

HARAMBEE

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO
POST ELECTION VIOLENCE IN KENYA
YOUR ASSISTANCE IS REQUESTED

Emergency
Issue

FEBRUARY
2008

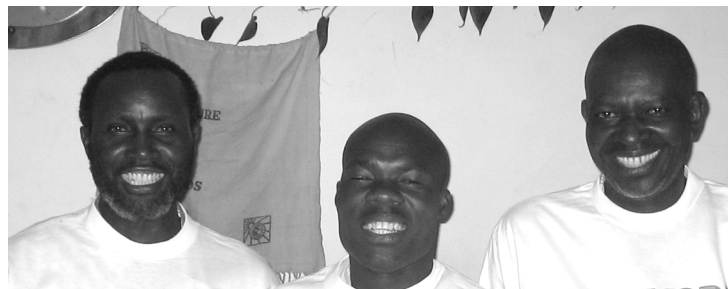
In the light of recent violence following the disputed election in Kenya, we saw the need to provide emergency assistance to the people we serve.

Kenya has a long history as a peaceful nation. It has served as a role model for other African nations and often has been a safe haven for people from war torn parts of Africa.

All this changed on December 27, 2007 when Kenya held its Presidential election between incumbent President Kibaki and Orange Party candidate Raila Odinga. Although early polls indicated Odinga was in the lead, Kibaki was declared the winner and swiftly sworn in. Suspicion of vote rigging abounds. Upon learning of Kibaki's supposed victory the Orange Party affiliates became outraged. Much violence and destruction followed.

The response in Kisumu was particularly violent because Mr. Odinga is of the Luo tribe, and from Kisumu. President Kibaki is from the Kikuyu tribe that has been in power since Kenya achieved its independence from England in 1963.

We have received emails from our friends in Kenya depicting the violence. On January 7th Rom Wandera the coordinator of FIOH-K in Kisumu wrote: "Well the situation in Kisumu is still volatile. It is the sounds of guns everywhere. The Town centre was virtually destroyed by the irate mobs who looted every shop and then set the buildings on fire. ... Food is now running out... Prices of everything has gone up twice"



FIOH-K board Members Left to Right: Robert K' Odinga, Paul Odhiambo, and Rom Wandera-FIOH-K coordinator

Paul Odhiambo, a graduate of Kenyatta University, thanks to sponsorship of FIOH-USA, is now a Board member of FIOH-K. Paul writes, "Kisumu is one of the towns that was worst hit by the violence. As shops all over were looted, hundreds killed and injured, and prices of essential commodities have skyrocketed. I tell you that even corn flour for preparing ugali (their main food – a cooked mixture of corn meal and water) is nowhere to be seen. People are suffering." Paul also wrote that he is now volunteering in one of the displacement camps assisting with food distribution, bandaging the wounded and any other needed tasks.

David Osino, an FIOH-K volunteer writes, "... It is true that starvation is biting and I have felt it."

Rom writes, " By the time the mass action was being called off, in Kisumu alone more than 100 people had died with hundreds hospitalized." Robert K'Odinga (a board member of FIOH-K) "... is at the Provincial General Hospital assisting with the removal of bodies of the young people killed during the violence." (continued on other side)

(continued from other side)

We also heard from Susan Wangui, a formerly sponsored student from Nairobi who writes "... We are OK though our country needs prayers. These clashes have brought businesses down because people are not moving from one city to another especially our tribe, the Kikuyu. ... We are asking and preaching peace."

Michele Sprada, Mary Ellen Dye and Sr. Linda Glaeser, SSJ are especially moved by the news of such destruction in Kisumu. They have walked the streets of this formerly peaceful town and have always felt safe and welcomed by the many friendly people in Kisumu.

As of February 4, 2008 Rom wrote more encouraging news. "The guns are silent and today we went to school without any incidents. The local administrator came to assure the teachers and the students of their security. It was a relief that none of them [students] had lost a relative or was hurt."

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Sandy Warner-Treasurer

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Rom gave us ideas of ways we could immediately help during this crisis situation. Rom writes, "The violence is down but people are very hungry. There is no food as the roads from the Rift Valley are still blocked. If we could access some funds and buy the corn to grind in the Posho mill, we could distribute the flour to the very needy in Kaloleni, Manyatta and Usoma. (Villages around Kisumu) A 90 kg (198 lbs) sack goes for KSH 1,600 (about \$25.00). It would help to alleviate the suffering of a family. If each family could get 2kg (4.4 lbs), they would be able to make porridge to survive on."

Rom continues, "We also have people whose houses were burnt with all the clothing inside them. There are also people

nursing bullet and machete wounds and need daily dressing at the hospital. It costs Ksh40 (60 cents) per dressing and Ksh 80 (\$1.20) for a two-way transport a day. Due to the disruption of transportation, some of our HIV/AIDS patients monthly routine was disrupted and as such their health has deteriorated and they now need nutritional feeds."

Future In Our Hands-USA sent \$1000.00 in response to this emergency from our "greatest need" fund. Much more is needed. Anything you can do to assist our efforts is greatly appreciated.

Future In Our Hands-USA
107 Tyler St.
Buffalo NY 14214-1133

Phone: 716-837-4898
Email: lglaserssj@msn.com

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Future in Our Hands-USA was founded in December 2005 in response to the needs of the poor in Kenya. It is part of the FUTURE IN OUR HANDS NETWORK that began in Norway in 1974