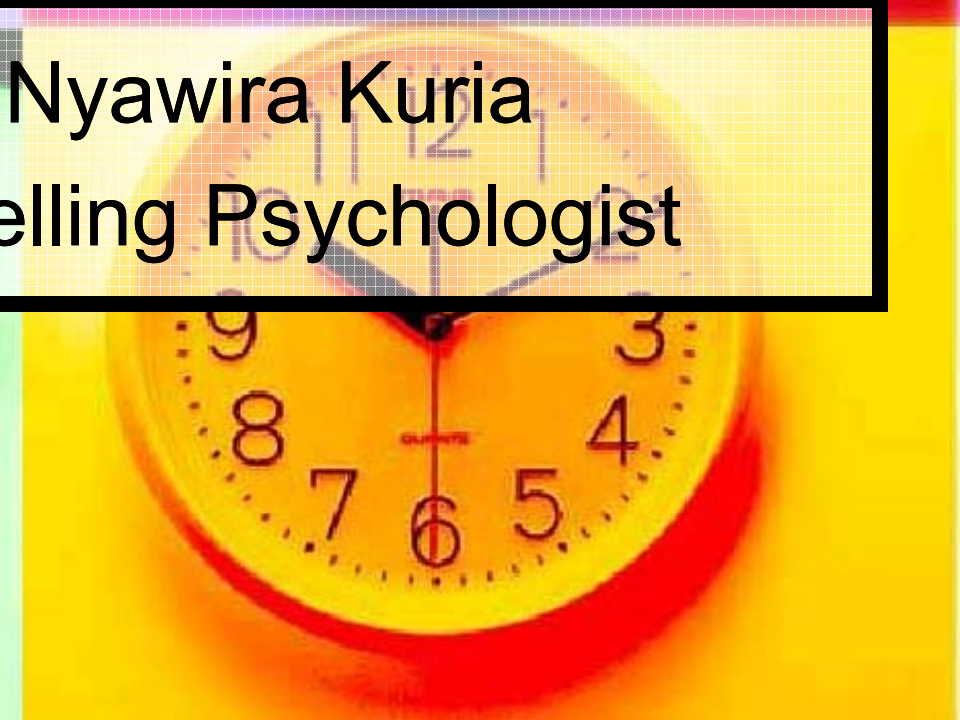
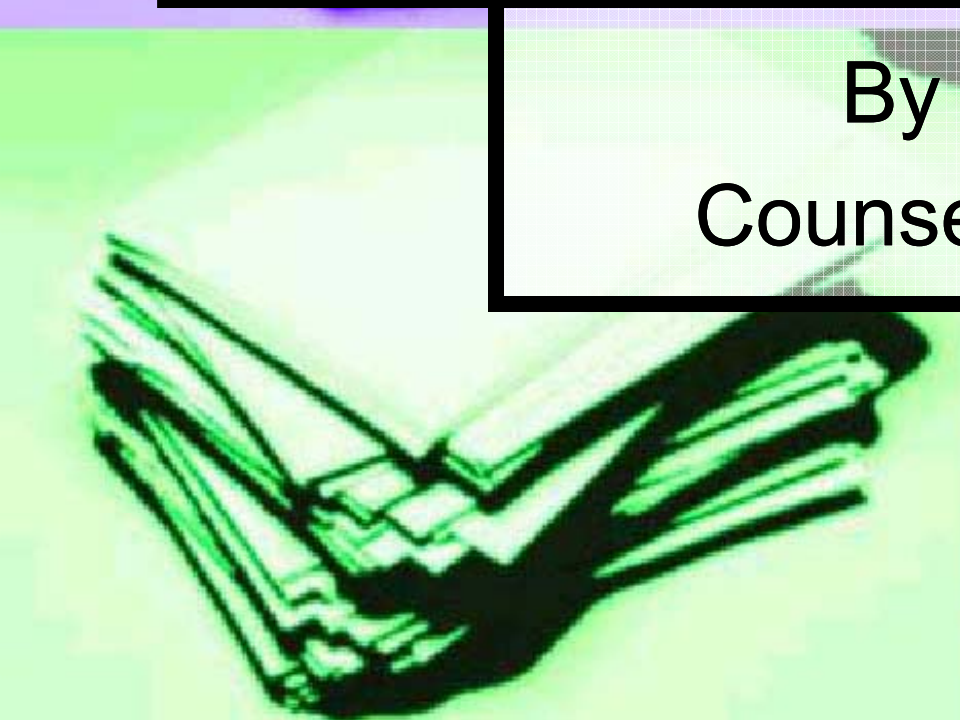




# TRAUMA: THE SILENT KILLER



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# BACKGROUND

- Kenya held the fourth multiparty general elections on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2007. A dispute arose following the results of the presidential results on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2007 by the electoral Commission of Kenya(ECK) which quickly degenerated into an unprecedented spiral of violence in various parts of Kenya.





# LOSSES

- displacement of over 500, 000 persons
- loss of homes/familiar environment,
- loss of family/relationships
- food/ security,
- basic services such a school and medical care,
- destruction of property
- heightened ethnic hatred and general disruption of social and economic way of life.



# EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

- immediate reactions among the affected population, nearly all the Kenyans that may have suffered severe violence and forced displacement will initially display reactions of (Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms PTSS).
- In the acute phase, these may include
- disbelief
- numbness
- restlessness





- intrusive thoughts
- grief reactions
- intrusive flashbacks
- social withdrawal
- uncontrollable crying.



- Among the children, there may be additional reactions, such as regression to an earlier development stage such as bedwetting, clinging to a parent (s) or/and become mute.
- As a result of this destructive phase many children adolescents and adults were severally affected psychologically.

# TRAUMATIC RESPONSE

- The severity of the event
- The individual history
- The meaning the event represents
- Coping skill, values, beliefs
- Reactions & support from family friends and professionals





# POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

- Substance abuse
- Compulsive behaviour patterns
- Inability to make healthy professional/or lifestyle choices







- Dissociative symptoms
- Feelings of in effectiveness, shame despair, hopelessness
- Loss of personhood
- Feeling permanently damaged
- Loss of previously sustained beliefs



- the victim can be silenced by the deafness of others
- Self destructive and impulsive behaviour

# EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Inability to maintain close relationships or choose appropriate friends
- Hostility
- Social withdrawal
- Feeling constantly threatened
- Sexual problems



# ETHICAL TRAUMA COUNSELLING

- can be engaged in when the following factors are present
- Safety has been restored and there is no chance of threat to life or other danger, when basic survival needs are met
- If done by professionally trained counsellors







- If ongoing regular follow up counselling can be guaranteed
- If a person indicates that they wish to be counselled

# WAY FORWARD

- Recognise the need to have professionally trained counsellors, that cater for specific groups
- Educate our communities on the importance of professional counselling in relation to traumatic events in our lives

