

HEALING OF POST ELECTION VIOLENCE
MEMORIES AMONG CHILDREN:
A case study of Burnt Forest

BY:ROGERS SONGOLE

&

ANGELINE OBUTU

Introduction

- Post election violence had devastating effects.
- It included brutal acts.
- Media, government & NGOs involved adults

Methods

- Qualitative focus group discussions with pupils age 12 – 18 yrs
- Discussions were on:
 - Life before PEV.
 - During PEV
 - Life now.
 - What's hurting most
 - What they want
 - Way forward

Life before PEV

- There was peace
- Went to school
- No killings
- Were friends with other tribes.
- Farmers grew food.
- No burning of houses
- Peaceful trading
- Lived without fear
- No hunger
- Tourist visited
- Education was normal
- No tribalism
- No running away from homes
- Freedom of movements

Life During PEV

- Slept hungry
- Slept in the forest
- Witnessed raping of women & small children
- Raping and killing of relatives
- Always on the run
- No good sleep
- Parents property were burnt & stolen
- Helped to prevent suicide
- Were abandoned by their parents
- Forced to participate in the violence
- Family, friends & community disruptions
- Exposure to boundless human brutality
- Churches & schools were burnt
- Lost pets, uniforms, clothes books
- Teachers were displaced

Life now

- Some have forgiven
- Were bitter
- Life returning to normal
- Food not enough
- Behind in class
- Not comfortable in relating with other tribes
- Refusal to sell foods
- Internalization of terror experiences.
- Relationships change
- Some living in IDP camps
- Disruptions in education
- Enmity labeling and stigmatization
- NGOs helping with the reconstructions and personal effects
- Feel depressed, angry, distrustful, fearful, alienated and betrayed.
- Some feel no forgiveness
- Violence in schools
- Few teachers in schools

What they want

- Peace
- Forgiveness
- Harmony
- Love
- Joy/happiness
- Unity
- Self-control
- Friendship with others
- Freedom
- Faithfulness
- Kindness
- More teachers needed

Way forward

- Peaceful learning environment
- Live in harmony
- No fighting
- Forgive each other
- Have freedom of movement
- Making friendship with other communities
- Reconciliation programmes for children

Outcome/Conclusion

- Children behind in class
- PEV had devastating effects on both adults & children.
- PEV acts included: shootings, stabbings, burning- houses, food stores, schools, churches, & business buildings.
- Children were exposed to PEV directly or indirectly.
- Impact includes: depression, anger, distrustfulness, fearful, alienation, bitterness, aggression & learning difficulties.
- Children want peace, forgiveness, harmony, love, freedom, unity and happiness.
- Had not gone through psychological first Aid, hence need for the same.
- Children behind in class

The Kenya we want?

