

Influence of Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons on Sustainable Community Cohesion and Development in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: The election related violence and resource based conflict have been major drivers in Kenya's internal displacements making Kenya a substantial contributor to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), now perceived as one of the 21st Century's tragedies that humanitarian sector has to address. Statistics by United Nations agencies on displacements and refugees puts this figure at over forty million people, a number that represents 62 per cent of global internal displacements inflows. Whereas studies have revealed that the rights and needs of IDPs are best protected and sustainably served when adequate support systems and sufficient resources are in place in the affected communities, limited studies that have evaluated this scenario exist. Further, according to studies done by Kimungi(2013) and International Development Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (2017), internal displacement's negative consequences in terms of people's wellbeing and human rights have been highlighted for decades, but its impacts on and relationship with socio-economic development are not well understood. The purpose of this study was to address this empirical gap by examining the nature of IDPs resettlement in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya with a view to decipher its influence on sustainable community cohesion and development after resettlement exercise. A sample size of 184 was used, being composed of 135 household heads, 28 key informants and 21 members from three focus group discussions (FGDs). The mixed research design that comprised of concurrent triangulation, evaluation and cross sectional survey was employed. Multiphase, stratified sampling and purposive sampling were used to select households, key informants and FGDs respectively. The data for study was obtained through questionnaires, interviews, document analysis, and observation checklist. Frequency tables, pie charts, verbatim quotations and chi-square tests were used to analyse data. The study established that most of the resettled IDPs were reintegrated in their previous environment after three years in camps and that majority of the respondents .Chi-square tests revealed a significant relationship between cohesion on resettlement and development in the study area. It was concluded that the resettlement of IDPs in Uasin Gishu County which occurred after three years had influence on the sustainable community cohesion and development. The study recommends that all options of resettlement especially reintegration and relocation be considered whenever this activity is being considered elsewhere.

Keywords: resettlement, IDPs, cohesion, development, Uasin-Gishu County.

1. INTRODUCTION

Paraphrasing William Lacy Swing, Director General of International Organization for Migration (IOM), Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) is one of the 21st Century's tragedies that humanitarian sector has to address where persons are caused to flee for their own lives out of their traditional homes/places of habitual residences within borders of their countries (IOM, 2017). In the process, IDPs become susceptible and vulnerable to many shocks out of poverty, extreme weather conditions and associated diseases, lost educational opportunities, unemployment, marginalization together with

insecurity (IDMC, 2017; Kimungi, 2013). According to United Nations agencies on displacements and refugees, over 40 million people are currently displaced by conflict inside their own countries, a number that represents 62 per cent of the total number of displaced persons worldwide and that the trend keeps raising on unprecedented proportions (IOM, 2017; Chauvin & Santos, 2017).

Resettlement of internally displaced persons is bound to cause challenges because the entire resettlement process is dynamic and pose significant challenges for individual returnees, host communities and host families in whichever contexts: rural and urban areas (UNDP, 2011). Whereas it's true the rights and needs of IDPs are best protected and sustainably served when adequate support systems and sufficient resources are in place in the affected communities as averred by IOM (2017), this is hardly the case. The recipient host communities and local authorities/administration are therefore left struggling to meet the influx of demand for housing, schools and access to social protection services, among other infrastructural requirements for a sustainable livelihood which may threaten cohesion as a result of resettlement of IDPs. Further, according to studies done by Kimungi(2013) and International Development Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (2017), internal displacement's negative consequences in terms of people's wellbeing and human rights have been highlighted for decades, but its impacts on and relationship with socio-economic development are not well understood. The desire to conduct this study was premised on empirical evidence (UNHCR, 2005; Cotroneo, 2017; Chauvin & Santos, 2017) that the global crisis of internal displacement on a spiral increase will be adequately resolved when durable solutions are found, and individual countries individually or collectively together with affected communities are united in sharing responsibility in responding to displacement, in preventing and reducing the risks of crises, and in resolving conflicts as urgently as possible. This study focused on the nature of IDPs resettlement in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya with a view to decipher its influence on sustainable community cohesion and development after resettlement exercise.

Whereas studies (UNDP, 2011; Kimungi, 2013) have attributed multiple causes of internal displacement in Kenya, some of them being natural disasters, cultural practices such as cattle rustling, resource based conflicts among others, there seems to be concurrence that political violence, has generated a huge proportion of IDPs to date. Before 1992, patterns of displacement appeared to be tied to colonial policies around land but since reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1992, the politically orchestrated violence witnessed in the lead up to the 1992 elections was repeated in subsequent electoral cycles in 1997, 2002 and 2007. However, the violence and massive internal displacement that accompanied 2007election marked a watershed in the whole pattern of resettlement which since then had to be pursuit with caution lest another cycle of bloody violence and displacement follow. A situational report by UNDP (2011) reinforces this school of thought when it posits that tensions in various parts of the country remains high, suggesting not only failed reconciliation efforts after displacements and migrations but perhaps also that sustainable community cohesion is a major casualty of the failed resettlement programmes in Kenya. This study was an empirical gesture to unlock this dilemma by examining how the nature of IDPs resettlement in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya impacted on sustainable community cohesion and development after resettlement exercise. The three alternative solutions for internal displaced persons, analogous to the classic three durable solutions sought for refugees; repatriation (return), local integration and resettlement were interrogated. This study was guided by conflict transformation theory as conceptualized by John Paul Lederach and post development theory as conceptualized by Michael Foucault. As averred by Lederach and Maiese (2009) conflict transformation goes beyond a set of specific techniques to address conflict and that it's more of a mechanism that provides a set of lenses through which we make sense of social conflict by focusing on certain aspects of conflict thereby being helped to discern clearer perspective of the conflict. Premised on the thinking of Michael Foucault, the post-development theory advocates for thinking about alternatives to development instead of alternative ways of reaching development in the developing economies like Kenya (Kipplier, 2010; Escobar, 2010). The researchers used these theories to conceptualize the problem under investigation; examining the nature of IDPs resettlement in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya with a view to decipher its influence on sustainable community cohesion and development after resettlement process.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research paradigm that informed this study was a pragmatic approach, a philosophical underpinning for mixed method design (Creswell., Plano Clark., Gutmann., & Hanson., 2003). The mixed research design that comprised of concurrent triangulation, evaluation and cross sectional survey was employed to address various variables in the study objective. Resettlement of displaced persons and desired cohesion and development are multi-faceted, dynamic and multidimensional concepts that could be best examined different methods are employed (Kadushin., Hecht., Sasson., & Saxe., 2008). A sample size of 184 was used, being composed of 135 household heads, 28 key informants and 21 members from three FGDs. Multiphase, stratified sampling and purposive sampling were used to select households, key informants

and FGDs respectively. Such a mixture of sampling techniques is known to enrich sampling strategy (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The data for study was obtained through questionnaires, interviews, document analysis, and observation checklist. Frequency tables, pie charts, verbatim quotations and chi-square tests were used to analyse data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to establish basic demographic characteristics of sampled household members namely: age, gender, marital status, income and highest level of education. These basic characteristics were perceived to be important in the nexus between resettlement and sustainable community cohesion together with development in the County. The results are captured in Tables 1 and 2 together with figures 1 and 2.

Table 1: Age of the respondents

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage
<30	28	20.74
31-39	39	28.89
40-49	47	34.81
>50	21	15.56
Total	135	100.0

Source: Field Data (2016)

From Table 1, It was revealed that 34.81% of the respondents were between 40 and 49 years while a few (15.56%) were above 50 years of age. The mean age of the respondents was 37.44 years which is consistent with marriage ages as in this study those targeted for participation were mainly household heads.

The issue of age is important as each age or age group is associated with a particular role they played in the sustainable community cohesion and development. In relation to resettlement of IDPs, age factor is useful on the impact of resettled IDPs on agricultural production, employment status, remittance and challenges faced after resettlement.

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	73	54.07%
Female	62	45.93%
Total	135	100.0%

Source: Field Data (2016)

From Table 2, majority of the respondents were male accounting for 54.07% compared to females who accounted for 45.93%. This could be explained from a cultural angle where men being regarded as the head of the family and the provider of the household could naturally volunteer to respond on behalf of the family. This contradicts the findings of Etienne (2010) in Gulu District in Uganda where majority of the households were women-headed perhaps as a result of many men dying and being captured in the prolonged conflict in that region.

The income levels of respondents were inferred from nature of livelihood activities engaged in. The nature of employment for instance determines greatly the level of economic sustainability within the households and the community at large. Permanent and pensionable employment or secure informal employment increases the probability that the household would be able to cater for the basic needs as well as secure property. However, temporary employment or unemployment reduces the capacity of the households to meet their basic necessities and makes them more vulnerable to social conflict.

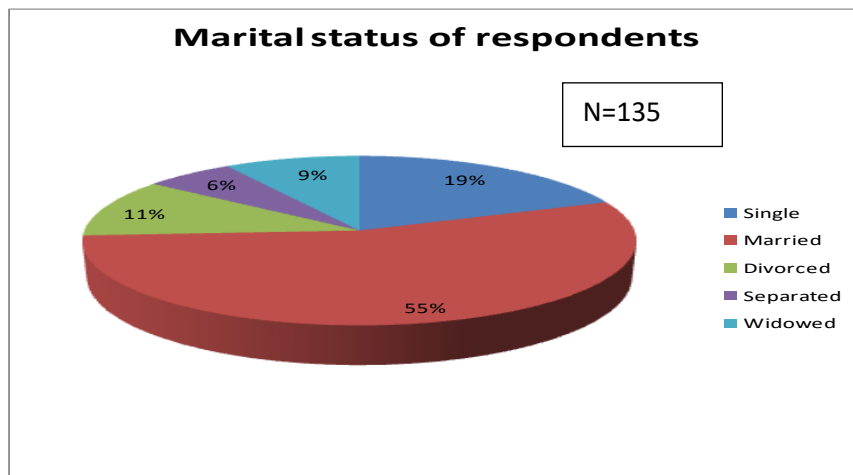
Table 3: Nature of employment

Nature of employment	Frequency	Percentage
Temporary	44	32.59
Self-employed	58	42.96
Permanent	23	17.04
Unemployed	10	7.41
Total	135	100

Source: Field Data (2016)

From the Table 3, It was established that more than forty percent of the respondents (42.96%) were self-employed while a few were permanently employed (17.04%) and that only 44 people (32.59%) were in temporary employment. This indicates that majority of the respondents were not in permanent employment. This finding corroborates with the findings of Brookings Institution (2011) that construction and domestic work were the main sources of temporary employment for the host communities and IDPs in Suba and Ciudad Bolívar Localities in Bogotá, Colombia.

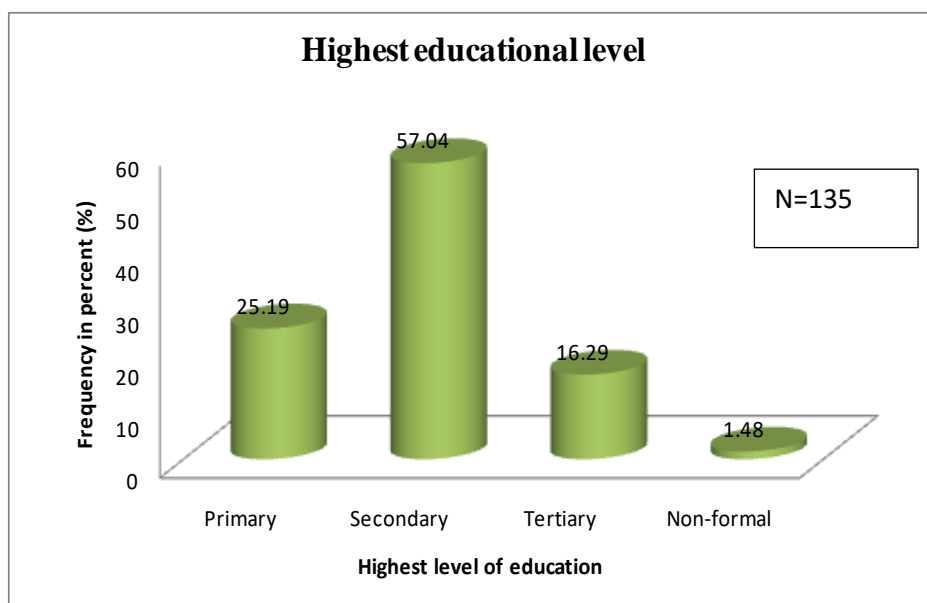
With regard to the marital status, figure 1 shows that majority of the respondents (55%) were married while 6% of the respondents were separated. those who indicated divorced were 11% , widowed were 9% and those that were single were 19%. Whereas the statistics implies that more than half of the respondents were in a married household, the 45% points to single headed households which makes them more vulnerable to resettlement dynamics.



Source: Field Data (2016)

Figure 1: Marital status of the respondents

One's level of education is a precursor to options of opportunities and flexibility when one is faced with challenges of resettlement. This study sought to establish the highest level of education of the respondents and the results were as shown in Figure 2. It was established that majority of the respondents (57.04%) had attained secondary education as highest level of education while only 16% indicated had a tertiary qualification.



Source: Field Data (2016)

Figure 2: level of education

The study further examined the nature of IDPs resettlement in Uasin Gishu County by looking at the willingness of the IDPs to be resettled, where the IDPs were resettled, when the resettlement was done after initial displacement from their original home, who was involved in facilitating their resettlement, and how the IDPs were facilitated during the resettlement process. The results are as captured in figure3 and Tables4 to 8. As indicated in figure 3, more than half of respondents at 65 % (88) were willing to be resettled back into their previous traditional homes/places of habitual residences within Uasin Gishu while 35% (47) were not willing to be resettled back into their previous traditional homes. Chi-square test conducted on willingness as a component of nature of resettlement gave ($\chi^2_{1,0.01}$ 12.452) which showed that there was highly significant ($P < 0.05$) variation among the IDPs willingness and resettlement exercise.

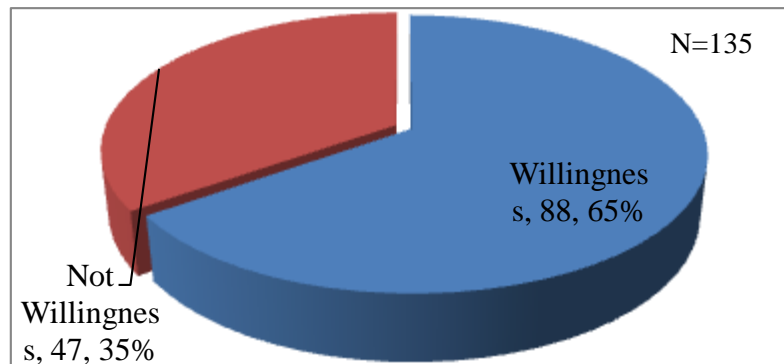


Figure 3. Willingness to be resettled

During FGD, the researcher noted that some of the IDPs were more than willing to return to their farm and continue with their lives as before. However, one of the discussants revealed that a section of the IDPs were scared to be resettled to their original farms due to what happened resulting to their status of internally displaced persons. Some of the reasons cited were insecurity and that host communities expressed hostility as they were not ready to lose the new opportunities out of grabbed properties and minimum business competition after displacements. One of the discussants stated that:

I really wanted to return to my original homeland. Where I was not comfortable but the manner which I and my family flee made me to be hesitant. When the government assured of us security and reconciliation I decided to be resettled although some of my relatives and friend are still skeptical.

Other studies on internally displaced persons in Kenya for instance by Kimungi (2001; 2013) , UNDP (2011) and Beyani (2012) corroborate these finding and that other reasons that frustrated desire for reintegration included lack of a policy and legislative framework together with insufficient operational and institutional capacity. These factors frustrated enforcement of the rights of returnees especially those who found their property occupied by former neighbours and had little support from Government agencies to seek redress. Even in other states where conflict has resulted to migration and internal displacements like Burundi, Uganda, Colombia, Serbia, Sudan, among others, the common thread of frustration on the account of insecurity, robbed livelihoods and threats for re- eviction remain real (Ferris& Birkeland, 2011; IDMC, 2008)

On the account of where IDPs were resettled after displacement, the results are as captured in Table 4.

Table 4: Where the IDPs were resettled

Where resettled	Frequency (percentage)			Total
	Ainabkoi	Kesses	Turbo	
Previous home	31 (22.96%)	28 (20.74%)	32 (23.70%)	91 (67.41%)
Different location	14 (10.37%)	17 (12.59%)	13 (9.63%)	44 (32.59%)
Total	45 (33.33%)	45 (33.33%)	45 (33.33%)	135 (100.0%)

Source: Field Data (2016)

From Table4, It was revealed that more than two-thirds of the respondents (67.41%) were resettled in their previous homes while about one third of the respondents (32.59%) were resettled in a different location but within Uasin Gishu County. This implies that most of the resettled IDPs were reintegrated in their previous environment. Chi-square test

conducted on integration a component of nature of resettlement gave ($\chi^2_{1,0.01}$ 16.363) which showed that there was highly significant ($P < 0.05$) association between integration of the IDPs and the entire resettlement exercise. During FGD, majority of the participants revealed that they preferred to be resettled in their previous homes hence integration. One of the discussants stated that:

I preferred to return to my previous homes than being allocated in totally different location. The size of land allocated in different location was small as compared to what I had earlier. Besides I can quickly rebuild shelter as I pick up my pieces.

The feedback from a FGD participant points to the reality that in some cases where property could be returned to returning IDPs, community cohesion could easily be cemented and therefore possibility of development could ensue. However, some of the respondents decided to be resettled in different location as they were not at peace with their previous homes. Some of the reasons advanced were lack of security from their neighbours, suspicious about their neighbours motive toward them and some who were squatters profited from land that were given in different location. The findings as established by the study is corroborated by studies by Rohwerder (2013) on IDPs in Democratic Republic of Congo.

The study sought to find out the reception of host communities during and after resettlements. The respondents were required to rate the reception from 1 very bad to 5 very good. The results are shown in Table 5

Table 5: Reception of host communities to IDPs resettlements

Reception	During Resettlement		After resettlement	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very bad	28	20.7	2	1.5
Bad	41	30.4	5	3.7
Moderate	40	29.6	31	23.0
Good	24	17.8	67	49.6
Very Good	2	1.5	30	22.2
Total	135	100.0	135	100.0

Source: Field Data (2016)

From Table 5, over half of the respondents received bad (30.4%) and very bad (20.7%) reception during resettlement period as compared to 5.2% who still received bad and very bad reception after resettlement. Similarly, a total of 19.3% of the respondents received pleasant reception during reception as compared to 71.8% of the respondents after resettlement. During the FGDs in Ainabkoi, Kesses and Turbo, it was revealed that IDPs received mixed reception depending on their ethnicity. Those who were resettled in different location experienced different reception when they went for market and other public places like to fetch water or do washing at the river and posho mills. However, the situation was worse for those who were resettled at their previous home. One of the discussants in Ainabkoi revealed that:

I found it hard to relate with my neighbor who chased me away from my home took some of my properties and injured me. I know it will take some time before I relate with them the way we used before the displacement

From the findings, it's evident that some of the respondents found it hard to relate with the previous neighbour and also the neighbours felt guilty of what they did to their neighbours and friends during displacement. During interview with key informants derived from local administrators, CBOs and NGOs, the researcher noted that, initially, the majority of the host communities were hostile on the idea of resettlement of the IDPs within their midst. Some of the community members had occupied or taken advantage of the IDPs and occupied their property. A study by Kamungi (2001; 2013) and a report by special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs in Kenya (Bayani, 2012) is agreeable with this finding. It was further revealed by key informants interviewed that the change of heart on the part of host community to accommodate IDPs after resettlement was out of initiatives of the government agencies together with FBOs, NGOs and CBOs to build cohesion between resettled IDPs and the host communities. The local administrators initiated several programme for reconciliation and acceptability of the IDPs either in their original land or new areas. This led to increase in their level of reception and acceptance by the host communities. This initiative of building bridges and seeking reconciliation and the achieved cohesion is consistent with the finding by Cotroneo (2017) on specificities and challenges of responding to internal displacements in urban settings.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND REMMENDATIONS

Resettlement of IDPs in Uasin Gishu County was based on two patterns which are reintegration and relocation. It was observed that most of the resettlement occurred based on reintegration of IDPs into their former homelands on the account of reception by the host and foreseen options of regained livelihoods and therefore development. Relocation as a nature of resettlement was driven majorly by insecurity and fear for re-attacks. That cohesion was build out of joint efforts of actors in the resettlement exercise who were a blend of friends, neighbours, NGOs, churches, relatives as well as the government of Kenya. The study recommends that all options of resettlement especially reintegration and relocation be considered whenever this activity is being considered elsewhere

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