

# The Nature of Cooperation between Civil Society Organizations and Security Agencies in Community Policing in Kibera Kenya

Mwenda Flora Tira<sup>1</sup> (MSc), Okuto Emily Adhiambo<sup>2</sup> (PhD)

<sup>1</sup>Africa Nazarene University Governance Peace and Security Department P.O. BOX 53067-00200, Nairobi- Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Africa Nazarene University Kenya, Lecturer in the Department of Governance peace and security studies P.O. BOX 53067-00200, Nairobi-Kenya

**Abstract:** *The study sought to examine the nature of cooperation between civil society organizations and security agencies in community policing in Africa's largest informal settlement- Kibera slums in Kenya. Anchored on the broken windows theory, the study targeted to collect data from Kibera residents, the police and the management of civil society organizations. The study employed the descriptive survey research design. The study utilized both secondary and primary data. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires and interview schedule from 384 randomly sampled residents and management staff of the civil society organizations operating in Kibera's Makina village. Secondary data was reviewed from existing studies related to the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Quantitative data was descriptively analyzed using the percentages and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analyzed using themes emerging from the data in line with the study objective. Analyzed data was presented using charts and tables. The findings of this study showed that there was sharing of information amongst various entities especially between public and police. The study concluded that civil society organizations are effective in the implementation of community policing initiatives in Kibera. The study recommended that there is need for provision of funds that would enable the CSOs in Kibera informal settlement to offer medical help and mental assistance. There is also need for CSOs to include legal practitioners and social workers within their midst so as to increase the frequency and value of these activities.*

**Keywords:** Cooperation, Kibera, Civil society organizations, security agencies, Makina village, Public, Police.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Community policing is a way in which the community and police work together to proactively and reactively deal with crime and other related issues including social and physical disorder and neighbourhood decay (USIU, 2013). Through community policing, mutual trust is built between the citizens and the police whom traditionally are viewed as agents of oppression (Van & Lever, 2010). In the 1970s considerable need for community and citizens to minimize crime levels developed, as crime levels increased, from organized crimes to residential break-ins. The reality that citizens had a role to play by merging together into groups would be critical in mitigating the local crime levels from within the residential areas. According to World Economic Forum (2013) this was tagged as 'community hypothesis' which meant that people could take responsibility by getting involved in collective crime deterrent measures to solve the crime issues within themselves, build relationships, enhance social control and become more secure.

In spite of the efforts that have been made in Kenya to ensure community policing become integral in the police reforms, it is faced with the challenge of enhancing public participation in security initiatives so as to promote access to justice; and contributing to increased safety whilst encouraging the right to live without fear of crime. Overcoming this requires focusing on issues relating to the role of the policing services within the rule of law and the delivery of effective services to the public. It also requires a

focus on engaging the public on crime prevention efforts (Republic of Kenya, 2006). With the ever increasing crime rates, widespread corruption, and politicization of policing approaches, community policing has not been fully embraced thereby making it difficult to extend it to other parts of the country in order to improve safety for Kenya's population. It is important to note that establishing community based policing requires a holistic approach involving all the stakeholders in the security agenda (Sarah & McCarthy, 2013). None of this is easy without deliberate effort by the civil society organizations

The success of community based policing is predicated on mutual trust between the police and the general citizenry. Civil society organizations play an integral role in building mutual trust between the citizens and the police. Police in Kenya have traditionally been viewed as people who use blunt force on the citizens. As such, the citizens have not been cooperating with the police to foster a harmonious working relationship in sharing information for law and order to prevail. As part of the police reform, communities are required to work in collaboration with the police to prevent crime by volunteering to give information to the police about crime and criminal activities within the social milieu (Mwaniki, 2009).

To help achieve this, civil society organizations have come in to play the mediation role in trust building, between the public and police, for community policing to be effective. Besides this, they have been instrumental in training police officers to be receptive to the demands of the time. In as much as civil society organizations have engaged in community policing, their effectiveness is yet to be

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investigated since crime in slum settlements still remain high (Saferworld, 2008). There is need to evaluate how these organizations participate in the policing process. Mistrust and lack of confidentiality have been reported as the main obstacles between the police and the civil society (Mwaniki, 2009). In Kibera, civil society organizations' contribution is often seen as primarily about raising awareness in local communities. However, there is need for a much broader engagement. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the nature of cooperation between CSOs and the Police service in enhancing community based policing.

### 1.2 Purpose of the study

The general objective of this study was to establish the nature of cooperation between civil society organizations and security agencies in community policing.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the postulates of the normative sponsorship theory by Tiedke *et al* (1975) and the broken windows theory by Wilson and Kelling (1982). The normative sponsorship theory was proposed by Tiedke *et al* (1975). The theory asserts that by nature people have the will to build a harmonious society and will therefore support any community programme which will be geared towards this course. This in essence means that a community policing programme will gain traction if it does not deviate from the standards people have set that promote harmony in their society. In this regard therefore traditional policing cannot achieve much without peoples support.

The broken windows theory on the other hand was founded by Wilson and Kelling (1982) and uses the analogy of a broken window in a building. Where the window has been broken and is not repaired depicts carelessness on the part of the care taker and consequently more windows will be broken and the converse is true, in the sense repairing of a broken window will not cause other more windows to be broken. The broken windows theory informed the study in regard to making community members watch over their neighbours and try to bring corrective action in advance before a problem escalates and bring a crisis is concerned. This means that community members had the responsibility of reporting any untoward act or behaviour that has been witnessed in the community to the relevant authorities. This is like being your brother's keeper.

## 3. Literature Review

Mathenge (2013) revealed that majority of the informal settlements in developing countries are prone to insecurity issues. Due to increased number of population and high level of unemployment, high cases of crime are recorded on a daily basis in Kenya. Individuals are likely to engage in unethical behaviours like drug abuse and stealing due to social frustrations. The role of the Civil Society in partnership with other security agencies cannot yield results if social benefit organizations are not involved. Engagement of key stakeholders and ranging from the community, the security agencies and the general public is the only way

developing countries can enhance security and promote social economic developments.

Saferworld (2008) established that the key factors supporting the success of community based policing approach is the level in which stakeholders have collaborated with a common understanding and commitment by the community throughout the programme. A wide involvement from the Police, business community and residents has supported and has actively been involved throughout each phase of the programme. This partnership has enabled a successful implementation of community based policing in Kibera. Civil society organizations should work towards building trust for an effective community partnership with the police. The use of unnecessary force and arrogance, aloofness, or rudeness at any level of the agency will dampen the willingness of community members to ally themselves with the police.

Wairimu (2014) argues that the effective mobilization of community support requires different approaches in different communities. Establishing trust and obtaining cooperation are often easier in middle-class and affluent communities than in poorer communities, where mistrust of police may have a long history. Building bonds in some neighbourhoods may involve supporting basic social institutions that have been weakened by pervasive crime or disorder. The creation of viable communities is necessary if lasting alliances that nurture cooperative efforts are to be sustained. Under community policing, the police become both catalysts and facilitators in the development of these communities.

Masese (2007) established that "Crime does not happen spontaneously. It grows out of an unequal and exclusive society and out of lack of institutional and social control. These trends have posed enormous challenges to the County Government of Nairobi in terms of security concerns. This is manifested in gated neighbourhoods, closure of the CBD District enterprises for window shoppers after office hours and installation of metal grills, decayed and isolated street alleys and park spaces by evening, the avoidance of unlit areas of the street alleys and park spaces by evening, the avoidance of unlit areas of the city among others thereby leading to people's self-imposed curfew on a number of no go zones"

Ngare (2007) suggest that the law enforcement agencies are seriously inadequate and lack the necessary resources and capacity to combat the perpetrators of crime effectively. With the cooperation of the business community, the police force has embraced the principle of community policing. Unfortunately, a legacy of distrust still exists between the police and the public, emanating from past police practices. Upon realizing this problem, the police together with Non-Governmental Organizations, civil society organizations have teamed up to raise public awareness on the need for more effective policing and adequate resources and duties within the framework of human rights. Yeebo (2009) established that local civil society organizations such as Peace Net have played an important role of imparting knowledge and skills through training, advising on the development of the national policy, supporting

implementation at the pilot sites, and encouraging the government to implement police reform.

Van and Lever (2010) established that crime prevention initiatives in informal settlements that need to be addressed are: Fear of crime; personal crime; property crime; commercial crime; violence against women and youth crime. Urban growth has been associated with increased demand of basic services, such as food, shelter, employment, water, transport, education, health and security. The decline of safety and security in developing countries during the last decade has drastically caused a loss of investment confidence, a reduction in production and a re-allocation of investment.

#### 4. Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey was appropriate for this study as data collected used interviews and questionnaires to gauge the opinions of respondents about community based policing which is a social issue. The target population for the study constituted the residents of Makina village in Kibera, members of the civil society organizations and the police responsible for community policing. Makina village has approximately 130,000 residents (KNBS, 2010). Furthermore there were 9 faith based and civil society organizations of which two (Saferworld and PeaceNet) have been dealing with community policing since 2003 when the programme was incepted (Saferworld, 2008). This study used multiple sampling procedures in which a combination of probability and non-probability sampling methods to select the sample required for study was employed. The study conveniently sampled Makina village being the oldest site where the concept of community policing began in 2003 and had the desired characteristics of the study. Cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques were applied to draw a representative sample consisting of residents while purposive sampling was used to select members of management from the civil society organizations and police officers who are involved in community policing.

The study used Cochran formula to arrive at 384 respondents. Further, the researcher divided this sample into 10 clusters each consisting of approximately 38 households of which 40 household heads were selected randomly to participate in the survey. A total of 40 household heads were surveyed. This represents approximately 10% of the target sample (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). Similarly, the researcher purposively sampled four members of management of the 9 targeted CSOs and four police officers who are involved in community policing in Makina village. The 4 CSOs sampled were purposely selected because they had the desired characteristics of the study. The study relied on use of primary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules containing both structured and semi-structured questions respectively. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were conducted through frequency counts and percentages to capture the distribution of responses on the key issues addressed in the study objectives. Inferential statistics was done through regression

analysis. Qualitative data on the other hand, was transcribed, coded into themes and analyzed by use of content analysis.

#### 5. Findings

The study first sought to determine the activities of CSOs in enhancing community policing in Kibera. The study determined that the activities in this instance included; social protection, offering of medical and mental support, assisting affected victims to contact the police, provision of legal assistance to victims of violence and supporting the reintegration of survivors of violence into the community. From the overall frequency of the community policing activities in Makina area in Kibera, it was seen that 29.2% of the household heads indicated them to be frequent, 21% indicating somewhat frequent, 18.5% indicating least frequent, 17% indicating it not to be frequent at all as 13.8% claimed indicated that it was most frequent. From this generalization, 35% of the respondents indicating lowest frequent levels as 65% indicating some reasonable frequency measures from the household heads. The findings are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Overall Household Heads Activities**

	Frequency	Percentage
Not frequent at all	34	17.4 %
Least Frequent	36	18.5%
Somewhat frequent	41	21%
Frequent	57	29.2%
Most frequent	27	13.8%

The household heads were also asked to rate by indicating how frequent the activities took place in Makina village as a way of helping victims of crime. The study found that social protection was frequently done as shown by 30% (12) of the household respondents and further 7.5% (3) indicated it was done most frequently. However, 35 % (14) indicated it was not frequently done activity at all. Chi-square test conducted on frequency social protection gave ( $\chi^2_{4,0.05}=11.750$ ) which showed that there was significant ( $P<0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to social protection as an activity that takes place in Makina village as a way of helping victims of crime.

The results also revealed that 32.5% (13) of the respondents indicated that assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station was least frequent activity and the same percentage indicated it was somehow frequent. A quarter of the respondents rated it as frequently with only 5 % (2) indicating not frequently at all. Chi-square test conducted on frequency assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station gave ( $\chi^2_{4,0.690}=2.250$ ) which showed that there was no significant ( $P>0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to this activity in helping victims of crime.

On provision of legal assistance to victims of violence, a quarter of the respondents rated it as a frequent activity in helping crime and further 22.5% (9) rated it as most frequent activity. However, 17.5 % (7) of the respondents indicated as not frequent at all. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of provision of legal assistance to victims of violence gave ( $\chi^2_{4,0.05}=15.750$ ) which showed that there was

significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to this activity in Makina village as a way of helping victims of crime.

Lastly, 37.5% (15) of the household respondents rated supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings as a frequently done activity and further 20% (8) rated it as most frequent activity. The findings also revealed that 15 % (6) of the respondents

indicated is not frequent at all. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings gave ( $\chi^2_{4,0.068} = 8.750$ ) which showed that there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to this activity in helping victims of crime. The findings are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Household Heads Activities**

Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Social protection	35%(14)	10%(4)	17.5%(7)	30%(12)	7.5%(3)
Offering basic medical and mental assistance	17.5%(7)	20%(8)	25%(10)	25%(10)	12.5%(5)
Assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station	5%(2)	32.5%(13)	32.5%(13)	25%(10)	5%(2)
Provision of legal assistance to victims of violence	17.5%(7)	15%(6)	20%(8)	25%(10)	22.5%(9)
Supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings	15%(6)	17.5%(7)	10%(4)	37.5%(15)	20%(8)

The study further determined that activity that had highest frequency was supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings with a mean of 3.3/5.0 and it was followed closely by provision of legal assistance to victims of violence with a mean of 3.2. Social protection had the least mean of 2.65/5.0. From the civil society organizations contacted, all of them were involved in community policing activities in Makina. They were seen to have been in existence in doing the activity for a period of 1-5 years in Kibera. From the activities carried out by the social organizations, 60% indicated they were somewhat frequent, 20% being most frequent and 20% being not frequent at all. This indicated the presence of the community policing activities in Makina area of Kibera from the sampled household heads.

From the police, different views on the activities on community policing from the police sentiments were seen. Some responses obtained indicated that; "Before the community policing, police officers were viewed as killers, brutal, corrupt and seen as those who could hardly understand the people. Community policing has made the community to understand that police officers are human beings and can relate and understand other community members as the police were also seen to view community members as less fortunate. The roles of the civil society has been instrumental in provision of information to the police officers, preaching peace to community as well as acting as the link between the police and the people"

The civil society organizations members were also asked to indicate the frequency in which they offered the activities to victims of crime. The findings indicated that 75% (3) of the CSOs member indicated that social protection activity was somehow done while 25% indicated it was not done. None of the respondents indicated it was most frequently done. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of social protection by CSOs members gave ( $\chi^2_{1,0.317} = 1.000$ ) which showed that

there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to their response on the frequency of this activity.

Regarding offering medical and mental assistance, half of the respondents indicated it is somehow done while the other half revealed it was not done at all with none most frequently done. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of offering medical and mental assistance by CSOs members indicated that there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to their response on the frequency of this activity.

In assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station, half of the respondents revealed it is somehow done while the other half revealed it was not done at all with none of them indicating most frequently done. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station by CSOs members indicated that there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to their response on the frequency of this activity.

Regarding provision of legal assistance to victims of violence, all of the respondents indicated it was not done at all. Lastly, half of the respondents indicated that supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings was most frequent activity while one of them indicated it was somehow done and the other not done at all. Chi-square test conducted on frequency of supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings gave ( $\chi^2_{2,0.779} = 5.000$ ) which showed that there was no significant ( $P > 0.05$ ) variation among respondents in relation to their response on the frequency of this activity. The findings are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Civil Society Organizations Activities**

Activity	Not at all	Somewhat	Most frequent
Social protection	25%(1)	75%(3)	0%(0)
Offering medical and mental assistance	50%(2)	50%(2)	0%(0)
Assisting the victims to contact police or accompanying them to the local police station	50%(2)	50%(2)	0%(0)
Provision of legal assistance to victims of violence	100%(4)	0%(0)	0%(0)
Supporting reintegration of survivors of violence to communities of new settings	25%(1)	25%(1)	50%(2)

Based on the activities carried out by CSOs, the study determined that the organizations' cooperated through resource sharing; there was evidence of sharing of resources especially information between the public and the police, medical aid and financial support also indicated by the members of the public. Partnerships were seen for instance between local organizations and the police on aspects such as reduction of gender based violence from the community for better community policing practices. Public participation was mainly seen from the areas of public awareness and the promotion of human rights in the area.

From the Civil Society Organizations in Makina area of Kibera, trust was enhanced between the Civil Society Organizations, the police and the general community. Confidentiality was evidenced through witness protection as preservation of evidence and some confidential information in place. It was seen as a challenge to other stakeholders since they could not easily see the confidentiality aspect on various aspects of the Society activities and approaches.

There was resource sharing and conducting of different stakeholders' forum. In most cases information becomes the most shared resource as it is essential in implementation of the community policing objectives in Makina area of Kibera. Partnerships were also seen through the use of community outreach and sensitization forums.

Public participation was also evidenced through instances of public awareness on different community sessions through sensitization and invitation of community members of matters pertaining to community policing in the area. On co-operation, the police indicated enhancing trust between them and the public at various settings. Resource sharing was also evident especially as seen from the various peace forums organized in the area and the sporting activities. Public participation through the various forums organized at the community levels for example the peace walks and the charitable activity was done to a greater extent.

## 6. Discussion

From the findings it comes out that the CSOs play more advocacy roles like accompanying victims to the police stations. Many times criminal activities go unreported. This is likely to escalate crime in informal settlements. With more cases being reported, the police are more likely to take action hence crime control Kibera informal settlement. The CSOs members in the study indicated that trust was enhanced between the CSOs, the police and the general community. Saferworld (2008) disagrees with the present study findings when they indicated that there was no trust between the community and the police. Saferworld (2008) further indicated that lack of trust is the accusation that both the police and the community leveled against each other on

lack of cooperation. While the community feels that the police do not treat them as equal partners and merely uses them as sources of information, the police accuse the community of failing to give them information and shielding criminal suspects. However, Scheider, Chapman and Schapiro (2009) determined that in an effort to reduce crime more effectively and efficiently, many law enforcement agencies are establishing collaborative partnerships within their communities. These relationships help to facilitate trust between community members and police organizations. Partnerships may include police officers, business owners, community leaders, social service and healthcare providers and other community members. Additionally, Reisig (2010) suggests that Community Oriented Policing (COP) need to engage the community as an equal partner with law enforcement agencies in solving local crime and disorder problems. Officers need to be trained in public relations, community partnerships, and problem-solving techniques.

Members of the community policing committees often complain about lack of confidentiality regarding information that is shared with the security agencies thereby putting their lives in danger. Conversely, police officers also accuse community-policing members of leaking privileged information to the suspects to subvert arrest of criminals. The findings align with the findings obtained by Jonathan (2014) who found that private security providers were more advantaged than the police officers in access to information on crime due to their greater public confidence. In line with these findings, Saferworld (2008) also established that the key factors supporting the success of community based policing approach is the level in which stakeholders have collaborated with a common understanding and commitment by the community throughout the programme.

Engagement of key stakeholders and ranging from the community, the security agencies and the general public is the only way developing countries can enhance security and promote social economic developments. This includes building trust and confidentiality among the key members. Wairimu (2014) supports the present study findings by positing that the effective mobilization of community support requires establishing trust and obtaining cooperation are often easier in middle-class and affluent communities than in poorer communities, where mistrust of police may have a long history. Building bonds in some neighbourhoods may involve supporting basic social institutions that have been weakened by pervasive crime or disorder. The findings of the present study also agree with the findings of Ngare (2007) who suggested that a legacy of distrust still exists between the police and the public, emanating from past police practices. Upon realizing this problem, the police together with Non-Governmental Organizations, civil society organizations have teamed up to raise public awareness on the need for more effective policing and

adequate resources and duties within the framework of human rights.

The study found that partnerships were in existence through the use of community outreach and sensitization forums. The findings obtained are in line with the findings of Ngcangcela (2004) who determined that partnership policing has evolved from community policing through partnership policing initiatives – particularly in a country like South Africa that is still in the throes of political transition. The author found that there are successful partnerships that are well established in the study area, which had contributed to prevention of crime successfully. Further, Ratcliffe (2016) agree with the findings of this study when he determined that community policing had contributed to solving of crimes and that the critical success factor for policing partnerships has more often than not been active local community leadership and a dedicated station commissioner. Where no action has taken place, the recurring problem with power relations remains prevalent.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concluded that there was sharing of information amongst the police, medics and the public. Public partnership was also enhanced through the use of community outreach and sensitization forums resulting to public awareness which has seen reduction of gender based violence. However, trust and confidentiality remain key areas in community policing as far as cooperation is concerned.

The study found that resources provision, partnerships and public participation were the major cooperation activities that were practiced. The study recommends that the CSOs should continue using these channels since cooperation had a positive relationship with CSOs effectiveness. Further, various ways of ensuring confidentiality and trust can be implemented, such as avoiding sharing of basic information of individuals.

The cooperation between the CSOs and other security agencies is influenced by trust and confidentiality. The study recommends that a bill be enacted in order to provide the private security providers and CSOs better policy and regulatory framework coverage in their roles in community policing. This would ensure sharing of information that is crucial for community policing. The study also recommends provision of a standardized training to the staff in order to build more public and police confidence. It is recommended that sensitization programmes should be enhanced through organized community policing meetings with the public in order to educate the members of the public on how community policing works and how to improve good relationship with the police.

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