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## The Expectant ‘Chocolate City’ and the Unfulfilled Attainment of Safe Heavens in Kibera Informal Slums in Nairobi, County

David Sande Ouma\*

Sociologist and Dean of Studies, FPFK Goodhope School, Nairobi, Kenya

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#### \*Corresponding Author:

David Sande Ouma

M: +254723496834

Email: sandedavid64@gmail.com

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### Abstract

The rapid rise of the population in most developing countries has posed a challenge to respective governments to provide decent and quality social services to its populace as anchored in their constitutions. This increased population has superseded the existing social amenities such as houses, schools, and hospitals as planned by city planners. This has resulted in the proliferation of informal settlements, whose geographical locations are noted by a poor environment that has hostile living conditions to mankind. This paper elucidates that limited knowledge, pessimistic attitude from the locals, poor leadership, corruption, and lack of accountability are the causal factors for the continued pathetic status of Kibera slums. The paper thus concludes that if barriers that cause marginalization to the people are lifted, there is the accountability of service provision by relevant stakeholders, empowerment, and good leadership; Kibera will thrive and become one of the best places for human settlement.

### INTRODUCTION

The rapid rise of population in most countries particularly in the low-income countries more so, in Africa, Asia, and South America has posed a challenge to the respective governments in providing decent and quality social services as prescribed by their constitutions (Kasala, 2014; William et al., 2019; Chikoto, 2009; Lwasa, 2016; Sverdluk, 2011; Mberu et al., 2016; Mutisya & Yarime, 2011; Konseiga, 2009; Ali & Sulaiman, 2006; Mwau, 2009). The presence and continued growth of informal settlements that are commonly referred to as slums or shanties are inevitable due to the continued increase of poverty index levels and increased rural to urban migrations that have caused the people to be vulnerable and susceptible to disasters (IDMC, 2015). This has been witnessed in most cities that experience increased rural to urban migrations, illegal migrations or refugees that supersede the available social amenities such as houses, availability of water, sanitation facilities, schools, hospitals, and so forth that are planned by the city planners (Tsinda, 2013; Kasala, 2014; Sibiya et al., 2013; Magalhaes & Eduardo, 2007; Javad et al., 2011). This has resulted in the proliferation of notable slums across the world that include: the favelas in Brazil, Soweto slum in South Africa, Kibera slum in Kenya, Dharavi in Mumbai, Karachi in Japan, and Jamestown in Ghana (Wikipedia). These slums have similar characteristics that comprise of poor infrastructure, lack adequate social amenities, have poor drainage and sewerage system, poor housing system, and poverty (Lwasa, 2016; UNICEF, 2012; Ali & Sulaiman, 2006; Mutisya & Yarime, 2011; Chikoto, 2009).

Kibera, as a place of settlement, originated from the fruits of the Nubian soldiers that provided a helping hand to Mau Mau group in fighting against the colonial regime (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 65). This place was originally a forest that was later awarded to the Nubians and supported by the founding president

the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's government as a token of appreciation for their contribution (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 98). The inhabitants called the place Kibera, which is a Nubian word meaning a forest (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). As time went by, years down the line, other ethnic groups such as the Luhya, Luo, Kikuyu, Kamba, among others, migrated into the area and rented the Nubian houses (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p.101). Kibera informal settlement is located within Kibera constituency with an estimated land coverage of 2.38 km<sup>2</sup> and a distance of 6.6 km in the southern part of Nairobi County (Amelie, 2011; Parsons, 2010). It has proximity to renowned places such as the Nairobi National Park, Wilson Airport in Langata estate, and Agricultural Society of Kenya grounds. It has a total of 11 villages that include: Soweto East, Soweto West, Laini Saba, Kisumu Ndogo, Lindi, Mashimoni, Gatwikira, Kambi Muru, Makina, Siranga, and Mugumoini. Kibera is known to be home and motherland of many, with a majority of the Nubians seeing it as a multipurpose which serves both as their urban and countryside areas at the same time.

After the millennium, the population of Kibera has continued to grow tremendously as it was estimated to be around 170,070 in the year 2009 (KNBS, 2009), though other scholars have estimated it to be over one million people (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). This increased population has led to increased illegal settlements of people that has led to the loss of past glory of highly rated estates surrounding the area that include: Woodley, Langata, Madaraka, Highrise, Jamhuri, and Fort Jesus; as the middle-class families have moved out of them in an effort to stay away from the low-class people for their safety and avoid negative vices such as crime and violence. These estates used to host reputable people in the society, such as members of parliament (MPs), heads of parastatals, and government ministers. In a nutshell, the common perception of

most regarding informal settlement or slums is that the place has high crime levels, drugs and substance abuse, poor sanitation, and so forth (Meth, 2017). The residents of the area have thus endeavored to coin the name 'chocolate city' as an alternative name of the place that is aimed at neutralizing the negativity that is perceived in the area. It gives the positive outcomes that come from this area, such as sports personalities, education personalities, political leaders, and academic professionals. It is the position of this paper that the people of Kibera have the right to proper representation and access to basic life requirements according to the country's constitution. As the sun rises and sets with a dwindling silence, does it mean that everything is okay?

### **Political Mistrust and Dishonesty from Leaders**

In the quest to attain power, leaders drive spirited campaigns that are directed by well-crafted manifestos of what they plan to do for their electorates once they clinch power (Lipset, 1981). These manifestos majorly center on the allocation and distribution of social services such as education, hospitals, security, proper infrastructure, and proper representation in the legislature. Since independence, the residents of this area have had an opportunity to elect the area member of parliament (MP) after every five years during the general elections as stipulated by the constitution. Unfortunately, based on the gauge between the gains and losses within the area, there is clear evidence there is a disconnect between the leadership and the populace. There is clear evidence of lack of proper infrastructure, houses, poor sanitation, and sewerage system; lack of adequate public schools and social grounds (UNICEF, 2012; Mwau, 2009; Mutisya & Yarime, 2011; Konseiga, 2009; Mberu et al., 2016). This demonstrates that the leaders chosen, such as the members of the county assembly (MCA) and the area MP do not perform their mandates, and any efforts made by them to solve the residents' grievances are not sustainable due to lack of community's involvement (Chitere, 1994).

In Kibera informal settlements, there have been a number of people killed and some injured during periods of political turmoil that is characterized by election disputes and mass demonstrations that cause violence and ethnic tension in the area (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 188). Since the introduction of multiparty politics in Kenya in 1992, Kibera has been on the opposition, and has been considered as a hotspot of violence in the subsequent elections of 2013 and 2017 (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 190). The chosen leaders thus far in the area have capitalized on the opportunity of having a majority of the residents being jobless by using them to perpetuate violence to ascend to power (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 212-216). This was witnessed during the 2007/08 post-election violence that saw close to 300,000 people, particularly the Kikuyu and Akamba being uprooted from their houses and became internally displaced persons (IDPs) (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 214). It is according to Plato's perspective that the character of political leaders is defined and characterized by society and its populace that vote them in or give them the mandate to govern them. The question, therefore, we pose is why poor people are divided in the political process that hands them the platform of choosing their preferred leaders to change their area misfortunes?

The political impulse in the area has seen the area residents not to respect the rule of law, and in a nutshell, the slum is anarchic as the area chiefs, and local leaders are under the mercy of the local youth wings. This problem has infiltrated into the ownership and rentals of properties, such as the houses. Since the year 2001, when the former president Daniel Arap Moi announced that the rent of the houses should be reduced to half,

most of the residents ended up being defaulters of rent payment (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 208). This has further gone to the levels where some landlords have been beaten and chased away by some tenants in their quest to collect rent (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 216). This has begged the question: who will ever wipe the tears of these landlords that have been denied their right of income from their investments up to date? Secondly, is there any hope and certainty of investing your business in Kibera due to its instability? This has been the major reason most of the houses that are structured as plots either have no pit latrines or if present, are full; thus, people opt to relieve themselves in plastic bags and dispose to the river streams through what is referred to as 'flying toilets' (Otsuki, 2013; Aljazeera, 2017; The Standard Digital, 2017). This practice has been very unhygienic as the levels of water pollution in the area are extremely high as it has led to a continuous outbreak of diseases such as cholera, typhoid, amoeba, and dysentery (Akullian et al., 2015). These diseases have resulted in high infant mortality rates as most children die before reaching their fifth birthday (Akullian et al., 2015; Worrell et al., 2016; Corburn & Karanja, 2016).

In recent times, there have been introductions of bio centers that offer public toilets and clean water to area residents at KSh 10 per visit with the human waste-producing biogas (Otsuki, 2013). This has, though not helped in reducing this practice of flying toilets as many of the area residents live below the poverty line of less than one dollar a day (Nyamboga et al., 2014; Amelie, 2011; Keaveny, 2015). Besides, according to cyclic sociological theorists, human beings are always skeptical and resistant to change and comfortable to their comfort zones; hence, to them, having human feces by the roadside and sewage all over is the normalcy of any slum set up. This thus signifies the existing existence of high levels of intolerance of any opposition or alternative voices in the area (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011).

In the scramble for power and one's economic stability, possession of land is one of the most important resources (Sifuna, 1995). The lack of land makes an individual live a hopeless life of being a squatter, live on rental housing, and one that cannot invest in big businesses due to lack of collaterals such as title deeds or lease numbers (Ali & Sulaiman, 2006; Mwau, 2009; Sifuna, 1995). Unfortunately, the area residents lack any proper documentation of ownership of the plots they live in as they are considered as having intruded into the government land illegally (William et al., 2019; Meth, 2017; Sibiya et al., 2013). This has, in the past years seen the outbreak of violence between different ethnic groups in the quest for ownership of the unplanned houses; a case in point being that of the Nubians and Luos in the year 2001 (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011, p. 208). Such conflicts make any arbitration or mediation efforts to solve them to be difficult due to lack of proper evidence such as land ownership documents; as what exists in most cases is a sale agreement which consists of the buyer, seller, and two witnesses which is deposited at the chief's offices, though due to issues of corruption, there have been cases of more than one sale agreement being drafted for a single house. This is a practice that continues on a daily basis, and many residents that have saved their meager income for owning a room that approximately goes for KSh 80,000 have ended up losing their money in these scams. In a properly planned town, there are sections of land that are put aside as social playing grounds for the children.

In Kibera, whose residents are vulnerable sections of the society, their social grounds have been taken away by persons considered rich and 'mighty' and built on them apartments to generate income. The residents have thus been forced to retrieve in highly crowded places with limited space, with silent cries

of the act (Musyoki, 2017). This has left children to pay a small fee to play in public schools playing grounds within their neighborhoods, a process that they cannot sustain daily due to their parents' lack of finances (Wacera, 2018). This has increased idleness among most youths that have led them to engage in drugs and substance abuse, with the common drugs abused being alcohol, khat (miraa), and bhang (NACADA, 2013). This has been a major undoing to the vibrant section of Kibera settlers that carries the hopes and aspirations of changing the face of the area (Mwau, 2009; Meth, 2017).

For instance, according to NACADA (2013) report, it notes that approximately 10 percent of youths were abusing drugs. Despite identifying them as drug abusers, efforts to conduct follow-ups on their rehabilitation turns out to be futile due to high migration rates and breakdown of communication due to change of mobile phone lines and lack of guardians as most of them take care of themselves at the tender age of 17 years (Meth, 2017). This has also seen the levels of insecurity caused by crime perpetrated by these youths increase, as they explore all avenues to raise money to buy drugs. Unfortunately, youths that have been caught committing a crime have been subjected to mob justice through being burnt in broad daylight or stoned to death (Chulek, 2018; The Nairobi Law Monthly, 2017). Thus far, this discourse demonstrates that there has been neglect of political leader to provide political direction on leadership, development, and cohesion of different ethnic groups, and thus only view them as voters. This goes against the spirit of human coexistence as Isaac Newton well put it that great leaders are those who rise through the shoulders of others with humility for the benefit of all. In this sense, the area leaders have kept a deaf ear to the cries of the locals, and thus have proved to be ignorant, non-deliverers, and guided by greed.

### **Social Upheavals, Inadequacies, and Marginalization**

The social environment of Kibera informal settlements is one that is associated with negativity across the globe, as it is associated with filth spread everywhere and inhabitants that are unaware of themselves (UNICEF, 2012). During the start of the millennium, where there was a rapid increase of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil organizations that were majorly funded by countries from Europe and the United States; there was a joke that their major aim was to come and see the people that were living in pigsties. In the area, it is characterized by poor housing that are cubes of 10 x 10 feet, some of which are constructed of mud, rusted corrugated iron sheets, timber, and some polythene bags (The Standard, 2017; Wikipedia; APHRC, 2014). Most of the families that share single rooms have very large family members averaging 10 members (APHRC, 2014). These single houses serve as living rooms, kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom at the same time with an average monthly rent of KSh 3500 (APHRC, 2014). This, therefore, implies that the basic rights of privacy, particularly to the older family members in the houses, are curtailed. There is still a certain population that cannot afford the rental amounts of these houses and thus ends up sleeping in business premises found along the roads, railway lines, or nearby schools (Wacera, 2018). This demonstrates the poverty index levels in the poorest slum whose residents live on a hand to mouth basis (Wacera, 2018).

One of the commonest social upheavals in the area is the poor drainage and sewerage system (Mutisya & Yarime, 2011; Konseiga, 2009; UNICEF, 2012). This has seen the residents dig more trenches that have sewage that is stagnated around the houses (Mutisya & Yarime, 2011). This poor state of affairs happens in the full glare of the Nairobi County government

and national government institutions such as the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) that have not explored ways of helping the residents out of the menace. This has led to the outbreak of diseases due to unhygienic conditions such as cholera, typhoid, flu, malaria, and bilharzia (Akullian et al., 2015). The Kenya Medical Research Institute in collaboration with the centers for disease control (KEMRI/CDC) has been conducting longitudinal surveillance both at a household and clinic level in the area for almost 15 years and has submitted that the existing levels of unhygienic conditions has led to increased morbidity and mortality rates (Akullian et al., 2015). In fact, the area experiences high morbidity and mortality rates among children, as most of them die before their fifth birthday (Olack et al., 2014). For instance, in a study that was conducted by KEMRI/CDC on mortality trends in Kibera, it found that 5 percent of infants died during their first birthday due to preventable illnesses such as fever, cough, and diarrhea (Olack et al., 2014). These findings are not limited to Kibera in Nairobi city as other places such as Kigali, Dar es Salaam, Cape Town, and Kampala have faced the same wrath (Tsinda, 2013; Kasala, 2014; Lwasa, 2016; Ali & Sulaiman, 2006; Chikoto, 2009; Javad et al., 2011). The presence of NGOs providing health services and morbidity surveillance have been a blessing to the residents as these disease outbreaks have been addressed in their initial phases before being a serious epidemic (Akullian et al., 2015; Olack et al., 2014).

The country's constitution also stipulates that every Kenyan has a right to access to social services such as education and healthcare. Unfortunately, in the area, there are limited public health and educational facilities to cater for the ever-increasing population in the area (Mutua et al., 2011; Abdramane et al., 2014). This has resulted in increased suffering to the residents, particularly in emergency situations that require close examination by doctors due to lack of money to go to the private hospitals (Wacera, 2018). There are also increased clinics that are, in most cases, individual-owned or through community-based organizations (CBOs) even though their services are profit-oriented and lack proper equipment (APHRC, 2015). Besides, there are also traditional herbalists that treat patients even though they carry the process through guesswork as one type of mixed concoction medicine can be used to treat various diseases without even conducting laboratory tests (APHRC, 2015). Most of these government health facilities are not built within the slum and are found in their geographical territory (Mutua et al., 2011; Abdramane et al., 2014). There has been the blessing of a number of NGOs that provide free health services to the area residents that include: Kenya Medical Research Institute in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (KEMRI/CDC) and the Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO). Their free health services have attracted a large number of patients in their clinics that have overwhelmed their health staff (Sande, 2015). In a study that was conducted by Sande (2015) on factors that affect the health delivery of NGOs in Kibera, it found that 43 percent of patients spent more than 6 hours on the queue before being treated. This delay in service delivery has subjected pain to the people, and thus a silent cry that is not addressed by the relevant stakeholders such as the government (Sande, 2015).

There have also been high cases of school drop out and early marriages among the girls (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). This has been caused by high poverty levels in their families, and due to the close proximity, comparatively advantaged men financially lure these ladies, thus putting them in a family way at very tender ages (Tshikotsi, 2009). For instance, in a study that was conducted by Onyango & Tostensen (2015) on the

situational analysis of youth in Kibera, it found that 5.6 percent of youth were engaging in prostitution as an alternative source of livelihood due to the lack of employment. This begs the question: why are the authorities and the parents allowing this rampant cohabitation among adolescents? Is there any future of such families that are led by children? There has also been an increased case of the rampant spread of HIV/AIDS in the area that has been triggered by high in and out migrations that have made people have sexual relations with different persons without proper knowledge of their sexual history (Meth, 2017). This is a position that is held by Corburn and Karanja (2016) who posits that:

... population groups are not treated as static, with fixed characteristics, but rather as dynamic and heterogeneous so that they are understood as having multiple and constantly evolving features. In this way, intersectionality is a central feature of the relational review, which implies that, for instance, the male slum dweller in Nairobi's Kibera settlement is not assumed to be afflicted by the same health stressors as their neighbor in an adjacent village or a young female slum dweller in the Mathare settlement on the other side of town.

This position is in line with Tshikotsi (2009) study on the challenges of eradicating informal settlements in South Africa that found economic factors and migrations as the leading causes of HIV/AIDS in South Africa's informal settlements. The people that have been inflicted by the HIV virus have been having challenges in terms of accessing treatment and taking their antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) due to the issue of stigma and discrimination that has been facilitated by their close proximity levels (Patterson, 2009).

The upbringing of people in the area has made them associated unknowingly to the forceful way of doing things in order to get their way. This has been in line with Edwin Sutherland in his theory of differential association that suggests people learn from what they see and hear in their respective neighborhoods. In this sense, most youths have grown seeing violence and crime as the order of the day, and hence this has witnessed the re-surfacing of gender-based violence (GBV), particularly to the young girls who enter marriage through cohabitation (Meth, 2017). This has been triggered by the harsh economic life that people go through that generate psychological stress and pressure that they vent out in an emotional and violent way (Meth, 2017). The statistics of gender-based violence in the area cannot be effectively determined due to the limited reports of such cases in fear of victimization, particularly on women (Swart, 2012; Ondicho, 2018; Dimovitz, 2015). Some women have ended up raising children that are conceived after sexual assault and rape that happened to them; hence, they have permanent scars in their hearts that have lasted for more than a decade (National Crime Research Centre, 2014; Murunga, 2011; KNHR, 2008; Musyoka, 2014; Onyango & Tostensen, 2015).

### **Economic Orphanhood and Caged Life Exposure**

The mark of any country's progress and prowess economically is pegged on the gross domestic product (GDP) that is determined by the number of persons that are in the labor force working (Kempe, 2012; Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). Kibera slums provide a high number of the cheap labor force, most of whom are either semi-skilled or not skilled at all that is facilitated by the rural to urban migrations (Kempe, 2012; Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). Kenya's progress economically heavily relies on the agricultural sector that controls about 80 percent, manufacturing industries, tourism, and so forth (Wanjohi, 1991). In Nairobi County, most

of the people that inhabit it majorly depend on being employed in these manufacturing industries that are located in an industrial area (Wanjohi, 1991). Unfortunately, the number of industries present cannot accommodate the ever-increasing population in search of employment (Wanjohi, 1991; Ng'ethe, 2018). In the area, the residents have always been involved in the task of seeking for employment a process they refer to as 'tarmacking'. According to employment statistics in Nairobi, it estimates close to 55 percent of youth are unemployed, with only 45 percent being employed (Ng'ethe, 2018). This indicates the reason why most residents live a pathetic life in the area (Ng'ethe, 2018; Wanjohi, 1991; Faye et al., 2011; Onyango & Tostensen, 2015).

To a certain extent, also, the available labor force does not have the requisite skills through training in order to be employed based on their merit of expertise (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). This has thus left many people in their poor status due to their inability to afford proper housing, food, and medication (Wanjohi, 1991; Ng'ethe, 2018; Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). This, therefore, implies that as the darkness crops in to mark the end of the day, and the silence is manifested in Kibera informal settlements; many people are undergoing through the pain of sleeping hungry, and not being able to meet their day's objectives such as getting a job or financial breakthrough; thus, their hopes of development are thwarted (Faye et al., 2011; Murage et al., 2014; The Standard Digital, 2018; Abdulla, 2011).

Due to the limited formal employment in Nairobi County, most residents have opted to venture into small scale businesses that require little expertise to start and operate. Most of these businesses are situated along the roads and railway lines, as they are locations that attract many people that pass by during the course of their different hustles and bustles. The major undoing of these locations is that they pose a great danger to the business operators, particularly in the event of accidents as the areas are more vulnerable to accidents. There have been limited business stalls that could be used by entrepreneurs to sell their products due to cases of corruption and high rental fees from the owners, and more so the local administration. The booming business products sold along these roads and railway lines are food that in most cases is exposed to air, that makes the traders get into trouble with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) that has in several occasions closed these business premises by virtue of the spread of diseases such as cholera, typhoid, and bilharzia (Ondieki & Mbegera, 2009; NEMA, 2011). This move has further swindled any hopes of the young traders to obtain financial stability in their lives, and thus left hopeless and suffering as their norm (Ondieki & Mbegera, 2009; NEMA, 2011).

Some residents have also had the quest to boost their future wellbeing by having a saving culture that they commonly refer to as 'chamas.' They are mainly formed for the purpose of bringing group members together as a family and support each other in the event of birthdays, weddings, and funeral events (Stephen, 2016). It further provides members with identity and sense of belonging, as some of the chamas are formed based on gender, age, and geographical point of origin (Stephen, 2016). These groups have also been instrumental in spurring economic growth through allowing group members to access loans after a certain duration to implement their development projects without having to give out collaterals, with group members being the guarantors (Stephen, 2016). In Kibera, there has been the formation of many self-help groups and CBOs (Stephen, 2016). Unfortunately, for almost two decades, there has not been much impact by these groups in the area (Stephen, 2016). To some groups that have opted to address the issue of sanitation and hygiene, such as

Maendeleo Ya Wanawake, they built a handful of pit latrines that they hire to the locals for use and also built the Ushirika health facility that provides medical services to the locals at a subsidized fee. Despite all these groups being formed, there has been a challenge of lack of properly defined objectives that have resulted in increased attrition rates of group members through unsubscribing of their membership, corruption, and leadership crises that have led to their collapse. This has put to an end the hopes of future investment to a number of group members; thus, to an extent, the existing manifestation of high poverty levels among the people that live as destitute (The Standard Digital, 2018; Wacera, 2018).

The increased unemployment and lack of finances among the youth have pushed them into seeking alternative ways of getting income to cater for their bills in their respective families (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). These alternatives are the ones that are considered as legal jobs according to the country's bylaws and hence, are conducted in secret (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). For instance, in Kibera informal settlements, there are increased alcohol drinking pubs and guest houses that have led to young girls being lured into dropping out of school to work in them as bar attenders (NACADA, 2013). These pubs that work overnight have led to increased cases of prostitution in the area in exchange for monetary value (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). This is a position that is supported by a study that was conducted by Onyango and Tostensen (2015) titled "The Situation of Youth in Kibera," that found 5.6 percent of youths engaged in prostitution to earn a living. This is a dangerous precedent among the youths as it breaks the strong fabric that is dependent on the young people for the country's prosperity in terms of the labour force (Kempe, 2012). Kibera informal settlements have also been an epitome of crime and violence that have seen so many people lose their valuable belongings that are later sold at a lower price to potential customers in what is referred to as the 'black market.' This is supported by Onyango and Tostensen (2015) that found 30.2 percent of crime and violence were reported in Kibera informal settlements. This has recently been a booming business among the youths that term themselves as hustlers that have one meal a day and only foot to their workplaces (Abdulla, 2011; The Standard Digital, 2018; Murage et al., 2014; Ng'ethe, 2018).

The level of accessibility and connectivity is one of the most important parameters that have enabled most countries to attain rapid growth. In Kenya, the picture that is portrayed in its capital Nairobi is not the same as that in Kibera informal slums that is only 6.5 km from the central business district (Muraguri, 2011). The slum is topographically characterized by being caged with lots of inadequacies, such as limited good infrastructures and social amenities (Akatch & Kasuku, 2002; Muraguri, 2011; Mitra et al., 2017). This enclosed region has made it difficult for any meaningful entrepreneurship or potential investors to set up their businesses there (Akatch & Kasuku, 2002). There have been cases of unplanned housing where all the land spaces, including the pathways, have been utilized (Muraguri, 2011). The area has experienced increased fire outbreaks that have been mainly triggered by illegal electricity connections that have led to the loss of lives and massive destruction of property (The Standard, 2017). This massive destruction has been caused by the increased challenge to the firefighters' vehicles and ambulances from penetrating the area, thus leaving most people homeless (Edobot, 2015).

In the current education system, primary school-going children are given free education in public schools (Onyango &

Tostensen, 2015). Unfortunately, there are still increased cases of children not accessing education due to problems of not being able to buy school uniforms and academic stationeries (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). Social services, such as public healthcare facilities that offer services at a comparatively cheaper price, are limited (Sande, 2015). The available health facilities have witnessed long queues of residents who have come to receive treatment with many that have passed on while on treatment lines (Sande, 2015). This has been the case at Kenyatta National Hospital, which is a referral hospital that has close proximity to Kibera slums.

### **So What Can Be Done?**

Development in the area can be attained if the issue of accessibility in terms of infrastructure is addressed. This will enable uniformed men and women to maintain law and order during times of riots and breakage of law and order (Muraguri, 2011). During President Uhuru Kenyatta's current regime, he used the services of the National Youth Service (NYS) to open up the area through building roads in different wards and removing garbage (Muraguri, 2011). This move was more advantageous in that it has helped in reducing the untold suffering of the residents during emergent times (Edobot, 2015). Kibera is known to be a hotspot of violence during elections, and hence during the aftermath of the disputed elections of 2017, the police had an easier opportunity to calm the situation. This was facilitated by good road connectivity, a case that was not present during the post-election violence of 2007/08 that was accompanied by women being raped, loss of life, looting of property, and destruction of property (Dimovitz, 2015; Musyoka, 2014). The issue of criminal activities and violence in the area has to be taken with a lot of seriousness and urgency by the government through the local administration to ensure there is massive security to encourage any potential developments in the area (Muraguri, 2011). In other words, the area has a high level of instability that is pegged on the situation political equilibrium spectrum (Muraguri, 2011). For instance, there has been the absence of banks for a long time in the area, with just recently trying to establish themselves, as Mpesa was the only medium used for financial transactions. This was triggered by the uncertainty that surrounds the sustainability of their businesses in the area (Muraguri, 2011). A case in point is when the Equity Bank in the area was stoned by demonstrators during the disputed election polls of 2017; thus, security in the area is paramount.

Secondly, the area residents have been having the chronic problem of ignorance that has led them to perish and have the present status quo (Kempe, 2012). In this respect, there has also been a disconnect in this geographical area in terms of the important stakeholders that include the community, its local administrators, and development goals (Kempe, 2012). The political leadership of the area that cuts across the member of parliament, members of the county assembly, religious leaders, village elders, and so forth have been performing their mandate dismally, and have only surfaced when an emergency has occurred; thus, they have been reactive rather than proactive servants of the people (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). In this sense, the solution revolves around the people who, when empowered, will help in providing solutions to their own problems (Chitere, 1994; Kempe, 2012). This will help in reducing the 'dependency syndrome' of the people towards the government, its local leadership, or NGOs, thus enhancing their overall sustainability (Nyamboga et al., 2014). The government should aim at reducing the level of ignorance in the area by encouraging adult education by establishing more adult training centers to impart knowledge

on them. This effort will also, to a larger extent, reduce the levels of early marriages and cohabitation that will reduce the levels of HIV/AIDS infections that are among the leading causes of death in the area (Patterson, 2009).

For almost three decades, Kibera informal settlements have had over 200 registered NGOs and CBOs that have been receiving financial donations from the United States and European countries (The Guardian, 2012; Barcott, 2000). Unfortunately, the so planned objectives of most of these NGOs and CBOs have not been met, and most of them have suffered a 'natural death' (The Guardian, 2012). Some of the organizations have been termed as 'briefcase NGOs' as their management has set up offices in the central business district and lost touch with their operations in Kibera informal settlement (The Guardian, 2014). This is the major reason Kibera slums has continued to be stagnant in its current situation, as most people managing the NGOs have benefitted from the same, as it has offered a platform where they have continued to write proposals about the slum grievances only to benefit themselves when the finances are submitted (Kimemia, 2014).

The local people should also be empowered through being given awareness campaigns such as seminars and training where they can be trained on how they can start small microenterprises (SMEs); how they can inculcate good saving culture from the little income they get; how they can run their CBOs and self-help groups without conflicts and attain their objectives (Kempe, 2012). Through this initiative, it will help people in the area not to focus so much on forming self-help groups that are geared towards helping them in times of hardships but rather, be business or financially oriented for their future growth. During the current constitutional dispensation, there are numerous platforms where the youth and women can use to obtain loans to start up their businesses that include the National Youth Fund, Kenya Women Trust Fund, Constituency Development Fund (CDF), and so forth. The challenge is that most of them lack information about the requirements that have to be met to secure the funds, and fear being asked to give collaterals such as vehicle logbooks, land title deeds, and so forth. The government should, thus improve in its marketing and information, given that it seems the people in the area lack sufficient knowledge. In addition, these respective loan interests should be reduced to reduce the hostilities towards its accessibility to the poor persons.

Kibera informal settlements have also been known to be a den that is characterized by sanitation facilities, sewage, and drainage system that has caused an increased outbreak of diseases that have caused increased morbidity and mortality rates (Akullian et al., 2015; Olack et al., 2015). The locals have continued to suffer from many social problems that have been caused by them being excluded by the government as they consider them as illegal settlements (Mmonwa, 2007). The government has a pivotal role in conducting surveillance to its populace to ensure they are free from any illnesses. Unfortunately, the government has had limited finances; thus, it is imperative for effective collaboration with other stakeholders such as the NGOs in conducting surveillance to identify an outbreak of epidemiology. A case in point is numerous surveillance studies that have been conducted by reputable organizations such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (KEMRI/ CDC), African Population Health Research Center (APHRC), Africa Medical Research and Foundation (AMREF), and Shining Hope for Communities (SHOFCO) (Akullian et al., 2015; Olack et al., 2015). The present NGOs should also ensure that professional ethics are always upheld in their operations and ensure there is an accountability of the

organization's finances to eradicate cases of corruption (The Guardian, 2014; Kimemia, 2014). This can be achieved through providing their reports regularly, either quarterly, semi-annually, or annually to the government and donors.

Since independence, Kenya has had subsequent general elections every five years (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). Kenyans have thus been involved in direct choosing of their political leaders and representatives that is designed in the constitution through means that are free of coercion and with free will (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). Kibera has continued to suffer and torture from different ills due to its selfish leaders that only focus on their wellbeing (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). In this sense, there has been a disconnect between political leaders and the people, as the latter only re-surface to the people when they are seeking another term in office (Adriaan de Smedt, 2011). It is imperative that political leaders employ the horizontal approach in terms of engaging with the community in terms of planning, organizing, and implementation of different projects in the area to enhance sustainability and people feeling part of the process (Chitere, 1994). Regular meetings also between political leaders and the community are paramount to ensure that any emerging issues are addressed appropriately at an opportune time.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus far, throughout the world, especially in the first world countries, they have endeavored and succeeded in ensuring that they have proper housing, good infrastructures and social amenities, good leadership, and equal employment opportunities. This discourse has demonstrated that Kibera slums and its residents have been marginalized from what the country's constitution describes as the bill of rights to access to political, social, economic, technological, gender, and ethnic accommodation to all. The Kenya slum upgrading program (KESUP) that was commenced in 2008/09 between the government and the World Bank was aimed at solving the puzzle of good housing to the people was halted, as the initial housing units were taken by the middle-class persons. The issues surrounding corruption, poor leadership, dishonesty, and lack of accountability should be resolved to ensure that the slum upgrading program continues to change the pathetic outlook of Kibera. The slum environment has proven to be areas that house persons with illiteracy, thus, it is important for empowerment centers to be increased to provide awareness platforms on how the people can improve their socio-economic status, and further reduce cases of HIV/AIDS infections in the area that destroys the human labour force that is important for the country's economic growth. It is, therefore, the position of this paper that if the above recommendations are met, the so desired 'chocolate city' of Kibera residents will henceforth be realized and be a haven to reckon with.

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