack of consideration that is paid to the youth-led community-based development in Kenya in terms of the lack of support on spot as well as unavailability of literature on this issue.

Secondly, while talking about empowerment, the psychological aspect of it is not being paid enough attention, in spite of having proved to be important for my informants; and thirdly, I argue that the stereotypical portraying of the environment of slums and, primarily, of its inhabitants is not leading to respect that is essential for all human beings.

Through qualitative methods, semi-structured interviews and participatory observation, in an inductive way, I tried to cover a wide range of aspects of the work of the youth from Kibera and through their testimonies bridge some gulfs between the world of the 'rich' and the world of the 'poor'. If I had interviewed only one of those youngsters I talked to, it would be enough for me to say that one can find great potential in Kibera that deserves to be recognized by everyone. Therefore I wanted my research to be first and foremost about human beings, their unceasing effort for advancement, personal progress and the development of their beloved community.

## **1.2 Choice of place of the study**

The choice of Kibera as a field for my research was not deliberate. It is, however, a place where researchers are often heading to. On one hand, it is a very good place for doing a fieldwork and, on the other, it could appear to be unsuitable for the same reason. Some claim that it is the biggest slum in Africa, others deny it. It is, nevertheless, the most populated slum in East Africa spreading in sight of the world's biggest development agencies with their headquarters placed right in the centre of all development endeavours, in the region's capital, Nairobi.

The name Kibera became notorious in the 'world of poverty reduction strategies' offering its name for different, not always transparent intentions. The result is the exposure of Kibera to

the presence of various NGOs and their staff from Western countries and to researchers hired to investigate the possibilities of implementing another project that will (this time at last) help the inhabitants to improve their situation. Kibera, indeed, is over-researched, which I came to find only after already establishing some contacts there, therefore I decided to stay and add one more tick in the statistics.

On the other hand, Kibera proved to be a very good field for a researcher on community development. There are two things I can think of that all the organizations managed to bring and that helped local people to start their own development efforts. The first one is the fatigue factor that arises when foreign efforts fail to bring results; and the endless waiting for any visible improvement promised by these agents. The second one is the know-how that brought to light the idea of different strategies for poverty alleviation and that keeps improving the effectiveness of their implementation through countless workshops on various issues.

In the end, I was happy that I hit at a website of the KCYP that introduced me to Kibera which appealed to me at the first sight.

### **1.3 Organization of the study**

The paper is divided into three parts which are designed to proceed from general theories to the particular case study.

In Part I, I present the views on poverty as set out in the studies carried out by major development agencies and other research institutes. I will outline new tendencies in the fight with poverty, analysing the concept of empowerment and community-driven development. I will conclude with showing some specifics of the youth in the development.

Part II is dedicated to the situation in Kenya, which forms a background for my case study. I will briefly touch on the history of Kenya with some implications to current social problems and also outline the official policy towards the youth. Then I will concentrate on Nairobi's urban poverty and the informal settlements, in general, and present basic facts about Kibera.

Part III creates space for my findings in the field. I describe in detail the work of youth-led organizations with the variety of their activities. I try to present an *emic* insight of their importance for the development of Kibera, how the members themselves perceive it. Thanks to the technical possibilities of recording the interviews word by word, I illustrate the findings with many quotations.

In the last chapter, I discuss various opinions on poverty heard in the field and also present in brief my comments on the discourse on poverty and the poor that prevails in the Western society.

In the conclusion, I will summarize the findings, present my contribution, and suggest some questions that still remain to be analysed.

#### 1.4 Data and sources

Major organizations headed by the World Bank are notable for the volume of literature they generate. Their papers on urban poverty, poverty reduction strategies, empowerment, and other issues are mostly available online.

As the purpose of the theoretical background in this paper is to show the general tendencies in the development field, it was essential to resort to these reports. A World Bank's papers jointly called *Voices of the Poor Series*<sup>2</sup> had an important impact on the beginning of my interest in urban poverty and development assistance. Although I object to the stereotypical portraying of the poor in most of the literature produced by the staff of international agencies, by their consultants, or by academics (predominately from Europe or North America), I cannot neglect the progress that has been made in the research on poverty. The poor were invited to participate in it, and their ideas were recognized as authoritative, "*there are 2.8 billion poverty experts, the poor themselves*" (Narayan et al. 2000b:2).

The method used in these reports is the so called Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA). It was developed during the early 1990 with the purpose of increasing the participation of poor people on the formulation and implementation of the policy for poverty alleviation<sup>3</sup>. The anthropological approach of the researchers allowed the informants express their opinions about poverty, participate on building the research and reveal all dimensions of poverty, not only the material one.<sup>4</sup>

In the theoretical part, I look more closely at the problematic of empowerment. Researchers concentrating on women's issues offer a good compendium to seize this, often vaguely perceived, concept. I used mainly works of Sarah Mosedale (2003), *Towards a framework for assessing empowerment*<sup>5</sup>, Nelly Stromquist (1995), *The Theoretical and Practical Bases for*

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<sup>2</sup>*Voices of the Poor*, World Bank Series, is a multi-country research initiative undertaken to understand poverty from the perspectives of poor people and creating a basis for the *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking poverty* (World Bank 2000). The findings were published in three volumes: *Can Anyone Hear Us?* (Narayan et al. 2000a) which gathers the voices of over 40,000 poor women and men in 50 countries; *Crying Out for Change* (Narayan et al. 2000b) pulling together new fieldwork involving 20,000 poor men and women in 23 countries; and *From Many Lands* (Narayan and Petesch 2002) which offers regional patterns and country case studies. The findings were first brought together in *Global Synthesis: Consultations with the Poor* (Narayan et al. 1999).

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Brock, Karen (Ed.) (2000), *An Introduction to Participatory Poverty Assessments, Introductory Reader*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

<sup>4</sup> For more see chapter 2.2 in Part I.

<sup>5</sup> Mosedale, Sarah (2003), *Towards a framework for assessing empowerment*, Paper prepared for the international conference, New Directions in Impact Assessment for Development: Methods and Practice, Enterprise Development Impact Assessment Information Service (EDIAS).

empowerment<sup>6</sup> and for the World Bank's view, *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook*<sup>7</sup>. In the respective chapters, I offer a more detailed review of the literature.

Many articles on the issue of urban poverty can be found in the *Environment and Urbanization* Journal available online<sup>8</sup>. Some are general: Ellen Wratten (1995), *Conceptualizing urban poverty*<sup>9</sup> and others focus on particular cases: Graham Alder (1995), *Tackling poverty in Nairobi's informal settlements: developing an institutional strategy*<sup>10</sup>.

In the second part, for the case of Nairobi's informal settlements, I appreciated the papers of Washington H.A. Olima (2001), *The Dynamics and Implications of Sustaining Urban Spatial Segregation in Kenya: Experience from Nairobi Metropolis*<sup>11</sup> and Rasna Warah's *Divided city*<sup>12</sup>. On the issue of youth in Kenya I used mainly the World Bank's report, *Youth Development in Kenya*<sup>13</sup>. Various articles that can be found online about the slum of Kibera are mentioning over again the same facts and phrases and never omit to mention flying toilets. They again focus mostly on the negative aspects, the dirty and over-stressed environment.<sup>14</sup> I give my opinions on such portraying in Part III. Else Øyen calls such discourse on poverty a 'tale-telling tradition'.<sup>15</sup>

The sources used for the fieldwork, Part III, I list in the respective part, chapter 1.2.

## 1.5 Fieldwork methods

As mentioned in the introduction, prior to the fieldwork, little was known by the author about the real situation in the field. The preliminary attempts to find some information lead to uneasy expectations that were then compared with the reality of the current situation in the field.

The fieldwork was carried out between 5<sup>th</sup> February and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2006 with no strict working plan. I wanted to stay open to the situation in the field and did not design the survey ahead,

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<sup>6</sup> Stromquist, Nelly (1995), The Theoretical and Practical Bases for Empowerment, in: Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo (Ed.), *Women, Education and Empowerment: Pathways towards Autonomy*, Report of the International Seminar held at UIE, Hamburg, 27 January - 2 February 1993, UNESCO Institute for Education.

<sup>7</sup> Narayan, Deepa (Ed.) (2002), *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook*, Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.iied.org/human/eandu/eandu\\_details.html](http://www.iied.org/human/eandu/eandu_details.html).

<sup>9</sup> *Environment and Urbanization*, 7, 1, pp. 11-33.

<sup>10</sup> *Environment and Urbanization*, 7, 2., pp. 85-108.

<sup>11</sup> Olima, Washington H.A. (2001), *The Dynamics and Implications of Sustaining Urban Spatial Segregation in Kenya: Experience from Nairobi Metropolis*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Conference Paper.

<sup>12</sup> Warah, Rasna (2004), *Divided city, Information poverty in Nairobi's slums*, Paper prepared for the Dialogue on "Communication and Cultural Diversity", Forum Barcelona 2004 Barcelona, Spain 24-27 May 2004.

<sup>13</sup> World Bank (2005), *Youth Development in Kenya, report on Economic and Sector Work*, World Bank.

<sup>14</sup> I will only mention two of them for illustration: Salmon, Katy (2002), Nairobi's 'Flying Toilets' – Tip of an Iceberg, *Terra Viva*, Inter Press Service News Agency, Johannesburg, 26 August, available on:

[http://ipsnews.net/riomas10/2608\\_3.shtml](http://ipsnews.net/riomas10/2608_3.shtml), and Affordable Housing Institute (2005), *Kibera: Africa's largest slum*, July 07, available on: [http://www.affordablehousinginstitute.org/blogs/us/2005/07/kibera\\_africas.html](http://www.affordablehousinginstitute.org/blogs/us/2005/07/kibera_africas.html).

<sup>15</sup> Øyen, Else (2002), *Poverty production: A different approach to poverty understanding*, Paper presented at the International Conference on Social Science and Social Policy in the 21st Century, Vienna, December 9-11.

as it may have been limiting my perspectives. Therefore I stayed flexible free of the danger of proving some prior expectations. I carried out the interviews and all the research alone without any intermediaries which was appropriate for the character of the qualitative questioning. Qualitative methodologies are well-suited to the exploratory nature of the research.

I used the methodology of face to face semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, which require descriptive answers.

Interview questions, prepared in English, were used as guidelines and I kept changing slightly the list of them because some questions proved to be unnecessary to be asked every time (as similar answers were given all the time), but mainly because some new interesting issues arose during my stay as recorded in the participant observation.<sup>16</sup>

I used the first youth group I contacted as a stepping stone for the contacts with other groups. The number of active groups in Kibera is not very high and they know about each other, therefore, I could be easily referred to another groups.

As a consequence, all the groups I visited were among the active ones, the good examples of the youth-led development which, nevertheless matched with the focus of the research and I do not hide it.

Participant observation completed the research.<sup>17</sup>

During my fieldwork I did not have to face major obstacles that would prevent me from completing my work.

## **1.6 Ethics**

Every researcher has responsibilities and obligations to his or her informants. The first responsibility is to reveal the purpose of the research to them. The topic of my research was not found controversial or problematic and, I believe, it did not give rise to any doubts; no one therefore refused to participate. The interviews were voluntary without any planned material reward and I therefore felt indebted to the respondents in spite of having avoided the raising of expectations on such payments. Nevertheless, I was willing to offer my know-how and also work and time if I were asked for a help. I was invited by some youth groups to advice them on some issues they thought I would know. In spite of not being an expert on these issues I tried to do my best to help them. For one youth group I was gathering information on grants and funding for grassroots projects<sup>18</sup> and visited numberless institutions, embassies and organizations to pursue this task.

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<sup>16</sup> Interview questions can be viewed in Appendix II. Sample Interviews in Appendix III and IV.

<sup>17</sup> All sources of information are listed in Part III, chapter 1.2.

I intended to present the testimonies of the interviewees in an unaltered form, wherever put in quotation marks, with his or her first name and a youth group he or she belongs to. I believe that their ideas are very inspiring and do not deserve to be left anonymous.

The funds received from the scholarship of Charles University were used fully and wisely. They covered almost 75% of the expenses required for the vaccination, travel, and ninety-day stay.

I heard the youth from Kibera sometimes complain that they have no profit from the numberless researches made there, that they were not provided with the results, and did not see any impact. I cannot promise an impact from my thesis, nor an improvement on spot, I can only promise to inform those people I met about my findings by sending them a hard copy of this paper. It was one of the reasons why I decided to write it in English and not in the Czech language.

## **II. Defining urban poverty**

### **2.1 Multidimensional character**

There always used to be a tendency to look at people in extreme poverty as having primarily material rather than psychological needs. But nowadays, some researchers begin to realize that:

*“It’s not only wealth that matters –  
it’s peace of mind too.”*

Karen Brock (1999)

Poverty is now agreed to encompass more than a mere lack of what is requisite for material well-being. *“It can also mean the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development – to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and the respect of others”* (UNDP 1997:5).

Among researchers and experts on poverty there exists nowadays a broad consensus on a multidimensional character of the concept of poverty. This means precisely that when dealing with poverty we have to consider many aspects that are interconnected. Due to this fact, different authors offer different points of view on the dimensions of urban poverty or poverty in general.

This broader view of poverty has evolved largely owing to the work of Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, who was one of the consultants to *Human Development Report: Human Development to eradicate poverty* (UNDP 1997). His approach also influenced the World Bank’s *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*, and meant conceptual

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<sup>18</sup> Actually, I only joined a volunteer from Europe that came to Kibera with this purpose and was so kind to let me help her.

expansion of its view of poverty including the non-income perspective, too. Sen's Capability Approach suggests that poverty is best understood as various forms of "unfreedom" that prevent people from realizing and expanding their capabilities. Therefore it is more than an income deficiency. This framework emphasises the importance of freedom of choice and multidimensionality of well-being.

The World Bank dominates in poverty research today. It may not necessarily be "*due to its explanatory strength but rather to the prevailing political position of the Bank*" (Øyen et al. 2005:15). Its World Development Report's (WDR) approaches tend to set the standard for the policy making process in the field of development and poverty reduction (Ibid.).

The WDR 2000/2001 (World Bank 2000) and equally the *Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies*, Chapter on Urban Poverty (Baharoglu and Kessides 2002:124) outline five dimensions of poverty: **income/consumption**, **health**, **education**, **vulnerability** (or security), and **powerlessness** (or empowerment).

Basically, two ways of approaching poverty exist: the participatory and the economic approach. The first one is conventional, based on economic definitions which use income, consumption, or a range of other social indicators to classify poor groups against a common index of material welfare. The second one uses alternative interpretations developed largely by rural anthropologists and social planners working with poor rural communities in the Third World (Wratten 1995:12).

The participatory approach was used in the *Voices of the Poor Series* that represents a main source for the WDR 2000/2001. It highlighted the importance of the non-material dimensions of poverty apart from the material one. According to Narayan et al. (2000a:26) "*...poor people's definitions reveal important psychological aspects of poverty. Poor people are acutely aware of their lack of voice, power, and independence, which subject them to exploitation. Their poverty also leaves them vulnerable to rudeness, humiliation, and inhumane treatment...*"<sup>19</sup>

To sum up, poverty reflects in every part of people's lives. In the simplest definition, poverty can be viewed as lack of material resources leading to physically and psychologically deprived state of being.

But definitions of poverty and its causes vary by gender, age, culture, and other social and economic contexts of the respondents. Ellen Wratten (1995:21) shows that certain characteristics of poverty are closely identified with urbanization. She puts these attributes of urban poverty into four interrelated areas: **Urban environmental and health risks**,

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<sup>19</sup> I comment closer the discourse on poverty in Chapter VI of Part III.



**Vulnerability arising from commercial exchange, Social diversity, fragmentation and crime, and Vulnerability arising from the intervention of the state and police.**

*“While there may be a greater volume and quality of community services in cities, the urban poor are invariably denied access to them: isolation is determined by political clout as well as spatial location”* (Ibid.). Therefore, in the urban setting stands out the social dimension of the segregation, in the rural space is more palpable the spatial one.

## **2.2 Well-being, ill-being and assets**

As an indicator for the level of poverty, researchers often ask about the state of being of their respondents. The two edging states of being are usually referred to as well-being and ill-being. *“Wellbeing has a psychological and spiritual dimension as a mental state of harmony, happiness and peace of mind. Illbeing includes mental distress, breakdown, depression and madness, often described by participants to be impacts of poverty”* (Narayan et al. 2000b:21).

In the series *Voices of the poor*<sup>20</sup>, when poor people speak about well-being, they speak about the **material, social, physical, psychological, and spiritual** dimensions, and also about **security** and the **freedom of choice and action**. Great value is attached to qualitative dimensions such as **independence, security, self-respect, identity**, close and non-exploitative **social relationships, decision-making freedom** and legal and political **rights**. All of these dimensions combine pervasively in states of mind as well as body, in personal psychological experiences of well-being.

It is nevertheless essential to distinguish between wealth and well-being. Great wealth was not seen by people as necessary for well-being (Narayan et al. 1999:10).

Much of ill-being was described as the opposite of well-being, it is related to material deprivation, hunger, physical ill-being, bad social relations, exclusion, isolation and loneliness, vulnerability, worry and fear, low self-confidence, and powerlessness, helplessness and frustration – all of them being the possible indicators of poverty.

Things required for well-being usually contain a range of assets<sup>21</sup> that people need to ‘feel well, satisfied or happy’. The range of assets mentioned throughout the *Voices of the Poor Series*<sup>22</sup> varies according to peoples’ priorities (to a certain extent, people from rural areas will mention different assets than urban dwellers, parents will desire other things than children, etc). The list usually starts with possession of basic material assets (**physical capital**) adequate food, constant and regular sources of income, nice clothes, a house that

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<sup>20</sup> See especially *Crying out for change* (Narayan et al. 2000b, Chapter 2).

<sup>21</sup> In accounting, an asset is anything owned which can produce future economic benefit, factors of production. Here, however, it involves also non-material ‘possession’.

<sup>22</sup> See in particular *Can Anyone Hear Us?* (Narayan et al. 2000a:39 hereinafter).

does not leak, and continues with the non-material ones. Healthy bodies or good education fall to the **human capital**, good relations in the community, well-behaved children fall to the **social capital**. Social capital has been recognized as an important tool for poverty reduction. The **environment** surrounding a community is also viewed as an asset.<sup>23</sup>

### 2.3 Types of low-income areas

One of the features of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was rapid urbanization of the world's population. According to the *2005 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects* (UNDESA 2006:1), in 1900, it represented a mere 13 per cent, by the middle of the century it rose more than twice up to 29 per cent and reached 49 per cent in 2005. The numbers speak more clearly: the urban population increased from 220 million in 1900 to 732 million in 1950, and is estimated to have reached 3.2 billion in 2005. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the urbanization will not cease as the latest United Nations population projections for 2030 anticipate it to reach 60 per cent, or 4.9 billion people.

Out of the total urban population, it is estimated that in 2001, 924 million people (31.6 per cent) lived in slums (UN Habitat 2003a:xxv, cited in Warah 2004:4).

Slums here stand for various terms used for settlements occupied by the urban poor. These terms differ widely from country to country: *slums*, *favelas*, *bidonvilles*, *shantytowns*. Some of them are used interchangeably, some differ in certain aspects.

One of the official terms used for these spaces is the informal settlement. According to the UN Habitat Programme (cited in UNDESA 2001:160) it refers to: i) residential areas where a group of housing units has been constructed on land to which the occupants have no legal claim, or which they occupy illegally; ii) unplanned settlements and areas where housing is not in compliance with current planning and building regulations (unauthorized housing).

It can be substituted by the terms *squatter settlement*<sup>24</sup>, *unauthorized settlement*, *low-income settlement*, *shanty town*<sup>25</sup>, and some others<sup>26</sup>. The legal definitions, however, differ from country to country and also names in local languages. Thus in Brazil, for example, we find

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<sup>23</sup> Other papers offer different categories of assets and capital. Empowerment and Poverty reduction: A sourcebook (Narayan 2002:11 hereinafter) lists these assets and capabilities: **Individual** which include material, human, social, and political assets; and **collective** encompassing voice, organization, and representation.

<sup>24</sup> According to Hari Shrinivas, squatter settlement is "*a residential area in an urban locality inhabited by the very poor who have no access to tenured land of their own, and hence "squat" on vacant land, either private or public.*" (*Defining squatter settlements*, Global development research center, GDRC, <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/squatters/define-squatter.html>, accessed 8/12/2006).

<sup>25</sup> The definition of encyclopaedia Wikipedia ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shantytowns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shantytowns)) confirms the claim for interchangeability as it states that: "*Shanty towns are units of irregular low-cost and self-constructed housing built on terrain seized and occupied illegally -- usually on lands belonging to third parties, most often located in the urban periphery of the cities.*"

<sup>26</sup> For more see Shrinivas (Ibid.).

*favelas*, in the French-speaking world *bidonvilles*, which are often used for both, slums as well as informal settlements.

The popular term slum is sometimes used interchangeably with that of informal settlement (and squatter settlement) but it is necessary to draw a difference between them. According to Shrinivas<sup>27</sup> this difference lies in the fact that “*slums refer to the environmental aspects of the area where a community resides, while squatters refer to the legality of the land ownership and other infrastructure provision.*”

Following this division, the GDRC<sup>28</sup>, gives the definition of slums as “*highly congested urban areas marked by deteriorated, unsanitary buildings, poverty, and social disorganization.*” Similarly, according to the Glossary of the World Bank<sup>29</sup> a slum is “*a heavily populated urban area characterized by substandard and poor housing and squalor.*”

Therefore, from an urbanistic point of view, slums are unplanned areas resulting from poor or absent urban policies and dysfunctional land and housing markets. They are often located on hill-sides, river banks and other high-risk places. Moreover, the residents are deprived of the most basic municipal services, such as water supply, sanitation and solid waste collection, and frequently have bad access to social services such as primary health care and education.

According to UN Habitat (2003b:54, cited in Warah 2004:5) slums represent the “invisible” part of the city, “zones of silence” in terms of public knowledge even though in many developing countries, the number of slum residents reaches up to over 50 per cent of a city’s population.

### **III. Fighting poverty**

#### **3.1 New directions in poverty reduction**

*“Eradicating absolute poverty in the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is feasible, affordable and a moral imperative.”*

UNDP (1997:12)

Poverty reduction became a central theme of government action of developing countries. A renewed emphasis on poverty reduction has also appeared in the policy of major development agencies to which contributed a widespread agreement to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

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<sup>27</sup> *Slums and Squatter Settlements: What is the difference?*, Global development research center, GDRC, <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/squatters/slumsandsquatters.html>, (accessed 8/12/2006).

<sup>28</sup> See previous footnote.

<sup>29</sup> [Http://www.worldbank.org.cn/Chinese/youth/Glossary.asp](http://www.worldbank.org.cn/Chinese/youth/Glossary.asp), (accessed 2/4/2005).

**First Millennium Development Goal:** The proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and the proportion of people suffering from hunger should be reduced by at least one half between 1990 and 2015.

See [www.undp.org/mdg/](http://www.undp.org/mdg/).

Much policy design has been influenced by the wealthy, international donors and financial institutions, particularly the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Their authority kept increasing as the debt crises deepened. This position has changed during past years. In the design and implementation of policies greater emphasis has been put on government ownership and leadership (Oxfam 2002:3). We mentioned the progress in researching poverty by including the poor in the Participatory Poverty Assessments. It is the objective of the new poverty reduction strategies to involve country's governments and civil society also in project design and implementation.

*"The old model of a technocratic government supported by donors is seen as incomplete and ineffective. Most development practitioners now believe that aid and policy effectiveness depend on the input of a whole range of agents—including the private sector and civil society—as well as on the healthy functioning of the societal and institutional structures within which they operate"* (Klugman 2002:2).

In September 1999, the IMF and World Bank, supported by donors, resolved upon increasing the amount of debt relief for the low-income countries but the countries were expected to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), anticipated by a short-term Interim PRSP (Oxfam 2002:4). The PRSP provides a framework to prioritise poverty reduction in the policy of all low-income countries.<sup>30</sup>

The PRSP program is based on five core principles suggesting that the strategies should be:

- **country-driven**, where civil society and the private sector should participate in all operational steps;
- **results-oriented**, with targets for poverty reduction that are tangible and that would benefit the poor;
- **comprehensive** in recognizing the multidimensional nature of poverty and the scope of actions needed to effectively reduce poverty;
- **partnership-oriented** with all development partners (bilateral, multilateral, and non-governmental) participating in the formulation and implementation; and

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<sup>30</sup> To help countries fulfil this task, the World Bank launched in 2002 *A Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies* (Jeni Klugman, Ed.). This guide is supposed to assist countries in developing and strengthening poverty reduction strategies. Its content is only suggestive, and it may be selectively used as a resource to provide information about possible approaches.

- based on a **long-term perspective** for poverty reduction<sup>31</sup>.

The emphasis on the country-driven development is also apparent from a Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, held in Paris in March 2005. Ministers of the developed and developing countries and heads of development institutions agreed on a wide-ranging framework for enhancing the delivery and management of development aid through greater emphasis on **harmonization, coordination and country ownership**.<sup>32</sup>

Similar emphasis on this approach was pronounced in the *Human Development Report 2005* with the subtitle *International cooperation at a crossroads: Aid, trade and security in an unequal world*, stating that “Developing countries have primary responsibility for creating the conditions under which aid can yield optimal results” (UNDP 2005:7).

A number of critical comments were expressed about the new PRSP approach. Many feel that little has changed since the previous Structural Adjustment Programmes and the new strategies are no more than an attempt to coat those policies in a human facade. “*This fear is increasingly being validated as full PRSPs are beginning to be completed. For all PRSPs there has been minimal change in terms of the macro-economic policy core, which continues to mirror the PRGF<sup>33</sup> arrangement held with the IMF*” (Oxfam 2002:6).

Øyen et al. (2005:15) notes that the first and second generation of PRSPs were not successful. Moreover, as Oxfam’s paper (2002:6) argues, the process continues to be donor-led from its inception. The concern with national ownership and participation still largely comes from the donors, not the governments themselves. Problematic is also the fact that in many cases there is not a clear link between the PRSP process and existing processes of national planning.

Partnership with governments also faces some other obstacles. There are many intermediaries that stand in between the donor and the intended beneficiaries. This is a challenge to accountability, transparency and participation. Therefore, “*The core message from poor people is a plea for direct assistance to them, without exploitative and corrupt “middlemen” and free of well-intended but often wasteful development programs*” (Narayan et al. 1999:216).<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> These six core principles are taken from the World Bank ‘Overview of PRSPs’: [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPRS/0,,menuPK:384209~pagePK:162100~piPK:159310~theSitePK:384201,00.html#elements\\_of\\_a\\_prsp](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPRS/0,,menuPK:384209~pagePK:162100~piPK:159310~theSitePK:384201,00.html#elements_of_a_prsp) (accessed 4/11/2006). They are also described in the *Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies* (Klugman 2002:3).

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>, (accessed 4/11/2005).

<sup>33</sup> PRGF, Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, is renamed from the IMF concessional lending facility known as Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF).

<sup>34</sup> I was involved in some fundraising activities for a community-based organization from Kibera. It proved to be more than difficult to get funding for grassroots projects because most of the international aid is given to the government of Kenya. This CBO (and not only this one) have, therefore, never directly benefited from this aid. For more see Part III.

Further on, we are going to discuss strategies that extend to the micro-level. In the policy design there has been a tendency to change the extent of participation from poor people being viewed as targets of poverty reduction efforts, passive beneficiaries, to being taken as partners. The World Bank's *World Development Report 2000/2001*, requires promoting **opportunity**, facilitating **empowerment**, and enhancing **security**. Similarly, the United Nations' *Human Development Report 1997* (UNDP 1997:6) also sees empowerment as a starting point for poverty reduction: "*A people-centred strategy for eradicating poverty should start by building the assets of the poor – and empowering the poor to win their fight against poverty.*" As we might agree, practice is not as simple as theory. Especially, when the theory is far from being clear.

## 3.2 Empowerment

### 3.2.1 Introduction

*"I like the term empowerment because no one has defined it clearly yet;  
so it gives us a breathing space to work it out in action terms  
before we have to pin ourselves down to what it means.  
I will continue using it until I am sure it does not describe what we are doing."*

NGO activist cited in Batliwala (1993:48, cited in Kabeer 1999:1)

This notion of empowerment, although pronounced more than ten years ago, still holds true. Today, it continues to be a very complex concept that is difficult to define let alone measured, therefore, it is hard to prove the scale of its impact and effectiveness. Despite these obstacles, it is an increasingly familiar term within the World Bank and many other development agencies and grassroots organizations.

Empowerment has been studied since it first emerged during the U. S. civil rights movements in the 1960s to attain democratic rights for Afro-Americans. In the mid 1970s, the term began to be known within the movements fighting for women's rights (Stromquist 1995:13). Since then, it has been used in a great variety of ways covering different processes on different levels and, as outlined later, having a wide range of dimensions.

It is often an indicative more of a process than of an outcome. Key terms appearing in the definitions are mostly: options, choices, control, power, capability, freedom etc.

According to the findings of the World Bank's PPAs (*Voices of the Poor Series*), local notions associated with empowerment include "*self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, capable of fighting for one's rights, independence, own decision making, being free, awakening, and capability*" (Narayan 2002:10).

Shetty (1991, cited in Action Aid 1996:96) ascribes to an empowerment approach a number of common features. It is *"a dynamic and ongoing process"*, requiring a *"holistic approach"*, but which is *"context specific...defined only within the local social, cultural, economic, political and historical context"*. It is focused on *"marginalised groups"*, *"implies redistribution of power"*, is *"democratising"* but is also *"very much dependent on the perception that marginalised people have of themselves"*. And not least, empowerment approach should *"build self-reliance"* and be *"sustainable"*.

Empowerment at the macro, or institutional level requires participation and social inclusion. At the micro, or individual level, it brings the idea of self-efficacy<sup>35</sup> and the significance of self-realization, with people being agents of change in their own lives<sup>36</sup> (Malhotra 2002:8).

We saw some common features of the concept but the particular approaches to empowerment tend to differ depending on the author's agenda and orientation.

We will look closer on three approaches: the first one will be the operationalizing and project-focused empowerment that is often used in intervention strategies carried out by major donor agencies; the second approach analyzes the concept of power as crucial to understanding empowerment; and in the third one we will see some other definitions that reduce empowerment to only one aspect of the possible complexity of the term.

### 3.2.2 Dimensions and approaches

#### 3.2.2.1 Project-focused approach

First recognized by the Bank in its *World Development Report 2000/2001* (World Bank 2000), empowerment was identified as one of the three key pillars of poverty reduction and as a primary development assistance goal.

The *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook* (Narayan 2002:2) says that empowerment is *"much more than a means to other objectives; it is a good in itself, and a desirable goal of development"*. The paper focuses on institutions because that is where it sees the main target of the Bank's work for poverty reduction. Hence, empowerment is defined as *"the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives"* (Ibid.:vi).

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<sup>35</sup> Bandura defines self-efficacy as *"people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives"* (Bandura, Albert (1994), Self-efficacy, in: V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior*, Vol. 4, New York: Academic Press, pp. 71-81.

<sup>36</sup> The first level is emphasized in the policy of major development agencies whereas the second one is mentioned by some authors especially as the psychological dimension of empowerment (see chapters 3.2.2 and 3.2.3).

In a World Bank policy research paper (Alsop and Heinsohn 2005:6), empowerment is defined not dissimilarly to the self-efficacy concept mentioned above and means that a person or a group “*possess the capacity to make effective choices; that is, to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes.*”

Narayan (Ed.) (2002:10) sees empowerment as relevant at the individual and collective level, and having economic, social, and political scopes. The four key elements of empowerment that must underlie institutional reform are: Access to information, Inclusion/participation, Accountability, and Local organizational capacity (Ibid.:14 hereinafter).

Capacity of local communities, especially “*poor people’s capacity to make rational decisions and effectively manage development resources, is usually underestimated*” (Ibid.:61). It can only be harnessed by empowerment. Empowering communities means that communities gain voice, decision-making powers, and access to resources<sup>37</sup>.

The World Bank (see footnote 37) outlines three key facets of community empowerment:

- Organizing and improving community participation;
- Financing communities through matching grants; and
- Targeting interventions to ensure the participation of socially excluded sections.

Skirbekk and St. Clair in the *Philosophical Analysis of the World Bank’s Conception of Poverty* (2000:13-14) argue that the newly added dimensions such as the empowerment, health or education and the emphasis the World Bank places on them are still merely instrumental and should lead to the success of market values.

Other authors give similar critiques. The Bank has been accused of ‘*power blindness*’ (Wong 2003)<sup>38</sup> for its “*neglect of political power; its disregard for the power dynamic in interpersonal relationships; and its undemocratic corporate culture.*” Using the four aspects of power (outlined below), Wong shows the Bank’s focus on economic power. Key features in combating poverty are two ‘positive’ powers - ‘power to’ and ‘power with’. “*Power, in the Bank’s perspective, is instrumental in nature and is a means to achieve economic efficiency.*” This version of power is, according to Wong, overly limited and, therefore, not without problems.

Apart from Wong, many authors have noted that power relations operate at different levels, and so does empowerment.

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<sup>37</sup> World Bank’s website, *Community Mobilization and Capacity Building*, [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,,contentMDK:20384443~menuPK:608222~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430161\\_00.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,,contentMDK:20384443~menuPK:608222~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430161_00.html) (accessed 10/12/2006).

<sup>38</sup> Adopted from the article’s abstract: available on-line: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/sage/pids/2003/00000003/00000004/art00003>.



### 3.2.2.2 4 types of power plus one more

In this approach, the idea of power is central to empowerment. The analysis of the concept of power is based on Western sociological discourse with application for development and poverty reduction. This typology is widely referred to in the empowerment literature, especially that concerned with women's rights.

G. Sen (1993, cited in Malhotra 2002:5), for example, defines empowerment as *"altering relations of power...which constrain women's options and autonomy and adversely affect health and well-being."*

Various authors<sup>39</sup> approach empowerment by analyzing four dimensions of power. These are: **power over**, **power to**, **power with** and **power from within**.

Within the social sciences, power was first typified as **power over**, or power to act upon a person or thing. It is an aspect of power that is particularly difficult to discuss. *"We may wish to reflect on why it is so difficult to discuss easily the issue of some people having structural, political, economic, and social power over others"* (Eyben 2004:20).

In the conflictual power theory, power is viewed as something inherently negative and malignant: power prohibits, power makes a person do what he would not have done otherwise, or to act against his interests. It is presupposed that power is a zero-sum game. Within this paradigm, power refers to the act of prevailing in decision making (Csaszar 2004:137-138).

Most authors do not ascribe to the process of empowerment the intention to dominate others, but the intention to act with others to promote change (Wallerstein and Bernstein 1988, cited in FTCC 1999:2).

Similarly, Carolyn Moser (1991, cited in Oakley and Clayton 2000:4) states that: *"While the empowerment approach acknowledges the importance for women of increasing their power, it seeks to identify power less in terms of domination over others and more in terms of the capacity of women to increase their self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change..."*

The other three aspects of power (power to, power with and power from within) are referred to as the non zero-sum models, where one person's gain is not necessarily another's loss.

**Power to** is defined as *"generative or productive power (sometimes incorporating or manifesting as forms of resistance or manipulation) which creates new possibilities and actions without domination"* (Rowlands 1997, cited in Mosedale 2003:5). It is bound with an

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<sup>39</sup> Jo Rowlands (1997, cited among others in Mayoux 2005; Oakley and Clayton 2000; Csaszar 2004), in her influential work *Questioning empowerment: working with women in Honduras*, Rosalind Eyben (2004) in her paper *Linking power and poverty reduction*, Carolyn Moser (2003) in the conference paper *Towards a framework for assessing empowerment* and others.

increase in skills or abilities including earning an income, access to markets and network. Hence it broadens the options of what is achievable for one person without necessarily diminishing opportunities of another party (Mosedale 2003:5).

The term **power with** describes common ground among different interests which leads to collective action, recognising that more can be achieved by a group of individuals acting together than by individuals alone. It builds collective strength through organization and the development of shared values and strategies and thus influences positive change (Mosedale 2003:5, Eyben 2004:22). Through organisation of the powerless individual abilities and the **power to** are enhanced.

For Sara Evans (1979, cited in Mosedale 2003:6), the prerequisites for developing an 'insurgent collective identity' are: Social spaces where people can develop an independent sense of worth as opposed to their usual status as second-class or inferior citizens; and the role models – seeing people breaking out of patterns of passivity<sup>40</sup>. This relates to the fourth aspect of power, the power within, or **power from within**.

This aspect of power is used mainly in the human rights and feminist perspectives where many definitions contain the idea that a fundamental shift in perceptions, based on individual changes in consciousness, or 'inner transformation' is crucial for the process of empowerment to take place. It refers to assets such as self-esteem, self-confidence and dignity. Kabeer (2001, cited in Mathotra 2002:6) goes a step further and describes this process in terms of "*thinking outside the system*" and challenging the status quo.

Carolyn Mosedale (2003:5) states that "*In a sense all power starts from here - such assets are necessary before anything else can be achieved.*"<sup>41</sup> Likewise, Nelly P. Stromquist (1995:16) makes reference to Joke Schrijvers who, talking about autonomy (as a term not dissimilar to empowerment), links it with the inner power standing on the beginning of all action: "*What I personally like best in it, is that it expresses an inner attitude of strength, an attitude which makes room for transformation. Transformation which comes from within, which springs from inner resources of ones own as an individual or a collectivity.*"

This empowerment at the individual, or micro level has been influenced by the work of the Brazilian Paulo Freire. Freire as a popular educator, highlighted consciousness raising, development of a critical faculty and improved self-concept which is connected to the power from within.<sup>42</sup>

Clarissa Rile Hayward (2000) challenges the prevailing view which treats power as something powerful people have and use. Rather than seeing it as having a 'face', she

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<sup>40</sup> Both prerequisites proved to be accurate according to my findings in the field, see Part III.

<sup>41</sup> I truly hope that my endorsement of this approach will be clearly visible especially throughout Part III.

<sup>42</sup> Freire's work is mentioned in various papers, e.g. Action Aid 1996, Mosedale 2003, FTCC 1999.

considers power as a complex network of social boundaries norms, identities, institutions which define both the field of action and the individual's freedom within it, for the 'powerful' and 'powerless' alike.

**De-faced power** is a concept where power should not be defined *“as an instrument some agents use to alter the independent action of others, but rather as a network of boundaries that delimit, for all, the field of what is socially possible”* (Hayward 2000:3). *“Power comes from below..., there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations”* (Foucault, cited in Hayward 2000:5).<sup>43</sup>

However, Jo Rowlands (1997, cited in Mosedale 2003:5) says that when women internalise the feeling of subordination, explicit use of power over is no longer necessary. They adapt to those *“social limits to human action and people’s capacities to participate in shaping their lives”* that are described by Hayward (1998, cited in Mosedale 2003:7). This suggests that the ‘de-faced power’ could have been once a power with a face as well.

Interestingly, Naila Kabeer in her influential work puts in contrast a state of disempowerment that has to precede the process of empowerment. ‘Deny’ is the crucial verb here and it implies having a ‘face’. To be disempowered means here to be ‘denied choices’ (because power for her is an ability to make choices). The notion of empowerment, therefore, refers to *“the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability...People who exercise a great deal of choice in their lives may be very powerful, but they are not empowered in this sense, because they were never disempowered in the first place”* (Kabeer 1999:2).

### 3.2.2.3 Empowerment in the reductionist view

In spite of, or just because of the complexity of the concept, some NGOs or grassroots organizations tend to perceive empowerment as being characterized predominantly by one component.

Reviewing the approaches to empowerment in development studies, Oakley (2001:43) identifies five key applications of the term:

- Empowerment as **participation** which he sees as the strongest in practice;
- Empowerment as **democratisation** linked with macro-level political activity;
- Empowerment as **capacity building**<sup>44</sup>;
- Empowerment through **economic improvement** which is based on the assumption that, focussing on women’s issues, their powerlessness is primarily a function of their poverty.

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<sup>43</sup> It can remind us on the Sen’s view of poverty as different forms of ‘unfreedom’ that prevent people from realizing and expanding their capabilities, provided that the ‘unfreedom’ came with no ‘face’.

<sup>44</sup> It is true, according to Mosedale (2003:11-12), that *“Capacity-building in general is often regarded as empowering, although there are many approaches, some of which seem little more than training”*.

Such interventions often resort to microfinance and small business development activities; and finally

- Empowerment on the individual level referring to **expansion of human capacities**.

We have observed that the concept of empowerment is not easy to analyze and apply. Sometimes, it is being reduced to only one dimension but the majority of authors consider it to be very complex, acting on various levels. We shall examine hereinafter the latter point of view, dividing empowerment into various categories and levels of impact.

### *3.2.3 Levels of empowerment*

One of the possible divisions is offered by Jo Rowlands (1997, cited in Oakley and Clayton 2000:9). In her analysis, Rowlands has explored empowerment at three levels: The first one, **personal**, refers to the development of a sense of self-confidence and capacity; the second one, **relational**, concerns the development of the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and decisions made within it; and the third one, **collective**, happens when individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact, such as forming a co-operative or involvement in political structures.

A different point of view is presented by other authors, each one dividing empowerment into alternative categories. According to Stromquist (1995:14 hereinafter), a full definition of empowerment must include **cognitive**, **psychological**, **political**, and **economic** components.<sup>45</sup>

From the feminist point of view, the **cognitive** component refers to understanding the self and the need to make choices that may go against cultural and social expectations. It involves acquiring new knowledge to create a different understanding of gender relations, as well as destroying old beliefs that structure powerful gender ideologies. In general, the term cognition (Latin: *cognoscere*, "to know") is used in several ways to refer to a faculty for the human-like processing of information, applying knowledge and changing preferences. It is a process of knowing and, more precisely, the process of being aware, thinking, learning and judging.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> I attempted to match this framework into my findings (see Part III, Chapter IV.) because of its simplicity and because it shows the importance of the cognitive and psychological dimensions that I found crucial during my fieldwork.

<sup>46</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognition>, and <http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=9259>.

The **psychological** component includes individual feelings of the ability to work for improvement at personal and societal levels and that the work for change will be successful. The psychological element is important but, according to Stromquist, it needs to be strengthened with economic resources.

The **economic** component of empowerment requires an ability to engage in a productive activity that will allow some degree of financial autonomy; and finally, the **political** component of empowerment stands for the ability to analyze the surrounding environment in political and social terms. It also means the ability to organize and mobilize for social change. In consequence, an empowerment process must involve individual awareness, and collective action. Rowlands (1997, cited in Mosedale 2003:14) also highlights the importance to put the personal changes into practise. *“There is broad agreement... that empowerment is a process; that it involves some degree of personal development, but that this is not sufficient; and that it involves moving from insight to action.”*

Oakley and Clayton (2000:11) offer a more compound division into six components: **Psychological** (encompassing e.g. self-image and identity but also acquirement of knowledge), **cultural** (in women studies it means to redefine gender rules and norms), **social** (e.g. social inclusion), **economic** (meaning income security, ownership of productive assets, and entrepreneurial skills) **organisational** (e.g. establishing representative organisations) and finally **political** (which involves participation in local institutions).

Similar division is offered in a synthesis by Anju Malhotra (2002:13) who outlines the most commonly used dimensions of women’s empowerment by drawing from the frameworks developed by various authors. The components are: **Economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological.**

#### *3.2.4 Empowerment in practice*

Review of the literature suggests that the concept is not easy to define and no general consensus exists for everyone to agree that empowerment has taken place. Empowerment is an ongoing process rather than a product with a final goal. My findings in Part III will suggest that the notion of empowerment belongs to individual and can, therefore, differ from the official assessments. Because no reliable measures exist, there is a danger that empowerment will be used in the field to describe nothing more than a superficial advancement.

*“There is evidence that many development projects, which placed ‘empowerment’ to the forefront of their objectives, have become frustrated by their inability to monitor and explain the process and thus ‘evaluate’ its outcomes”* (Oakley and Clayton 2000:12). Still others, according to Sarah Mosedale (2003:2) *“show little if any evidence of attempts even to define*

*what this means in their own context let alone to assess whether and to what extent they have succeeded.”*

Carolyn Mosedale (Ibid.:2) shows another point of view when stating that empowerment cannot be introduced by a third party but must be claimed by those who would become empowered. *“Development agencies cannot therefore empower women – the most they can achieve is to facilitate women empowering themselves,”* just create conditions favourable to empowerment but they cannot make it happen.

However, there is a constraint to the 'mere facilitating' approach as the agencies are *“necessarily in a position of power in relation to activities which they fund”* as Mosedale (2003:2) argues, and further asks how this relationship affects the agencies' ability to facilitate the empowerment of women. *“If participants themselves will largely determine aims, objectives and means the agency has no guarantee that it will like the results”* (Ibid.).

As Rasna Warah (2004:10) appoints, participatory approaches sometimes result in mere 'symbolic consultations'. In spite of the poor being invited to meetings and discussions, the real decision- and policy-making is left to those in power. *“Government officials seem reluctant to give real power to those they intend to benefit, perhaps because it justifies their own position, but also because they believe that the poor do not possess the knowledge to make informed decisions”* (Ibid.).

Thus, the intricacy of the concept gives to agencies, NGOs and CBOs a broad field to manoeuvre in. As Sarah Mosedale (2003:16) argues, and to a certain extent, I could not avoid having the same feeling in the field, *“It is evident that the term empowerment has become a buzzword within development studies and is used to add glamour (rather than value) to interventions which actually seek to achieve a variety of economic and social outcomes, which, though they may be extremely desirable in themselves, do not necessarily challenge existing patterns of power.”*

Despite all the drawbacks, the strategies of empowerment make a step further on the path of development, be it individual or global. To conclude, I will use the words of Peter Oakley and Andrew Clayton (2000:4) who claim that: *“Empowerment is not merely therapy which makes the poor feel better about their poverty, not simply the encouraging of 'local initiatives' or making people more politically 'aware'. Similarly it does not assume that people are entirely powerless and that there do not already exist networks of solidarity and resistance through which poor people confront the forces which threaten their livelihoods. On the contrary, empowerment has to do with 'positive change' in an individual, community and structural sense, with organisation and with negotiation.”*

### 3.3 Community-driven development

#### 3.3.1 Definition and principles

Community, in common usage, indicates usually a group of people who live in close proximity. But this is, according to Gusfield (1975), only one dimension of the concept of community – the **territorial**, created by people who share common environment, such as neighbourhood, or a village. Another dimension of community is **relational**, indicating that people belonging to this community interact and share common interests. Thus, community is a base for building social capital. Usually, in the case of geographical proximity, the relational dimension also plays major role. Without it, the sense of community would not be cohesive and resilient.

As was mentioned, participatory poverty reduction strategies are growing in popularity as ways of delivering resources to the community without pre-judging its priorities. Instead of seeing poor people as targets, they are supposed to become designers of development and partners in the fight for poverty alleviation. Community-driven development (CDD) is a key stone in this effort to find sustainable solutions. It also builds social networks that provide certain security when livelihoods fail. *“CDD - broadly defined - is an approach that gives control over planning decisions and investment resources to community groups and local governments.”*<sup>47</sup>

Five years ago, the World Bank made community-driven development a priority in the poverty reduction efforts. The CDD is founded upon principles of empowerment as described in the previous chapter. Communities claim voice and influence in decision-making process concerning their very lives. It started first as a mechanism for better service delivery and soon became a central tool for the empowerment of poor communities. The actors in development uttered the need for reversing the control from the traditionally top-down, to bottom-up direction. Thus, the CDD approach makes everyone more accountable, not only the individuals for their decision-making and voice but also the institutions and officials. The community makes sure that the services are tailored to their needs and therefore, they are better maintained and more sustainable<sup>48</sup>.

The World Bank<sup>49</sup> describes CDD as an approach to development that operates on principles of **participatory decision making (participatory governance), local capacity building,**

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<sup>47</sup>World Bank, CDD Anchor Unit, Community Driven Development, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,,menuPK:430167~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:430161,00.html>.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>World Bank, CDD Anchor Unit, Community Driven Development, Overview,

and **community control of resources**. The five key pillars of this approach are: **Community empowerment, local government empowerment, realigning the centre, improving accountability and transparency, and learning by doing**.

According to the Sourcebook for Empowerment and Poverty Reduction (Narayan 2002:155) experience has proved that CDD can make poverty reduction efforts more **demand-responsive**, more **efficient** and **effective**, and also more **sustainable**.

### 3.3.2 Community-based organizations

Communities, tired of waiting for a change, often decide to take action into their hands, join together to pursue a common interest and create a community-based organization (CBO). CBOs are briefly defined as “*grassroots organizations managed by members on behalf of members*” (Edwards and Hulme 1992, cited in Narayan et al. 2000a:111). Similarly, Chapter on CDD of the World Bank’s Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies (Dongier et al. 2002:305) uses the term CBO for a “*membership organization aimed at furthering the interests of its own members*”.<sup>50</sup>

CBOs differ from elected local governments in that they are organized on a voluntary basis; members choose their own objectives and the motivation rests on common interests. The common interest might be related to production, consumption, the use of common pool resources, or the delivery of services. They perform diverse functions for communities, including the mobilization of labour, infrastructure development, cultural activities, conflict resolution etc. CBOs are usually trusted because people feel the belonging, their priorities are the same.

Forms of community-based organizations vary infinitely, from revolving loan societies to a simple arrangement for exchanging labour and sharing food. “*Deeply rooted in local culture, indigenous organizations may sponsor celebrations, rituals, and festivals, which bring joy and give meaning to people’s lives. They are often the only organizations that poor people feel they own, trust, and can rely upon*” (Narayan et al. 2000a:111-112).

Community groups may be given a chance to partner with support organizations and service providers either from governmental, non-governmental, or private sector who help them to develop and implement projects that meet their immediate priorities. In this place, it is necessary to distinguish between a CBO and an NGO, or non-governmental organization.

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<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,,contentMDK:20250804~menuPK:535770~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430161,00.html>.

<sup>50</sup> According to my experience and for my case study, I would add to this definition – “...and larger community.” Not all local people who belong to local community are members of the CBOs and still they benefit from the CBOs’ activities, many of which are actually designed especially for larger public. See Part III to learn more.



The latter has “a broader scope of activities that might assist CBOs and pursue commitments that do not directly benefit NGO members” (Klugman 2002:305).

Communities do already have substantial skills and local capacity exists but it needs empowerment to be harnessed. Outside agencies (governmental or non-governmental) should, therefore, focus on helping with strengthening and financing, facilitating their access to information, and promote an enabling environment through policy and institutional reform (Ibid.:303). “*The big challenge for outsiders, NGOs, governments, private sector or international agencies is to support the capacity of poor people to organize, mobilize resources for priority needs, and participate in local and national governance*” (Narayan et al. 2000a:127).

Today, new opportunities and modalities exist that can help poor people connect globally, as well as within and among their communities to better address their needs and find various options for solutions. We witness rises not only of local CBOs but also international federations of the poor.<sup>51</sup>

### 3.3.3 Drawbacks of the CDD approach

Community-driven development belongs to the fastest-growing mechanisms for channelling development assistance. However, the theory, as outlined above, often diverts from practise. The World Bank’s vision is not universally shared either. Sceptics doubt about the basic design of the approach and point at challenges arising with implementation of such projects (Mansuri and Rao 2004:2). For the community-based initiatives to be sustainable they require enabling institutional environment which again demands government commitment and also leaders that are accountable to their community (Ibid.:1).

Such conditions are not easy to satisfy. Therefore the same authors (Ibid.) state that “A review of their conceptual foundations and evidence on their effectiveness shows that projects that rely on community participation have not been particularly effective at targeting the poor.” The authors show various problems arising with the CDD strategies, among others that the costs of service delivery may shift more to potential beneficiaries. Furthermore, the community endeavours alone do not necessarily have the power to transform the attitudes and implementation styles of governments or donors. If the perceptions of local people and project supervisors of what is good and useful vary, it is difficult to evaluate the project’s effectiveness. “*Whose preferences should count?*”, they ask (Ibid.:14). And similarly to

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<sup>51</sup> For all could be mentioned Shack/Slum dwellers international (SDI), <http://www.sdinet.org/>, Homeless International, <http://www.homeless-international.org/>, or Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), <http://www.wiego.org/>.

empowerment, adding community participation to the objectives of an already designed project often serves as a mere 'legitimizing' of this project's implementation (Ibid.:7).

Another problem arising concerns the funding. CDD programs are meant to provide direct financing to local community groups. If such assistance is given to a community, it can happen that local elite and local leaders act as effective gate-keepers who either keep resources for their own use, or try to deepen their control over the poor by becoming the resource distributors (Narayan et al. 2000a:220). Therefore, in more unequal communities, targeting and project quality tend to be markedly worse (Mansuri and Rao 2004:1). Moreover, in some communities certain groups are excluded from decision-making, e.g. women or other ethnic and religious groups.

The potential of community-driven approach, according to Mansuri and Rao (Ibid.:12), is greatest for projects that are small in scale and not complex. Most funding for community development is limited to a range of feasible projects that deal with public goods and services, usually schools, clinics, roads, and water and sanitation facilities.

It is nevertheless necessary to point out that many of the community-driven programmes do not access any external resource flows. The practice is that there exists vast number of small CBOs that are not linked to any support organization and receive no funding from outside (apart from casual well-wishers). Yet their activities can be highly successful and helpful for their members and broader community. But the policy of major development agencies is not designed for minor projects that focus also on non-material help.<sup>52</sup>

It will take time to capture the drawbacks of the recently designed theory and bring it into practice. For now, the concepts like participation and empowerment continue to be highly vague and their *"naïve application...endemic among project implementers...contributes to the poor design and implementation"* (Ibid.:1).

#### **IV. Youth in focus**

##### **4.1 Growing adult**

*"It is now increasingly recognized that youth participation is a critical aspect of positive youth development."*

World Bank (2006b:2)

Neither an adult nor a child, but somewhere in between, youth is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood when people, through a process of intense physiological,

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<sup>52</sup> I talk here about my experience from the field (see Part III).

psychological, social, and economic change, gradually come to be recognized, and to recognize themselves, as adults (Fussell 2006, cited in WDR 2006a:27).

For statistical purposes, United Nations use the range between 15 and 24 years to demarcate the period of youth. The World Bank (2006a) in the *World Development report 2007*, identifies young people as those between the ages of 12 and 24, when important foundations are laid for learning and skills. In this period, people establish their identities as individuals by moving from dependence to independence. According to this report, the number of people worldwide aged 12-24 years has reached 1.3 billion, the largest in history. In this stage of life, people are supposed to enhance the human capital they need to move themselves and their families out of poverty and lead better and more fulfilling lives. While they begin to interact independently with the broader community, they start to be heard and recognized outside their families.

If young people are not given the opportunities to participate in civic life, they are, according to the *World Development report 2007* (World Bank 2006a:9), at risk because without such opportunities their *“frustrations may boil over into violent behavior and lead to economic and social instability, sparks that can ignite long-simmering disputes.”*

Similarly, the United Nations’ *World youth report 2003* (UNDESA 2004b:6, citing R. Mkandawire 2002) claims that young people in response to limited or non-existent economic prospects may engage themselves in illegal activities such as drug trafficking, violent crime or gang warfare. And again in *World youth report 2005* (UNDESA 2005:46) it is repeated that those youths who have the requisite skills and education but are, nonetheless, unable to find or keep decent or productive work may experience disillusionment, disappointment, and desperation, undermining their sense of well-being and making them more vulnerable to recruitment by militant groups or organized crime.<sup>53</sup>

But generally speaking, education is crucial in this stage because young people are more likely to fall into poverty than the adults. In Phil Garrigan’s (2000:73) opinion a counter-dynamics exists in which *“education tends to act against poverty and marginalisation, and poverty and marginalisation tends to act against education.”* The persistence of poverty is thus caused, for example, by the child’s full-time labour, caring about younger siblings while the mother is at work, by a negative approach of the parents towards education, or simply by a lack of money to pay the school-fees and books.

## **4.2 Pro-youth policy**

World’s leading development agencies such as the United Nations and the World Bank recognize the importance of investments in the next generation. However, since it is little

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<sup>53</sup> I pay attention to the problem of idleness and lack of opportunities for self-realization throughout the third part of this paper.

known about the number and circumstances of young people living in poverty worldwide, investments in projects concerning them are often overlooked in national poverty reduction strategies and they are rarely seen as fundamental to promoting development (World Youth Report 2005, cited in Tackling Poverty Together 2006:2).<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, in 1995, at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Youth Year<sup>55</sup>, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a key instrument of global youth policy, the *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond* containing guidelines for the development of national youth policies.<sup>56</sup> It seeks to address more effectively the problems of young people and to increase opportunities for their participation in society by identifying three overall themes: **Participation, development and peace**, and ten priority areas for action aimed at improving the situation and well-being of the youth. These are: **Education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure time activities, girls and young women, the full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making.**

The youth are a significant demographic group, addressing their specific needs is therefore important for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. On closer scrutiny, The *World Youth Report 2005* (UNDESA 2005:25) shows that five of the Goals may be identified as referring directly to youth because they relate to issues primarily associated with young people, including educational attainment, gender balance in education, improved maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, and decent employment opportunities for youth.

Concern for young people in global development policy can be also seen in the World Bank's topic of the latest *World Development Report 2007*, having in focus *Development and the Next Generation*.

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<sup>54</sup> Moreover, "Few World Bank or UNDP country offices have "mandates" to work with youth, nor do they offer a specific focal point or contact person with whom youth organisations can liaise and, at a minimum, collect information about the poverty reduction efforts underway" (Tackling Poverty Together 2006:7).

<sup>55</sup> Already in 1965, the UN released *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples*. Two decades later, the UN General Assembly called for the 1985 *First International Youth Year* emphasizing the important role young people play in the world.

<sup>56</sup> For the programme see: <http://www.un.org/events/youth98/backinfo/ywpa2000.htm> (accessed 12/12/2006).

### **BOXI/1: World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation**

The major World Bank's paper sees young people as critical to further progress with poverty reduction and economic growth. Developing countries must invest in young people, promoting education and health, and developing essential skills.

The message of the report is clear and simple and it is summarized in the foreword of the president of the World Bank Group Paul Wolfowitz: *"The time has never been better to invest in young people living in developing countries...The number of people worldwide aged 12–24 years has reached 1.3 billion, the largest in history."*

The report presents three strategic directions for reform: **Opportunities, capabilities and second chances**.

All countries should provide opportunities for young people to be heard and to participate in civic life outside the family. They should be enabled to build their skills for exercising citizenship. They should be enhanced their voice in policy and service delivery by recognizing them as decision-making agents and by helping ensure that their decisions are well informed, adequately resourced, and judicious.

Improving access to and promoting the quality of education and health services will help to develop human capital and to choose well among new opportunities. Demand for higher order skills should be met by improving the relevance of upper secondary and tertiary education. Barriers to the start of work should be eased and mobility facilitated.

Those who have taken bad decisions or have had bad luck should be offered second chances as a denial of opportunities can have long-term implications.

Source: World Bank (2006a).

#### **4.3 Youth empowerment**

Youth empowerment shares similarities with empowerment of other groups. But as young people have specific needs, so has projects targeted on empowering them.

Peace Child International<sup>57</sup> has decided to organize youth congresses to help to promote the role of young people in the field of sustainable development and support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The congresses are held once in two years, with the first being held in 1999 in Hawaii. The second World Congress of Youth in Casablanca, Morocco in August 2003 adopted a Casablanca Declaration calling for 0.7% of all Overseas Development Assistance to be allocated to youth-led development initiatives (World Youth Congress 2005:4).

In 2005, on the third World Youth Congress held in Scotland, the participants claimed that young people *"want to be involved and this is a call for all development actors to take youth-led development [YLD] seriously and include them in their efforts to achieve the MDGs"* (Ibid.:2).

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<sup>57</sup> <http://www.peacechild.org/>.

The third congress, focused on young volunteers, concluded that *“Because young people are happy to take their wages, not in cash, but in experience as volunteers, they are inherently cost-effective. Their desire is to help themselves and their communities.”*<sup>58</sup>

Recently, in the United States, studies about youth empowerment have focused on new educational models involving youth peer counsellors in prevention against various threats concerning them, especially tobacco and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and school failure. But *“the focus of the field of prevention has begun moving beyond rather than turning away from preventing something negative from happening to youth...to a new paradigm, which emphasizes the need to promote positive youth development via youth empowerment”* (Kim et al. 1998, cited in Holden, Pendergast and Austin 2000:4-1).

The model introduced by Kim et al. (Ibid.:4-13, 4-14) is termed the youth development and empowerment approach. It was used to provide a framework for studying substance abuse and other problematic behaviour and to provide prevention for it. The crucial mechanisms proposed rest in bigger trust and ‘high expectations’ towards young people from part of their families, community, and society in general. *“It is an essential element of this approach to view youth as community assets and resources rather than community problems”* (Ibid.). The authors (Ibid.:4-1) highlight the objective of this approach being a ‘fully prepared youth’, instead of a ‘problem free youth’. The need for young people’s participation in the process of public affairs, therefore, increases.

Effective intervention of the youth development and empowerment approach should include ‘ample opportunities to learn skills’, an ‘opportunity to assume responsibility’, and an ‘opportunity to participate in social and public affairs of importance to the youth’. Additional components provide space to ‘demonstrate their abilities and successes’ and ‘reinforcement of their achievements, particularly by significant others in the school, home, or other adults in their social network’ (Ibid.:4-13, 4-14).

Most of the programmes designed for empowering the youth also highlight the importance of the power from within that was discussed in chapter 3.2.2.2. Firstly, young people need to have a vision for the future and be able to make independent choices, they need to be empowered from within. As stated on the website of a community-based organization Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES)<sup>59</sup>: *“Without first changing the children’s mindsets about their potential, their own worth, and developing a vision for their future, even the most heroic educational attempts fail.”*

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<sup>58</sup> Indeed, my findings support this statement.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.empowerachild.org/web/mission.php>.

Nevertheless, youth empowerment is a delicate issue in the way that it is in the nature of the youth setting out targets that are too high or not easy to meet. As Petoskey et al. (1998, cited in FTCC 1999:5) stated, *“personal empowerment must be more than individual improvement of skills or increase in self-esteem. If the individual is truly unable to exert control over the circumstances in his or her environment, attempts to change the psychological outlook of the individual can actually intensify the awareness of and feeling of powerlessness over life circumstances.”*

#### **4.4 Youth-led development**

*“Young people have important opinions to voice around development aspirations but their concerns are often ignored when adults make development decisions on their behalf.”*

World Bank (2006b:2)

The chance to participate in the community development is one of the most important protective factors for young people (World Bank 2005:9). The desire to create change in the surrounding environments is natural to them and community-driven development has great potential to give them this opportunity. The benefit is mutual; when young people put their vast energy and talents into the support of their community, it thrives and on the other hand, the youth gain self-esteem (Ibid.:43).

The World Bank’s CDD Unit<sup>60</sup> sees the community-driven development approach as an *“important means to enhance the inclusion of the increasingly alienated youth in development programs.”* These programs present an instrument able to: ‘improve youth access to economic/livelihood opportunities’, ‘enhance their participation in decision-making’, ‘provide spaces for sports and recreation’, and ‘create conditions for social integration of youth and enhance social capital’.

The challenge for the development policies to involve youth in the development process is critical. Young people are thought to make up more than half the world's unemployed (World Bank 2006a:30). The objectives of this new focus are still not transferred into practice. The responsibility for the implementation lies not only with governments and foreign NGOs. The youth themselves need to act as positive examples for a change. Being the change and take the community along. But for the change to take place resources are needed.

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<sup>60</sup> Youth and Community-Driven Development, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTCDD/0,.contentMDK:20605092~menuPK:608277~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430161,00.html>.

**PART II –**

**Background: Kenya**





Kenya's post-independence politics was dominated by Kenya African National Union (KANU). Its policy favoured free-market economics and close ties with the West but the government failed to address the land issue with millions of Kenyans becoming landless squatters. Poverty and dramatic population growth in the rural areas caused large migration of landless people to urban areas in search of jobs. Throughout the 1970s the aged president grew more reclusive and autocratic. Nevertheless, he was re-elected to a third five-year term in 1974 thanks to Kenya's economic prosperity brought by high world tea and coffee prices and a thriving tourist industry. Jomo Kenyatta died in office in August 1978 and was succeeded by vice-president Daniel Arap Moi who announced that his leadership would follow Kenyatta's footsteps, *Nyayo*.

In 1982, a coup d'état was attempted due to the failure of Moi's politics unable to address high unemployment, inflation, and constant political infighting. Moi subsequently outlawed all other political parties except KANU. Over the next years, he continued to consolidate his hold on power. He replaced Kikuyu (biggest ethnic group in Kenya favoured by Jomo Kenyatta) in his administration with his fellow Kalenjin and eliminated press freedoms. Sharp increase in the level of human rights abuses, economic corruption, and political patronage was part of the policy. Moi's popularity declined after more allegations of torture and illegal imprisonment came out.

By the early 1990s, Kenya had already lost its stand as one of Africa's most prosperous and stable countries. Foreign governments and donors started to put pressure on Moi to legalize pluralism. World Bank suspended its aid pending economic and human rights reforms. Yet president Moi confidently predicted that the return of Kenya to a multi-party system would result in an outbreak of tribal violence that would destroy the nation. *"However, far from being the spontaneous result of a return to political pluralism, there is clear evidence that the government was involved in provoking this ethnic violence for political purposes and has taken no adequate steps to prevent it from spiralling out of control"* (HRW 1993:1).

Regardless of the allegations, Moi managed to win the 1993 presidential election, due to the highly fragmented political opposition, with a mere 36% of the popular vote. His political legitimacy has further deteriorated, especially after suspicions of government-sponsored terrorism - a series of mass killings in areas of concentrated political opposition by what many believe were Moi's Kalenjin henchmen.

Until the next election in 1997, the regime did little to cut down the level of corruption, ethnic favouritism, and human rights abuses. It suffered also from a mounting debt and a crumbling infrastructure. Nevertheless, the president's tactics divide and rule among ethnic groups helped him win another term at the head of the country in 1997.

In the next term for presidential elections in 2002, Moi was barred by the constitution to stand for the function again. He nonetheless supported KANU candidate Uhuru Kenyatta, Jomo Kenyatta's son.

The opposition, having a multiethnic base was united under the group forming 'National Rainbow Coalition' (NARC). Its candidate, Mwai Kibaki, got 62% of the votes in the presidential elections, against only 31% for the KANU candidate and was sworn in on December 30, that year as the third President of Kenya.

## **1.2 Modern social problems**

Various problems that Kenya, as a developing or a Third World country, has to face are encompassed in the garb of poverty. Poverty eradication became the main focus in the development field and the first of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

Since the 1980s Kenya's economy has performed below its potential, with low economic and employment growth and a decline in productivity. Economic growth has slowed from an average of 3.8 per cent per annum in 1986-90 and further continued to decline, from 1.8 per cent in 1998 to 1.4 per cent in 1999. By 2000, it was at its lowest point since independence, with 56 per cent of the population living in poverty and a negative growth rate of 0.2 per cent (Central Bureau of Statistics 2003a, cited in World Bank 2005:12).

In 2001, the rates increased marginally to 1.2 per cent (Government of Kenya 2002, cited in Mitullah 2003:1). According to a report prepared by the Ministry of Planning and National Development (cited in the Daily Nation 20/2/2006<sup>62</sup>), the economy recovered from a major slump, growing from 2.8 per cent in 2003/2004 to 4.3 in 2004/2005.

Nevertheless, poverty continues to increase from 48 per cent in the early 1980s to 56 per cent in 2005 (Ibid). Therefore, the Government of Kenya subscribed to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) in 2000 and agreed on the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) at the same time (Republic of Kenya 2004:3)<sup>63</sup>.

Together with the economic decline, estimates on unemployment indicate an increasing trend over the last two decades. In 1978 the urban unemployment rate was around 7 per cent. By 1986 it had increased to 16 per cent and continued to rise to 25 per cent by 1999. The number of people openly unemployed currently stands at over 2 million (14.6 per cent of the labour force). The majority of the unemployed, though educated, do not have necessary skills (Republic of Kenya 2004:8-9). The largest figure of unemployed people is in the 20 to 24 age group.

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<sup>62</sup> Daily Nation (20/2/2006), Poverty rises despite growth, by Jeff Otieno.

<sup>63</sup> For more on the issue of PRSP see chapter 3.1, part I.

A contribution to the failure represents the content of the school curriculum which does not involve practical entrepreneurial and technical skills, as well as life skills, reproductive and sexual health education, and conflict resolution and therefore it needs to be reformed (World Bank 2005:74).

Most inhabitants of Nairobi earn their incomes from informal economic activities while formal wage employment has been decreasing. The informal sector generates more employment than the formal sector. The estimates, however, vary. *The Launch of the 2003 Economic Survey* (Republic of Kenya 2003:19) states that in 2002, there were 6.9 million persons employed in both the modern and informal sectors, the latter accounting for 74%.

The issue of HIV/AIDS pandemic inflicts crucial strokes to the efforts for poverty alleviation. It was declared in 1999 a national disaster. The rise in incidence of HIV/AIDS made Kenya a country with one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world which imposes increasing social and economic burden. The proportion of people between ages 15-49 who are infected with HIV rose from 4 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 1998. Urban prevalence is known to be far higher than prevalence in rural areas and is estimated to be between 17 and 18 per cent (NAS COP 1999, cited in APHRC 2002:119).

### **1.3 Youth in Kenya**

*“The youth can no longer be termed as leaders of tomorrow, but of today.”*

Republic of Kenya (2002:23)

In Kenya, young people represent a large and growing proportion of the citizens. The government of the country defines youths as those between 15 to 30 years of age. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2004, cited in the World Bank 2005:1) people under 30 years of age create 75 per cent of Kenya's population, which nowadays stands on more than 32 millions.

The economic stagnation mentioned above has had disproportionately negative effect on young people who constitute the majority of new job seekers. They are still hindered by the difficulty of finding employment and thus stay dependant instead of being able to contribute to the economy (World Bank 2005:7). About half a million young people enter the Kenyan labour market every year, but only a quarter of them will find employment within the formal sector and 75 per cent are left unemployed or doing jobs that do not match with their qualifications in the informal sector (Republic of Kenya 2002:7).

*"So far, there has been no policy action or initiative to foster the participation of young people in political process. Unlike the early years of Kenya's independence when young politicians played a leading role, today Kenyan youth are relegated to the back seat"* (World Bank 2005:40).

In collaboration with various stakeholders, the Department of Social Services at the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture, and Social Services (MGSCSS) has developed a National Youth Policy and an Action Plan for its implementation. The Youth Division of the department shall spearhead its implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the mobilization of resources for its funding (Ibid.:53). The overall objective of the policy is to *"promote youth participation in democratic processes as well as in community and civic affairs and ensuring that youth programmes engage the youth and are youth centred"* (Republic of Kenya 2002:9).

The emphasis has been laid on certain strategic areas which include: Employment Creation, Health, Education and Training, Sports and Recreation, Environment, Art and Culture, Youth and the Media and Youth Participation and Empowerment (Ibid.:1).

The key objectives of the Kenya National Youth Policy are among others:

- Identification of the hindrances to realization of the potential of Kenyan youth;
- Identification of ways to empower the youth in order to exploit their potential<sup>64</sup>;
- Promotion of volunteerism among young people;
- Exploration of possible engagement of young people in the process of economic development; and
- Promotion of hard work and productivity among the youth (Ibid.:9-10).

One of the constraints to an effective implementation of the National Youth Policy is the absence of strategic coordination. The responsibility for its execution has been given to the Youth Division of the Department of Social Services but this agency alone does not have enough power or resources to implement the key elements of the policy (World Bank 2005:57). The youth issue is multi-sectoral in nature, cuts across many different agencies, and thus requires effective coordination among them.

A crucial issue, linked to the shortage of opportunities for gainful employment, is the high rate of crime, again dominated by young people (males between 16 and 25 constituting over 50 per cent of all convicted criminals in Kenya). Similarly to other African countries, most crimes committed by young people in Kenya are financially motivated. The reactions of the society

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<sup>64</sup> According to the Kenya National Youth Policy (Republic of Kenya 2002:19) *"The youth are empowered when they acknowledge that they have or can create and make free choices in life, take action based on that decision and accept responsibility of the action."*

to youth crime varies. The youth (who are often also victims of crime) recognize the pressures that drive their peers to a life of crime whereas the adults are usually less sympathetic and demand harsh punishment for offenders (Ibid.:22-23).

Low qualifications are one of the causes of high unemployment, especially among the youth. Literacy rates in Kenya are among the highest in Africa however, while the government has made progress in increasing primary school enrolment with the introduction of free primary education, secondary school enrolment rates remain extremely low. Only 22.2 per cent of eligible students are able to proceed to the secondary level. Space limitations in secondary schools and high fees prevent many otherwise eligible young people from attending school. Socioeconomic differences in access to education are marked at all levels (Ibid.:xii,13). A Population Council's study about young women in areas with high HIV prevalence (2006:7) states that rates of educational attainment are generally higher in Nairobi. "*Among adolescents living in Nairobi's slums, however, only 40 percent of boys and 33 percent of girls have some secondary education*" (Ibid.).

Frustrations caused by the lack of opportunities for meaningful self-realization goes hand in hand with drug abuse. The survey *Youth in Peril: Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Kenya* (commissioned by Nacada, and cited in Muganda 2004) reveals that the youth mostly abuse the following substances: Among the legal ones are alcohol, *miraa*<sup>65</sup>, tobacco and also inhalants and the illegal ones are *bhang*<sup>66</sup>, cocaine and heroin. It is turning out to be a major problem because the youth begin to consume substances in early adolescence.

The research *Youth and crime in Nairobi* (UN Habitat 2002:8) stated that "*It was common to hear statements that youth from poor families used drugs to "kill frustrations" while youth from rich families used drugs for "relaxation" and because they could afford to.*"

## **II. Urban poverty in Nairobi**

### **2.1 Statistics**

Approximately 45 per cent of Kenya's urban population lives in the country's capital, Nairobi. Its population has grown more than ten-fold since 1960, from approximately 219 thousands to approximately 2.31 million people in 2000, to 7.7 per cent of Kenya's total population (DFID 2000, cited in Warah 2004:7).

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<sup>65</sup> *Miraa* is a term used in Kenya for a plant generally known as *khat*. Native to tropical East Africa it is a shrub or small tree with evergreen leaves that has been grown for use as a stimulant for centuries in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. The fresh leaves are chewed in order to achieve a state of euphoria and stimulation (Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khat>, accessed 20/12/2006).

<sup>66</sup> Cannabis.

### **Nairobi's population growth (in thousands)**

<b>Year</b>	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
<b>Popu- lation</b>	87	219	351	862	1,380	1,755	2,233	2,818	3,443	4,016

Source: UNDESA (2003 and 2004a).

In the table below, we can see the disproportion of the population increase towards the stagnating area growth. Since 1963, there has not been recorded any change in the area extent which is obviously reflected in the growing density of population in the informal settlements.

### **Growth of Nairobi's population related to the area expansion**

	<b>Area (hectares)</b>	<b>Population</b>
1963	68,945	342,764
1999	68,945	2,143,254

Source: Olima (2001:3).

The majority of Nairobi's inhabitants is represented by the slum dwellers. It is estimated that 55 – 60 per cent of the city's official total population lives in informal settlements which, in aggregate, occupy only 5.84 per cent of all the area that is used for residential purposes (see Alder 1995, Warah 2001 and 2004).

Between 1971 and 1995, the number of informal settlements within Nairobi rose from 50 to 134, while the estimated total population of these settlements increased from 167,000 to some 1,886,000 individuals (UN Habitat 2003a:219, cited in Warah 2004:7).

## **2.2 Urbanization of poverty in Nairobi**

*“Urban spatial segregation is not a recent phenomenon in Kenya, and indeed in Nairobi. It's origin in the Kenya towns can be traced way back to the emergence of colonization.”*

Washington H. A. Olima (2001:5)

Great Britain after gaining the East African territory tried to make it economically self-sufficient. In 1896, they began to build a railway from the port of Mombassa to the inland, reaching Lake Victoria in 1901. The Kenya-Uganda Railway was an important logistical

achievement with strategic and economic value for both Uganda and Kenya. It also helped different types of commerce to be developed, most importantly the export of coffee and tea, and it further encouraged colonial settlement.

In 1899, the railway reached an area used by Masaai people as pastures for their cattle. A watering hole, Enkare Nairobi, meaning 'cold water', lent its name to an emergent settlement established first as a railroad depot for the railway project's 32,000 workers that eventually grew into a small town.

For the construction, the British recruited not only Africans but also indentured labourers from India. Many of the Indian workers stayed after the construction in the country, becoming merchants in the towns that arose around the railway. In 1907, Nairobi became the administrative capital previously ascribed to Mombassa but it was not until the 1950s that the town was granted city status.

The origins of segregated Nairobi lay in the need to accommodate people of different races and ethnic descents during the colonial era. They were separated physically through different residential areas with each of them being allocated different public resources (UN Habitat 2003a:219, cited in Warah 2004:7).

The Europeans created their residences away from Asians and Africans in what came to be high-income residential quarters with the best infrastructure. Local people who were working as farm labourers or domestic servants for the Europeans received only meagre incomes and therefore were condemned to squeeze in semi-permanent informal areas on the outskirts of Nairobi or around the White settlers' areas. Holding the wages of the Africans low, colonial government kept them away from the Europeans. Since then, "*...residential segregation has shown itself to be persistent*" (Olima 2001:8). These efforts have resulted into creation of distinct residential zones with the low-income group and the high-income group forming two ends of the social ladder (Ibid.:13-14) and with the Asians staying somewhere in between. Moreover, "*The combination of residential segregation by either income or ethnic groups has resulted in systematic and uneven spatial distribution of public services including schools, access to transportation, health care, and water and sanitation*" (Ibid.:14).

Majale (2000:4, cited in Mitullah 2003:9) summarizes the main factors that helped in the colonial era the slum proliferation. These factors were:

- Displacement of Africans to make room for European settlers;
- The Colonial Government's policy of racial segregation, accompanied by a de facto policy of not allocating enough resources to cater for the housing needs of the Africans; and
- Clearance of 'sub-standard' housing.



Mitullah (Ibid.:11) further names factors that became important afterwards:

- Migration during the struggle for independence;
- Rural-urban migration and urban population growth without corresponding housing provision;
- Resettlement due to new developments;
- Upgrading or relocation in suitable sites; and
- Extension of city boundaries.



## 2.2 Modern Nairobi – view from the University

At independence, the Government of Kenya launched a policy of desegregation with any resident of Nairobi being free to move to any part of the city if he/she chooses to but only few Africans could afford to move out of the poor parts of the city (Warah 2004:7).

Except for this attempt, the government policy after independence has not been very favourable towards the squatters. The evictions of the low-income groups from the high and middle-income residential areas have widely been used to sustain spatial segregation. By setting land use standards that the poor cannot meet, the government virtually forced them toward the informal and peripheral areas.

In the 1960s, these areas were already a feature of urban life in Kenya and the new government tried to set up control and institute clearance of some of those worst. From the time of Kenya's independence up to the late 1970s, official government policy was to demolish informal settlements, not considering the fact that much of the urban population

had no other means of obtaining housing. This policy only led to the proliferation of new slums in other parts of the city. There were fewer demolitions in the 1980s, and during the 1990s, the approach alternated between ignoring the problem and demolitions (Weru 2004:48).

Nowadays, the expansion and proliferation of informal settlements in Nairobi continues on account of the rapid rate of growth of the city's population (estimated at 5 per cent annually). Together with the continuous influx of new migrants from rural areas, motivated primarily by economic considerations, it creates a severe housing and labour shortage<sup>67</sup>.



**2.3 Train going through Kibera**

### **2.3 Kibera in dates and numbers**

The area of Kibera, prior to human settlement, formed part of the dry-season grazing zone for the Masai cattle. First settlers were ex-soldiers of Kings African Rifles (KAR)<sup>68</sup> of Nubian origin who migrated from Sudan on the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The name Kibera is a corruption of a Nubian term for wilderness or bush, *kibra*.

The Nubian soldiers were allowed to settle on the land after retiring from the colonial army. The movement of other communities into Kibera was gradual. At the height of the Mau Mau uprising and Emergency in the 1950s large numbers of Kikuyus were to seek shelter with the Nubians. However, a major influx into the area by members of other ethnic communities began only in the 1960s.

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<sup>67</sup> To understand better the poverty distribution in Kenya see: Geographic dimensions of well-being in Kenya: Where are the poor? From district to locations, Volume 1, available on [www.worldbank.org/research/povertymaps/kenya/index.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/research/povertymaps/kenya/index.htm), accessed 16/3/2006).

<sup>68</sup> The King's African Rifles (KAR) was a multi-battalion British colonial regiment raised from the various British possessions in East Africa from 1902 until independence.

The average density of Nairobi's informal settlements is 250 dwelling units (or 750 persons) per hectare compared to 10-30 dwelling units (or 50-180 persons) per hectare in middle and upper-income areas (Alder 1995:86). However, for Kibera, Nairobi's largest informal settlement, the estimates rise as high as 2000 persons per hectare (Amis 2003:7, Olima 2001:8) and are said to be the highest in Africa. In 1998, Kibera's population was estimated from aerial photos at 500,000 (Amis 2003:8). But now the estimates reach to over one million people that reside on an area of approximately 2.5 square kilometres (600 acres). The settlement consists of thirteen villages.<sup>69</sup> Within Nairobi, Kibera is also the most expensive settlement on account of its inner city location and proximity to the industrial area, a major area of employment.

#### **2.4 Ignored settlements**

The land that gave rise to the first informal settlement was given to the Nubian soldiers but they were not granted legal status for it, they have never been its official owners. Up till now the government refuses to recognize the low-income settlements as inhabited areas. Security of tenure is a major problem. The dwellers themselves lack possession not only of the land they occupy but also of the houses. Most of the residents rent single rooms from individuals who have over time negotiated a legal or quasi-legal arrangements with the authorities to erect structures and collect rents. The highly inequitable land and structure ownership makes it difficult for the poor to stand for their rights when being evicted.

Informal settlements have different forms of land ownership. Basically, it is either public or private. On public land, structure owners obtained temporary occupation licences from the local authority, verbal permission, or a letter from the local chief, appointed by the city authorities (Alder 1995:88). *"The chiefs determine, at their discretion, who may have a temporary occupation licence and at what price, thereby establishing a system of patronage"* (Wegelin-Schuringa and Kodo 1997:182).

On private land, the landowner normally gives permission to build and collects rent. According to Graham Alder (1995:88), majority of the informal settlements are not inhabited by 'squatters' in the common sense that they have invaded the land or occupied it without the owner's accord.

The quasi-illegal status of all informal areas conduces to the prohibition of building anything other than temporary structures. This usually means houses with wattle construction covered with mud and corrugated iron roofing. Compounds consist of separate rooms of ten square metres, each under a common roof. Distances between rows creating a compound may be

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<sup>69</sup> See the map of Kibera in ANNEX I.

as little as one metre. One compound is shared by 25 to as many as 200 persons (Wegelin-Schuringa and Kodo 1997:182).

The rooms belong to landlords who collect rents but often show little interest for carrying out improvements to the dwellings. Mwangi (1997:145) reports that landlords and tenants belong to different social groups. Most landlords are rich and live in other parts of the town, away from their rented property. *“This is the result of factors that favour the rich and politically connected in the allocation of land”* (Ibid.).

Furthermore, *“Any attempt to improve conditions in Nairobi’s informal settlements is complicated by the potential conflict between landlords and tenants and by the conflicts between different ethnic groups that often have been exacerbated by the manipulations of powerful political interests”* (Weru 2004:48).



**2.4 Landlord’s house in Kibera**

UN Habitat reported that a study done at the University of Nairobi in 2000 found that of 120 landlords interviewed, 57 per cent were either government officers or politicians (IRIN 2/12/2006<sup>70</sup>).

From time to time, tensions between poor tenants and the landlords escalate as happened in Kibera after a visit of President Daniel Arap Moi in October 2001. Moi came to assure support for his party KANU for the oncoming elections before he leaves the presidential post. To secure popularity, he suggested that some landlords were oppressing the poor with unreasonably high rents (see e.g. IRIN 12/13/2001<sup>71</sup>). After President Moi’s speech, a good number of tenants in Kibera refused to pay the rent. Although other ethnic groups were present, the disputes ended in fierce clashes between the Nubian landlords and the Luo

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<sup>70</sup> IRIN (2/12/2006), KENYA: *Feature - rent crisis in Nairobi slums*, <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=29192>.

<sup>71</sup> IRIN (12/13/2001), KENYA: *Focus on clashes in Kibera slum, Nairobi*, [http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=17688&SelectRegion=East\\_Africa&SelectCountry=KENYA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=17688&SelectRegion=East_Africa&SelectCountry=KENYA).

tenants. At least 12 people were reported killed (though Kibera inhabitants gave higher numbers) and many more got injured and displaced. Ethnic differences with the roots in original 'ownership' of the land create considerable heterogeneity within the socio-economic profiles of local people.

Not only frictions between tenants and landlords constrain the life of the dwellers but, from time to time, also the threat of being evicted from homes by the government comes to the light. Most of the informal settlements are situated on potentially some of the most valuable land near the city centre. The communities, which have been living in those settlements for generations, were supposed to make room for 'development'.

Given that the settlements are informal, nor structure owners nor the government, are obliged to provide any services - adequate housing, repairs or maintenance, latrines and water, electricity, or garbage collection.

Basic infrastructure provided by Kenya government, such as roads and electricity, barely extend to the informal settlements as these do not belong to the official 'planned areas' of the city. *"Therefore, the authorities have no statutory obligation to provide services to these areas"* (Taylor and Gitau 2003a:12, cited in Warah 2004:8-9). The residents have no choice *"but to make their own arrangements to gain access to these services, such as through water kiosks and by "stealing" electricity from the mains"*<sup>72</sup> (Ibid.:9).

## **2.5 Poverty reduction and development efforts**

In 1986, governments in Africa, including Kenya, ushered in the implementation of the World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) which were designed to lead to the economic growth. The Programmes required from the state to withdraw from service provision and government subsidies. The effect of these policies was proliferation of new slums and further deterioration of those already present (Government of Kenya/UNCHS:123, cited in Warah 2004:7).

On their part, donors had no clear approach in working with informal settlements, they lacked coordination and did not view 'urban' as a funding category. But in response to the state's withdrawal, many civil society institutions arose and together with churches tried to support the needy. *"While focused on relief and welfare activities, they managed to improve education, sanitation and refuse removal in some settlements, albeit on a very limited scale"* (Warah 2001).

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<sup>72</sup> It is indeed a lucrative business to bring electric supply line to the slum and then sell the connection for 500 Kenya Shillings a month to those who want to have one bulb and a radio.

With the advent of political pluralism, the development efforts began to originate from part of the urban poor themselves. They began to organize in community-based organizations. In other parts of the world, organizations of slum dwellers had been working already for some time.

In Kenya, Federation of slum dwellers, *Muungano wa wanavijiji*, emerged not before the 1990s, in period when communities were extensively affected by evictions. Individuals from different communities of Nairobi and Mombassa came together to form an organization that would protect their rights against forced evictions and 'land grabbing' and that would represent constructive community-led approaches to slum upgrading.

The Kenya Federation forms part of an international network of federations of the urban poor, Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI)<sup>73</sup>, which was founded with the purpose of sharing ideas and experiences, and also supporting one another in the efforts for gaining access to adequate land, infrastructure, and housing. Such organizations represent a unified voice for the marginalized people.

The community organizations proved to be an increasingly effective way for development. Let us have a closer look at a case of community youth development from Kibera.

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<sup>73</sup> See footnote 54.

**PART III –**

**Fieldwork in Kibera**

## **I. Introduction**

### **1.1 General outline and context of the youth-led development in Kibera**

*“We have a vision, so we have to share it with the other youths.”*

Frank, KCYP

In Part II I already mentioned the problems that concern the young people of Kenya who constitute big proportion of all citizens. They suffer from the poor macroeconomic performance of the country and high rates of unemployment. Moreover, the educational system *“has not been effective in equipping students with the practical skills required by industries or for self-employment”* (Ministry of Labour and Human Resource Development and UNDP 2004, cited in World Bank 2005:39). The educational system does not meet the demand in terms of both quantity and quality and thus *“many young people are unable to translate their aspirations into a productive and fulfilling future”* (World Bank 2005:68).

The lack of opportunities for self-realization is endangering the whole generation. Young people have commonly high aspirations but without chances to meet them they will be endangered with idleness and inactivity that usually afflict them more than any other age group (Ibid.:65). The idleness, as showed later, can lead to engagement in risky activities and suggestibility to negative peer pressure.

The youth groups serve as a protective factor. Their activities range from income-generation, training and education, recreation, and awareness creation (of the most burning issues such as HIV/AIDS and drugs). *“These groups play a positive role in the lives of young people, including being a source of information, giving them a sense of belonging and self-esteem, and helping them to feel empowered through their collective action”* (Ibid.:72). Moreover, they serve the whole communities.

As I already stated, Kibera is exceptional in the sense of exposure to the development efforts. According to Courtney Crosson (2004-5:2) there are over 500 registered organizations in the settlement yet the population, as Crosson asserts, remains underemployed and underserved.

Nevertheless, Mr.Kamau from National Council for Churches in Kenya (NCCCK)<sup>74</sup> says that thanks to these efforts, youth groups in Kibera are good, exposed. However, the number of youths involved in groups with such positive activities is still very low.

I did not manage to find an access to official statistics, if they exist at all. The only numbers I obtained are from the person in charge of the CBOs in Kibera, the Social Development

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<sup>74</sup> Interview, April 2006, Nairobi.



Officer for Kibera and Embakasi, Mr.Oketch<sup>75</sup>, who gave me the total of 226 youth-led organizations registered in Kibera by February 2006. However, the majority of them was either dormant, non-active, or had been founded with unclear purpose of getting money without the effort to actually implement any project. As Mr. Oketch discloses, it is hard to trace and reveal these groups as the majority of them does not have a physical address. Therefore, they are called 'briefcase' (not having an office but existing only on papers put in a briefcase). Naturally, it is not possible to give an exact number of these organizations. On the other hand, the number of active groups that regularly report on their activities was known to be exactly sixty-two, according to Mr. Oketch.

### **BOX III/1: Figuring out the figures**

I attempted to count the percentage of young people involved in the youth-led organizations in Kibera. Each organization has approximately 30 members. For the sixty-two organizations it gives a total of 1860 people involved<sup>76</sup>.

According to the UNDESA (cited in World Bank 2005:16), there are 6 601 000 people from 20 to 29 years of age in Kenya. Out of the total population, estimated at 32 millions, it represents 20,6 per cent.

Applying the same percentage to the population of Kibera estimated at 800 000 to 1 million, we would find **165 000 - 200 000 people** between 20 and 29 years of age in the informal settlement. The final number of people active in the youth-led community-based organizations will, therefore, be around one per cent (1%). Is one per cent little or not? And what about the remaining 99 per cent? From these, we have to subtract people that are working, attending colleges or other forms of education and also those who have families as these people usually do not participate fully in the youth-led organizations. And what about the rest? In my work, I chose to focus on the 1 per cent minority. What makes them to join the youth groups and to work on their projects?

## **1.2 Data for fieldwork**

I made my first contact with a youth group KCYP via email. They first showed me Kibera. It was rather easy to become involved in their activities as they had a daily course of drama and they were used to host foreign visitors and volunteers. The members of KCYP therefore constitute big proportion of my informants. They also helped me to contact other youth groups.

I obtained the information from the following sources:

- **Recorded interviews:** I used a digital Dictaphone to tape the interviews that were later transcribed word by word.

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<sup>75</sup> Interview, April 2006, Nairobi.

<sup>76</sup> These are active members, otherwise there are often more people who are not active or are involved mainly in football without participating in other development activities.

In the following table, I list the groups interviewed. The number of people present at an interview ranged from one to various which depended on the decision of respective groups. Sometimes, more people were present but did not participate in answering the questions, therefore I count only one person in this case.

Most of the interviewees were from the leadership – chairmen, programme officers etc. – 15 people, whereas 6 were ordinary members.

7 groups were well established, working for several years and 2 were founded only few months prior to my arrival.

<b>Name of the youth group</b>	<b>Number of members interviewed</b>
CVDRII (Centre for Viable Development, Research, Innovation and Intervention)	3 together
Duduba Youth Group	1
Kamsheg (Kambi Muru Self-help Group)	1
KCYP (Kibera Community Youth Programme)	7 separately
Mashimoni Youth Group	3 together
MYG (Mabadiliko Youth Group)	1
Operation Hope	1
POK (Pillars of Kibera)	2 together
Shades Classics	2 separately
<b>Total number of groups:</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total number of interviews:</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Total number of participants:</b>	<b>21</b>

- Apart from these interviews that represent a main source of information, I visited two **focused group discussions**: one on poverty and one on gender issues with girls.

- I also tried to gather some '**views from outside**', from adults not involved in youth groups, like the staff of Care Kenya, National Council of Churches of Kenya, Carolina for Kibera, Amref, Social Development Officer, and the District Officer.

- Throughout this part, I also quote some **researches** done in Kenya or Kibera previously.
- The paper is complemented with **photos** I took in Kibera. All of them are of my own production.

• **Participant observation:** During my stay, I went daily to Kibera, not only in order to make the interviews but to take part in different events and visit places all around the slum<sup>77</sup>. I started with the drama course of KCYP which enabled me to make the first contact with young people from Kibera. I also saw various performances of drama and poems, focused on creating HIV/AIDS and drug awareness.

Apart from the cultural activities I went to see one community clean up, a football match, a therapeutic group of women affected by HIV, a workshop on Environment and Waste Management organized by students of Trier University, Germany. I also visited various households, schools and two orphanages.

- Outside of Kibera, I met organizations in other parts of Nairobi and met many young people but due to circumstances, I did not question them or did not record the conversations. Among others it was an adult-led self-help group Blue Sky from Eastern Nairobi and a youth group Matumaini Rysa from a small informal settlement called Mji wa Huruma in the North of the capital.

It is important to note that behind the term 'youth groups' we can find two kinds of organizations. Some of the groups are registered as community-based organizations and others as self-help groups. I had difficulties to distinguish between them as the activities of both had similar character on the spot.

I asked Fred from KCYP where the difference between CBOs and self-help groups lies. He also thinks that *"For real, there isn't a difference between a CBO and a self-help group, for example KCYP is a CBO which is self-help oriented. The only difference is, there are other CBOs that depend on external support to exist, it can even be an NGO which is called a CBO meaning that it is community-based."*

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<sup>77</sup> Normally, I went to Kibera in the daylight but I was once given the opportunity to stay over night and knew the atmosphere of the place covered in darkness without any streetlights. It was one of the most interesting experiences of my stay.

Therefore, a self-help group is supposed to be self-sustaining, members working mainly for themselves whereas CBOs' activities are more oriented towards serving the community and look for funding from outside.<sup>78</sup>

## **II. CBOs: On the beginning**

### **2.1 Motivation to create a youth group**

*“Change has to start from here, it has to start from the ghetto!”*

Fred, director of KCYP

At the beginning of the formation of a youth group various motivations present themselves, all relating to a certain discontent with the situation as it is. Something is bothering the youth, be it boredom, be it their material situation, be it the pandemics of HIV/AIDS. The idea of starting a new youth group is usually taken from examples of already formed organizations, ideas on activities are spreading across the area as well. The origins of some youth groups can be found in a leisure activity, mostly football, which makes people come together. Later on, they begin to feel the need and will to come up with some development activities that would benefit the society and themselves.

Here are some motivations for creating a youth group that arose from the interviews in Kibera. Several of them often combine:

- For many youth groups the first driving force became the danger of **HIV/AIDS**:

Mashimoni Youth Group was originally also just a football team. Only later *“...we felt that there was a need for us to come up with another good initiative – a youth group which would have other programmes apart from playing football.”*

R: Why?<sup>79</sup>

*“We saw that there was a need, because, you know, most of the youths are being affected by HIV/AIDS, it will be pandemic, so we took an initiative, because it is affecting the youth. That’s why.”*

All the youth groups in Kibera without exception deal with HIV/AIDS and many of them were founded particularly with the aim of fighting this disease through their activities.

- A very common motivation of creating an organization, interconnected with the other motivations, is that of getting rid off the **idleness**:

*“We wanted to target the youth, the idleness in the community”* (Mashimoni Youth Group).

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<sup>78</sup> I sometimes use the term CBO for the self-help groups as well, especially for the purpose of simplifying the chapter titles.

<sup>79</sup> “R“ stands for researcher. I think it is sometimes appropriate to show also the question that is being answered.

Because, when the youth *“are idle they tend to take more drugs so we involve them in some activities”* (CVDRII).

Gaby, musician and a founder of Mabadiliko Youth Group<sup>80</sup> (MYG), brought together young people from the Kibera’s village of Lindi. He is especially concerned with the problem of drugs rising from idleness or a negative peer pressure. *“When you’re idle and think you should do something, you end up messing up your life by taking those drugs, especially when you are alone, you’re like: what am I gonna do?”* But after coming together and participating in some activities, it is much easier to fight the negative tendencies and become a positive example for the others. The group Shades Classics is *“basically composed of youths from around who saw that after school they shouldn’t just sit at home and do nothing and decided to do something positive with their lives and contribute to the society.”* This problem of ‘sitting at home and do nothing’ arises especially after completing high school. In this stage, many boys and girls come together to form a youth group because there are only few opportunities for finding an employment or raising money for further education or for some other interesting and positive activities.

- Contribution to **individual and community development** is another common motivation that penetrates all the action of youth organizations. Later in the study I will discuss in detail this point and show that the sense of community and its development stands very high in individuals’ motivations:

*“Forming KCYP was not only because we wanted to escape from getting involved in crime or prostitution but it was because we had a future for this community, Kibera, for the young people.”* (Robert, KCYP).

Gaby from MYG realizes that: *“If we come together we can do something that will benefit the society and ourselves.”*

- Due to lack of opportunities for earning an income, young people try to start some **income-generating activities** (IGAs):

*“Most of the groups are self-help,”* as Seje from Shades Classics remarked, *“they are formed basically for monetary gains because the job opportunity in the country are so few. And also to keep the youth busy.”*

Mohammed from Kambi Muru Self-help Group (Kamsheg) said that at the beginning of his group they thought: *“There were no jobs, so let’s do something useful to sustain ourselves!”* Kamsheg managed to reach this goal because they are doing well in the IGAs. Their composting project, barber shop, charcoal selling and other projects employ 25 people.

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<sup>80</sup> *Mabadiliko* means “changes” in Swahili.

A recently formed youth group called Operation Hope has big ambitions. The aim for them is to: *"reduce poverty among the youth and also to get rid of the idleness among the youth."* They would like to meet this objective through the IGAs they want to establish. So far, they have been checking out the possibilities for starting a business but the market in Kibera does not allow to come up with many activities (see Chapter 3 for closer look at the IGAs) neither they manage to exceed the boundaries of the settlement.

## 2.2 Motivation to join a youth group

*"We don't need to advertise, people are just joining us. Like I told you what we're doing for the community...Our respect, our honesty, our passion is what is making people joining us.*

*We don't offer any particular advantages, people just join us freely."*<sup>81</sup>

Robert, KCYP

The problem arising after completing school was already mentioned. Not all the youngsters, however, decide to join an organization but for those who do, the motivations are similar to those of the founders in the previous subchapter. They are, of course, interconnected and can be found among the following:

- To **keep oneself busy**, to have some **leisure** activities and **entertainment**. It can go hand in hand with the interest in attaining some skills and knowledge (discussed in the next point): *"I was just clearing school, just walking around and I heard the group singing and dancing, so I was interested and I got curious, so I came inside and that is how I began with the group"* (Seje, Shades Classics).

Chris from Pillars of Kibera (POK) had a similar motivation: *"Me actually, I was interested. I saw the things that they were doing. Like theatre they were doing, I was just admiring. So the dance could be also my tribute. So after joining I became a theatre member which I changed later for a manager of football team."*

The drama skills are particularly attractive for the youth. Many of them want to be trained in drama and join a group after seeing a performance (see more below).

- **Income generation** can be particularly attractive in the environment of high unemployment. However, these activities are not likely to meet the demand and if this motivation stands alone it is likely not to endure:

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<sup>81</sup> Youth groups do not usually recruit members. Their capacity is limited and they are able to satisfy the needs of only those determined youths who are willing to work mostly on voluntary basis and therefore, do not suit to everyone. Read more later in the study.

R: How do you motivate new people to join?

*“Well, now it is like a business so mostly you don’t have to motivate them, they just see for themselves. They see the good that we are doing and they are interested in it so they just come,”* said Mohammed from Kamsheg. He concluded that he is proud to *“have employed twenty-five members of our group through the income-generating activities. And the money from these projects we can save and reinvest and expand the projects.”*

Not only can young people become employed in the IGAs in Kibera but sometimes, according to Seje from Shades Classics, they can find an employment elsewhere: *“Shades act as a bridge because most of the members, almost all of the founding members got jobs through Shades Classics. One in the World Bank, one in the National Theatre. Because they are exposed, they make contacts and when the time comes, you won’t really have a problem learning a job.”*

- Phrased in the parlance of development policy, the youths are interested in the **enhancement of human and social capital**, in their own **development**.

Simply, they want to attain some knowledge, to develop a talent, to gain more opportunities for meeting new people, to gain self-confidence. Here, many youngsters expressed their huge interest in gaining drama skills:

R: What was your motivation to join the KCYP?

*“I joined them because I loved the drama group, I wanted to have more experience in drama”* (Kathy, KCYP).

Similarly, a motivation for Rose to join the KCYP was also to develop her talent in theatre: *“I was told about it by a friend. He was telling me that many people have some talent but don’t get the chance to exploit it when they are just sitting with it back at home.”*

And again, Andrew’s motivation to join the same group was identical: *“I spotted them first on drama. So, basically, my motivation was to do the drama.”* But he continues *“...when I came in I just wanted to do the drama but there are so many things you can do.”*

Frank, again from KCYP, had the same idea: *“At first, I was only focused at drama, drama, drama, but then I looked around and there was much more than drama.”*

I asked Andrew whether the participation in the drama group fulfilled his expectations. He answered that *“My expectations on improving in the drama were partly met. When I came in I thought I would have an opportunity to become an actor but the expectations get growing, so like now I can say I want to be director of a play and from there I can reach some other point. Coz when you fulfil your expectations you must get a new one coming up.”*

- Many young people were heard to speak about the love for their community. To contribute to the **community development** is another reason why they come to volunteer.

Cartoon, who is active in Shades Classics and KCYP, also volunteers in an orphanage as a music teacher:

R: Since your 14 years you have been joining different NGOs and CBOs, what was your motivation for doing it?

*“I like working with young guys. I can learn something from them and I can give them something what I have. I simply feel good.”*

R: And your volunteering for the orphanage?

*“I really like the kids. Once I was like them and someone gave me what I needed but to them no one is really able to spend some time with them, playing with them, or teaching them music as I do. I just create what they don’t have in the picture. And also, God gave me some talents, so I am paying back to the children. I just give my time to them like a thanksgiving.”*

We might reveal more kinds of motivation like the following one of a member of Pillars of Kibera (POK): *“Originally, I saw myself a member because the group started here. My brother and few other people were the founders. So I found myself in the group but I came to adapt to what they are doing.”*



### **BOX III/1: Life before joining a youth group**

To recognize the change that comes about in lives of the people after joining a youth group, it is interesting to see what they had been doing before.

#### **Frank, KCYP**

R: What did you do every day before becoming involved in KCYP?

*"I used to go to the jobless-corner and chat with guys."*

R: What would you do if you weren't participating in KCYP?

*"Just continue going to the jobless-corner."*

#### **Abzed Osman, Duduba**

R: What did you do before you formed the group and started to work for the community?

(.....long thinking)... *Nothing.*

#### **Kepha, KCYP**

R: What was your motivation to join a CBO?

*"Most of us were just out of high school, left with not much to do. I was trying to go to college or university but realizing that I couldn't do that because of finance. So I was left with nothing to do. I could just stay idle, maybe read few books and do nothing. So I was really in a position of destroying myself, getting into the wrong company and meeting the wrong friends."*

#### **Mohammed, Kamsheg**

R: Is there any change in lives of the members after joining the group?

*"There is a big change. For example people have negative views on a youngster but when he joins a CBO he gets positive model and is following in our footsteps. And whatever he is doing, his lifestyle changes."*

#### **Gaby MYG**

*"I've learnt that our group has inspired many people. For example, a mother of a boy came to me when she saw that we were doing clean ups for the community on Sunday morning and asked me to come next time and wake up her son. She thought that if we involved him in this useful activity, he could get rid of being idle and the use of drugs."*

#### **Chris, POK**

R: Has anything changed for you when you joined POK?

*"Before, I was just idle, I was just at home, sleeping every now and then, I was like a chicken. Eating and sleeping. But when I joined, I became active. The idleness, part of it, was eradicated. So now, most of the time I spend with the group, maybe I am writing some letters, or planning on a play. I'm quite busy right now."*

### **2.3 Who is included and who is not**

Courtney Crosson (2004-2005:17-18) states that her respondents *"seemed to be disengaged from participation in community organizations. Only 5% of (them) were or had been involved in a youth group."* There are various reasons for not joining any youth group. These vary according to gender, age or simply the character of the respective person:

- The case of **girls**:

It is a well-known fact that most youth groups in Kibera are dominated by men<sup>82</sup>. According to my respondents, the reasons for being so are various:

**- Bad experience of girls or their parents' prejudice:**

Gaby from MYG thinks that the reason why it is so difficult for a girl to be in a youth group is especially the distrust of parents. They believe that if a girl becomes involved in an activity together with boys, she would get under bad influence. *"Here in Africa, in Kibera,"* Gaby continues, *"girls are taken as a treasure. The parents don't look at the positive side, they just say: You're not going to do this. And that's why sometimes, talking to them is so hard."*

Nevertheless, it depends on the area or a particular group. Some organizations such as Pillars of Kibera (POK) from Kisumu Ndogo already proved they can be trusted and therefore do not face this prejudice. Thus they have an equal number of girls and boys in most of their projects. *"...in this area, the attitude of people is more positive. So parents encourage girls to join the group. In other areas, however, parents will think that if a girl joins, she'll get pregnant."*

**- Girls' character:**

Seje from Shades Classics thinks that girls are not as outgoing as boys, *"Because from my experience, in our last team we had a number of 6 boys and 6 girls and now we have only 2 girls from them left; from the boys, they are all there. So I think, girls take time to join a group. They need time to be orientated properly."*

Others suggest that girls may not be as determined as boys. *"There is the lack of persistence. They like what's already there"* (Mashimoni Youth Group).

- There are **other reasons** for the girls not being able or willing to join the organizations, e.g., they are needed at home to take care of the family and household; or it is the lack of appropriate projects in the men-dominated groups that can discourage them. For example, some groups are focused on environmental issues like garbage collection and clean ups which requires physical strength.

To be fair some of the groups are opened to attracting more girls and claim they want gender equity.<sup>83</sup> In some groups, there already exists an equal number of girls and boys, and the POK even has a girls' football team. In the theatre, girls are also involved in quite a good number. On the other hand, in the CBOs' leadership, the situation is more unbalanced. The mere fact that my interviews were made from 90 per cent only with men – mostly chairmen,

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<sup>82</sup>Crosson in her report (2004-2005:18) found that among those respondents who were involved in youth groups, only 18% were female and 82% male.

<sup>83</sup> On my suggestion of opening an income-generating project that would be interesting for girls, some groups started to investigate about the possibilities of beadwork which was an activity that had become very popular among CBOs.

programme officers etc. speaks for itself.

- People who are **not ready to sacrifice** or **do not see the benefits of participation**, or who **have to look for an immediate income**. There are also young people who simply do not feel the necessity to join an organized group as they are happy with their current situation and time-spending. Only a small percentage of the youth in Kibera are involved in the community organizations (see the estimates in Box III/1). It is difficult to denominate the feature of one's character that makes someone aware of the future benefits of participation. I asked the members of youth groups why young men and women who have the time and energy choose to stay idle at home instead of working on their personal development and the development of the community.

The short-term view of the future is suggested by Frank from KCYP: *"They don't want to make sacrifices. They have to take care about their living. They just take care of immediate material gains. They don't see behind it. If I make sacrifice now, maybe I will get something in the future. They don't see this."*

Kathy from the same CBO gives her opinion on the issue: *"Some people think: 'if I join a CBO, I'm going just to work there, volunteering the rest of my life and get nothing.' They have that mentality in their head so sometimes to get it off is so hard..."* She continues that those who are involved in the community development do not seek immediate results, *"more likely they hope that future will reward their present sacrifice. You just learn each and every day and you have to participate. It is learning and action. You have to see for yourself and see where you can apply. After that you know what you are going to do in your life. Each and every day I have to get something new."*

R: How come not everyone finds this?

*"Because what is good for you, it will never be good for me. There are these people who need someone to tell them: This is not right. And there are those people who just see for themselves and there are those who can be told, who can see and they don't do anything and you will not understand them and you just wonder why but you have to learn and know what they value in life."*

Members of POK gave a very interesting answer on my question why is it that some people do not join the organizations: *"Do you know the market that sells teapots? You don't take everybody to go and buy them. Or, also in government in a country, someone will give out good ideas that will help but then you find someone else that has that mentality of negativity, who is always pessimistic, who won't buy and trust this ideas."*

According to Silvano, chairman of the Mashimoni Youth Group, there is a problem of lack of education. *"It can be a contributing factor when a person never went to school."* He also adds

another point: *“And there is the sport. Some people want just the football and are not interested in other activities. They just do football for their fun.”*

Another remarkable point of view is presented by Kepha from KCYP who says that *“people expect many things, especially the colonial mentality: ‘Mzungus will support Africans,’ or ‘white people have money that they can give.’ So they see there is a CBO and perhaps a few white people are around...Then when they come they expect money. When they see no money there, they leave. They don’t really understand the purpose of being there. They don’t even see where the train is heading to. They just see one of the cabins of the train but they don’t know where the head of the train is, where are we heading to as a community.”*

- I need to remind and highlight that some younger boys and girls still attend **school** and others already go to **work**. They are not likely to participate fully in the CBOs or self-help groups. The schedule for meetings or drama rehearsals, the time required for the activities, simply does not fit the schedule of a person who is a full-time student or employee.

R: Kathy, do you have friends who don’t join KCYP or any other CBO?

*“Yes, I have seven of them, they are still schooling, so they don’t have enough time. So we meet on the weekends.”*

As Mr. Kamau from National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) discloses, *“When people are at college or having a job, they usually don’t join a group. They can’t, the groups aren’t tailored for them.”*

- **Adults** who have family to take care of are in a different situation concerning the participation in community affairs. Their responsibility changes and, after marriage, either they need to have an income from the youth group or they usually quit. The whole youth group dissolves or the responsibilities pass to the younger fellows.

The age of people involved in CBOs ranges from 14 to 30 years. However, those under 18 are often still schooling and usually join only the football team. Majority of the active members, according to my observation, is between 18 and 25 years of age.

According to Mr. Kamau (NCCK), when the youth reach adulthood, the groups dissolve. But the more women that are in a group, the more sustainable it is. Male-dominated groups have problems with sustainability. I nevertheless did not pursue this problem further.

### **BOX III/ 2: Youth-led organizations compared to adult-led CBOs**

When I asked about the specifics of the youth-led CBOs compared to adult-led CBOs, I was often told that the youth are:

- more energetic, more active;

- have broader range of activities, e.g. sports and theatre:

*"I think that the CBOs formed by youths mostly have different activities and the activities are broad, not necessarily focused on one-track (because you have CBOs formed by women that focus on women's issues) but with the youths you find that they have sports activities, development activities, activities that deal with HIV, income-generating activities. So they are broad and more energetic"* (Fred, KCYP).

- they have diminished access to funds, are less trusted:

*"The youth CBOs are more active. The adults are more based in the office, they don't go very deep to the community. And they also maybe have better access to funds because of the bad attitude people have toward youths. So when it comes to funding, the adult-led CBOs are more accessible to the funds from abroad"* (Robert, KCYP).

- the adults care more about income-generating activities, are more practical in satisfying their needs;

R: Do you see any difference between adult-led CBOs and youth-led CBOs?

*"It is mostly about the income-generating activities. So they are more practical in this way. They are focusing on their needs"* (Nelson, Mashimoni Youth Group).

I personally visited only one adult-led CBO in Nairobi and for that case I found especially the last point being appropriate. It was a self-help group that supported its members in their private enterprises through the strategy of microfinance.

- During my stay I heard couple of complaints on **favouritism** in youth groups based on ethnic or religious grounds. One boy that have volunteered for some time in various groups insisted that *"In many CBOs I've been in, there was always favouritism. Not interested in knowing your first English name, but your cultural name."*

It is true that the context of Kenya and Kibera is complicated in terms of ethnicity and religion. In Kibera, people live together and they belong to different ethnic groups and beliefs. If a man who is Christian wants to join a group he will probably not join a group where the majority is Muslim, regardless of the latter's claim for openness. I visited groups that were homogenous in terms of religious belief as they claimed to be based on 'God's mission' and received some donations from the Church. But other groups were clearly miscellaneous, religiously as well as ethnically.

A founder of one CBO says that their objectives are different from others, when I asked why, he answered: *"For example, some groups are Christian, some are Muslim and you need to be one of them so that you can join."* He named some groups that are, according to him based on religious belonging, however, one group I made interview with previously had

claimed that: *“Our group is open for everyone who is young. Regardless of religion, tribe, HIV status.”*

How much it is a matter of prejudice and how much it is true, however, was not investigated any closer by me.

- Remarkably, Crosson (2004-2005:18) adds one more reason to those above saying that, apart from employment, housework, marriage, and children, men and women who were not involved in youth groups mentioned *“not knowing of any group in their area as the reasons for lack of involvement”*. The question is whether this is a true reason or an excuse for lack of interest.

#### **2.4 The hunt for funds: Partnership with NGOs**

According to Courtney Crosson (2004-2005), there are more than five hundred different organizations (either community-based, non-governmental, or civil society) registered with the Government of Kenya in Kibera. She argues that most of them, however, exist only for the purpose of receiving funds *“but show little commitment to effective and efficient service provision within the community. Kibera inhabitants have thus become weary of an “NGO-culture” that has become largely exploitative. The creation and management of a donor funded organization has become widely seen as one of the few successful ways of rising out of poverty in Kibera”* (Ibid.:5-6).

The number is truly surprising because with such a quantity, one would expect to see things in movement. I, therefore, asked whether there was some improvement in Kibera throughout the years of the NGOs’ presence. *“There is a progress because sharing of information is very important for someone who didn’t have this information.”*

R: So there has been a certain progress in knowledge, or know-how, but in material situation?

*“There is no progress”* (Mashimoni Youth Group).

This confirms my notion that the most remarkable benefit of the NGOs’ presence, at least from the young people’s point of view, is the knowledge and information they bring through various trainings and workshops they organize.

Nevertheless, there are opposing attitudes towards the cooperation with non-governmental organizations. Some youth groups speak positively about the partnership and these mostly do cooperate and benefit from it or benefited in the past. On the other hand, those groups who have some negative experience criticize the work of NGOs because of interconnected reasons:

- The NGOs, to pursue the new policy of supporting the participation and community-driven development, they cooperate with CBOs but **without involving them in decision-making**:

R: What do you think of partnership between NGOs and CBOs?

*“The NGOs only want CBOs to legitimize their work. It is not a real cooperation they are interested in. Once a certain NGO used our name to show that they cooperate with CBOs but this wasn’t true, we never worked with them. This is not ethical. The NGO workers also often assume an approach: ‘I know and I will teach you.’ So it is only about the legitimization of their work why they invite a local partner”* (Fred, director of KCYP).

Seje from Shades Classics, in spite of having positive experience and his youth group partners with NGOs, sees the dilemma of this issue: *“There is something that is called a ‘donor-syndrome’, in our circle of talking. It is like when an NGO comes and wants to use a youth group as an implementing agent in the community, the donor wants the youth group to do exactly what they want.”*

Andrew from KCYP thinks that if a donor is willing to support his group, he should accept its ideas. *“We accept people who finance us, train us in some skills but the cooperation has to go the right way, unconditionally. It doesn’t mean that everything we write in a project is perfect and we would never change it. It is because we believe that what we want to do is the true and the right thing. So we don’t want to be commissioned by some partners.”*

One of the possible reasons for refusing a partnership is, from my experience, the existence of a good leadership and a strong vision of a youth group. Such a group is less willing to accept any ‘imposed rules’; and does not want to fit in the ‘ready-made policies’ as it would cause the feeling of subordination. I felt pride behind this reluctance. Nevertheless, other organizations, who also have good leadership and a vision, praise the partnership without feeling subordinate.

*“Those who know what to do, they don’t need to partner with the organizations to tell them what to do. They do workshops where they feed you, give you accommodation and even money but try to implement the policy in you”* (Kepha, KCYP).

Sometimes, the NGOs are even said to exploit local people, not paying them appropriately for their work:

R: What do you think about the partnership between NGOs and CBOs?

*“It’s OK but mostly it is exploitive. The NGO wants to show it’s presence in that particular community and say they have a project. So the CBO would be implementing the project for them. Sometimes, the CBO get funding but most of the times it’s just to show ‘We have a team there.’ They give you hand-outs, these little things that they give to show that they care. You go to a workshop and they give you hundred shillings<sup>84</sup>. Very, very temporary. That’s*

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<sup>84</sup> 100 Kenya Shillings equated at that time approximately 1, 40 USD.

how they manage to work with CBOs. But here in Kibera, many things are changing. We don't want such NGOs" (Kepha, KCYP).

- Some youths also claim that organizations and people from outside **cannot understand the real needs of local people:**

Silvano, the chairman of Mashimoni Youth Group said that there has not been any real progress in material situation. I asked, therefore, how was that possible, according to his view. He answered that *"If you look at the people from NGOs, they are not poor. Are they from Kibera? They are not from Kibera, so there is no way they can upgrade Kibera."*

R: Do you think so? So where lies the difference between the work of NGOs and CBOs?

*"The difference is their approach. The NGOs approach from top coming down. The CBOs are approaching the problem from down. The down-up approach is more effective than the top-down approach."*

Cartoon from Shades Classics has his own experience with partnering with NGOs and CBOs: *"Working with a CBO is like being on their level. They're equal. But if they see an NGO, in their mind it's something really big, like community itself, trying to impose some rules to the youth just get something out of them."*

R: What rules?

*"OK, for example they are passing the final decisions, not consulting us. Everything on their own. I made such experience, but it was six years ago so I don't remember concretely."*

- Serious complaints were heard about the **distrust in young people, not taking them as equal partners:**

For Robert from KCYP, *"Going to college is one thing, and working for the community is another. You can have that papers but you can lack that eagerness or passion to help your community...Working for a CBO like this makes you understand people. No college can provide you with this. Once there was an NGO coming to do a project and they were abusing us because of our intellectual inabilities. They thought we've never gone to school...They did the project but it was not perfect. Right now, I think I have a vast experience in a community development work like anyone who has gone through this. Even without papers...They cannot imagine, that in areas like ghettos live people who are educated and capable enough to be equal partners. Some of them treat us as if we were inferior...But if you take any member of KCYP and just give him a work in an NGO he will be perfect. Because we're used to working hard without expecting to be paid. We see this as a very positive attribute of our work."*



Fred, from KCYP also talks about the distrust: *“One thing is...is it fatigue or what? It is a matter of trust. People don’t trust young people mainly in funding agencies or in funding circles. People tend to say: ‘ah it is just a group of youths who have not yet decided what they want to do.’ So they prefer to work with people who have big qualifications, international experience, courses. That is not our case, so they don’t trust us. They think that when you have a group of young people together it is not manageable so that is what can impede them from investing in you.”*

The same experience was made by another member of KCYP, Kepha, who replies the same question in a similar way: *“Donors are very funny people, they don’t take the youth seriously. They think we are only forming ourselves, that we just go to parties and dance. They cannot imagine a serious youth group with clear ideas, with a mission. The only thing the youth can do is to mess around, play around, have girlfriends and boyfriends. So it is very difficult to convince someone that you’re actually different and doing something different. But if you’re an adult, or have an adult, it’s much easier for them to be trusted.”*

• **Positive attitudes:**

It is necessary to include the arguments that support a positive judgement of the cooperation with NGOs. Some groups received funding or other support for their projects and were speaking positively about NGOs in general. They praised not only the possible material gains but also the building of their capacity through workshops:

R: Are you satisfied with the cooperation with the NGOs?

*“Yes, with NGOs, I think, our gains are not just monetary but also in a way we get exposed, in a way our capacity is built. Because if the NGOs make workshops, they invite us. We send our members and they are trained maybe for leadership skills, conflict management, so it is multi-levelled”* (Seje, Shades Classics). Seje also claims that his organization acts as a bridge between the community and the ‘NGO world’ *“...we are offering referral services because at Shades we have got a good based network with other established NGOs. So maybe we could refer someone to a particular NGO according to his problem.”*

Mohammed discloses that Kamsheg has *“a positive attitude to NGOs because one of them firstly empowered us. Some of the NGOs do this through the seminars and we can start some things.”*

R: So you have positive experience with some of the NGOs. And the ‘other NGOs’?

*“Maybe they take you for seminar and instead of giving you what you need they give you money. But if you give me money, I’ll eat today and tomorrow I’ll come back. So instead of giving me money – or a fish, you teach me how to fish and show me where to fish. And I’ll be having food the whole of my life.”*

The group Pillars of Kibera cooperates with 3 NGOs. Chris thinks that this cooperation is beneficiary for them. *“Like Care Kenya was involved in the theatre part. We were also trained about home-based care, how to treat people with HIV/AIDS.”*

R: And do you receive also some financial support from them?

*“Not much. You must be good at what you’re doing so that they could support you. You must cooperate with them for some maybe six years for them to be interested to work with us, to sign a contract. That is when you also get some finance.”*

R: So for now, you depend on your IGAs?

*“Yes. Though we were given some equipment for the football team. When we performed very well at Care Kenya tournament we got it because we were a good team so they donated us 10 balls. We have an advantage because we work well.”*

### **BOX III/3: From the other viewpoint**

One of the NGOs mentioned in the interviews was the Kenya branch of the international organization Care that has its office also in Kibera. Care Kenya, or CK, cooperates with youth groups on some of their projects in Kibera.

For their informal network they chose 15 groups. It is only a loose non-formal network with 2 members of each group being in a committee (one girl, one boy). They meet twice a month to represent interests of their groups. I heard both positive and negative comments about the cooperation.

I asked Emma, one of local staff, to give me her point of view on the critiques:

*“The CK made a strict selection to 15 groups. A legal document was signed. Some youth groups claim lots of activities but virtually are doing nothing. That’s what we found and we couldn’t give funds to such groups. So we agreed on joint activities like football, beauty contest, drama...We monitored some groups and we could finally give them some funds.”*

R: So it is beneficiary for them?

*“Yes, they definitely need our guidance, we give them trainings. And they work more effectively thanks to us and the network”.*

R: I heard that some people were complaining that they are making decisions but virtually their hands are tied. What’s your point of view?

*“They feel they must have their hands on the money. When they plan something, they also want to purchase things. We have procurement procedures, they have to understand this. So it is the gap between planning and purchase. Some of them have expectations that we can’t meet. We don’t handle money, we also seek for funds and we are responsible for them.”*

R: Some youths are complaining that you impose rules on them and give ideas that they have to follow...

*“We want to make them work more effectively. Fifty ideas can’t work all. We have to be realistic. It’s brainstorming, not turning down. Our ideas have to be heard also. It’s not that we would ignore them, it’s a process. And we want them to improve.”*

As we saw it, there exist different attitudes to the work of NGOs in Kibera and I did not intend to make an evaluation or critique. However, throughout my stay, my perceptions of it remained ambivalent and the testimonies of my respondents were far from clarifying it. Especially when some of the testimonies on work of a particular NGO were contradictory. On one hand, I suspected some of the youths of being biased, on the other, it is necessary to take their point of view into account as there is rarely smoke without fire.

#### • **Funded or not?**

While investigating the differences between youth groups and asking about the specifics of a particular group, an interesting matter came out that concerns the issue of being or not being supported from outside. Various youth groups were talking with pride in the fact that they are not funded and claimed this be the difference from the other CBOs.

One member of a youth group affirms: *“What I really like about my group is that they are not like other CBOs: Oh, without donors we can’t survive.”*<sup>85</sup>

I asked Kathy whether her group, KCYP, is somehow different in comparison with other groups and she replied that it is, *“because most of the other groups they have donors, they have funds, KCYP doesn’t have but they survive. They organize many things in Kibera, they are known almost everywhere.”*

It is true that KCYP is one of the most active groups I, however, knew about other youth groups that also do a good job. To my objection Kepha from KCYP replied: *“But most of them are funded, that’s the difference. So I feel it’s unjust to compare KCYP to these organizations. They are working well because they are funded but KCYP is not funded. So it is not fair to compare those who reached the same destination but one was going by bus and one came on foot.”*

Further on, I inquired Seje from Shades Classics about the same issue as Kathy, and the answer was: *“I think Shades Classics are kind of different in a way. First of all, Shades Classics doesn’t depend on donors. We have never had any donor who is supporting all of our projects. We get our money through our performances, that’s what we use for the advancement of the club. I think in a way, we are self-sustaining.”*

However, I knew about their cooperation with NGOs so I wanted to know whether they received support for at least some of their projects: *“OK, for projects, yes. For example, currently, we’re having a project with Care Kenya, called the Girl Child Project. The project is championing the rights of a child and to be specific we are fighting rape in Kibera. So for that*

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<sup>85</sup> I have, nevertheless, never heard this statement of any CBO I visited.

*project we do receive some small funding from Care and that is what we're using to pass the message to the community."*

The POK's members answer the same question in a similar way: *"Yes, we are different from the other youth groups. Many youth groups think that POK is being sponsored by some NGOs."* As I learned, POK claims to be self-sustaining through their IGAs. But it was their cooperation (as showed previously) that makes the other groups think that they receive regular financial support.

We observed that the terms of 'being funded', 'having a donor' etc. would need to be defined before being investigated. Another study would be needed to clarify the partnership and the whole problematic.

However, from the way the youth wanted to disavow the partnership, my first notion was that depending on someone's support was perceived in a negative way. To be funded means to be subordinated, inferior, subservient to the donors and their 'ready-made programmes'.<sup>86</sup>

Yet the biggest critics would welcome funding for their projects on condition that the project was invented, designed, written and implemented by them.

It is, nevertheless, not a frequent event for a youth group to receive grant for such a project. On the other hand, a youth group being funded in order to implement a project designed by an NGO or together with an NGO is not such an uncommon thing. This discrepancy was a major cause of the complaints as it is very difficult to receive a grant no matter the quality of a project.

### **III. CBOs "keeping-busy"**

*"Idle mind is the devil's tool."*

Common saying

#### **3.1 Organization of the youth groups**

As I already showed, youth groups come up with many activities that serve their objectives. The activities are both with monetary and non-monetary aims. To manage to coordinate this broad range of projects, the organizations are stratified into various sections, with a director or a chairman and an executive board at the head. For example, in the Mashimoni Youth Group, the executive committee consists of the chairman, the secretary, treasurer, a programme coordinator and two other members. Usually, the groups are divided into sections according to the focus of the programmes. Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP) has, for example, five departments, each presided by one or two programme officers: **Arts and development for social change, Environment, Youth empowerment**

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<sup>86</sup> Interesting to compare with critiques on the new participatory strategies discussed in Chapter III, Part I.

**and development, Health, and Special programmes department.** The departments of other youth groups vary either by name or the activities of the particular CBO or self-help group. Some groups have special department for sports and football, that could be under the **Cultural and recreational activities department** like in the CVDRII. This CBO is focusing on people living with HIV, diabetes, TB, or cancer and therefore, they have a special department called **Community mobilization and sensitization** handling these issues. Hereafter, we will look closer at particular projects of the youth groups I met.<sup>87</sup>

### 3.2 Income-generating activities

*“The only way how to be self-reliant is to be self-employed.”*

Fred, KCYP

In Kenya, various factors contribute to the difficulties in finding a job. Even if they finish high school, young people are left with little practical knowledge. To gain more skills for a desired job, he or she is usually supposed to attend a vocational training or college. High schools, colleges, courses and universities are paid and this makes the dwellers from low-income settlements less likely to attend them and, thus, less likely to find a job. The vicious circle is completed when the talented and industrious youth from the informal settlements are left with little material support. In order to revert this cycle people try to come up with some income-generating activities.

*“Unemployment is a risk factor for youth...Not only does this mean that they are economically unable to fend for themselves, it also leads to other risk factors such as depression, hopelessness, and low self-esteem. Unemployed youths are idle and may turn to risky behavior such as substance abuse. Also when they see that there are few opportunities available to them to make an income, some youths resort to a life of crime and violence”* (World Bank 2005:44).

However, the market in Kibera does not allow establishment of big businesses. It is regarded a success if a youth group manages to set up more income-generating activities that are able to fully sustain those few people involved and still leave a percentage for the whole group. The effort is made to save some money and reinvest them in expanding a project or starting another one. An initial investment is normally needed to start the first business. The groups that had some established IGAs were often helped at the beginning by a well-wisher or an NGO both materially and non-materially.

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<sup>87</sup> My intention is not to list all the activities. Instead, I only want to present the various range of projects that take place in Kibera and are run by the youth.

- **Garbage collection, separating waste:**

One of the most wide-spread activities of the youth groups concerns environment. As the Carolina for Kibera<sup>88</sup> promotes: *Taka ni pato*, or Trash is cash, the youth groups have projects that clean the environment, help the community and at the same time provide an income.

Mashimoni Youth Group collects garbage and separates plastics. This plastic is sold to companies that handle the recycling.



### **3.1 Separated plastic waiting to be sold, Mashimoni Youth Group**

Not only plastic can be sold, Kamsheg deals with organic waste and receives money from the good-quality compost. Other groups collect bones and still others glass. I heard, that groups exchange these commodities with one another according to their ‘focus’.

These materials are gathered through another IGA – garbage collection. Boys distribute plastic bags to households and for some little money they come every week and collect them filled with waste.<sup>89</sup>

- **Music, dance and theatre performances:**

Another very popular activity that is entertainment, community service and sometimes a source of money at the same time is drama, music and dance.

The youth groups mostly produce their own plays, poems and songs and these are usually meant to create awareness about various issues.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> An international NGO established in 2001 by university students from North Carolina, USA. Based on the philosophy of participatory development, CFK seeks to promote “*youth leadership and ethnic and gender cooperation in Kibera through sports, young women's empowerment, and community development.*” <http://cfk.unc.edu/>.

<sup>89</sup> The bags, after separating the required materials are said to be taken either to an unofficial dumping sites in Kibera, or somewhere to a main road where municipal services are supposed to take care of them.

<sup>90</sup> To repeat them again: it is first and foremost the HIV/AIDS, and also gender issues, violence, drug abuse.

The performances are not always paid, but sometimes local groups are hired by an NGO to perform in an event concerning their projects. Some groups perform also for tourists, like the Shades Classics or KCYP.



**3.2 Members from KCYP during a performance for foreign visitors**

• **Beadwork and handcrafts:**

This activity was also of a great interest in Kibera. Many groups (not only youth-led) were starting this IGA.<sup>91</sup> This production is meant to be sold to tourists but there already exists a big competition in this field and the market is not elastic. It requires, therefore, a lot of skills (not only in handcrafts but also in marketing) to make some profit from this entrepreneurship.



**3.3 Boys from MYG weaving accessories**

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<sup>91</sup> I was asked by three groups to come and advise them on the bead making just because I showed them one beaded bracelet of my own production. Apart from this, my knowledge was not much better than that of anyone else.

- Apart from these common projects there are some **other businesses** found only in few of the groups or were specific to just one of them:

The youth group Kamsheg is a self-help group focused on the IGAs. They have five projects, each employing five people.



### 3.4 Charcoal selling and a barber shop

Apart from these, the charcoal and barber shop, I mentioned already the composting. The two remaining are computer and telephone services.

KCYP with the help of a foreign well-wisher started to assemble and sell solar panels.



### 3.5 Assembling solar panels

### 3.3 Voluntary community service

Much of the activities are not aimed at generating income, but to serve the community or the members themselves<sup>92</sup>:

- **Educational theatre:**

Drama in Kibera (and in Africa in general) combines the purpose of education and entertainment<sup>93</sup>. It is designed to attract the attention of broad audience and to transmit a very important message to them.

<sup>92</sup> For more see chapter V. of this part.

<sup>93</sup> I do not want to discuss the objectives of drama in Europe which I believe also educates people but as I perceive it, the educational part stands out much more clearly in Africa, and in Kibera it is of primary importance.





### 3.6 A play performed by KCYP at the National's theatre club, Nairobi

*“First of all, the most important thing is information...We organized community events like football tournaments, we have the theatre performance – and this is very important because you go to the community and highlight the issues that are important for that community. They know it, they live it, but it is necessary to highlight it” (Andrew, KCYP).*

One of the very successful performers of the educational theatre are Shades Classics. Their performance combines drama, dances, poems and music. In the following box I present a sample of an educational poem that comes from pens of the actors and members of youth groups.

#### **BOX III/4a: Example of an awareness poem**

The first poem focuses on the HIV/AIDS problematic, and, as most of the pieces do, it also advises to get tested and not to discriminate those whose HIV status is positive.

#### ***Attention!***

*Attention! Please pay attention  
 The world is in a horrible situation  
 There is an invasion  
 Invasion which causes intoxication of the fumes of a deadly explosion  
 Beware this AIDS comes like a lotion  
 Penetrating our emotions  
 A pulling temptation  
 Yes, it is a very soft, silent, sweet poison.  
 Men: Yes, you women must take the test,  
 It is you who cause all this mess, we die because of your weakness.  
 Women: But why should we blame one another,  
 And we are both players and we both lit this fire.  
 We talk and talk while people die  
 If we all know the solution  
 Why don't we walk towards that direction.  
 So go for V.C.T. and know your status,*

*So that you can take early corrective measures.  
If you are negative ensure you remain negative  
and do not discriminate those who are positive  
because they still have a life to live and so much to give  
So take care.  
If you dare you won't be spared.*

**Shades Classics**

I watched various improvised performances with the same topic – the importance of going to the Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre (V.C.T.) as it will help to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. This advice is usually followed by calls against discrimination of the HIV/AIDS affected.

However clear it may seem, Crosson (2004-2005:16) made one interesting finding in her research: *“some respondents said they “did not know” what VCT was, but when asked if and why it was important they said “yes, to know your status.”* This fact casts a cloud over all the unceasing efforts around HIV/AIDS awareness creation.

To present the other side of the coin, Andrew from KCYP claims that *“People even approach us after the performance and ask what shall they do in a particular case. Or they ask for an appointment with us. And we can for example refer them to the right place. They start thinking about it again and they can change some things.”*

A second example is a play with the topic of drug abuse which is another issue described frequently in the educational theatre.

#### **BOX III/4b: Example of educational drama**

##### ***Mourn the Destruction***

A drama written by Richard Amunyi from KCYP focuses on the dangers of drug addiction and talks about a trial of a drug dealer who is blamed for killing all the drug addicts who are still alive but do not live, just suffer.

Here are the first and the last part of this play. The actors are: Mr. Tembe - a drug dealer who enters the stage with a briefcase with drugs and Bingy – who came with money to buy the drugs but begins to realize the evil of all this acting.

Mr. Tembe: *Are you trying to rebel?*

Bingy: *Rebel...I'm just trying to be sensible...I mean, this is not right.*

Mr. Tembe: *Foolish boy. Since when did I start getting lectures on right and wrong? Have you forgotten that you took an oath?*

Bingy: *I will bring the witnesses. Yes, the witnesses.*

Mr. Tembe: *What do you mean by witnesses? This whole affair was to remain a secret. Why do you have to call them?*

Bingy: *Sorry, sir. The effects are apparent and cannot be hidden any more and in fact you*

*were foolish enough to walk into a podium to display your filth to the watching masses and today you are going to pay.*

Then Bingy brings the prosecutor and witnesses Quinie and Zulu (drug addicts giving the evidence by counting their drug-caused problems) and Mr. Tembe is judged by them:

Prosecutor: *...I direct the conscience of the people here to judge Mr. Tembe. Justly proceed my lords, proceed with your verdict.*

Quinie: *Let all the youths flee from Mr. Tembe because he is...*

Bingy: *Terrible, terror, terrorist, trouble, tragedy and trash.*

Quinie: *Let them come to divinity for with there is...*

Bingy: *Cleanliness, character, champions, clean choices and true change.*

Quinie: *We are here to expose and confess our evil deeds for us to be cleansed for eternal peace.*

Zulu: *Mr. Tembe, you need to be cleansed for eternal peace and we shall not cast the first stone upon you but times will cast the first stone.*

(And they pray together the Lord's prayer).

**Richard Amunyi, KCYP**

This play carries everything that an educative theatre usually does. A social problem – drugs in this case; a bad person – Mr. Tembe; someone who is aware of the evil of this activity and is willing to turn over a new leaf – the witnesses together with Bingy who are important because they tell us what is actually the correct behaviour, they tell the audience how to take responsibility and make new choices, how to remedy the past mistakes. The end is positive, the bad person was defeated and punished and a good example is given to the audience on how to face their problems.

Along with the drama, music is also very popular in Kibera. It is a good social outlet and again, as much as the theatre, it is a way of educating the community as it also reflects on some burning issues. This is particularly true about hip hop songs, that were born in similar social context as that one of the slum, and whose lyrics can be regarded as a kind of poetry. The topics are similar to that of poems and theatre, the lyrics are usually clear and simple. In a hip-hop song of MC Lawilawi from CVDRII the refrain says: "*Wenye virusi ni watu tu (3X). Mbona kuwatenga kuwatusi.*" (Those with HIV are just people. Why abuse and discriminate them.) The message is clear, there is no need to hide it or embellish it.



**3.7 Music studio at KCYP's office**

- **School outreaches** for creating awareness:

With the same purpose as the theatre, members of some of the youth groups go to schools within Kibera and talk to their peers about these issues. The students are, according to the members' testimonies, more willing to open up in front of their peers than in front of the adult teachers.

- **Environmental clean-ups:**



**3.8 MYG: Sunday's clean-up**

I already described some environmental programmes among the income-generating activities but members of some CBOs also go regularly and clean water drainages and other places without being paid for this. They are, however, hindered by the fact that there is no proper dump for the garbage. The waste is, therefore, usually left along the trenches or on heaps elsewhere.

- There are many **other activities** that are done for the community. The CVDRII, for example, does a home-based care for people with HIV, cancer or diabetes.



**3.9 In front of CVDRII' office**

A big event was the December's 2005 World AIDS day organized by KCYP on Kibera's football ground. It was a whole-day happening with many theatre and music performances and other activities that were supposed to cast light on the dangers of the disease.

### 3.4 Capacity building<sup>94</sup> and leisure activities

The CBOs and self-help groups work very well as leisure and informal educational centres for their members. Those who want to develop certain skills are offered a range of activities from which they benefit greatly:

- **Workshops:**

Workshops and seminars are usually held by NGOs or governmental institutions and people from community organizations are invited to participate.

As Cartoon from Shades Classics testifies: *“And also in CBOs is another advantage. Guys organize for you workshop and then you increase your knowledge on different stuff that affects the youth, like HIV awareness, conflict resolution. I acquired this knowledge through my CBO.”*

Crosson (2004-2005:2) gives another point of view disclosing that not all these events are effective and resulting in a useful outcome: *“Many day or week long workshops have been sponsored in downtown Nairobi hotels to train peer-educators from Kibera...However, these attendees are often motivated to attend the workshop by the food and glamour of the downtown location and frequently return to the community with little commitment to implementation...The workshops happen at fancy Nairobi hotels in a suspended reality where decision-making is simplified and seems easier.”*

I cannot evaluate the effectiveness of the workshops offered by NGOs. I can only offer the perceptions of some of the young people like Kepha from KCYP, who, talking about empowerment, says that *“you don’t just give someone money, you show them how to fish. For this we have different trainings, we have workshops, we have organized seminars sometimes. We’ve been showing people a directive to different seminars, if we receive invitations ‘send us five people from your organization’ we say ‘so and so go to this seminar, so and so go to this seminar.’ So here people acquire knowledge that concerns their lives. And up to this level we managed to have so many people trained. And many people here at KCYP they know so much, they are like jack-of-all-trades, they don’t specialize, they know community work, they know few technical issues, they know business management, entrepreneurship, leadership skills.”*

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<sup>94</sup> Capacity building is a popular term within the development field and there are a variety of definitions for it. According to Barbara Blumenthal (cited in McNamara, Carter 1997-2006, *Capacity Building (Nonprofit)*, [http://www.managementhelp.org/org\\_perf/capacity.htm](http://www.managementhelp.org/org_perf/capacity.htm), accessed 23/1/2007), the most fundamental is *“actions that improve nonprofit effectiveness.”* Other definitions refer to the concept as actions that enhance a nonprofit’s ability to work towards its mission.

In 1991, UNDP defined **'capacity building'** as *the creation of an enabling environment with appropriate policy and legal frameworks, institutional development, including community participation (of women in particular), human resources development and strengthening of managerial systems, adding that, UNDP recognizes that capacity building is a long-term, continuing process, in which all stakeholders participate (ministries, local authorities, non-governmental organizations and water user groups, professional associations, academics and others”* (UNDP 1991, cited in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capacity\\_building](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capacity_building).

In my case, I perceive capacity building in a more modest way, closer to the first definition.



- Other **courses** and **trainings**:

Here, I would like to highlight that some trainings are done in Kibera, and are organized by the same CBOs in order to give skills to their members.

The members of KCYP were particularly eager about training their drama skills and this CBO had a great advantage compared to other youth groups. Thanks to their web site (and the good job they are doing) volunteers from abroad keep coming to teach the members some skills. During my stay three people from Europe held courses on ‘Drama and development’ and also ‘Music production’. The lessons took place regularly for several months about three times a week for couple of hours each time.



### 3.10 ‘Drama and development’ course

*“...And I think also, if we talk about community development you also have to look at the young people – what can they do to develop themselves. And we try to help them to get some skills not just to work in the KCYP but they can go out and take care of themselves. People who would like to sing, who would like to perform, we try to see how to use their own talents.... One thing I am afraid of is to have a career that would be imposed on me. Because what I do here I do because I really enjoy it.”* Andrew, KCYP who himself is involved in drama training.<sup>95</sup>

Sometimes, volunteers from Nairobi universities come and arrange seminars, for example on accounting.

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<sup>95</sup> I talk closely on the talents’ nourishment in Chapter V later in this part.

- Discussion **meetings** on various issues, **sharing of information**:



### 3.11 'Tackling poverty together' discussion

*"For example in the evening, I am having a meeting on environment so I have to prepare what am I going to say. The mind is busy."*

Chris, POK

Sometimes, youth groups share ideas, visit one another in their offices and try to network. The newly established organizations like the Operation Hope need some information from those who are more experienced. Gaby from the above-mentioned CBO gives his experience with sharing information among groups. *"...The other day, I went to Kamsheg to investigate about the IGAs."*

R: And are people willing to share the information with you?

*"Some groups not, because they feel the competition. But when they know you, they tell you everything. Like I know Kamsheg."*

Apart from these investigations, some initiative youth groups organize discussions on various issues. I had the opportunity to join a discussion 'Tackling poverty together'<sup>96</sup>. I present some ideas heard there later on in chapter VI.

#### • **Music:**

To be a member of a youth group means to be provided a space for developing talents, for exposing it and, not least, to have fun. The peers serve as audience, supporters and promoters. This holds true for music as much as for the drama skills.

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<sup>96</sup> This discussion was an initiative of KCYP whose director, Fred, is involved in the international initiative originating in the United Nations' Programme on Youth implemented jointly with the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations. This project, carrying the same name as the discussion, focuses on strengthening the role of young people in national poverty reduction strategies.



**3.12 A little music session**

• **Football:**

Football is again an activity that is not absent in the schedules of any of the youth-led organizations. Some of them were raised from football teams, others saw the need for this entertainment. *“Recreation serves as a protective factor for young people because it keeps them from being idle and having unstructured time during which they may engage in risky behavior. Therefore, it is vital for communities to have recreational spaces for young people to use”* (World Bank 2005:43).



**3.13 Football tournament organized by the youth group MYG in Kibera**

It is a fact that thanks to the footballers, the number of members rockets up to fifty and more, sometimes a hundred. Much of the sportsmen are, however, not involved in other activities apart from the football. This leisure activity, nevertheless, does not lose its protective potential. The youth groups organize tournaments even during school holidays, to provide the pupils with a good way how to spend their free time and, perhaps, some of them will later join another activities and contribute to the community development as well.



#### **BOX III/4: Needs of the organizations**

In spite of having many activities and many workshops offered, young people from Kibera are aware of the limited opportunities they have. There are many things that could contribute to their better performance.

##### **Kepha, KCYP**

R: What do you think KCYP needs?

*"We need more skills. Skilled people, experts. We need them to come down here to Kibera and see the young people here who are so thirsty for knowledge. Who want to learn but have no means to get the knowledge."*

R: Skills in which field?

*"Various fields. We have people with different visions and ambitions here. And we have people who want to do many things, talking of community development, of music, arts, sports, social issues like peace building, conflict transformation. Such skills that build a person and make a life, not just a living.*

*And of course we need money. Money as a mean, not as an end. We need money, but there is always a way even without money for us."*

##### **Fred, KCYP**

R: Are you satisfied with what you have reached so far?

*"I am not satisfied, sincerely not satisfied, despite people saying we've achieved a lot. I have not yet seen what has been achieved, personally speaking. Because there is a long way and I also need to move in my personal life. Of course if we see that people joining us are satisfied, the better, but we're not yet there. This is just the beginning."*

R: Is there anything else except money that KCYP needs?

*"Yeah, definitely we've been looking for some professional people that can help us. You see we're still a growing organization. Perhaps we're doing some things not in a perfect way so if we can get people that can help us to do things professionally we could learn from them. We can learning just by watching and aping.*

*And also we need connections. You cannot survive in the world of development work if you don't have the right connections. So if you have someone who is willing to connect with you it means you're better off. You can use these connections to get what you want."*

#### **IV. CBOs "empowering"**

##### **4.1 Perceptions of empowerment: Overview**

*"Surely, it is all about empowerment, it's just all about empowerment,  
that's what I feel."*

Frank, KCYP

Empowerment is one of frequent and popular objectives not only of major donor agencies but also of organizations working at the grassroots level. However, as mentioned in part I, chapter 3.2.4, their perception of the concept is often shallow and vague and as such it is frequently taken over by the youth-led organizations. Thus, the answers I was given for the question on empowerment sometimes seemed like ready-made phrases adopted from the vocabulary of the NGOs.

But not all people I spoke with were familiar with the term as their groups did not work with it.

On the other hand, some organizations claimed to have empowerment among their primary objectives and were describing it in a quite complex way. In opening the website of KCYP<sup>97</sup>, the phrase “*Empowering youth to have a stake in the future*” emerges right under their logo.

*“Empowerment is very, very delicate and complex. NGOs come with empowerment. They call it ‘not giving someone fish but teaching him how to fish.’ But for us empowerment is a little bit more advanced than that. You don’t give me fish (I don’t want your fish anyway). I want you to tell me how to fish, and also let me fish. Then you show me the lake. That is empowerment.”*

Kepha, KCYP

Most ideas, however, reduce the whole complex to just one part of the concept<sup>98</sup>. Many of the Kibera youths perceive empowerment as an inner strength that changes people’s mindsets and gives a new sense to their lives. The power from within, or the psychological dimension was truly inspiring.

I divided the perception of empowerment, according to the statements of my interviewees, into the following categories: **empowerment as capacity building**, **empowerment as consciousness raising**, and **empowerment as participation and inclusion**. I attempted to match these with the frameworks outlined in Part. I, chapter 3.2, in particular with the concept of power (see chapter 3.2.2.2) and with the empowerment levels as described by Nelly Stromquist (see chapter 3.2.3) to see the correlation between theory and practice.

#### **4.2 Empowerment as capacity building**

Skills and knowledge included in capacity building are perceived as empowering in most definitions given by the youths I interviewed. This form of empowerment is brought to an individual from an outer source and mostly concerns different kinds of information, including HIV/AIDS and drugs sensitisation, and human capital enhancement through education and information. These skills and knowledge are supposed to lead to greater independence, freedom, both in material and non-material aspects of life.

According to the youth group CVDRII, empowerment means providing training for the youths: *“We are having workshops on leadership skills, CV writing, HIV and discrimination, child rights and discrimination, drugs and drug abuse. We invite CBOs, NGOs and self-help groups – those that we know and who work for the community.”*

R: Why do you do these workshops?

*“To empower the youth.”*

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<sup>97</sup> [Http://www.kcyp.net](http://www.kcyp.net) (accessed 25/10/2006).

<sup>98</sup> See Part. I, chapter 3.2.2.3 where I outline the reductionist point of view for comparison.

To be empowered means to be informed about issues affecting one's life. Information is perceived as empowering because it helps people make better choices and thus enhances their well-being. It is important not only for the members themselves but the youth groups serve also to 'empower' general public.

Programme officers from CVDR II continue:

*"We share our knowledge, we empower them. Most of us are trained as peer educators."*

R: And can you see the impact?

*"Yes, we can see the impact. Yes, most of our activities are empowering them (people from the community). Most of them really get to know the issues of the problems concerning them and they learn how to tackle them."*

Likewise for members of POK, empowerment stands for training and gaining knowledge.

R: Do you work also with the term 'empowerment'?

*"The youth empowerment? That is one of our objectives. We organize seminars, or we look where seminars are and try to involve our members. For example, our members have been trained on leadership, human rights, PET (participatory educational theatre), behaviour change, conflict management."*

R: So this is empowerment?

*"Yes, members gaining skills and knowledge."*

Seje from Shades Classics also asserts "...we try to empower everybody.... So at the end of the day, everybody has got somewhere, he or she went and acquired some knowledge."

For Fred, the director of KCYP, empowerment is about having a wider range of options that derive from gaining some skills and knowledge and also from inspiration of others' acting. It is about being able to do what makes sense in one's life and continuing to exceed one's limits.

R: How do you understand the word empowerment?

*"For me empowerment is if you give me a set of options that I can use towards my well-being or somebody else's well-being, then you've empowered me. By giving me tools that I can use. Not necessarily training me or giving me money. But giving me an area of how I can think - broader options of what I can do, so that I can do what I want, then you've empowered me. And this comes with skills, exposure and learning from others. Because here in KCYP, we have opportunities of meeting many people that you interact with and they might inspire you. In one way you're empowering me because people will be able to think beyond the box. I can now make an independent choice and have a vision about my own life."*

According to Andrew from the same CBO, empowerment is much about making the right decisions. Such decisions cannot be made without information and education.

*“The word empowerment is to give someone the ability to make the right decisions that will help him or help the community around him. If you create that environment, if you give anything that may help the mind of that person to make the right decision, then that is empowerment. It is not necessarily material or financial or whatever. The true empowerment must be in information or education but most of all information...Like if I have ten shillings I can be able to invest it and get hundred shillings. If I tell this to a person, I’ve empowered him.”*

Thus, empowerment is know-how that brings a future benefit. It is the knowledge, information and skills that create the ‘**power to**’. Power to make better choices, power to improve someone’s well-being. But it is also about ‘thinking beyond the box’; a process of thinking, learning from others and changing one’s preferences.

This dimension, according to Nelly Stromquist’s (1995) concept, belongs to a certain extent to the cognitive part of empowerment. The interconnection between the different parts, however, shows that some impact appears also in the psychological and economic dimensions. Skills and knowledge improves the chance on getting better job and raising one’s self-esteem.

#### **4.3 Empowerment as consciousness raising**

*“Kibera has beauty, too, you see.  
I have been empowered to know that!”*

Frank, KCYP

This dimension appeared to be very important for many of my informants. Empowerment is here perceived as awakening of an already present inner potential and knowledge that has been latent so far. In the previous chapter, the information comes from outside and has to be acquired through learning. Here, nevertheless, it is an information that reminds one of, or uncovers, a belief and energy that gives new direction for one’s life. According to Rowlands (cited in Mayoux 2005:6), it is an individual change in confidence and consciousness, it is the ‘**power from within**’ or the **psychological** dimension of empowerment.

As Nelly Stromquist (1995:15) remarks, *“One cannot teach self-confidence and self-esteem; one must provide the conditions in which these can develop.”* I believe that this is what youth groups do.

On the KCYP's website<sup>99</sup> you find this statement: *"Youth empowerment is about enabling young people to realize the dreams, visions, motivation, knowledge and skills that they already have."* Frank from this group was particularly enthusiastic when talking about empowerment: *"That's what I like about KCYP. I learn how to work hard, how to sacrifice and I am being empowered. When somebody sees me working hard, he could follow my example. I am being empowered to know how to sacrifice."*

For the chairman of Mashimoni Youth Group, Silvano, empowerment is about *"creating a mindset of the will for development in all parts of life, be it individual, be it economical, be it social."* Mindset and the will are crucial words here and Leo from KCYP thinks likewise that *"It is just opening somebody's mind. After opening the mind the eyes will open and you will see. You can tell a person but he is the one who is going to do it."*

Throughout my stay, I tried to figure out what made the young people I met participate in the community development without being paid for it. Now, I believe it is the power from within that they discovered and use. It gives them hope that the effort they make, the eagerness for developing themselves, will pay in the future. However, this inner strength stands only at the beginning of an action. It needs to be strengthened with other 'powers', otherwise it ends up wasting its potential.

#### **4.4 Empowerment as participation and inclusion**

*"One tree cannot make a forest."*

African proverb<sup>100</sup>

The tendency to identify empowerment with participation is strong in the development studies (see Oakley 2001:43, cited in Chapter 3.2.2.3, Part I of this paper).

It is true that a unified progress strengthens and mobilizes people's capacities to bring about a change. *"Such community/group participation enhances a person's belief in their ability to influence change in personal and social realms"* (FTCC 1999:2).

It is generally agreed that more can be achieved by a group of individuals acting together than by individuals alone. Abzed Osman from Duduba Youth Group thinks that *"Basically, if you join a self-help group, you get more motivated than as an individual."* Moreover, Gaby from M.Y.G believes that *"If you share with someone, you find it easier to overcome some problems."*

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<sup>99</sup> See footnote 100.

<sup>100</sup> Mentioned in the interview with youth group CVDRII.

After joining a group, young people enhance their social capital by making new friends with common interests. When people get together they create the '**power with**' that brings these interest into collective action which is designed to influence positive change.

Stromquist (1995:15) calls "...*the ability to organize and mobilize for social change*" the **political** dimension of empowerment. I would prefer to use instead the word **social** for my case study. Despite knowing that the term political is not applied only for interactions within governments but politics is observed in all human group interactions, including community organizations, it still brings in the semblance of young people from Kibera having the chance to interact with institutions beyond the non-governmental development sector which is far from being true. Their voice is not being heard outside Kibera and Kibera is not being heard at all.

In terms of social empowerment, youth groups offer a space for people put into practise their skills and talents, to make use of their faculties.

Fred from KCYP learned that by participating people get skills and self-esteem, they are improving themselves. "*But first, you have been empowered, so that you can now take it to the next level.*"

Robert from KCYP explains that "*what we do is honour their (the members') talents for their own individual development. For those interested in football we provided the equipment so that now they can play. We make them expose their talents, so they are flourishing. We make them benefit from their own talent.*"

For Cartoon from Shades Classics empowerment is "*a two-way traffic – you realize what you want plus you help others to achieve the same.*" He adds that, "*The youth can be empowered by helping them realize what they want.*"

Nelly Stromquist (1995:15) also agrees that "*In consequence, an empowerment process must involve individual awareness, and collective action...*"

The social dimension thus strengthens the progress in psychological, cognitive and economic spheres of empowerment. Abilities of individuals are enhanced by organizing into interest groups. The power to and the power from within are fortified by the power with.

No matter how defined, the practice of the action of the youth groups as a whole, I believe to correspond with the definition of Simons-Morton and Crump (1996:291, cited in FTCC 1999:2) who say that empowerment "*has come to represent efforts to foster bottom-up social change through consciousness raising, self-help, capacity development, and political action.*"

## V. Contribution of the youth-led organizations for the development of Kibera

### 5.1 Work for the community

*“Anyway, even if you develop personally,  
you’re still developing the community.”*

Kepha, KCYP

The youth from Kibera have the strongest motivation to work for the development of the community because they are part of it. The welfare of the community is thus connected to their own. Just as Kepha from KCYP remarked above.

The World Bank (2005:43) states that *“Despite the difficulties that they present, the slums can also be a source of protection for youths. Young people who live in slum areas report feeling part of a community and a sense of connectedness and belonging that does not exist in more affluent areas of the city.”*

The development can happen through the influence young people render on their peers. The youth organizations provide *“a forum in which they (youngsters) can take on positive social roles and which does not tempt them to engage in risky behavior. The organizations also give young people a sense of belonging and are a source of positive interaction among them”* (Ibid.:47). Moreover, those who gain are not only the beneficiaries of the programmes but also the peer educators themselves. If they give a positive example, through words and doing, it has an equal protective power for them. *“There is ample evidence that when young people participate as peer youth educators, they (the educators) tend to be less involved in risky behavior”* (Ibid.:10).

Much has already been said throughout the whole part III and chapter III in particular, but I wish to summarize the contribution of the youth groups:

- They provide community with **information**:

*“...there is no development that can happen without information...”*

Fred, KCYP

Fred continues: *“...Information dictates how much you move the development. So that is our contribution – giving the community information that it needs. And also giving skills to young people who are developing themselves but at the same time helping the community.”*

Much of the information is targeted at the awareness creation about the issues of today, first and foremost HIV/AIDS and also drugs and other present-day problems.

R: Fred, how does KCYP contribute to the development of the community?

*“Most of our projects have been focused on community service. We’ve been very instrumental in creating HIV/AIDS sensitisations, we use theatre, we do community outreaches,”* and Kepha explains: *“We’ve been trying to concentrate on gaining knowledge and dispatch this knowledge to the community, perhaps in a different way – because most people here don’t understand English, so we get the knowledge in English, like a channel from experts. Then we repackage it, in form of drama, in form of poetry, in form of music and then we take it to the community, in a very casual way.”*

Together with disseminating knowledge about HIV/AIDS, the organizations also concentrate on reduction of the stigma that is perceived to go hand in hand with the disease.

R: How do you see the importance of youth groups for Kibera?

*“The importance of a youth group is to make sure that anything happens in the community we are the first to do something about it. Like the issue of HIV. We don’t just look at it, we do something. The first thing is the community mobilization, we go to the community and see how the thing is in real, we get to know the problem and together in our group we see how we can help our community. What we do is create a platform for the community to share ideas on issues and tackling problems. Everyone can come and get idea. More ideas, more solutions.”*

R: And can you see the impact?

*“Yes, people with HIV come and share and open up. Because we sensitize them they know each and every aspect of the thing and the stigma is being reduced. That’s an impact that we’ve made. By understanding it we have reduced the stigma...So they do not end up just saying: ‘Oh, that one has HIV, that is stigma’”* (Haron and Pape, CVDR11).

I asked about the importance also Abzed Osman from Duduba Youth Group and he answered that the groups are *“very important because our community must know more about HIV/AIDS. We educate them through seminars, awareness, outreaches, theatre...At least community members gain a little bit of education from youth groups. We know some facts about AIDS and myths about AIDS. So we take the myths and put them into facts.”*

Kathy from KCYP also wants the community to get information, *“But getting the information is not enough. When they apply the information, that is satisfaction. So I see, if I continue doing this for example for five years, the community is going to develop. I hope we’re going to reach as many people as possible. But we can’t reach all of them.”*



- They promote **positive peer influence**:

R: Kathy, do you think CBOs in general are important for Kibera?

*“They really, really are. There are people who use drugs and youth groups can supply the community with information. They cannot help everyone because I had a friend who, while being in a CBO, continued using drugs but other kind of people, like me if I hadn’t been here, I don’t know what would I do right now. I really don’t know. They helped me to avoid other things, negative things and focus on the positive things of life”* (Kathy, KCYP).

For young people, peer influence is very important. The peers’ behaviour has a substantial impact on them. Most youths trust their fellows and ask them for advice and help when they face a difficult situation (World Bank 2005:46).

It is, therefore, an inevitable fact that young people *“do better when their peers have positive, pro-social values, are engaged in the community, and have an opportunity to contribute to their family, school, workplace, and community”* (Ibid.:10). Youth-led organizations also provide an opportunity for young people to relate to their peers *“and contribute to creating positive youth communities”* (Ibid.).

Peers also create an impact on youths when it comes to the use of drugs. Young people in Kenya, and all around the world, tend to be easily influenced by their friends’ substance use as revealed in the surveys cited in *Youth in Kenya* (Ibid.:24). *“Studies have shown that young people are more likely to engage in risky behavior such as substance abuse when their friends do so”* (Ibid.47).

As cited already in Part II of this study (Chapter 1.3) the most common legal substances used by young people were found to be alcohol, tobacco, *miraa* (or *khaat*), and inhalants such as glue and the illegal marijuana (also called *bhang*), cocaine and heroin. The incidence of drug abuse was found to be more frequent among males and the out-of-school youth than among students, a fact which could also be caused by the students under-reporting the extent of their substance abuse (Nacada 2004, cited in Muganda 2004 and World Bank 2005:24).

Gaby formed the group MYG with the objective of wiping out the drugs from his area. He believes that the youth-led organizations contribute to the reduction of crime and drug abuse among youth in Kibera. He thinks that by coming together, people can stop taking drugs more easily<sup>101</sup>. *“It is good to learn from somebody who was affected and now is clean. You find it easier if you share together. And it will keep you busy instead of being idle...I think that when people take drugs it is because of the peer pressure. You are smoking cigarettes, I am*

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<sup>101</sup> By “taking drugs“ the youths from Kibera often mean also drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes.

*not smoking cigarettes which means I am not cool, you know. If my best friend smokes and I do not, there will be a big gap between us."*

Leo from KCYP sees similar benefits of participating in a youth group. *"I'm getting skills. Those skills found me here. I am changing. I have friends who're just sitting at a jobless corner and think in the way: 'I can't.' So they're sitting at the jobless corner, chewing miraa, smoking. I always wanted to change them, let them know, that they can choose to do something else."*

- Youth groups give a **positive picture** of the youth and of Kibera in general:

*"This participation also gives young people an opportunity to contribute positively to their communities and helps to change their negative image in the minds of older people."*

World Bank (2005:47)

People who are active members of community organizations provide a positive example for their community and, potentially, broader society. As Mohammed from Kamsheg says, the importance of youth groups is that they *"change what people think about Kibera. Coz out there, many people hear about Kibera in a negative way, so they think that it is a negative place. There are robbers, there are murderers, all of this bad stuff is found in Kibera. But when you come to the ground it is totally different from what you hear, and it is because of the CBOs. So the CBOs change the lives of people living in here from the negative side to the positive."*

The group POK has also changed the perspective of adult people towards the youth. *"Some people thought that youth are involved in violence, drug abuse. But we contributed to reducing drug abuse in our area. There are no customers. You find that we have one hundred members."*

### **BOX III/6: Heart for the community**

#### **Chris, POK**

*“Working for community is good because they identify you as good people and this is actually of a great help to us. They don’t see you as someone dependant on them and doing negative things. But they appreciate the work that you are doing. And that is satisfactory.”*

#### **Seje, Shades Classics**

R: And for you personally, what does it mean to work for the community?

*“Well, I was born in the slums. So most of the things in the slums are really, really dear to me and I think that in a way I am enlightened, in a way I am advantaged. I have to take back that good message to the people in my area, so that they can know what to do. They can be informed. That is why we use the IEC approach – Information, Education and Communication.”*

#### **Silvano, Mashimoni Youth Group**

R: What does it bring to you personally, to be involved in these activities?

*“It comes from the heart. What you feel about the community, what you think about it. It is like a call. You want to be the change. The change you want to see.”*

#### **Andrew, KCYP**

After an outreach to school where KCYP members spoke about HIV/AIDS to the pupils, Andrew was sharing his feelings. *“I was feeling very happy. Nothing special happened in that day but just spending one hour with those students in the class and sharing some information made me feel good. I felt like I had done so much. I felt satisfied about giving that kind of service and that is that kind of a direct service to the society. And if I had been paid for it, I would be looking at the money first, not at the direct benefit that it should have for the community.”*

#### **Kathy, KCYP**

R: Why do you participate in the community work?

*“Maybe because I love my community. And if I have the information – I mostly get it for free, so I like to give it free. So that’s why I really love to do it. I can just do nothing about the situation but it is about my community, it is about me! Making the change that I don’t want to be waiting for someone else to come and do it. Yes, it’s part of me and I cannot just leave it out for someone else.”*

#### **Abzed Osman, Duduba Youth Group**

R: Do you like working for the community?

*“Yes, for hundred per cent.”*

R: Why? What does it bring to you?

*“I just like serving the community, I just like doing anything.”*

R: But for me, as a person from Europe, it is quite hard to imagine why...

*“In Europe, you are very rich. Here in Kibera, we are very poor.”*

R: So you feel it necessary to help?

*“Exactly.”*

#### **Mohammed, Kamsheg**

R: What does it bring to you personally to be here in your group, to work for the community, and to work for yourself?

*“I feel good working for the community and for the CBO. There are people next to me whose problems are the same as mine and if we come together we can solve our problems. I work with people of my standard. And if I want to improve my standard we*

*improve it together.”*

**Kepha, KCYP**

*“It is about passion why you help the community. Because the community is a bit thankless. They won’t discover what you’re doing, they won’t even know that you’re helping them anyway. But it is you who feels that you have done something for them. Well, many people ran away from working for the community because it’s thankless. Even if you died today, they won’t say you died helping the community. They would say you died wasting time somewhere. But it is the feeling inside you that makes you know that you have done something for the community and for yourself...Because the community is proud of that one person who has skills that no one else has and uses the skills to promote them. That’s work for community.”*

R: What does it bring to you when you participate in a project?

*“Many things but the biggest profit I get from here is not financial or material or physical. Many people expect to have material gains from place like this, money or anything. But what is most important is what it puts inside you. So it really develops me in terms of experience, skills to work in the community, to know how to manage situations and to work in a place like Kibera. I think it’s a very strong litmus test, you can work anywhere once you’ve worked in Kibera. That’s one of the most difficult places to work in. And perhaps one of the easiest places to work in if you know it. Once you’ve been able to work in Kibera, there is no other place you can’t work in. I am very sure of that. Because you know so much, you have the skills to work with people, live like a community. Imagine a community with different tribes, different communities coming together to form a larger community. Who are all poor. You can imagine, and you’re there trying to make a change and you are in harmony with them without being suspect for wrong intentions. It’s one of the best feelings someone can ever have. And you feel satisfaction when you come back home you just feel satisfaction that you have done something.”*

R: For the others?

*“Yes.”*

R: And for yourself?

*“Yes.”*

**Haron, CVDRII**

*“It is really challenging what I do in the slums. There is no need to look for another place where to work. People here need me, they need my service. And I feel I need to change the community, I have this vision. Coz in the community you have many issues and I also have that heart for the community. I can’t give up. Even if there’s no funding, I’ll keep on doing that work voluntarily. I’ve been volunteering for many years but I know the reward will come later.”*

- Among other activities done for the community I already mentioned some in chapter III of this part. E.g. the **cleaning of the environment**, or **home-based care**.

## 5.2 Personal development and psychological well-being of the members

*“If you are a youth who has a vision, you’re focused on what you’re doing and you want to bring an impact, or if you are talented, we can work together and make a change out of it so you keep on giving youth opportunity to develop, a chance to act....*

*Where are youth there is a struggle for something, you see. And challenges are everywhere and they just try to make the best out of the challenges. We come up with solutions so that the previous challenges don’t bring us down. We know we are growing and we’re here to keep on.”*

Haron, CVDRII

Previously, I have shown various benefits, especially those concerning the material situation, gaining skills and knowledge, and also the protective value of leisure activities and entertainment. I also described closer the empowering potential of the youth groups.

Here, I wish to look closer at another non-material gains from participation in the youth-led organizations. The topic of personal development and psychological well-being does not seem to be very exposed compared to the issue of economic progress. As Robert Chambers (1995:198) noticed, *“The personal dimension is as paramount as it is perversely overlooked...Psychologists and psychotherapists are rare among development professionals...It is, though, obvious to the point of embarrassment, that individual personality, perceptions, values, commitment and behaviour are crucial for institutional and professional change.”*

Furthermore, the literature of the development agencies focuses on material outcomes of all the undertaking. The concentration is directed to the results and the process itself is frequently not appreciated. I believe that it is not only the final goal that makes the self-esteem and self-confidence, two of the building stones of personal development, grow. The path can be a goal in itself.

Now, let us look closer at the personal dimension. Naturally, the keeping-busy and empowering factors discussed previously penetrate all the action of youth groups which:

- Enable the **behavioural** and **mental change**:

*Kepha, from KCYP, thinks that the youth groups are “doing a good work. Perhaps it may not be seen physically, but mentality of the young people can easily be modelled towards a certain direction by the influence of the CBOs. Because young people come together, speak their own languages, they can behave freely and this way they can easily access information and they can easily be reached and that means communication can easily flow and when communication flows there is change of mentality towards positivity that we all are going towards. Now, it’s upon them to act, because they got the information.”*

Seje from Shades Classics says that "... the youth-groups are formed to educate, inform and communicate the fellow youth because the youth listen more to the youth. So fellow youth tells you about AIDS, crime, drugs. So there is a behavioural change in the community through information and positive examples." And Cartoon from the same group adds: "One thing is that it (a youth group) acts as a place of change. You know when we are just home, although we might have talents but not until we bring them together, one boy, or a girl. We can create something, but this can't work when I am at home. We have to come together and form a youth group, that's when we come up with a CBO. And this is a place for nurturing your talent."

Members from Mashimoni Youth Group also think that "there is a change of mind from being idle to do something. One can actually think of his future life. Because we do our capacity building. Sharing experience."

- Enhance **self-esteem** and **self-confidence**:

*"All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others."*

Abraham Maslow (1943:381)

According to Abraham Maslow, for all humans it is essential to be respected, to have self-respect, and to respect others.<sup>102</sup> People can gain the desired respect through activities, professional or hobbies, that are capable of providing them with the sense of contribution and through which they could feel accepted and valued.

When a person feels capable, useful and necessary in the world, he is likely to be self-confident, his need for self-esteem is satisfied. And, as the World Bank (2005:48) states, "Young people who have a positive self-image are less likely to engage in self-destructive risky behavior such as substance abuse and risky sexual practices."

On the other hand, imbalances at the level of self-esteem produce feelings of inferiority and helplessness (Maslow 1943:382). And, as I already mentioned, young people in Kenya have only few possibilities to find a satisfying job or other activities. There are lack of opportunities for realization of people's potential. In this situation, the community organizations can also play a crucial role.

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<sup>102</sup> The American psychologist Abraham Maslow became mostly noted for his proposal of a hierarchy of human needs. He laid out five categories of basic needs: the physiological needs, the needs for safety and security, the needs for love and belonging, the needs for esteem, and the need to actualize the self, in that order. As this is not a study from the field of psychology, I will touch only briefly on this issue.

Fred from KCYP says on the issue of contribution of the youth groups to development of the personality of their members that *“Much is done through training, opening up, I mean, giving somebody self-esteem. Coz when you have a group of people, you can learn from others, from what are they doing and how. Because some people are closed up. With time, you find people who can talk and they can share out, for example through the training in public speaking. Now, one knows I can speak about my issues in this way and people listen. So it gives somebody self-esteem and also the skills, it means you are improving on yourself.”*

Fred was talking about something that Maslow (Ibid.:383) sees as the preconditions for the satisfaction of basic human needs. These are, for example, freedom to express one's self, freedom to investigate and seek information, freedom to defend one's self, justice, fairness, honesty, orderliness in the group.

Seje from Shades Classics adds: *“For example, when I first came to Shades, I was shy and timid, withdrawn, but with some time, Shades showed me how to be more bold, more...empowered, I can speak better. So this is one way how Shades is helping the members. When they come they are withdrawn but with the time they open up and become so self-confident.”*

- Create an environment for **self-actualization**, and **discovery of new talents**:

After satisfying the first four basic human needs (see footnote 31), Maslow argues that we may still feel another discontent unless the individual is doing what he is fitted for. *“A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, he must be”* (Maslow 1943:382). This need is called self-actualization. The term, first used by Kurt Goldstein refers to the instinctual human need to use fully people's abilities and to strive to be the best they can. It is the desire for reaching one's fullest potential (Ibid.).

Self-actualizing people are said to be creative, spontaneous, moral, lacking prejudice, accepting facts and should solve effectively theirs and other people's problems.

However, according to Maslow (Ibid.:383), we do not know much about self-actualization since people whose basic needs are satisfied people are, in our society, the exception.

We can, nevertheless, observe that community organizations can play an important role in supporting young people's talents, in realizing their potential. Those who want to become actors, singers or playwrights are given a chance to show their works to their fellow members and the community and through their organization, sometimes, they can find also material support and venues for performances. Moreover, the groups also act as a places where a hidden potential or talent is discovered.

Frank from KCYP likes the community work particularly for the reason of teaching people what he knows. *“I’ve never had a place where people would sit and listen to me. Sometimes, you have an idea that somebody doesn’t have but you don’t have a place where you could go and tell it to them. So in KCYP I have chance to talk to you, guys (volunteers from abroad), about things I know. Coz, maybe, I have an idea, I don’t know...”*

Frank continues to talk about this experience: *“The other day I was waiting at the junction and one girl greeted me. I didn’t know her but she told me: ‘Oh, you’re the one from KCYP, you came to my school.’ And that was great to hear.”*

Abzed Osman from Duduba Youth Group acknowledged that participation in a youth groups affected his life. *“When I joined the group, suddenly, my talent came at the surface. I am a poet. Before, I didn’t know my talent. So I discovered my talent.”*

Similarly, Cartoon from Shades Classics said: *“Me I wasn’t good at poems before joining the Shades Classics, but when I came here we had to do poems, so I had this push and spend more time trying to cram some poems but as time went I became good at that area in which I wasn’t.”*

### **5.3 Opinions on the importance from outside**

I spoke to various people who were neither members of the youth groups nor living in Kibera in order to obtain opinions on the importance of youth groups for Kibera from the other side. The testimonies were mostly brief without talking in detail and, in the first place, mentioned the negative examples of organizations or youth in general and only then recalled the positive aspects.

After asking a District Officer in Kibera about his opinion on the youth of Kibera, he only remembered negative things, like criminal activity. As I did not specify my question to the youth involved in community development he did not take it into account. When I specified my question, Mr. Mukele mentioned lack of resources that does not allow the youth groups to be very important. *“It does not allow them to do much.”*

However, he said that youth groups are instrumental in some fields, especially in garbage collection, they are in the frontlines. They are also good at creating awareness about drugs and HIV/AIDS. To some extent, they even prevent crime through creating income-generating opportunities. *“The youths are busy and kept away from crime, they are self-employed. They also help by avoiding early pregnancies. They do also something for the environment and sanitation.”*

In the end, to my view, the youth-led organizations did not remain so unimportant as the first reaction of Mr. Mukele indicated.

Mr. Kamau from National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCCK) acknowledges that in Kibera



youth groups are good, exposed. He mentions especially the garbage-picking projects as their biggest contribution. Moreover, to participate in youth groups or to attend school reduces the possibility of involvement in crime because in Kenya young people are especially at risk. On the other hand, Mr. Kamau disclosed that when financial help comes through groups, some of them become traps for money (see more in the next chapter).

Emma from Care Kenya says that *“The government does not think of people after primary school, so the people stay idle.”* She continues saying that some of these people join a youth group to avoid this idleness but others *“just join the groups for fun, to have someone to go out with. Most of them don’t have a vision, they play scrabble the whole day. A focus and a goal are essential. A group must have a vision for their members and not all groups have this.”*<sup>103</sup>

A social development officer for Kibera and Embakasi, Mr. Oketch, probably the most competent government official for the matters of community development in the respective areas, mentions the contribution and also drawbacks of the youth-led development. He thinks that youth groups are important thanks to the employment opportunities they offer and also for helping to keep the youths away from crime, alcohol, and drugs. On the other hand, Mr. Oketch names some challenges and constraints that will be mentioned in the following chapter.

The World Bank’s opinion is based on a research in Kenya (2005:76) and states that *“youth institutions and organizations can provide many benefits for young people. They give them a sense of belonging and connectedness, provide them with positive role models and opportunities to learn, and engage them in activities with a social purpose (such as HIV/AIDS prevention, conservation, peer education, and recreational and cultural activities).”*

#### **5.4 Constraints to the work of CBOs**

*“We’re still planting trees. We’re not looking for short-term outcomes, but long-term. We’re expecting to leave a legacy to for the people of this place.”*

KCYP meeting (13/2/2006)

So far, I have highlighted the positive aspects and contributions of the youth-led community organizations but there are many drawbacks in their work. Firstly, the external factors that limit the effectiveness of the community development and involve the lack of funding

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<sup>103</sup> For more opinions of Care Kenya see the Box III/3.

(discussed closely in chapter II) but also **lack of information technology** and **inadequate access** to it and **to education**, we also discussed the **prejudice** towards young people.

Secondly, some negative features appear in the work of CBOs and self-help groups that are the consequence of internal failures. These involve:

- **Mismanagement of funds:**

Vague reports about the so called briefcase organizations and other 'gold diggers' appear from time to time but were not backed up by facts.

Although there is a high number of registered organizations within Kibera, Crosson asserts that (2004-2005:5) most of them only *"exist in name to receive funds, but show little commitment to effective and efficient service provision within the community."*

According to the Social development officer Mr. Oketch, the biggest challenge for the community-based organizations is finances. Generally, there is a lack of funding but when a group receives money, the mismanagement of it from part of the leaders is rampant. This is mostly true for bigger CBOs, especially the adult-led ones, who handle money from donors, said Mr. Oketch. Some leaders are not willing to call elections in order to stay in function. Moreover, there is auditing before elections.

I asked the youths about their opinion to the situation. According to POK, some groups *"are just waiting for donors, not ready to dig in their own pockets. They think about gaining, not about their own commitment. Some people do that because they think that if you form a group the NGOs will provide money. They don't know that NGOs provide money according to what they see. So some groups are only founded on the base of gaining. The members tend to clash with the members. Because for example, the leaders don't think of developing the community."*

- **Lack of commitment and experience, weak leadership, absent vision:**

The groups I was in touch with belong to those organizations that are active and whose projects are based on a vision. Moreover, their activities are transparent as they report regularly to the Office of Social Development Officer. However, as Mr. Oketch states, only about 40% of the community organizations he is in charge of report regularly. According to him, one of the major problems is lack of leadership skills, leaders are not trained which also affects record keeping and accounting.

Naturally, not all existing groups have managed to survive the tough beginnings, and not all of those who still survive have strong leadership; disputes can appear between the leaders and members or among members preventing any projects being carried out. As it is agreed

in the *World Development Report 2007* (World Bank 2006a:47) *“For many young people, the reality is that they are inexperienced decision makers who are only selectively informed about the risks, costs, and benefits of most human capital investments. Some tend to be more myopic and impatient than adults, which may lead them to discount the value of long-term investments like human capital.”*

According to Emma from Care Kenya, *“NGOs have also their part of blame. CK arrived to Kibera and announced that we will partner with 10 youth groups, so new groups were formed to suit us. But we’ve learnt from past mistakes. We now want the partnership to be sustainable, it should empower them.”*

I asked Seje from Shades Classics how come that his group was so successful. He replied: *“OK, one I think it’s thanks to the leadership and the founding members having vision for the club. And then, secondly, what we do is unique. And thirdly it is because Shades move out to look for something to do. We don’t wait for things to come here. So when we want to start our project we sit down and strategize, see how we’re going to roll out our project and then move out to look for our market.”*

• **Giving false hopes and promises:**

*“I was always complaining about one thing”,* Cartoon from Shades Classics disclosed, *“and that is giving hope to the youths. To promise to the members to provide for them some income, initiate an income-generating activity. So all your hope is there but as time goes by you find out that there is no clear communication between you and CBO officials. So you invested your time while you could be doing something else, maybe working. But you left that job so that you can be with your CBO. So you end up losing everything.”*

R: Did you come across some CBOs that aren’t working that well?

*“Yes, I used to be in one where we worked hard on a performance, came up with dances etc. because we were promised a performance and the money will be this much. But when the day came for the performance, the coordinator wasn’t there. We didn’t know what happened only after we came to know that it was cancelled. So we were just standing there, some of us had other things to do.”*

R: Whose failure was it?

*“Of course I blame the officials. Communication is the most important thing.”*

• **Few people involved and lack of information** about their activities:

In the research of Courtney Crosson (2004-2005:17), when respondents were asked to identify self-help groups, schools, environmental and sanitation organizations, health service organizations, and sports programs in Kibera, most of them could name at best one

organization in each category. *“The community seemed to be widely uninformed about available services and the function of organizations in their community.”* Moreover, the community seemed not to be informed about the existing youth groups in their area. *“When asked to list youth groups in their area, respondents were often unable to even think of one. In one case, a respondent was standing in front of the office of Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP) and told the research assistant that no youth groups existed in their area”* (Ibid.:18).<sup>104</sup>

- The fact that some organizations are **exclusive** and **man-dominated** was discussed already in chapter 2.3 in this part.

However, *“although some youth organizations are exclusive (for example, if they are faith-based or school-based), on the whole youth organizations are a protective factor in the lives of young people”* (World Bank 2005:47). Moreover, I believe that everyone who wants to join a youth group can find one that will suit his or her preferences.

## **VI. Two perspectives**

### **6.1 Who says that we are poor?**

*“I am poor only when I am dead.”*

Leonard, KCYP

I was given the opportunity to join one discussion on poverty, held on 6/3/2006 in Kibera. The participants, consisting only of members of youth-led CBOs or self-help groups, were giving various opinions on what poverty is for them. I put their ideas into the following clusters:

- Poverty is a **mind concept** and is **relative**:

Some participants saw poverty as a relative concept that people put in their minds, and through which they understand the reality. According to them, it is a belief about what people can or cannot do.

For example, Frank from KCYP<sup>105</sup> mentioned the relativity by saying: *“I think that nobody is poor. It is just the fact that you don’t have something that he has. Poverty is just a state of mind - When you think you are poor.”*

Similarly, Kathy from KCYP adds: *“Poverty is the mentality that you put in your head. It is lack of comfort that you have in your life.”*

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<sup>104</sup> I mentioned the policy of youth groups towards recruitments of new members and advertising on their activities in chapter 2.2.

<sup>105</sup> KCYP organized this meeting and its members created the biggest part among the participants. During my research I was in closer touch with them and had the possibility to discuss further and individually the issues that were mentioned at the meeting, therefore, I quote mainly their ideas.

Leo, from the same youth group, also says that feeling poor is based on belief that was adopted by someone. *“OK, people say that we in Kibera are poor, so then you just believe that you’re poor and you’re not working hard. So that being poor is a mental idea that makes poor of me because I believe I can’t make it, because someone else tells you...if you tell them the opposite, you’ve empowered them.”*



### 3.14 Discussion ‘Tackling poverty together’

Frank also thinks that rich people set standards on what is considered desirable resources in that society and that the poor are not able to meet which causes feelings of inferiority. *“The point is, we try to picture things and set standards, like if he has these big shoes he is rich and if you can’t afford shoes like him, you’re poor. These are the standards set by people.”*

According to Else Øyen (2002:1), this hierarchy forms part of the social context for people therefore, they relate to it and adopt it as part of their cognitive map.

To conclude, Frank thinks that *“nobody is poor as long as you live and as long as you have what it takes to live.”* Leo goes even further when saying *“I am poor only when I am dead.”*

- Poverty is **subjective**:

Laura, an assistant director in the KCYP thinks that poverty is not exclusively an experience to those in low-income areas. Everyone can experience it no matter what the area of residence is. *“It depends on your feeling of comfort. You can feel bad while living in Lavington<sup>106</sup> and feel good living in Kibera. Why should I want to live in Lavington? Everyone has its own perspective of life.”*

The participants would agree with the researchers that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that can penetrate all spheres of life and all parts of the world. Mohammed from Kamsheg thinks that different aspects of poverty can be experienced by all people

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<sup>106</sup> Lavington is a posh residential quarter in Nairobi.

regardless the material situation. *“Poverty is something that everyone experiences. You find someone living in Runda<sup>107</sup>, he is not poor in money but he may be poor in other ways. There is poverty of mind and others.”* In Kibera, Mohammed adds, he can be comfortable with much less than the rich because his needs and expectations are lower.

- **Material aspect** of poverty:

As was to be expected, the material aspect of poverty was also discussed during the meeting. Here, poverty was mostly defined as the lack of basic needs. Kepha agrees that *“Man must eat, man must sleep and man must survive. But the most important food in man’s life is not just the physical food that you eat.”*

The participants often asserted that they did not need much money to be well. For Kathy from KCYP, *“it is not about having much money to be rich. No. If I have this kind of life, I have clothes, I eat, I am rich because I have hands, I have eyes, I can still think and I know what to do now.”*

When asked about well-being, people often replied that it means *“Just to have the basic needs. Like a place where to live, some clothes to put on and also a good health”* (Cartoon, Shades Classics). Likewise, Mohammed from Kamsheg says that he does not need much, only the basics: *“food, clothing, shelter. I don’t need other things like a car Lexus.”*

- Poverty is a **challenge**:

Kepha from KCYP, who enjoys public speaking and likes to philosophize, recognizes all the constraints of a life of poverty but also sees a big challenge in them: *“Poverty is a very strict teacher because it leaves you a mark that can never be erased. It develops your character in a way because you really, really struggle hard to live. It teaches you really strongly how to live, how to survive. And it is not a teacher that loves you, like the teachers that love their children. It is very, very angry, sometimes. Sometimes you sleep hungry. It punishes you temporarily but it builds you ever more. So I believe we are students in this class...People could learn from poverty if they saw it as a teacher and not a punisher, something that develops them as well. Those who are poor and live in Kibera should therefore learn from poverty and how to be students in this class...”*

We observed that poverty is a harsh experience yet the youth altogether rejected falling in this category, designed for those deprived. These opinions are certainly influenced by the fact that their basic needs are actually satisfied, they are mostly in good health and are full of strength. Elderly or sick people’s definitions would differ from those mentioned but it does not

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<sup>107</sup> Runda is a posh residential quarter in Nairobi.

mean that we will not accept them as part of this reality - a reality of Kibera, a low-income settlement.

Throughout the discussion, I could feel certain aversion coming out of the testimonies on poverty, I could feel rejection towards being viewed as poor; a pride, maybe. It is clearly due to the fact that poverty, in general, is an undesired state that carries more than the inability to buy things necessary for live. It is a stigmatizing and negative status assigned to people at the bottom of a hierarchy where they are to be found not only due to the lack of material possession but also due to the lack of intangible assets such as prestige.

## **6.2 Poverty is when...: stereotypical portraying and stigma**

*“People see rusty roofs and they think we have rusty heads.”*

Mohammed, Kamsheg

Over time a picture of poor people was created that described various aspects of their lives, indicating how they behave, and how they should behave (Øyen 2002:1). This picture, and popular representations of poverty and poor people in general, has been mainly negative a fact which necessarily affects poor people’s well-being. In *Crying out for change* Narayan et al. (2000b:136) say that: *“The stigma of poverty, and the perception of deviant behaviour associated with it, is recurring theme in discussions with poor people”*.

Moreover, *“the higher layers,”* writes Øyen (2002:1), *“claim the right to define what is good and bad behaviour, what is right and wrong in terms of social norms, and what is best for society at-large.”* Those who stand higher in the hierarchy tend to distance themselves from the lower layers, and therefore, are not likely to describe kindly those at the bottom. Such biased descriptions do not necessarily depict the truth. Thus, a stereotypical picture has been developed leaving no space for a more accurate and factual account of causes and manifestations of poverty.

As Øyen (Ibid.) adds, those from the bottom layer are hardly capable of challenging these stereotypes created for them which is *“the very character of their lowly position.”* On the other hand, the upper layers have moral impact on the public discourse which is characteristic for their position.

This portraying, she continues (Ibid.:1-2), developed into a tale-telling tradition of how poor people behave and think. Moynihan in 1969 wrote: *“To be poor is degrading, since all other segments of society reject and despise the poor, considering them lazy, incompetent, and immoral. Others see them as failures, and often unable to find work and escape poverty no matter how hard they try, feelings of hopelessness and apathy set in among the poor”* (1969:280). Since then, the tale-telling phase in poverty research has not been overcome.

Øyen (2002:2) asserts that *“In spite of recent developments and new accumulated knowledge, understandings of poverty and the use of poverty research are still dominated by tale-telling.”*

Indeed, the semantic field of the word ‘poor’ refers not only to material situation but has meanings not freed from judgements mentioned above.

#### **BOX III/7: Poor poor**

Definition of the word poor has in English manifold meanings where only the first two refer to the material aspect and do not contain other forms of judgement:

1. **not rich:** lacking money or material possessions;
2. **affected by poverty:** characterized by widespread or evident poverty, (*a poor part of town, one of the poorest countries in the world*);
3. **inferior:** not of good quality or not in good condition, (*poor education*);
4. **lacking skill:** having little skill or ability, (*a poor athlete*);
5. **low or inadequate:** lower than expected or needed in quantity, number, or amount, (*poor wages, poor attendance*);
6. **weak:** lacking strength, power, stamina, or resilience, (*in poor health*);
7. **deficient:** lacking or deficient in something, (*often used in combinations, e.g. cash-rich but time-poor*);
8. **lacking productive potential:** lacking fertility or nutrients;
9. **low in valuation:** low in a scale of value, (*poor opinion of himself*);
10. **deserving pity:** deserving pity or compassion, especially because of something that has just happened.

Source: [http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary/\\_/poor.html](http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary/_/poor.html)

Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that the *Voices of the Poor Series* highlighted a serious deprivation linked to poverty being the lack of acceptance from part of the ‘non-poor’ society and the stigma that hangs together with poverty. Poor people identify factors relating to not being accepted or respected by others as critical to their experience.

The literature on poverty-related issues seems to pursue a policy of stressing the ‘lacks’ of the poor, their incapacities and the stigma bound with poverty. *“Poor people often lack practical skills that would help them earn a livelihood. Their lack of ability to provide for their families and belong to society leads to low self-confidence and self-worth”* (Narayan et al. 2000b:235). Lack, lack, low, stigma, deviant, poor...Vulnerability, crime, poverty, apathy, poverty, lack... Such testimonies serve the purpose of the researches that were designed to create a basis for the new poverty reduction strategies (and were described in the *World Development Report 2000/2001*) but do they serve the people themselves?



The social stigma carried by the poor is perceived as a cause for social exclusion<sup>108</sup>. Deepa Narayan et al. (2000a:188) further describe the implication between the two concepts in question: *“First, being poor leads to social exclusion, which increases social stigmatization and marginalization from institutions, leading to greater poverty. Second, while social exclusion may not lead to economic poverty, it is always linked to exclusion from institutions of society and always leads to a poorer sense of well-being.”* Although both of the concepts can be found in coincidence, they are not coextensive. *“People can be poor without being socially excluded or excluded without being poor”* (Narayan et al. 1999:4).

However, we can still agree that there exists close correlation between poverty and exclusion. *“Recognizing a distinction that separates the concepts of poverty and exclusion, it is necessary to stress the mutual implication that exists between them. In fact, in the contemporary societies the phenomenon of poverty tends precisely to be defined more as exclusion than as the lack of properties”*<sup>109</sup> (Baptista 2000:88). According to Sanjeev Prakash (2000:22), social exclusion is almost a synonym for poverty and it is, therefore, needless to highlight that the poor are excluded from external networks.

Young people also have to face some biases towards them. In some communities, as mentioned in the World Bank’s research in Kenya (2005:41), the youth are seen as immature troublemakers, a fact which contributes to their exclusion. Discussions with youths revealed that they feel a lack of respect from the society that does not take them seriously and look upon them as irresponsible and unproductive. The youths would welcome a forum that would give them a voice in community affairs.

Young people from slums are doubly stigmatized. Since general perception links poverty to crime and the proportion of young criminals is higher, they are feared by the outside world and often subject to police harassment.

Frank from KCYP also knows this feeling: *“Sometimes, you know, people when they see a guy from Kibera they just hide their cell phones, if they have it in the hand, just because they think that everyone from here is a thief.”*

This stigma makes young people from Kibera shout: *“You can’t philosophize, you’re in Kibera!”*<sup>110</sup> Although meant as a joke, it carries an important message. Firstly, the slum Kibera is regarded by the rest of the society as a place where no one is able, or even

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<sup>108</sup> Exclusion here *“refers to the norms and processes that prevent certain groups from equal and effective participation in the social, economic, cultural, and political life of societies”* (Narayan et al. 2000a:188).

<sup>109</sup> Translation from Portuguese, L.S.

<sup>110</sup> A phrase uttered by Fred, director of KCYP, to Kepha, a programme officer, while discussing some issue.

supposed to, philosophize and secondly, it tells us that people from Kibera actually **can** philosophize<sup>111</sup>.

I did not intend to deny the deprivation and sense of ill-being linked to poverty. I nevertheless realized in the field that people living in low-income areas are a very diverse group whose reality should not be generalized. The situation is obviously more diverse than the 'black and white view' so often presented.

Is poverty linked to the denial of dignity and the lack of self-esteem?<sup>112</sup> And why is it that the youth from Kibera cannot enjoy the respect of others?

### 6.3 Some comments on the discourse

*"We live from hand to mouth, but we are not poor in minds."*

Robert, KCYP

I believe that we contribute to the propagation of the stereotypes and the stigma by continuing to put emphasis on the 'lacks', deprivations, and differences. But *"Our views of the realities of the poor, and of what should be done, are constructed mainly from a distance, and can be seen to be constructed mainly for our convenience"* (Chambers 1995:191). Indeed, the abstract world of the poor, the research on poverty, as remarks Else Øyen (2002, Øyen et al. 2005), is dominated largely by the non-poor. The poor do not do research on themselves, in spite of the new participatory approaches; they only serve as providers of the data, describing their reality for the researchers to use. I nevertheless argue that the researchers' perceptions and their very presence affects the outcomes. Even though, as

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<sup>111</sup> I would like to clarify the meaning of philosophizing and philosophy to support my argument that all people, regardless their social status can, are able, and have the right to philosophize. According to an on-line dictionary philosophizing means to 1) *speculate or theorize, usually in a superficial or imprecise manner*; 2) *think or reason as a philosopher* (<http://www.infoplease.com/dictionary/philosophize>). Similarly, according to Thesaurus, it means to *"reason philosophically"* (<http://www.infoplease.com/thesaurus/philosophize>). Is it not a basic capacity of a human's brain to reason, think, speculate? As I am not trained in philosophy neither in literature I see philosophy as something each person is able to do as long as he can speak or write. I do not want to start a polemic about the unclear borders between philosophy and non-philosophy, philosophers and non-philosophers. Kai Kresse in his dissertation also states that: *"...in the context of social practice it is not always possible to differentiate very clearly between philosophy and non-philosophy"* (Kresse 1998-1999:11). Nevertheless, according to the precise translation of the Greek word philo-sophia - meaning 'love of wisdom' couldn't those who enjoy discussion and learning new things be also philosophers? Paul Radin (1957:xviii, cited by Kresse 1998-1999:23) acknowledged the possibility of philosophical discourse in any society *"there is nothing (...) that prevents philosophical formulations from being attempted. Individuals with a philosophical temperament are present, the languages are adequate, the structure of their societies places no obstacle in the way."*

<sup>112</sup> From the Human Development Report 1997 (UNDP 1997:5), *"(Poverty) can also mean the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development – to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and the respect of others."*

Øyen (2005:138) remarks, *“Their cognitive understanding of poverty and their direct and indirect impact on efforts towards poverty reduction needs to be explored further.”*

Fortunately, the perceptions are not always single-sided. We saw that most of the literature concerning poverty *“stresses the lack of local capacity”* (Environment and Urbanization, 2001:5) but those working directly with people in the low-income areas have generally different perspectives than the academics, consultants or international agency staff. *“Those who work directly with low-income groups in urban areas, their community organizations and the local professionals with whom they interact (for instance, local doctors, nurses, teachers and staff of local NGOs) are constantly confronted with exceptional people, doing exceptional work with very few resources”* (Ibid.).

Baharoglu and Kessides (2002:127-129), in the chapter on Urban Poverty of the Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies, name a number of common misconceptions about urban poverty which need to be corrected and then new basic premises established. One of the new premises that concerns us here is that *“Poor people are capable of helping themselves. They will successfully take proactive roles in development if they are allowed to participate in decision-making and are given the rights and responsibilities enjoyed by other urban citizens”* (Ibid.:129).

Now, I believe that the time has come to proceed to another level. We might know that *“Poor people are capable of helping themselves”* but the non-poor, the NGOs, the donors and the researchers have to provide the less well-off with trust, respect and recognition, to restore the dignity that is perceived to have disappeared with poverty.

*“When Beck asked very poor people in three villages in West Bengal “Which do you value more, food or self-respect, 49 out of 58 said they valued self-respect more, three valued each equally and only six put food first. Typically, one replied “If I don’t have self-respect, will food go into the stomach?” Beck concluded that “Despite their regular hunger, most poorest people in the study villages felt it was more important to be treated with respect than gratify immediate needs.” It was his view that “If this feeling is widespread among the poor in India, then planners’ and academics’ exclusive interest in income and nutrition is inadequate for understanding poverty”* (cited in Chambers 1995:191).<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Abraham Maslow (1943:387), identifying various causes of reversal of his hierarchy of basic needs where physical needs stand prior to the need for self-esteem, however argues that *“when a need has been satisfied for a long time, this need may be undervalued. People who have never experienced chronic hunger are apt to underestimate its effects and to look upon food as a rather unimportant thing. If they are dominated by a higher need, this higher need will seem to be the most important of all. It then becomes possible, and indeed does actually happen, that they may, for the sake of this higher need, put themselves into the position of being*

The environment of respect naturally cannot be created by repeating the tales and stereotypes about the poor and their lives. Such stories are likely to bring only more pity and pity belongs, according to my view, to the tale-telling tradition Øyen (2002) talks about because it enables the rich to distance themselves from those they take mercy on. Pity is a feeling that makes someone feel superior to the person he is taking pity on, it is an elitist approach that usually leads only to sentimentality without a real intention to help. It is a cheap illusion of how good we are (and we like to believe ourselves as such).

By all means, pity and respect do not go together very well. Pity does not lead to respect, as respect comes from recognition of one's value. It is easier to respect people by identifying similarities instead of differences.

Unfortunately, it is not easy to introduce such concepts as respect to the poverty research as they *"do not lend themselves to measurement, are in practice not measured and so, for normal professionals, barely exist and rarely count"* (Chambers 1995:191).

#### **6.4 Kibera has beauty, too...**

*"People see guy from ghetto and they see drugs, AIDS, theft.*

*But Kibera has beauty too.*

*It has all the good things, they're just covered with mud.*

*When you wash out the mud you find gold...Kibera has beauty, too.*

*I have been empowered to know that!"*

Frank, KCYP

And have YOU been empowered, too? Which one of the pictures (3.15 and 3.16) that create the reality of an urban slum is presented more often?

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*deprived in a more basic need. We may expect that after a long-time deprivation of the more basic need there will be a tendency to reevaluate both needs... Thus, a man who has given up his job rather than lose his self-respect, and who then starves for six months or so, may be willing to take his job back even at the price of losing his self-respect."*



**3.15 Informal dumping site in Kibera**



**3.16 Neat neighbourhood in Kibera**

Not only the official literature on poverty, but also casual visitors come to places like Kibera to look for ... what exactly? Photographers, tourists, reporters and NGOs staff keep picking up the most striking examples of poverty and display them as if it were the single most important reality. None of them is usually willing to make the effort and see that places where people live have some positive aspects and beauty, too, although it might be hidden from the visitor's first sight. For those who have never been to such place it can be hard to imagine because they are massaged by testimonies of those who came there to 'see how the poverty is.' Fulfilled expectations?!

But Kibera is home for hundreds of thousands of people and those people I met mostly love the place because it is their home. They call it *kijiji*, village. But also ghetto.

*“Life is just how you take it. If you take Kibera as a hard place to live in, a dangerous place, that is how it will be. But if you take it just like any other place, Kibera is a good place.”*

Kathy, KCYP

I asked Mohammed from Kamsheg in the interview: How is Kibera for you?

*“I was born here. And my life is very sweet and I enjoy it. If you took me out to Runda just for one week I wouldn't make it. If I am here and I get bored, I have got my friends. But there, everyone is rich, nobody is willing to help. They just live on their own. But here in Kibera let's say if I have a problem, people help me; if I am short of salt, I go to one of the members and they help me. But there people buy things and they don't mind the life of others. We here in the ghetto we think of the others. But they think only about themselves.”*

The life of the rich, either Africans or White people is also perceived in a stereotypical way which is reflected in the above opinion. In the 'rich world' people are thought to be less willing to help each other, the social cohesion is not present, everybody minds his own business.

It is true that among those who lack assets is the social capital essential and highly valued. Social cohesion was praised by many young people I talked to. When they were asked whether they would like to move out from Kibera, many of them replied that they would not. One boy told me that he was living for few months in a town far North of Nairobi and he did not like it at all. He was really happy to have returned to Kibera where all his friends were.

*“And it is cheap to live here and you can live on maximum one dollar per day. And also there is social cohesion and community love. You can help your neighbour...And that's how Kibera is sometimes a good place to live in”* (Cartoon, Shades Classics).



### **3.17 Lively streets of Kibera**

People in Kibera are willing to share which, as I understood, is both a duty and a pleasure:

I asked Fred, the director of KCYP, if he wants to share his life philosophy with me. He thought a bit and then replied: *“Life is no rehearsal. You live today and then it's gone. So if*

*you have some knowledge, if you have some skills you are supposed to ensure that apart from you there is somebody else who gains from that otherwise it is irrelevant for you to have lived this life if you cannot contribute to the welfare of others, I mean mankind, humanity.”*

R: You say irrelevant?

*“Yes, because what else have you lived for? For yourself? Only you, you?”*

To conclude, Frank’s words can be an inspiration for everybody: *“I work not to be recognized for what I am doing I am just working because I feel like working. If you recognize what I am doing come and give me hand, don’t congratulate me. Coz when you sacrifice, when you give in, it is the best way the universe gave you mercy in the future. We know God is looking at us. And something comes. Just do your best without expectations and you will harvest one day.”* (Frank, KCYP).

So you see, Kibera has beauty, too.  
I have been empowered to know that...

## **VII. Conclusion**

This paper represents my desire to contribute to the exposure of some spots that exist in the field of development waiting to be recognized. Firstly, I think that insufficient consideration is paid to the youth-led community-based development in the context of community-driven development. This is reflected in the lack of support the youth groups receive in Kibera, as well as in the lack of relevant literature on this issue.

Secondly, I expressed my regrets about the fact that, while talking about empowerment, the psychological aspect of it, or personal development, is neglected in the project design in order to focus on measurable outcomes; and thirdly, I suggest that the common discourse on the poor should be changed, as the stereotypical portraying of their lives and of the environment of slums, the fixation on the negative sides of it, contribute to maintenance of the stigma hanging on poverty and does not bring respect that is essential for every human being.

Thanks to the qualitative anthropological research and the semi-structured interviews I was provided an insight not only into the work of the youth-led organizations but also, to a certain extent, to their life ‘philosophies’.

To frame my findings within a background I proceeded from the theory, presented in Part I, where I focused on some concepts crucial to the study of urban poverty and poverty reduction. It was particularly interesting for me to review the literature on empowerment and then try to look at its presence in the field.

I wished to include this widely used term into my thesis not only because of its current popularity but also because it penetrates all aspect of life from the macro level up to the 'power from within' on the micro level. This aspect appeared to be particularly important for the youths I interviewed revealing the depth of the contemplations about their lives. Yet the instrumentality and operational potential of empowerment in the field remains arguable.

In Part II, I outlined in brief the background of Kenya trying to focus on its contemporary problems affecting the youth. The issue of high unemployment level is especially burning.

In the third Part, that presents in words and pictures the findings from my three-month stay in Nairobi, I describe the work of the youth-led organizations from Kibera and its members, their personal motivations for participation, their enthusiasm to contribute to the well-being of their community and the importance of the realization of their potential.

I found that in Kibera, there exist organizations of young people that have many activities that are mostly done without expectations for payment. These are, first of all, the educational theatre, football, cleaning of the environment, school educational outreaches etc. The education focuses on creating awareness about HIV/AIDS, drugs, violence etc. On the other hand, some activities are focused on income-generation. These are, e.g., the garbage collection, selling separated trash for recycling, music and dance performances and various public services.

The groups are rarely supported materially from outside. At best, they are offered workshops by the NGOs present in Nairobi, or given some financial help from casual well-wishers.

Although the results of their activities might not be very visible in the context of the whole Kibera I, nevertheless, argue that the presence of the groups is important in the way that they provide something that no other organization offers to the youth in Kibera. They serve as protection against negative peer pressure, they protect people who've finished high schools from staying idle, they provide them with some skills out of which are particularly valued the drama and music skills but also other kinds of knowledge. Sometimes, they also provide a modest income to their members from the income-generating activities.

Moreover, the participation in the activities gives the youth a vision for future and a sense of self-worth and usefulness. Through the various activities they gain self-esteem because their potential is used wisely and is expanding; some even say to have discovered a new talent. The members feel they are being empowered by gaining the skills, by getting exposed, and by improving on themselves. They believe that they can influence certain matters concerning them, and if they do not see the results now, the future will reward them.

This discovery of the inner power was an immediate reward that was at high importance for my respondents and therefore, I argue, that the inclusion of the psychological and personal



dimensions into the development strategies would be very relevant. However, more investigation would need to be done about the design and implementation of such projects. Furthermore, I found that social capital is on a high level in Kibera and that people I interviewed have big heart for their community which was an important motivation for them to join the activities.

At the conclusion I wished to present some opinions on poverty that were expressed during a meeting of the youth groups in Kibera as they represent a very important indicator of young people's approach to the concept of poverty.

I tried to pursue my decision to highlight the positive things that are present in an environment where they are usually not looked for throughout the whole thesis and in the last pages in particular. However, I need to emphasize that this approach is not an approach of an idealist. I do realize that the experience of poverty is very diversified. However, the very fact that it is often presented stereotypically when talking about powerlessness, exclusion, lack of self-esteem, links to crime etc., produce a desire to present the opinions of young people which do not completely match with this model. Moreover, some of the participants refused to be viewed as poor saying *"I am only poor when I am dead"*. These youths may be in a way enlightened; too proud to lack self-esteem and too capable to be called powerless. However, they might live next-door to people who feel deprived by poverty and do not look with optimism to the future as poverty is indeed a harsh experience and no one, not even the youth I met, deny it.

I hope that by presenting my findings in this thesis, I have contributed to uprooting some of the stereotypical views of general public on the inhabitants of the low-income settlements and especially the youth of Kibera and thus help to make a step forward on the path of the convergence of dialogues of the youth and adults as suggested on the website of the CBO KCYP: *"adults must change the current communication paradigm with young people. They should engage in dialogue and change from working for youth to working with youth."*

I realize the limitations of my statements as they belong more to philosophy than to a scientific approach.

The amount of data I collected was not very broad which also presents a certain drawback because the field I tried to cover is too wide to fit into a single thesis and a single research. Thus it remains to be more a survey, with various questions left unanswered. All the chapters of part III would deserve a further and more detailed analysis with wider range of informants providing the data. However, it should still remain a qualitative fieldwork with the researcher(s) doing face-to-face interviews with each and everyone of the respondents. It

would also be better for the purpose of some possible generalizations if we looked at other informal settlements in Nairobi apart from Kibera. We could then compare the work of youth groups within the whole city, as Kibera cannot speak for all the informal settlements because of its exceptional exposure to the development efforts discussed in the study.

I also admit that it would have been useful to have good knowledge of Swahili language, or local slang *sheng* because, especially in the group discussions and also in the awareness theatre, the youth sometimes preferred to communicate in local languages and dialects.

At first, I had desired to have more experience from the field and scientific work but later realized that my age and status of a student were of a great help in approaching my peers as well as my being willing to learn from them.

And I learned a lot. I learned that great potential can be found in Kibera and equally in all the world's diverse hidden corners. I learned that development of the society lies in the development of the individuals. I understood the meaning of the phrase from the *Voices of the Poor Series* (Narayan et al. 2000a:128): *"While structural change requires organization and time, mindset and behavioral changes are within the control of individuals."*

I also learned that every human being seeks recognition and deserves to be treated with respect and not as an object of pity.

And finally I learned that the 'poor' themselves should claim this respect. Perhaps merely by saying: *Who says that we are poor?!*

That is what I learned in Kibera...

## CZECH RESUMÉ

### *Bílá místa:*

#### *Rozvoj vedený mládeží ve slumu Kibera, Nairobi*

Ve své diplomové práci popisuji zkušenosti nabyté během pobytu ve slumu Kibera v Nairobi. Tento slum je největším ve východní Africe a díky tomu je vystavený mnoha snahám o rozvoj a zlepšení situace. Přesto mé úsilí při získání informací o mládeži v Kibeře a organizacích, které si zakládají, zůstalo nenaplněno. Až na jednu komunitní organizaci<sup>114</sup> (*community-based organization*) totiž nebyla o žádných podobných na Internetu zmínka. Přes velké množství neziskových organizací a výzkumníků, kteří do Kibery přicházejí, se mi tedy nepodařilo získat mnoho materiálu. Navíc téměř všechny dostupné ústní i psané výpovědi hovořily pouze o negativních zkušenostech a aspektech návštěvy městských chudinských čtvrtí, a byly proto spíše varováním před připravovaným výzkumem.

Skutečnost, že jsem na místě našla mnoho mládeží vedených komunitních skupin byla proto velkým překvapením, které bylo o to větší, když jsem zjistila, že tyto skupiny nebyly organizovány zvenčí, a nebyly odtud než minimálně podporovány. Ihned jsem se proto rozhodla poznat jejich činnost a přenést tyto poznatky do diplomové práce.

Krátce po příchodu do Kibery a jiných podobných míst v Nairobi, jsem si uvědomila odchylku od běžně prezentovaného pohledu na tato místa. Tento pohled jsem brzy prohlédla jako příliš generalizující, jenž neustále vyzdvihuje pouze negativní aspekty života ve slumu – špínu, mizérii, rozklad – a znemožňuje tak představit si přítomnost pozitivních věcí a lidských příběhů. Cítila jsem to jako velkou nespravedlnost vůči lidem, které jsem poznala a proto jsem zaujala postoj s pracovním názvem „ukaž a zdůrazni pozitivní věci“, kterým jsem zamýšlela odhalit, že pod nánosem prachu, rzi a bláta a pod tzv. linií absolutní chudoby, se skrývá mnoho věcí, které jsou působivé z pozitivního hlediska. To se také stalo nejdůležitějším záměrem mé práce. Doufám, že tím přispěji k vyvrácení některých stereotypů o obyvatelích slumů a především o mládeži z Kibery.

Vážným nedostatkem či prázdným místem byla pro mne skutečnost, že literatura týkající se rozvoje a strategií zmírňování chudoby se nezabývá rozvojem na osobní úrovni. Důležitost tohoto aspektu je často potlačována na úkor ekonomického pokroku. Tento individuální psychologický aspekt rozvoje však může být zahrnut pod termín *empowerment*<sup>115</sup>. Je to koncept, jenž pokrývá široké pole, ale příliš často se zaměřuje pouze na ekonomické výsledky. V poslední době však nabývá na důležitosti, a proto jsem se ho rozhodla detailněji prozkoumat a následně porovnat s tím, jak ho definují mladí lidé v Kibeře, kteří často kladou

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<sup>114</sup> Kibera Community Youth Programme (KCYP), <http://www.kcyp.net>.

<sup>115</sup> Tento termín nemá český ekvivalent. Jeho základ tvoří slovo síla, *power*, a předpona *em* znamená jakési nabytí této síly v mnoha směrech, které vede k rozšíření možností volby jednotlivce i skupiny. Je to schopnost konat žádoucí změny.

důraz na aspekt vnitřní síly<sup>116</sup>. Proto popisují tyto lidi nejen jako členy komunitních organizací, ale především jako lidi s osobními motivacemi a sny a vskutku také jako filozofy, kteří touto prací uskutečňují svůj velký potenciál.

Shrnuji tedy, že hlavní název této práce má přitáhnout pozornost ke třem oblastem, kde vidím bílé, nedostatečně prozkoumané místo.

V první řadě je to již zmíněný nedostatek zájmu, který je projevován o mládeži vedené komunitní organizace v Keni, a to jak z hlediska nedostatku materiální podpory, tak nedostupnosti literatury na toto téma. Tento nedostatek pozornosti není jen problémem Keňské vlády, ale vidím ho v daleko širším měřítku.

Za druhé se na poli strategií zmírňování chudoby nevěnuje dostatečná pozornost psychologické dimenzi *empowermentu*, přestože se pro mé respondenty zdála být nezbytným aspektem jejich působení na poli rozvojové činnosti. Byla to jejich odměna, kterou dostávali za práci namísto peněz.

A konečně za třetí argumentuji, že stereotypní zobrazování prostředí slumů a především jejich obyvatel vede pouze k lítosti, která však nevzbuzuje respekt, který je tolik potřebný pro pocit osobní pohody (*well-being*) všech lidí bez rozdílu kultury a množství materiálního bohatství.

Pomocí kvalitativních metod, polostrukturovaných rozhovorů a zúčastněného pozorování se snažím induktivním způsobem pokrýt velkou část práce mládeže z Kibery a prostřednictvím hojných citací z rozhovorů „přemostit“ propast, která vznikla mezi „chudou“ a „bohatou“ částí světa. Kladu důraz na velký potenciál, který si zaslouží být rozpoznán a uznán (*recognized*). Proto jsem chtěla, aby moje práce byla v první řadě o Lidech, o jejich nekončící snaze po pokroku, osobnímu poznání a rozvoji jejich milované komunity.

Moje práce je rozdělená do tří částí, které jsou seřazeny od teoretických základů ke konkrétní případové studii.

V první části prezentuji rozvojovou problematiku, koncept chudoby a nové strategie zmírňování chudoby (*poverty reduction strategies*) – *empowerment* a komunitní rozvoj (*community-driven development*), jak jsou popisovány ve studiích hlavních aktérů na tomto poli, především Světové banky a Organizace spojených národů. V závěrečné kapitole nastiňuji některé implikace pro oblast práce s mládeží.

Druhá část je věnována stručnému popisu situace v Keni, jak z historického hlediska, tak z pohledu současné sociální problematiky. Dále popisují politiku Keni vůči mládeži, tedy lidem ve věku 15-30 let. Poté se soustřeďuji na urbanizaci chudoby v Nairobi a také základní

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<sup>116</sup> *Empowerment* rozebírám v první části, kapitola 3.2, a ve třetí části, kapitola IV.

fakta o Kibeře.

Část třetí poskytuje prostor k prezentaci výsledků mého terénního výzkumu. Detailně zde líčím práci organizací, které založili a vedou mladí lidé z Kibery a jejich jednotlivé aktivity. Snažím se zachovat *emic* perspektivu při popisu důležitosti jejich práce pro rozvoj komunity a Kibery obecně a také důležitosti pro osobní rozvoj každého jednotlivého člena. Díky technickým možnostem nahrávání celých rozhovorů jsem mohla přepsat jejich výpovědi slovo od slova a zachovat tak nejen všechna fakta, ale i podnětné myšlenky.

Zde začínám ve druhé kapitole výběrem základních údajů – motivaci k založení komunitní organizace a motivaci se do její činnosti zapojit a také kdo se nezapojuje a proč. Dále se dotýkám stručně problematiky shánění materiální podpory a spolupráce s nevládními neziskovými organizacemi.

Třetí kapitola je věnována všem aktivitám, které patří do činnosti mládežnických skupin. Tyto jsou jak výdělečné, tak dobrovolnické a také zábavné a odpočinkové. Za všechny jmenuji alespoň divadlo a hudbu, fotbal, čištění okolí a sběr odpadků za výdělek.

Čtvrtá kapitola se zaměřuje na již zmiňovaný *empowerment* a pátá shrnuje poznatky z hlediska důležitosti mládeží vedených organizací jednak pro komunitu a jednak pro jedince. Zde právě vyzdvihuji nezbytnost seberealizace a psychologického aspektu rozvojové práce pro jednotlivé členy a dále podávám mnoho svědectví o jejich smyslu pro komunitu.

Z důvodu zachování objektivity jsem se snažila shromáždit také názory „zvenčí“ na zkoumanou problematiku. Tedy názory lidí, kteří pracují na poli rozvoje, ale nejsou členové komunitních organizací. Ti mi také sdělili některá úskalí komunitního rozvoje.

V závěrečné kapitole, která je jednou z nejdůležitějších v mé práci, srovnávám současný vědecký diskurz o chudobě s výpovědí mladých lidí z Kibery. Zabývám se rozporem, který jsem četla a slyšela při teoretické přípravě na výzkum a samotnou zkušeností z terénu. Ač by se nabízel opak, dokumenty z oblasti rozvojové pomoci ukazují daleko negativnější perspektivu, než jaká byla objevena na místě. Perspektivu, která vyzdvihuje především strasti a utrpení a také nedostatek schopností chudých lidí. Já ji nahlížím jako kontraproduktivní, protože nevede k odstranění stigmatu spojeného s chudobou. Je třeba proto naopak vyzdvihovat schopnosti marginalizovaných skupin, které více než cokoli potřebují uznání a respekt. Tohoto pohledu na věc nedosáhneme lítostí, ale pouze pochopením, že lidé, ať žijí v jakékoliv části světa, mají svůj osobní potenciál, kterému by měl být dán prostor se rozvinout. Dále je třeba si uvědomit, že místa, stereotypně zobrazovaná jako téměř nemožná k žití, jsou pro někoho domovem, kde může i Evropan objevit spoustu pokladů.

V závěru upozorňuji na nedostatky mé práce a shrnuji své poznatky a přínos pro další pokrok nejen na poli rozvoje, ale i lidského porozumění.

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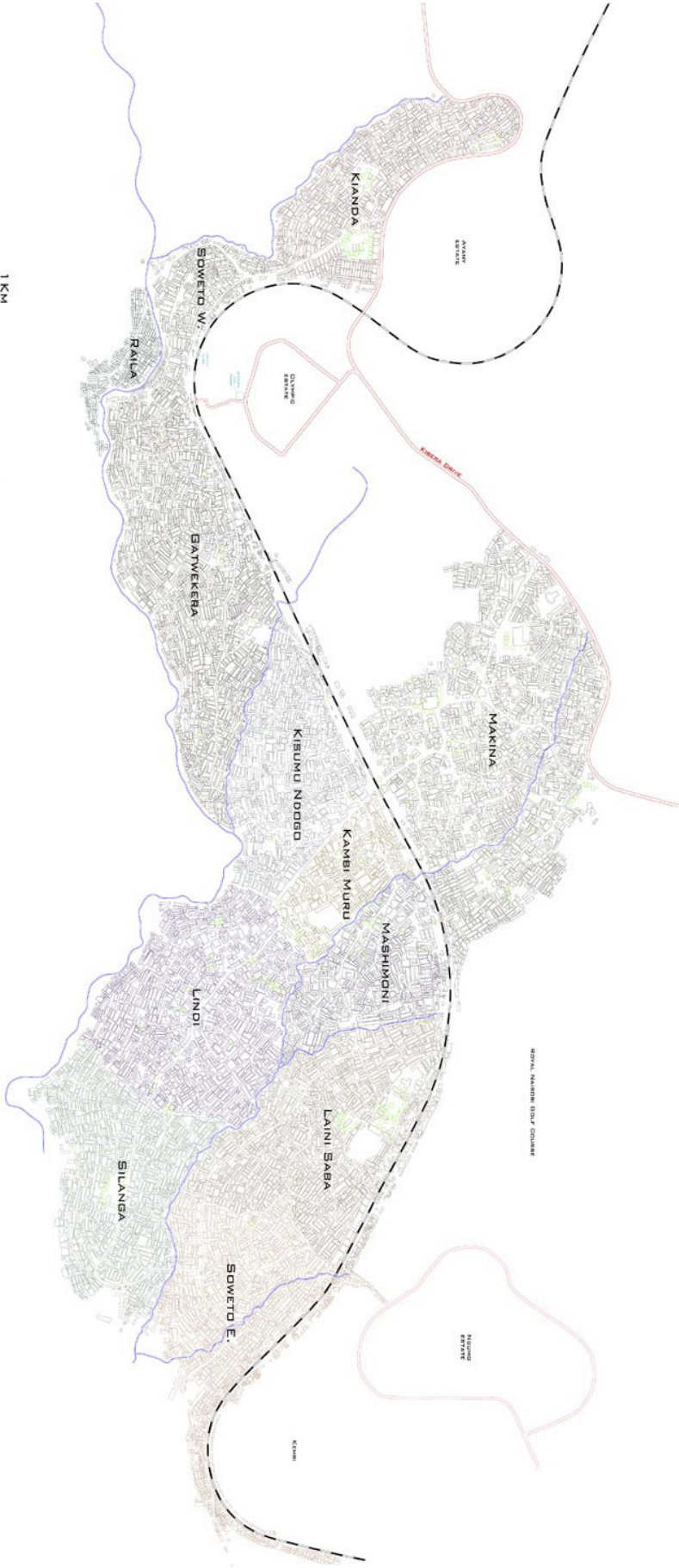
## **ANNEX**

### **I. Map of Kibera**

Source: Carolina for Kibera, by Alessandro Perinelli, Technical University of Vienna, based on 2003 aerial photography, <http://cfk.unc.edu/misc/map1.html>, accessed 24/3/2007

# CAROLINA FOR KIBERA

1KM



APPROXIMATELY BASED ON THE 2009 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY



## **II. List of questions**

My list of questions was created during the participant observation in the first weeks of my stay. However, the list was never fix and I kept changing it slightly according to various factors. One was that there were specific questions I asked to the founders or leaders of the youth groups and others to members. Some questions were common to both.

Other thing was that I did not ask all the questions to all the respondents, instead I adjusted to the situation and the flow of the interview. Some issues arouse only after I began the fieldwork and thus various questions were added later. The respondents who did not answer these new questions were not interviewed again. Other questions I decided to omit after getting many similar answers.

It is therefore difficult to display a list of questions used but I display below at least some of those basic ones. In the interviews that follow, you will see the variability.

### **For the individual members:**

- *How long have you been participating in your CBO<sup>117</sup>?*
- *When did you join the CBO and how did you learn about it?*
- *What was your motivation to join the CBO?*
- *What does it bring to you personally when you participate in the CBOs projects?*
- *Did the participation on projects fulfil your expectations?*
- *Have you made new friends in your CBO?*
- *Do you have friends that don't participate?*
- *Why do you think they don't participate?*
- *Did you try to persuade them? (If so) What did you tell them?*

### **For the leaders:**

- *What was your motivation to create a CBO?*
- *How does your CBO contribute to the development of the individual members?*
- *How does your CBO contribute to the development of the community?*
- *Do you think your CBO differs from other youth groups?*
- *Have you succeeded in finding donors?*
- *What do you think of a partnership between NGOs and CBOs?*

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<sup>117</sup> CBO here stands for both, CBOs and self-help groups.

- *How do you motivate young people to join you?*
- *Compare the CBOs formed by adult and elder people and youth-led CBOs.*

**For all respondents:**

- *Has anything changed in your life after joining the CBO?*
- *What do you like on your CBO?*
- *What would you do if you weren't participating in the youth group?*
- *What do you do for your community through the CBOs projects?*
- *Why do you help your community this way? What does it bring to you?*
- *How do you see the importance of youth groups for Kibera?*
- *What do you understand with the word empowerment?*
- *Most of the groups are dominated by men. Why is it so?*

And more.....

I also asked about well-being and the perceptions of poverty, especially after a focused group discussion on poverty held in Kibera (see chapter 6.1, Part III). Naturally, I was also asking about some basic facts of the youth groups: number of members, when were they founded, how is the structure of the organization, what are their projects and so on. I did not investigate much on the respondents' personal data though.

### **III. Interview with Kepha (Kibera Community Youth Programme, KCYP)**

I chose as the first sample the interview with Kepha from KCYP because his answers are detailed with specifics and concrete examples but also with remarkable thoughts. Indeed, Kepha is known for enjoying public speaking and he also knows a lot about community affairs. He is the programme officer of KCYP for Youth empowerment and development and is now 23 years old. He was born at lake Victoria in Western Kenya and came to Kibera only 4 years ago and soon after, he joined the KCYP.

*R: What was your motivation to create a CBO?*

Most of us were just out of high school left with not much to do. I was trying to go to college or university but realizing that I couldn't do that because of finance. So I was left with nothing to do. And I could just stay idle, maybe read few books and do nothing. So I was really in a position of destroying myself, getting into the wrong company and meeting the wrong friends. Then, I don't know how it happened, it was just coincidence, I used to be a photographer. I had my cousin's camera he used to lend me and I used to take photos of people. And one day, some people came to my 'studio', they were around my age, and asked me if I was willing to go with them and take some photos of their activities. So when I came over I found these people doing some clean-ups, cleaning dirty ditches etc. So I took photos of them, then I took to process them and after three days they were out. Then I took them back to these people. And I saw their enthusiasm of how they were looking at the photos and I began to be curious about how they were organized, taking photos together and working together. What did they plan to do? I didn't know that at that time they were just coming together to form the group KCYP, I was just very much on time. I could not hide my curiosity, so I asked one of them: 'I am really interested in this and I would like to join you'. 'No problem, just come over. We're meeting on Wednesdays, I'll pick you up...' Then I kept my promise and came to the first meeting. We used to meet at one of our colleagues' house because we didn't have an office, we didn't have anything. So then we had the meeting and I was really, really accepted to join the organization and I began to realize that I can do something and people can feel it's a good thing and I can speak and people think that's spoken well.

At the beginning there weren't many activities. We used to meet once a week. And slowly by slowly we started to be more organized and I was elected secretary, slowly by slowly, I was elected vice-chairman, slowly by slowly, I was elected chairman. We had a different structure then.

So then, many people came and went because, perhaps, they had different interests. Some of them believed we were funded by somebody and they wanted to come and enjoy the fruits, which were not there. So they came and went. But we went on. There were times when only myself and Robert were in the whole of KCYP, everybody ran away.

*R: Fred (the director and founder of KCYP) ran away?*

No, Fred not. But it was very hard, we had very difficult periods, no funds. Then we got a room. One of our members' friend was a landlady and she rented us a room on condition that we pay her when we get some money. Then we stayed there for long but we couldn't pay her and were kicked out but luckily we got an office down there and we've been there for two years. But we had to move recently.

Well, we worked on our vision. We realized that if we really worked strong together, we could benefit the community but also even ourselves and perhaps get more experience with working in the community. Be like anybody who is at school, even more than them. So I began to have stronger vision of KCYP, so in my dream this group was strong and in future even stronger organization of people of Kibera, organized by the same, same people who live in Kibera.

But there were times when I left because of other activities somewhere else, I was really busy.

And now, we have a different structure, now I am programme officer for Youth development and empowerment. Perhaps, there's still a long way to go but I believe that if we leave now (me, Fred and Robert), KCYP will not fall, it will not. The idea of KCYP will remain in its members and in the community at large. And they really know our capability, what we have done so far. And people really wonder because we're not being paid and they ask: 'How do you survive?' They think we're paid, they think we're funded. We just keep quiet.

*R: What is empowerment for you?*

Empowerment is very, very delicate and complex. NGOs come with empowerment. They call it 'not giving someone fish but teaching him how to fish.' But for us empowerment is a little bit more advanced than that. You don't give me fish (I don't want your fish anyway). I want you to tell me how to fish, and also let me fish. Then you show me the lake. That is empowerment.

So far we've been trying to really begin from the lowest level, knowledge. Coz you don't just give someone money, you show them how to fish. For this, we have different trainings, we have workshops, we have organized seminars sometimes. We've been showing people a directive to different seminars, if we receive invitations 'send us five people from your organization,' we say: 'so and so go to this seminar, so and so go to this seminar.' So here people acquire knowledge that concerns their lives. And up to this level we managed to have so many people trained. And many people here at KCYP they know so much, they are like 'jack-of-all-trades', they don't specialize, they know community work, they know few technical issues, they know business management, entrepreneurship, leadership skills.

We managed to direct few of us to certain places where they went and succeeded in getting jobs. And we're still having a programme through which are people trained and then linked, showed where to get a job. That's the lake. We show you how to use the skills: 'go to this person, go to this company...' Then it is upon this person to walk and go where we have already told him and with the skills that we've given him.

*R: What does it bring to you when you participate in a project?*

Many things but the biggest profit I get from here is not financial or material or physical. Many people expect to have material gains from place like this, money or anything. But what is most important is what it puts inside you. So it really develops me in terms of experience, skills to work in the community, to know how to manage situations and to work in a place like Kibera. I think it's a very strong litmus test, you can work anywhere once you've worked in Kibera. That's one of the most difficult places to work in. And perhaps one of the easiest places to work in if you know it. Once you've been able to work in Kibera, there is no other place you can't work in. I am very sure of that. Because you know so much, you have the skills to work with people, live like a community. Imagine a community with different tribes, different communities coming together to form a larger community. Who are all poor. You can imagine, and you're there trying to make a change and you are in harmony with them without being suspect for wrong intentions. It's one of the best feelings someone can ever have. And you feel satisfaction when you come back home, you just feel satisfaction that you have done something.

*R: For the others? Yes.*

*R: And for yourself? Yes.*

The day behind you you're very satisfied and you'll wake up again tomorrow, come to KCYP, stay without food the whole day, you still come home and feel satisfied.

*R: I wonder how you can live just out of satisfaction and air. Do you feel this every day coming home without food still feeling satisfied?*

Of course it's not so impractical as that. Man must eat, man must sleep and man must survive. But the most important food in man's life is not just the physical food that you eat.

*R: Yes, I understand this but do you feel this satisfaction every evening you come from KCYP or just after doing some particular project? What do you currently do for the community? Coz I just see you sitting at the computer, sometimes you are bored as you told me. Is this what you are doing for the community?*

(Laughs)...

Of course, I am learning. It's not instant, it's gradual.

*R: So if you are learning for yourself at the computer, you also do it for the community at the same time?*

Yes, because these skills, I am not taking them anywhere. They are going back to be used. For example when Tiff is going away, I am going to be a teacher. *(Tiff is an English guy doing music production by using a computer programme that he teaches Kepha and some other people).*

So I really have to be serious and that is for developing the community. But the community is a bit thankless. It is about passion why you help the community. Because they won't discover what you're doing, they won't even know that you're helping them anyway. But it is you who feels that you have done something for them. Well, many people ran away from working for the community because it's thankless. Even if you died today, they wouldn't say you died helping the community. They would say you died wasting time somewhere. But it is the feeling inside you that makes you know that you have done something for the community and for yourself. Anyway, even if you develop personally, you're still developing the community. Because the community is proud of that one person who has skills that no one else has and uses the skills to promote them. That's work for community.

*R: Well, but there are people who cannot live out of this satisfaction, just giving, giving, giving. They wait for an immediate income, so is it this why they don't join CBOs?*

That's one of the reasons. People expect many things, especially the colonial mentality: 'Mzungus will support Africans' or 'white people have money that they can give.' So they see there is a CBO and perhaps a few white people are around... Then, when they come they expect money. When they see no money there, they leave. They don't really understand the purpose of being there. They don't even see where the train is heading to. They just see one of the cabins of the train but they don't know where the head of the train is, where are we heading to as a community.

*R: Where are you heading to as a community?*

We're heading to a better community, clean community.

*R: Clean in what way?*

Clean in many ways, environmentally, mentally, and perhaps even economically.

*R: No corruption?*

(Laughs)...

No corruption. So that is where our train is heading towards. We're not there yet. Perhaps we will die before we reach there. Perhaps even our children will not reach there. But we know

we're moving, that is the most important fact. And even if I die today I will know that I have done a good work.

*R: If you can just repeat what exactly KCYP does for the community?*

It does so much because it comes from the community anyway and it's here to serve the community. We've been trying to concentrate on gaining knowledge and dispatch this knowledge to the community, perhaps in a different way – because most people here they don't understand English, so we get the knowledge in English, like a channel from experts. Then we repackage it, in form of drama, in form of poetry, in form of music and then we take it to the community, in a very casual way.

That is one thing we do for the community.

Two, we seek for opportunities to train people, we look for schools or companies who do trainings perhaps for free or for few shillings then we try hard. Perhaps, we can ask someone who can donate some shillings to enable few people to go to the training. Still we try to disperse the information to the community and to make sure that the youths will get the best. Youths are the future of Kibera and now we are really sure, I am sure that in twenty years, the adult population of Kibera will be different from the adult population now. Because of the work that many youth groups, KCYP included, have been doing.

*R: I cannot get rid of that feeling that members of CBOs are, maybe, the elite of Kibera. What do you think of this view?*

In a way, but I wouldn't say elite. It's been a long time since we came to KCYP, formed this group and worked together, we have undergone so many things. We have learned so many things out of the struggle that we have been doing in the past four years. I think that there is no school to make you an elite. And our school is an uncommon school, with no lectures. But you learn in a practical way. You know many things, you have to do things in the hands-on experience. When you do that, you are able to know things more concretely and you are able to become more intelligent than someone who just sits in a class and doesn't come to see the practical work.

But also, we are lucky to have people who are willing to learn. Me myself, I am one of them. I am always very curious. I always ask lots of questions because I want to know things and that's annoying, sometimes.

So this made us to know really a lot despite not specializing. We've been trying to know everything what we came across with. I am willing to take any lesson because it might help me one day. I also love reading, I read everything. And then I view the life differently. I live in Kibera but I feel like having a bird's-eye view, sort of. So it appears that we become more

intelligent or 'elite' but for me, we are still students and no matter how much we know, we still feel it's too little and we need much more skills. The human mind is so elastic, it can still expand. So we're still learning.

*R: How do you see the importance of the youth-led CBOs for Kibera?*

They're doing a good work. Perhaps it may not be seen physically, but mentality of the young people can easily be modelled towards a certain direction by the influence of the CBOs. Because young people come together, speak their own languages, they can behave freely and this way they can easily access information and they can easily be reached and that means communication can easily flow and when communication flows, there is change of mentality towards positivity that we all are going towards. Now it's upon them to act because they got the information.

*R: Do you think KCYP differs from other youth-led CBOs?*

I know it differs because of what we do here. And I am not speaking like this because I am in KCYP, but I am speaking as a youth from Kibera. Because of what we have done, of our presence in the community. Many CBOs exist in the community but they only exist officially but nothing is practically taking place, so much paperwork. On the Internet, you see so many things about Kibera, but come here and you find it so different from what you've read there. But we here, we've been struggling to make these things going practically, we've been struggling to change the ideology of people of Kibera, especially young people. Really incorporate them towards having development initiatives in their lives and to give them hope that even if they don't go to school, there's always another way of contributing to the society and to yourself.

*R: But there are some youth groups that are doing the same good job as KCYP, aren't there?*

But most of them are funded, that's the difference. So I feel it's unjust to compare KCYP to these organizations. They are working well because they are funded but KCYP is not funded. So it is not fair to compare those who reached the same destination but one was going by bus and one came on foot.

*R: But didn't you have the same possibilities to get funding as them?*

Not really, for example, many CBOs that claim to be youth are not youth, the leaders are not youth but KCYP is youth.



*R: Why KCYP hasn't succeeded so far in finding donors?*

Donors are very funny people, they don't take the youth seriously. They think they are only forming themselves, that we just go to parties and dance. They cannot imagine a serious youth group with clear ideas, with a mission. For them, the only thing the youth can do is to mess around, play around, have girlfriends and boyfriends. So it is very difficult to convince someone that you're actually different and doing something different. But if you're an adult or have an adult it's much easier for them to be trusted.

*R: But it is strange because, as you said, there are many youth groups doing a good work and still they haven't managed to convince these people about their seriousness?*

You might be many but quantity is not enough. Somebody has to see what you do, somebody has to know what you have done. And you have to show that you are doing something serious for the community. Most importantly, someone has to come down to see. Because anyone can say 'I have five hundred youths behind me'. He can convince someone easily, he can take a picture of some children, saying that they are orphans to get some funds...

So it is about who is doing the real work.

*R: What do you think about the partnership between NGOs and CBOs?*

It's OK but mostly it is exploitive. An NGO wants to show its presence in that particular community and says it has a project. So the CBO would be implementing the project for them. Sometimes, the CBO get funding but most of the times it's just to show 'We have a team there.' They give you hand-outs, these little things that they give to show that they care. You go to a workshop and they give you hundred shillings. Very, very temporary. That's how they manage to work with CBOs. But here in Kibera, many things are changing. We don't want such NGOs.

Those who know what to do, they don't need to partner with the organizations to tell them what to do. They do workshops where they feed you, give you accommodation, and even money but try to implement the policy in you.

*R: Can you give a concrete example of your experience with such an NGO?*

Yes, and many of my colleagues do.

*R: Can you be concrete?*

There is an NGO that has been in Kibera for 10 years. It was for the youth, for orphans and many young people wanted to volunteer there. They promised these people: If you volunteer for 6 months, or 8 months, we take you to college. They knew that these people were out of

high school and they really wanted to go to college but couldn't afford the school fees. And this NGO used to fundraise in the name of this purpose and also helping orphans. But when the money came, nobody was taken to college, some people volunteered for seven years, nothing happened. Then there was an outcry, all eyes pointed to this NGO, 'something must be done'. That was when many groups began to form, saying NO. 'Let us do something, let us really work for the community. Let us not be exploited.' So slowly by slowly people evacuated this NGO until now there is nobody there, it's just a big office, and it is not working. It still exists but it's very weak. Donors have withdrawn.

*Kepha gave the name of the organization. I must admit that I heard also positive things about this organization. A member from other CBO said to have benefited from volunteering for this NGO. Therefore, I will not display the name here. The same holds true also for the following example.*

*R: Some other concrete examples?*

One that introduced a branch in Kibera recently. It has programmes that are claimed to support the youth, their activities. They say they are organizing a network of the youth CBOs, of which we don't know. We weren't informed. You hear that there is a network of youth groups in Kibera and you don't know who is in the network, and you are in Kibera and you are one of the most active youth groups. So they organized some events, football tournaments, even a beauty contest. These events are important because they create people who are influential and can be used to help the community, to disperse some information. And they failed to do so. They didn't fulfil the promises they made to these people and they are very rude and they have big cars.

*R: Rude in dealing with local people?*

Yes, after exploiting them. So, these are few examples of the partnership. It's not a partnership. It's not equal.

*R: What do you think KCYP needs?*

We need more skills. Skilled people, experts. We need them to come down here to Kibera and see the young people here who are so thirsty for knowledge. Who want to learn but have no means to get the knowledge.

*R: Skills in which field?*

Various fields. We have people with different visions and ambitions here. And we have people who want to do many things, talking of community development, of music, arts,

sports, social issues like peace building, conflict transformation. Such skills that build a person and make a life, not just a living.

And of course we need money. Money as a mean, not as an end. We need money, but there is always a way even without money for us.

*R: If you compare the CBOs formed by adults and youths will there be any difference?*

Very big difference. Many times, adults are not really genuine in what they want to do. Because most of them has to put food on the table for their families. So unless the work that they are doing puts this food on the table immediately, rarely they do it. Most adults are married, they have families. When an adult sticks strongly to a CBO, mostly he has been with them since youth. Sometimes, they succeed but most times it's because they have money, income. Then, they form an organization because they have money. But after the money is used, it fails. There is no group dynamics, they don't grow gradually. It is just an organization formed to be harvested from. But there are also some adult organizations that are doing good genuine work that we must not overlook.

Most young people are really struggling to put up, bring something genuine because they have so much energy and so much time and new skills that they put into it.

*R: Thank you.*

#### **IV. Interview with Abzed Osman (Duduba Youth Group)**

I chose this interview to give the reader an idea of what every researcher experiences. The interviews ranged from a detailed answering to those with very brief replies as is the following case.<sup>118</sup> By no mean it implies that the latter is less valuable for a researcher.

Duduba Youth Group started as a football team and in 2002, when more boys and also girls joined in, they registered as a self-help group. The name Duduba consists of: *Dudu*, meaning insect or virus in Kiswahili, Ba is from *mbaya*, meaning bad. The main objective of the group is to create awareness about HIV/AIDS.

*R: What is the difference between self-help group and CBO? Why didn't you registered as a CBO?*

CBO is a 'higher level', self-help group is a 'lower level'. So we are heading to be a CBO.

*R: What other projects apart from the football do you have?*

Garbage collection, fighting poverty through IGAs (Income-generating activities).

*R: Any other activities?*

Drama, nurturing of talents through drama.

And we fight drugs and abuse (through drama).

*R: Do you see your group important for the community?*

It is very important because our community must know more about HIV/AIDS. We educate them through seminars, awareness, outreaches, theatre...

*R: Were you one of the founders?*

Yes, but the idea came from other people who told us: you must do this, and this...

*R: How many members do you have?*

About 40. 25 active, 15 Non-active.

*R: How do you see the benefits for the members?*

If you are active and you participate in the group, you have what is called omission of idleness.

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<sup>118</sup> It was also caused by the fact that whereas I knew the first respondent, Kepha, from previous occasions and he knew the purpose of my stay, I only met Abzed Osman at the interview and did not know Duduba Youth Group before.

*R: And why do you think people come to youth groups to join them?*

Basically, if you join a self-help group, you get more motivated than as an individual. If you join that group you also gain knowledge and skills

*R: So are they different than those who don't join any youth group?*

Yes, more active, with more knowledge.

*R: Have you ever partner with any NGOs or other organizations?*

We usually network with other youth groups, such as KCYP, or Youth in Action.

*R: And no NGOs? You are not interested or why?*

We are interested but, you know, you start at the grassroots and maybe then...

*R: So one day, maybe you will be developed enough to network with an NGO?*

Yes.

*R: Have you ever received some funding?*

Yes, we received a grant from Kenya Community Development Foundation. It helped us to have some educational seminars on leadership skills, behavioural change and communication.

*R: So you organize these seminars? And who is the teacher?*

KCYP, Kepha. It's cooperation with KCYP.

*R: Any other income-generating activities?*

No.

*R: And the girls?*

They do drama and some traditional dances.

*R: That is not an income generating activity?*

No, it is just creating awareness for the community.

*R: How often do you meet?*

Once in a week. But for the drama every day.

*R: So once a week is an official meeting? And what do you do there?*

Strategize on issues.

*R: What are the current issues?*

We are starting a small-scale business. Charcoal selling.

*R: So the issue of IGAs matters most at this time?*

Yes.

*R: How often do you do the outreaches with the drama?*

Twice a month.

*R: And how do you see the impact of this drama performances?*

Basically, some small, small reactions come, they start to ask questions. Like what is HIV, what is AIDS? And we reply.

*R: Do you like working for the community?*

Yes, for hundred percent.

*R: Why? What does it bring to you?*

I just like serving the community, I just like doing anything.

*R: But for me, as a person from Europe, it is quite hard to imagine why...*

In Europe, you are very rich. Here in Kibera, we are very poor.

*R: So you feel it necessary to serve?*

Exactly.

*R: Do you use the word empowerment?*

Not really.

*R: What had you done before you formed the group and started to work for the community?*

(.....long thinking). Nothing.

*R: So it changed your life?*

Yes.

*R: How?*

When I joined the group, suddenly, my talent came at the surface. I am a poet. Before, I didn't know my talent. So I discovered my talent.

*R: So are there others who discover their talents through joining your group?*

Yes.

*R: Do you think your organization differs from other CBOs?*

No.

*R: So you do the same as other youth groups?*

No, some are doing drugs and drug abuse, so just like this.

*R: In the activities.*

Yes.

*R: And do you still motivate more people to join in?*

Yes.

*R: What do you tell them if you want them to join?*

I basically tell them: If you are idle, you can do something against the idleness, avoid crime. If you are idle, you can do so many things against it.

*R: And does it help?*

Yes, they believe me.

*R: And the IGAs present also a motivation?*

Yes, through the garbage collection you earn at least something small.

*R: What do you think your organization needs?*

Some funding to build toilets, because in the place where we are, we need toilets.

*R: Some other plans? Where do you see the future of your group?*

Growing...

*R: How do you see the importance of the youth groups for Kibera?*

Yes, it is very important.

*R: In what way?*

At least community members gain a little bit of education from youth groups. We know some facts about AIDS and myths about AIDS. So we take the myths and put them into facts.

*R: Thank you.*