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**Building Sustainable Community Peace and Cohesion in
Informal Settlements: The Agency of Grassroots
Organizations in Kibra, Kenya****Christine J. Agaya & Joseph M. Mutungi****Abstract**

Consensus among scholars and practitioners points towards the agency of grassroots organizations in building sustainable peace and cohesion. These organizations are advanced as both organic and all-inclusive, which are important aspects of sustainability. Despite this acknowledgement, little research has been devoted towards establishing the factors that predispose the grassroots organizations as viable platforms for building peace and cohesion. This study which is anchored on the intergroup contact theory argues that the voluntary nature of grassroots organizations, their people-centric nature, emphasis on citizen participation as well as the presence of collaborative abilities render these organizations central to the bottom-up approach to building peace and cohesion. Contact between the groups helps create the kind of social capital necessary for collective action and subsequently reduction in prejudice.

Key words: *Grassroots organizations, cohesion, citizen participation, structure*

1. Introduction

Informal settlements have proliferated in large cities around the world and especially in the developing countries due to the inflow of people from different regions attracted to the city by the promise of economic opportunities (Limbumba & Ngware, 2016). The population of informal settlements particularly those in the developing world is characterized by a diversity of identities pegged on markers such as ethnicity, culture, religion, language or political

affiliations (Satterthwaite & Mitlin, 2013). This population diversity renders informal settlements melting pots of economic and social power, as the inhabitants compete for the limited resources in them, a view shared by Gunglay (2015). The struggle for the limited resources disrupts the social network and relationships in ways that creates mistrust and hinder effective collective action. These dimensions coupled with the pressure of urban living have pushed the populations in the urban informal settlements to form support networks based on family, wider kinship and unrelated co-residents to address their plight as well as their own needs at the neighbourhood level (Satterthwaite, Mitlin & Patel, 2011). These support networks have different names in different places and disciplines. Some of the common names used to refer to the support networks include; grassroots organizations, grassroots volunteering (GV), grassroots associations (GA), community based organization (CBO), residents' organization, self-help groups among others (Martinez, 2008). The support networks are characterized by local ownership and leadership where the organizations' members design the approach to self-help while outsiders may assist with resources.

2. Problem Statement

Formal institutions established to foster community peace and cohesion in Kenya have not been effective, partly because of their minimal decentralization and failure to penetrate into the conflict prone areas, often citing resource scarcity and security concerns in some areas, especially the informal settlements. Whereas grassroots organizations remain the most recommended pathways for building sustainable peace and cohesion in communities owing to the minimal success of the western top-down approaches, the arguments for their preference remain underdeveloped. Most of the literature on Kibra informal settlement has tended to focus on causes of conflict (Musembi, 2013) while others such as that of Mutisya and Yerime (2011) focused on problems at grassroots level in Kibra and their potential remedies. Elfversson and Höglund (2017) research on land conflict in Kibra informal settlement uncovered how the land issue had over time been intertwined with ethnic identity, citizenship and political discourse to sustain the recurrence of the conflicts. Though some of these studies acknowledge the potential of grassroots organizations in community peace and cohesion, few have ventured into the role these grassroots organizations play in the reinforcement of community peace and cohesion in the urban informal settlements, and particularly the factors that predisposes those organizations as viable platforms for such ventures. It is these gaps that this study sought to fill.

3. Study Objective

The specific objective anchoring the study was intended to examine the nature of grassroots organizations that predisposed them as viable platforms for community peace and cohesion in Kibra informal urban settlements.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded on Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory, developed from the works of Lett (1945) and William (1947), who proposed that contact between members of different groups could help reduce prejudice and improve social relations. This theory presents four conditions under which contact between erstwhile warring groups yields a reduction in prejudice. These are equal status among groups within the situation, active attainment of common objectives by the group, cooperation among group members and an explicit and unambiguous support for intergroup contact by institutional authority, law or customs. Building on the conditions, Stephan and Stephan (1992), argue that prejudice and conflict are intractable characteristics of the contemporary society and peaceful coexistence between groups do not come naturally but rather requires assistance in terms of programs that encourage contact to help reduce conflict and prejudices. This theory therefore asserts that there is need for groups to experience contact with one another to establish mutual appreciation and ease intergroup tension. Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) contributing on the significance of contact in reducing prejudice observed that

knowledge about other groups enables members to see the similarity in diversity, reduces anxiety about group contact and increases empathy, which in turn improves intergroup attitude. Contextually, grassroots organizations have emerged in the urban areas especially in the informal settlements as support network groups to tackling and alleviating some urban problems which jeopardize cohesion and to a certain degree the safety and security brought about by diversity. The grassroots organizations help to broaden the network of collaboration and enable members to work together to pursue shared goals. A critical review of this theory demonstrates its utility in exploring the nature of grassroots organizations that inclines them towards building peace and cohesion, hence its use in anchoring this study.

5. Literature Review

Community cohesion is the harmony that develops among people who live in a similar environment or share similar work and it is based on the principle of trust and respect for diversity. Paffenholtz (2015) argue that the call for peace and community cohesion in the contemporary world has moved from the Western top down approach to local approach in form of grassroots organizations. This view is shared by Thiessen *et al.* (2010) who explain that initiatives at the grassroots level are better able to tackle communal problems, to provide shared support and to work together to create a society where people of diverse ethnicity, culture and religious backgrounds can live in harmony. Schmidt (2016) emphasizes that efforts initiated by local stakeholders through grassroots organizations often work more directly and effectively in building harmony in the community. The central theme and point of convergence emerging from these scholars is that communities can live together in harmony and that community peace and cohesion can be built in plural societies through grassroots support network activities.

Schiefer and van der Noll (2017) argue that cohesion is a vital social quality of societies, because it leads to the development of togetherness and team spirit that involves individuals, groups and societal institutions. It allows for development of good social relationship among people, helps them to feel connected to the society and to develop positive orientation towards a common good. Scholars like Putnam (2001) and Friedkin (2004) have argued that cohesion is an essential ingredient in conflict reduction because it facilitates harmonization and collaboration for mutual communal benefit and trust. It provides the foundation for communities to be able to act together to address violence conflicts and disorder.

In countries like the UK the concept of community cohesion emerged as a way of unifying segregated communities, build mutual trust, respect and create an understanding between diverse groups by breaking down stereotypes and misconceptions about the other (Cantle Report, 2012). The call on community cohesion has been influential in shaping the United Kingdom's government policy since the 2001 disturbances in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford. The UK central government and the local authorities advanced policies and programs reflecting the key community cohesion themes and encouraged the participation of the local organizations from the community. According to the UK Local Government Association (LGA) report (2004) community cohesion need to be enhanced locally through strong community network and participation to nurture sense of belonging and to tackle fractures which may lead to conflict and disharmony. The central role of grassroots organization in building community peace and cohesion is also reported by Vasquez-Leon, Burke and Finan (2017) citing examples from Columbia while asserting that grassroots organizations nurture the principles of trust and solidarity necessary for community peace and cohesion. A study conducted by Marquis and Battillana (2009) showed that grassroots organizations emerge in specific locations and represent residents living therein. Grassroots organizations are therefore built on people's commitment to their own territory and as a response to peoples' needs. This can result into the development of place identity and place attachment. Marquise *et al* (2011) however caution that in the contemporary society, the rise of

an online world has created grassroots organization that are not entirely characterized by geographical identities but whose members are rather affiliated through loyalty and interest.

Voluntariness is also a characteristic of grassroots organizations in urban informal settlement. The UN General Assembly embraced voluntarism as vital component of any approach aimed at overcoming social exclusion and discrimination. Grassroots organizations are formed voluntarily with no coercion from either the state or any other sector of the society. The members work in the organization because of their belief in certain basic principles. According to Stukas *et al* (2016) voluntary activity may be motivated by commitment to an abstract ideal like a sense of duty, moral obligation compassion for those in need or it may be motivated by commitment to community or an opportunity to make a contribution to the community. Rochester *et al* (2010) argue that volunteerism is crucial in developing and strengthening local capacity and collective spirit crucial for community peace and cohesion.

Horn *et al.* (2018) showed that organizations in low-income settlements have widely encouraged citizen participation in the development projects taking place at community level such as community-wide service provisioning, settlement upgrading or re-blocking to create accesses. This strengthens collective action, inclusion, besides building sustainable relationships among the low-income groups in the informal settlements (Satterthwaite and Mitlin, 2013). Informal settlements such as Baan Maakong in Thailand, Dharavi in Mumbai and Dzivarasekwa in Harare have witnessed participation of citizens in slum upgrading project through federations of slum dwellers in conjunction with grassroots organizations found in these informal settlements.

According to Cattle (2012) participation in the community activities is crucial in the sustainability of community peace and cohesion in ethnically diverse communities, a perspective that is consistent with Putnam's (2002) argument that cohesion relies on participation on group activities because it creates solid networks of engagement, builds a capacity for trust, mutuality and co-operation among members of a community. The primary resource of grassroots organizations is their human capital and strong social network, bonds and interaction, which are mostly consolidated through participation of members in community activities. Better performing and more viable grassroots organizations have better competency to reach out and engage with other grassroots organization. Such effort has the potential to bridge division rooted in political and social cultural identity and to strengthen horizontal peace and cohesion. When grassroots organization expand their coalition outward through partnership and strategic alliance it can help to fulfil agenda of national peace and cohesion, what Lederach (1997) calls 'a starting point' for world peace.

A study conducted by Staples (2004) established that grassroots organizations develop their power from the people, thus their approaches seek to engage local people to resolve common problems, and gain a better measure of control over the circumstances of their lives. A defining characteristic is that most of the work is done not only for the people involved but also by them, with little or no paid staff, often without much specialized expertise, and usually without big budgets or other large resource reservoirs. They provide the mechanism for individuals to discover and bring forth their individual gifts to their community. According USAID (2011), to generate peace and cohesion at community level, it would be better to apply people to people approach. People to people approach entails bringing together conflicting groups to interact purposefully through projects. The aim is to create opportunities for a series of interactions between conflicting groups and to addresses divisions within a community based on ethnicity or religion. Projects in this arena address the prejudice and stereotypes that reinforces differences between groups and hinders the development of relationships.

A study by Teixeira, Koufteros and Peng (2012) found that allocation of responsibility and power within an organization and the way work procedures are carried out by the organization's members helps in the transformation of the structures that impede peace and cohesion. Structural peace results into intergroup relations and transforms

unjust social systems into more peaceful structures. Smith (2000), gives an overview of research on grassroots organizations and their distinctive nature as much more informally organized with their own distinctive structure and characteristics such as less bureaucracy, more internal democracy, member benefit goals and more often supra-locally linked structure that enhance peaceful coexistence. In most grassroots organizations, collectivism is promoted as an ideal form of organizational structure where leadership was a temporary role assumed by each member through rotation of chair or facilitator position (Smith, 2000).

According to Donatella and Diani (2006), grassroots organizations have dense informal network that form innumerable instances in which collective action take place and is coordinated mostly within the boundary of organizations. Grassroots organizations are also characterized by autonomy from other organizations. Autonomy allows for greater membership and leadership participation. They are therefore able to react to local crisis, opportunities and challenges in general.

6. Methodology

This study was anchored on the descriptive research design due to its ability to provide a picture of the phenomenon under study as it naturally happens. In this design, the study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches for purposes of analytical triangulation. The target population comprised of household heads (44067), members of grassroots organizations engaging in peace and community cohesion (568), national government administrators (19), generating a total of 45260. Using Cochran's formula: $n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$, Where;

n is the sample size

Z, which is equal to 1.96, is the standard normal deviation at a confidence level of 95%

e which is equal to 0.05, is the desired level of precision (i.e. the margin of error),

p which is equal to 0.5, is the (estimated) proportion of the population which has the attribute in question,

q is $1 - p$

a sample size of 384 was obtained. A mix of purposive, stratified, proportionate and simple random sampling procedures were used to distribute the sample size. Taking into account the various strata, relative population and the kind of information needed, data was distributed as follows: 338 members from among heads of households and members of the grassroots organizations were issued with questionnaires comprising of open and closed ended questions, 39 members drawn from the leadership of the 13 grassroots organizations participating in the study constituted three Focus Discussion Groups (FGDs) while the remaining 7 respondents comprising of government officials from various departments involved in peace and cohesion were interviewed. The resulting quantitative and qualitative data was analysed using a mix of descriptive statistics and content analysis respectively.

7. Findings

Out of the 338 questionnaires that were issued, 318 representing a response rate of 94% were returned, fully and appropriately answered by the respondents hence used in data analysis. Of the 318, 160 came from heads of households who also doubled up as members of grassroots organizations but not part of the organizations' core leadership while 158 were heads of households not affiliated to any grassroots organization. The 39 participants targeted for the FGDs and the 7 respondents who had been singled out for the interviews registered 100% turn out. The first question sought to establish from heads of households who were members of the grassroots organizations the duration of existence of their respective organization in Kibra and the findings were as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Duration of Existence/Operation of the Grassroots Organizations in Kibra

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	0	0%
1 – 5 years	19	12%
6 – 10 years	90	56%
11 years and above	51	32%
Total	160	100

Table 1 indicate that 56% have been operational in Kibra for a period of between 6 to 10 years. About 12% of them have been in existence or have operated for between 1 to 5 years. Those that have operated for the longest time, 11 years or more, were 32%. None of the participating organizations had operated for less than 1 year. Some of the respondents stated that most of the organizations dealing with peace and cohesion were set up after the 2007/2008 post–election violence and that is why none of the organizations had operated for less than one year.

The study deemed the duration of operations by the grassroots organizations in Kibra informal settlement as important because it would point to efforts made over time and help unearth successes as well as challenges these organizations were beset with in their effort towards enhancing community peace and cohesion in the study area. The study argues that the longer an organization existed, actively engaged in community peace and cohesion work, the more likely it is to draw good will from the community and other stakeholders. This consequently gives it a higher chance of attaining its objective creating a peaceful and cohesive community. According to Putnam (2006), grassroots organizations bring communities together and hence help bridge the differences and animosities occasioned by prejudices and conflicts among other causes. That a majority of the GROs (88%) had existed for over 10 years is indicative of the breaches in peace that have beset Kibra informal settlement in the last two decades and a pointer into the community members' willingness to change the course of their co–existence for the better. The finding is consistent with Lederach's (1997) assertion that organic peace is the outcome of a continuous effort by grassroots actors who are both the creators and consumers of the ensuing peace and that conflicts are transformed gradually, through a sequence of smaller or larger changes as well as specific steps by means of which diverse actors may play significant roles.

The second question focussed on the source of membership for the grassroots organization. The study established that the membership is drawn from the informal settlement. The respondents indicated that all the grassroots organizations in the informal settlement drew their membership from Kibra informal settlement. This essentially is an indication that people who are not residents of the informal settlement are either not allowed to become members of the groups or that outsiders are not interested in becoming members of the grassroots organizations. The latter possibility could be because these outsiders do not stand to benefit from the activities of the grassroots organizations. Members could also be drawn from similar geographical area because a greater need to organize in order to address challenges in the informal settlement and to cope with risk. During a Focus Group Discussion session with one of the participant had this to say:

Members of our organizations and the officials as well, are all drawn from Kibra. None of the organizations admits people who are not residents of this informal settlement. This is very important to us because we want the people who sign up to be members of the organizations to be people whose interests are in this informal settlement and will work hard towards ensuring that peace and cohesion is entrenched among the residents of Kibra. From time to time the different organizations get requests from people from other informal settlements and even people who are fairly well–off but do not stay in Kibra, but we decline their requests. The grassroots organizations also strive to adequately vet all applicants to ensure they are residents of the area. (FGD 1, Kibra)

This sentiment by one of the members indicate that the grassroots organizations operating in Kibra in the area of community peace and cohesion were keen on drawing their membership from the direct beneficiaries of the harmony and cohesion obtaining from their own efforts. The study findings are in harmony with Lederach's (1997) assertion that viable and long-lasting peace must come from among the consumers of the intended peace because they understand best the areas where they clash on and can thus suggest and implement the appropriate ways of getting out of those destructive differences. People within the area of conflict, within the society or community affected, all have important roles to play in the long-term process of peace building and cohesion. The grassroots organizations were typically, staffed by local members –voluntary members who understand the needs within their neighbourhoods and who have the desire and willingness to help.

The study further sought to find out whether the grassroots organizations levied fees such as membership or subscription fees. In this regard, it was established that there was no subscription charges for an individual to be a member of the grassroots organizations. Since these organizations are located in an informal settlement where financial constraint is already a major challenge for the residents, requiring members to pay in order to be members of the groups could be counterproductive in the sense that majority of the residents may not take up membership. A participant from among the leaders of grassroots organizations during the FGD noted thus:

You know Kibra is an informal settlement where most of the residents are those living below the poverty line; typically, what you would call a life of hand to mouth. If we charge any fee for membership, the idea of forming the grassroots organization will not even take off. People will dismiss it as an avenue of discriminating people based on their financial ability and not a platform of building community peace and cohesion. (FGD 3, Makina)

Despite the membership being free however, the researcher established that there were other requirements put in place by the grassroots organizations to ensure that only serious people register as members of the organizations. These included the requirement that a prospective member be a resident of Kibra and committed to the course of peace and cohesion as advanced by the grassroots organization they wished to be members. Prospective members were also required to provide their correct profile information including their names and phone numbers. This was explained as important in ensuring that only serious people sign up. Additionally, the potential benefits that members stood to gain, such as joining the self-help groups and being part of the joint economic generating activities, were also found to be used as carrots and motivators to get them become members of the organizations. The researcher further sought to investigate the ethnic inclusivity of the grassroots organizations. This desire had been informed by Oberschall's (2007) assertion that most of the conflict in the contemporary plural settings emanated from ethnic exclusivity. The study established that the grassroots organizations in the study area try to be non-discriminatory in terms of the ethnic extractions of their members. They also attempt to ensure that members share sense of belonging with others; feel safe, respected, and comfortable in being themselves to enable them to express all aspects of their identities without fear of discrimination. In a Focus group discussion, a participant had this to say:

As grassroots organizations, we can't afford discriminating against particular ethnic groups as that will not only work against our objectives of fostering peace. In any case, having grassroots organizations that spearhead the interests of one ethnic rather than coexistence would be like promoting ethnic discrimination in Kibra. (FGD 1 Kibra)

This statement shows the willingness of grassroots organizations to work together in a diverse community. An all-inclusive participation of community members is a fundamental step towards promoting intergroup contact necessary for establishing community peace and cohesion especially in an informal settlement that is characterised by ethnic heterogeneity.

The study argues that opening up the membership of grassroots organizations to people from across the informal settlement's ethnic divide is not only an attempt at upholding legal requirements but also a deliberate effort intended to open the lines of interaction among the different ethnic groups that reside in Kibra. The findings were found to be in sync with Putnam's (2000) assertion that inclusivity in plural settings is a basic measure of social cohesion. In a situation where different ethnic groups can collaborate in pursuing a common agenda of peace and community cohesion, then the essence of grassroots organizations in peacebuilding will have been achieved.

The study also established that most grassroots organizations were formed after the 2007/2008 post-election violence that adversely affected the informal settlement. The motive of the grassroots organizations was to bring peace and harmony after many people had lost lives and property. From across the participating grassroots organizations, the research finding showed that most grassroots organizations that had been established before 2007 introduced peace and cohesion after the violence that erupted in after 2007 national elections. A recurrent theme from across the key informants representing different grassroots organizations was that during the PEV of 2007/2008, many respondents observed neighbours who had lived with one another harmoniously turn against each other mostly because of politics, which was largely driven along ethnic lines. A respondent explained thus:

Every time I remember what I saw first-hand in 2008 following the announcement of the presidential election results, I commit the more to this organization and pray that my children will never witness the same. Madam, can you imagine yourself making a passionate plea to your neighbour with whom you shared basic things and supported each other to earn a living raising a machete to slash his neighbour purely because of belonging to a different ethnic group and supporting a different political group from yours? (FGD 3, Makina).

A research carried out by Okombo and Olang (2010) indicated that Kibra informal settlement was the epicentre of post-election violence that led to the massive destruction of property, looting, displacement and forceful eviction of some ethnic communities from their homes. It is against these background most community peace and cohesion organizations were formed to restore peace in the study area.

Furthermore, some of the respondents indicated that given the hostile environments that existed in the immediate periods preceding these three general elections periods, the government of Kenya and NGOs operating in Kibra encouraged organizations to include activities rooting for peaceful coexistence in their programmes. Global communities such as Kenya Tuna Uwezo (we have Power) assisted communities in the informal settlements like Kibra to form Grassroots organizations who played a vital role in the promotion of peace and stability.

Rising cases of crime in the informal settlement and the launch of the government-backed district peace steering committee and the 'Nyumba Kumi' initiative (communal watch group) were also cited as rationales behind the formation of some of the grassroots organizations that existed and promoted inter-communal ethnic cohesion in Kibra informal settlement.

Some grassroots organizations were formed as welfare committees to help during disasters such as demolition of houses, house burning and deaths but later embraced peace and cohesion to help bring the community together. Others like Kibra Women for Peace and Fairness started as Polycom Development project to assist girls who were sexually abused but later joined together to form Kibra Women for Peace and Fairness to help bring the harmony in the community after the experience of 2007 and 2008 that led to loss of life and property. A recurrent theme from across the respondent show that the motive for the formation of grassroots organization was to bring harmony to a community that had a history of regular conflict.

Finally, the study sought to examine the active participation pathways for grassroots organizations members in peace and cohesion programs. The findings in this regard were as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Platforms used by Grassroots Organization to Convey Peace and Cohesion Messages

Pathway	SA	A	N	D	SD
Use of Social media	28%	36%	3%	24%	9%
Through the chiefs' <i>barazas</i>	32%	41%	2%	18%	7%
Use of Caravans	21%	37%	2%	23%	17%
Through main stream media	11%	36%	8%	30%	15%
Offering stipends	18%	42%	7%	27%	6%
Use of leaflets	7%	19%	8%	46%	20%

The study established that grassroots organizations explore many avenues to engage the communities in their peacebuilding and cohesion activities. A cumulative 73% of the respondents indicated that they use the chiefs and the sub chiefs' *barazas* to create awareness of their peace activities and to invite the members of the community to participate in the peace and cohesion initiatives while 18% simply disagreed as a further 7% expressed strong disagreement. The Chief and the sub chiefs' fora was preferred by most of the grassroots organizations because of the authority that the local governments hold and the legality it gives to their activities. As the administrative level that is closest to the citizens, the chiefs and the sub chiefs were found to have a lot of influence on the local citizens. The second most used platform was found to be social media as reported by a cumulative 64% of the respondents, who either simply agreed or expressed strong agreement with the statement. The specific social media platforms used to further the activities of the grassroots organizations were Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and WhatsApp and these platforms were mostly used to disseminate information about peace and to invite the citizens of the informal settlement to participate in the peace activities. The study noted that each of the grassroots organizations had a Facebook page where they shared their programs and activities as well as WhatsApp groups with people from different villages spearheading the dissemination of the peace and cohesion information. It was noted that 33% of the respondents either simply disagreed or expressed strong disagreement on the use of social media to further grassroots organizations activities.

Mainstream media platforms such as radio stations like *Pamoja FM*, which is a community based Radio in Kibra settlement was mentioned by 47% of the respondents as an accessible platform that was frequently used by different grassroots organizations to create peace awareness as 45% of the respondents disagreed on its use. The 8% that expressed neutrality were found significant because they could tilt the pro or dissenting perspectives either way. Grassroots organizations such as *Amani Kibra* and *Carolina* used *Pamoja FM* to invite the residents in the Clean Up and football tournaments, events that were organized to foster collective care of the environment and cooperation in the day to day activities of the settlements' residents. *Kibra Women for peace and fairness* had used *Pamoja FM* to cool tensions and lobby for peace and cohesion especially in times of election. Others like *Kibra Zulu Youth Group*, *Gatwekera Umoja Usafi Mandeleo*, *Kibra Hamlets* among others have their own Facebook platforms which they use to disseminate information about their activities.

Another platform found to be used to reach out to the community by the grassroots organizations to pass messages of peace and tolerance and to invite residents of informal settlements to participate in peace and cohesion activities was peace caravans as reported by 58% of the respondents. The peace caravans were reported to be very effective in community mobilization because they attracted crowds who could easily listen in and participate in the concerned group's activities. However, they were reported to be expensive especially because of hiring public address systems, organizing for security, unless the grassroots organizations got sponsors. 40% of the respondents however disagreed

on the deployment of this strategy in mobilizing and engaging the community in matters peace and cohesion. The 2% that expressed neutrality to the statement were deemed as not significant enough to alter the majority finding with regard to use of peace caravans in driving community peace and cohesion activities.

In light of use of stipends to entice community members into peace and cohesion activities spearheaded by grassroots organizations, the study established that 60% of these organizations had budgets for stipends that were used to pay members small but reasonable stipends. 33% of the respondents however disagreed as a further 7% reported neutrality to the statement. The study established that other than the stipends, participants of the grassroots organizations' activities were also provided with material rewards to encourage individuals from Kibra informal settlement to commit and actively take part in the various activities aimed at fostering community peace and cohesion. The finding was important because it shed light on the place of financial resources in the realization of grassroots organizations' peace and cohesion activities. A participant in a FGD highlighted this position as follows:

You know Kibra is an informal settlement where people of little means live. They are everyday preoccupied with where they will get the next meal or the resources needed to pay rent, take their children to school and such like basic needs. So it is almost impossible for anyone to come and join up with you as an organization for a whole day or even part of it when they do not know if they will get some financial benefit to plug the gap back home caused by their foregoing their casual jobs to attend your organization's event. (FGD 2, Olympic)

Finally, 26% of the grassroots organizations were found to use leaflets with peace and cohesion messages to create awareness and invite community members to their activities. The leaflets illustrated the ideas and activities of the grassroots organizations. The leaflets were posted on walls while others were dropped on the resident's doors. Majority of the respondents, 66%, disagreed on the use of this strategy citing the many expenses associated with it such as financing the design and printing as well as the putting them in public spaces.

What came out of these responses was the idea that the grassroots organizations were very keen to get residents of the informal settlements to participate in the various activities aimed at bringing them together and enhancing cohesion among them. The organizations went to great extent to explore ways of getting optimal number of residents to participate in their activities such as community clean ups, soccer tournaments. The rationale behind getting the most participants was that the more the number of participants, the quicker and the wider the spread of messages of peace and cohesion in the informal settlement. This resonated with Lederach's (1997) argument that organic peace is possible when the intended consumers actively play a role in its creation and protection. Their (the community's) participation was a direct way of enabling them own the resulting peace and this would effectively persuade them to guard it whenever it was threatened. Participation in community activity is very crucial especially for a diverse community like Kibra informal settlement because it strengthens collectivity and helps to build community relationship. As observed by Krishna (2002) and Cantle (2012) participation in the community activities is crucial for community peace and a significant predictor of an aptitude for cooperation.

8. Conclusion

A critical analysis of the findings demonstrates that there were core characteristics of grassroots organizations operating in Kibra that predisposed them to peace and cohesion work. These included their being people focussed and active participation of the community members in the groups' activities. Other aspects of the nature of the grassroots organizations that came from the analysed data in respect of the study question included the familiarity of group members with each other and the similarity of their plight as residents of informal settlement as well as the propensity for building partnership and strategic alliances which were deemed as enhancing ownership of the

processes and outcomes being pursued. This study thus argues that grassroots organization are an invaluable means by which residents of informal settlements can easily be mobilized in the pursuit of a common agenda such as peace and cohesion, especially because of these organizations familiarity with the intergroup dynamics at the lowest level of social organization.

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