



## Global Voices Information Sheet

### Post-Election Violence in Kenya

#### **Post-Election Violence**

- On Dec. 27, 2007, Kenya held general elections in which President Mwai Kibaki was declared re-elected over Raila Odinga.
- However, the election results were said to have been flawed and international observers said they did not meet international standards.
- This led to protests and riots which erupted into wide scale violence that resulted in 1,500 dead and 600,000 displaced persons.
- On Apr. 13, 2008, Kibaki named the Grand coalition cabinet with ministers from the opposing sides. The cabinet was sworn in on Apr. 17, 2008.

#### **The Kibera Slum**

- Kibera is located in Nairobi, Kenya and is the largest slum in Africa.
- The area has a population estimated at 1 million within a geographic space of about 2.5 square kilometers. That's about 75 per cent of the area of New York's Central Park.
- Kibera is heavily polluted with open sewage and no sanitation systems.
- These conditions, combined with extreme poverty and poor nutrition, account for disease becoming rampant in the region.
- HIV/AIDS is particularly bad. It is estimated of the 2.2 million Kenyans living with HIV, 20 per cent of them live in Kibera.
- The United Nations is currently involved in a project to upgrade the slum. But, crime rates, lack of foundations and frequent flooding have complicated the process.

#### **Key Terms**

**impunity** – exemption from punishment

**incumbent** – holding an indicated position, role or office currently

**perpetrator** – one who commits an offense or crime

**testimony** – a statement or declaration of a witness

## Global Voices Secondary Educator Resources

### Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

### Themes and Course Connections

Teachers are encouraged to consider best practices for teaching controversial and sensitive issues. For some students, this column may present a difficult or uncomfortable experience.

### Pre-Reading Questions:

1. Brainstorm a list of adjectives that describe a slum (Note: It will be interesting to see whether students think of developing world or North America). As a large group categorize the descriptions into areas related to population size, shelter, health and sanitation and safety.
2. Ask students to predict the approximate number of people living in Kibera, the slum located in Nairobi. Second, ask them to identify the size of the area.
3. Ask students to imagine a violent situation breaking out in an area with an estimated one million people in roughly 2.5 kilometres. What types of behaviours would you expect? (Note: Ask students to consider what steps might be taken if riots broke out in a major city like Toronto or Vancouver. Consider recent examples like the G20 in Toronto or the Stanley Cup playoffs in Vancouver).
4. Gauge prior knowledge on the violence that erupted during the Kenyan election (Dec. 30, 2007).

### Post Reading Questions:

As a class, review the information sheet and column for facts related to the Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya.

1. What surprised you most about the column?

2. Of the estimated 3,000 rapes, how many people were convicted?
3. Why do you think sexual assaults were so prevalent during the riots (i.e., consider the different ethnic groups and divisions between people who had previously been neighbours)?
4. Why do you think CARE International established the reporting centres? What, if any, benefit will they provide?
5. Seeking justice for violent sexual crimes is difficult for women in any country. What is it about Kenya's political context that makes it especially difficult Kenya (i.e., what percentage of the testimonials were members of the Kenyan military)?
6. What physical and emotional consequences are being discussed in the reporting centres? Think back to the conditions of the slum itself. What are possible long term implications (i.e., spread of disease, economic and social implications of riots in a small geographic area)?
7. Discussion or written reflection:

There have been no convictions to date for sexual assaults during the post-election violence. But, there is an underlying message of hope inferred from the Kenyan victims. Why?

### Research Extensions:

1. Find out more about conditions in the Kibera slum and the current status of the Kenyan government. (Note: Visit the Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, CBC, BBC and United Nations websites for additional articles and links to photographs).
2. Find out what actions the Kenyan government and/or the United Nations have taken to improve conditions in Kibera, specifically regarding women's rights.