

Lobby and Dialogue Forums of Slum Representatives (Nairobi Slum Residents' Assembly)

The Nairobi slums are one area that was adversely affected by the December 2007-January 2008 post elections violence. The slums occupy one-eighth of the land space in Nairobi but host three-quarters of the city's population of four million people. Many factors combine to make the Nairobi slums the most violent and vulnerable neighborhoods in Nairobi. And as media reports indicate, post-election violence started in the Nairobi slums (Kibera) before it spread to other parts of the country. Consequently, the slums bore the heaviest brunt of the violence.

In January 31 of 2008, Citizens against Violence (CAVi) and FES launched a dialogue meeting with various groups involved in the PEV. The meeting was attended by 60 participants comprising ethnic-based leaders of youth groups, women, landlords, tenants, vigilante, and the religious leadership structures in the Nairobi slums. It was decided to establish the Nairobi Slums Leaders Assembly (NASLA) to serve as a neutral forum where leaders (delegates) from the Nairobi Slums could meet monthly to talk about issues concerning slum dwellers and develop community-based responses, not only to conflicts but also to governance and developmental issues. Since its launching, the Assembly convenes in Huruma every first Monday of the month. The delegates at the Assembly are 60 young people who were jointly recruited by CAVi and FES after interviews. All the delegates are youth leaders who have impacted positively on community peace mobilization. They represent 10 Slums, namely: Kibera, Huruma, Mathare, Kiambiu, Kawangware, Kangemi, Dandora, Korogocho, Eastleigh and Soweto. During its launching in April 2009, the Assembly set rules to guide its operations.

In 2013 the Assembly has adopted a formal structure. It is headed by a Speaker and has six working sub-committees constituted to monitor service delivery in the Nairobi slums. Each of the 60 delegates is a member of a sub-committee so that each sub-committee is composed of 10 members. The sub-committees are as follows: -

1. Slums sub-committee on land, housing and landlords-tenants relations
2. Slums sub-committee on security and community policing
3. Slums sub-committee on water, sanitation and garbage collection
4. Slums sub-committee on women empowerment and genders issues
5. Slums sub-committee on crime and drug abuse
6. Slums sub-committee on health and environment

NASLA also convenes monthly public meetings in each of the ten slums represented in the Assembly. The purpose of these meetings is to provide a forum where various committees in the Assembly can receive the position and input of slums residents regarding each of the prioritized issues. The sole aim of the intra-slums meetings is to bring the Assembly closer to the slums residents and to provide them a forum where they can also input on the policy issues before the Assembly can engage with the national and Nairobi County Governments.

