

**Kenya Expert and Founder of African Great Lakes Initiative,  
David Zarembka, offers insights into current situation from Western Kenya**

**Report #1: Report on Kenya Elections  
December 25, 2007**

Every five years, Kenya has an election for president, members of parliament (PM), and county councils. December 27 is Election Day here. Elections in Kenya used to be completely rigged with the one-party government of Jomo Kenyatta, followed by Daniel Arap Moi, nominating whomever they wanted. For PM and county council there might be more than one candidate, and unlike the US where incumbency almost guarantees re-election, incumbency here is a great liability as the electorate frequently voted even powerful people out of office. There is talk in the country of throwing out 90% of the current PM's and this might even happen! In 1992 multi-partyism was re-introduced, but President Moi was able to keep the opposition fragmented and won the 1992 and 1997 elections. However, in 2002 everyone united against him and he was defeated by Kibaki.

Mwai Kibaki, 76, is the current President and he is running for a second and last term on the PNU, Party of National Unity, which was formed only a few months ago as his election vehicle. His main challenger is Raila Odinga, 62, the son of one of the major early figures in Kenyan post-independence—Moi put him in jail for eight years. Raila's party is ODM, Orange Democratic Movement, which was formed in 2005 to successfully defeat a new Constitution promoted by the Government. The last is Musyoka Kalonzo, of the ODM-Kenya party, Orange Democratic Movement—Kenya, who was also involved in the defeat of the Constitution. Kibaki is Kikuyu, the largest, most dominate tribe in the country based around Mount Kenya; Raila is Luo, the second largest tribe from around Kisumu; and Musyoka is Kamba, from Eastern Province. There are many polls and they have indicated that Raila is ahead of Kibaki from 1% to 8% and Musyoka is trailing badly at 15%, almost all his votes coming from the Kamba tribe. If you would like to know the level of discourse here, the Luo are the only major tribe in Kenya who do not perform male circumcision. People are told not to vote for Raila because he is not circumcised.

Kenya has some weird laws which were put in to place to keep the old political guard in power. One is that the President has to win his own parliamentary seat. This could be very significant because Raila's constituency is in Nairobi and I have heard that there will be a lot of rigging and corruption in his district so that he loses. If he loses his seat and wins the popular vote, I predict significant violence in the country. Yet Kibaki is not off the hook as another rule says that a presidential candidate must have at least 25% of the vote in 5 of the 8 provinces. He is definitely not getting 25% in Nyanza Province where Raila comes from and it is possible that he will not get 25% in Western, Coast, and Northeastern Province. Then what?

With this background, I want to focus on the district we live in, Lugari District, which is a very volatile one. This district is in Western Province where the vast majority of the

population is Luhya. Lugari District was part of the White highlands reserved for British settlers until independence in 1963. It was then divided up into plots and sold at a discount to people from Western Province. Yet tribalism never stops. The Luhya are divided into 14 sub-tribes. The biggest is Maragoli from the south (the sub-tribe that Gladys belongs to) and many of them have moved to Lugari because Vihiga District is very crowded. Another large group in Lugari comes from the Bugusu sub-tribe from nearby Mount Elgon.

For the first time ever, the political parties held primaries—they were chaotic. Here in Lugari, where whoever gets the nod from ODM is most likely to win, the ODM primary was to be on Friday. But there were no ballots for the 8 candidates: people milled around in town for most of the day, and nothing happened. Then on Saturday the ballots showed up and folks went to the local PAG church (Pentecostal Assemblies of God) to vote. Gladys went and was told that even though this voting place was a block from our house, she had to go to another one about a mile away. She didn't go. Things seemed to be going orderly at that time.

Why are there so many candidates—the general election has over 2,000 candidates for 212 seats or more than 10 per seat? This means that you can win with a rather small percentage of the votes. The reason is that PM's are paid \$190,000 per year in salary and benefits (one of the highest in the world) in a country where the official per capita income is \$600 and my estimate is \$3,000. The only qualification outside of being a Kenyan citizen is to be fluent in Swahili and English.

Sunday (Dec. 23) when I was returning from Church I passed by the ODM office. There were many people standing outside and horrendous shouting from within the building. Enoch Kibunguchy, the outgoing MP, had lost the election and he assaulted the Returning Officer and later had a case filed against him. In many of the primaries the candidates favored by the political establishment lost – including many MP's, ministers, and assistant ministers. These losers quickly jumped to become a candidate of one of the other 140 or so registered parties—there was one party that advertised in the paper that if you paid a certain amount you could be a candidate on their party ticket. In this case, the ODM hierarchy offered Kibunguchy a try on the NARC party ticket which is allied with ODM. I think he has little chance of winning.

So let us turn to Wycliffe Mudavadi. For us, an important fact is that he is a Quaker who frequently comes to church in Nairobi (and perhaps upcountry). More important for most Luhya he is a Maragoli. In 2002 Mudavadi was made vice-president by Moi, in the hope of getting Luhya votes. This did not happen and Mudavadi lost his parliamentary seat. He quickly saw his error and during the ODM campaign in 2005 he joined the anti-government coalition. He is now the point man for ODM in Western Province and the vice-president designate if ODM wins. Kibunguchy is a Bugusu and accused Mudavadi of supporting his rival, Evans Musungu, who is also a Marigoli.

But then Lugari District is home to a former PM, named Jirongo, who is the leader of his own party, KADDU (Kenya African Development D? Union) which has 97 candidates

running for MP across the country. He is putting up a spirited campaign. Kibaki's party, PNU, has a candidate but I don't think he is a factor at all in this district. There are a total of eight candidates. I predict that Musungu, the ODM candidate, will win here, but this may be because he is a Maragoli and I hear mostly from other Maragoli. Our electrician, Justus, who is distantly related to Gladys, is the ODM youth leader for Lugari District. Needless to say our electricity which needs attention has not received it. My sons, Tommy and Douglas, printed up a shirt in the US which is orange (the color of the Orange Democratic Movement) saying, "Piga Chura, Chagua 2008, Barack Obama"—meaning "Vote, Choose in 2008, Barack Obama." Justus begged me for it so I gave it to him and he was wearing it every day.

There has been much more violence in this district. One defeated ODM candidate, a woman, was assassinated on her way home from an ODM meeting in Nairobi. Just last Saturday we learned that two women, who were given funds to bribe other women, were attacked by the youth of an opposing candidate: the money was stolen; their dresses were ripped apart so that they were naked. Bribing, which is supposed to be illegal—the laws in Kenya are actually very good on the whole, but the problem here is that no one thinks they need to abide by the law – prevails everywhere. In Vihiga, Gladys's home area, she saw women going to a certain house to get a half-kilo of sugar. On the national level, when Lucy Kibaki, the wife of the president, gave a speech to women in the Coast Province, each one was given a 1000/- note (\$15.87) in reward for listening to her. This was reported in the newspaper but is considered nothing out of the ordinary.

To-date twenty-five people have been killed due to the elections. An assistant minister's Government vehicle was stopped with traditional weapons—machetes, clubs, etc.--and he denied any involvement. Again the law states that anyone using violence will be disbarred. Three candidates have been fined 100,000/- (\$1587) for inciting violence, but they remain in the election. There are very few women candidates, around 10%, and even less will win. Women, in addition to men, have been beaten up by rivals including one female candidate who was hospitalized. Every candidate from the President on down had to visit her in the hospital to condemn violence against women. One of the top ODM officials, slated to be the Prime Minister when a new constitution is developed, was attacked in the Kisii area as he got out of his helicopter and had to be hospitalized. Two minutes before the attack a senior minister in the Kibaki Government had been shown on TV talking to the leader of the attackers who had a bow and arrow. He was not even reprimanded.

Because in the past the polls have consistently shown the Government side to be higher than the actual results, I predict that Raila is going to win the election by about 8% or 9%. ODM will also have a majority in the parliament. If Kibaki wins and ODM has a majority in the parliament, then Kibaki will start bribing the ODM supporters to join his side—there are a lot of ministerial and assistant ministerial positions to hand out. If there is any kind of deadlock as I outlined above, then there could be real trouble here in Kenya.

So I have signed up to be an election monitor here in Lumakanda. I have to be at the polling place by 5:30 a.m. and probably will not leave until 11:00 o'clock p.m.; after the

ballots have all been counted. Quaker Peace Network-Africa has 49 Kenyan and 29 international monitors. AGLI is helping to support the Kenyan monitors. Hezron Masitsa in Nairobi and Rose Imbega for Kitale are the QPN organizers. The election monitors here in Western Kenya include many of the top leaders of the Friends Church in Kenya—this is a very good sign for arousing more interest in Quaker peacemaking in Western Kenya. Gladys and I went to the training meeting yesterday and the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) surely has done a fine job of outlining what everyone should do. My job is just to watch for and notice any one of a number of infractions. Many of the international observers will be folks from Burundi, Rwanda, and Congo well known to AGLI—Elie Nahimana, Sizeli Marcellin, and Zawadi Nikuze. We were given a T-shirt with QPN-Africa on the front and “Quaker Peace Network, Friends Church, Kenya, 2007, Election Observers Team” on the back.

QPN got interested in Election Monitoring when at the QPN meeting in Kibuye, Rwanda, in October 2003, a Kenyan came and spoke to us for a day about how the churches, mosques, temples, and synagogues in Kenya united to keep the election from being stolen (again) by Moi. He was soundly defeated with 31% of the vote to Kibaki’s 68% and the election observers were able to announce the results before the Electoral Commission itself.

We all realized after this presentation that Election Monitoring is a critical component of peacemaking in Africa and the Quaker Peace Network has taken on this international task. QPN has had teams previously for 3 elections in Burundi, 3 in Congo, and the Constitutional voting in Kenya in 2005.

One of the requirements is that the ballots are counted immediately at the end of the voting at 5:00 PM with everyone watching the count. The results then must be posted on the outside of the voting station — I will write down the totals to make sure they match what is officially presented by the ECK. It is going to be a very loooooooooooooong day. I will report again as soon as I have recovered!!!

## **Report #2: December 30, 2007**

It is around 11 pm in Kenya now and Kibaki was declared the winner of the presidential election and was immediately sworn in for a second term. The challenger Raila Odinga's Orange Democratic Movement said it would name a parallel government.

The international community should not recognize the Kibaki regime.

Within 15 minutes of the announcement, 6 Matatus were burned and shots could be heard in Mbale, Kenya. In Kakemenga houses are burning and there are running battles in the street.

Near my home in Kipkaren, a Kikuyu was attacked and fled to the Lwakhaka Police Station. Kikuyus shops have been burned.

Army entered Kisumu on Saturday night. Ex-pats are looking for ways to go to Uganda.

We have little information. There are no papers, no calling cards and the radio is useless. The only thing being broadcast is that everything is under control and remain calm.

I am still at my father-in-law's home in the countryside. We are fine.

### **Report #3: December 31, 2007**

There is a surreal quiet here at my father in law's house as the country has erupted in violence.

Kenya's ethnic conflict has erupted pitting Kikuyus against Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin and others.

A source in the police told me that 5 Kikuyus have been killed in Mbale. Most of the Kikuyus in the area around Mbale have fled to the District Commissioner's Office. Shops owned by Kikuyus have been burned and looted.

In the nearby town of Chavakali, the policeman told me, 30 more Kikuyus have been killed.

I can hear gunshots, I suspect mostly teargas guns, coming from the direction of Chavakali.

Another source has told me 2 other people have been killed in Kakamega. There are no vehicles on the Kisumu/Kakamega road.

In the provinces near my home (Nyanza, Western and the Rift Valley), the countryside is being divided into areas where there are all Kikuyus and other areas where there are no Kikuyus.

At 11 am today, a woman came up the path wailing that her only son was killed in Nakuru (a Kikuyu area). She wailed, "they should have killed Kibaki instead of my son."

### **Report #4: January 2, 2008**

I learned one thing this morning--it is cold at 5000 feet above sea level on the equator at 5:00 AM on the back of an open truck. Samson, Gladys' brother-in-law, obtained a truck to carry us back home. He is a policeman so there was an armed guard on the truck.

Besides Gladys and me, there were Samson's wife (Gladys's sister), one of his daughters, another sister, an aunt, and a cousin. We were told to be ready by 4:00 AM so we got up at 3:30 AM. I was hoping that this would be African time so we would leave at 6:00 AM when it was getting light out. But he got there at 5:00. The ride, besides being cold and very bumpy, was uneventful. There were almost no vehicles on the road--in two hours we passed less than ten and most of these were near Kakamega. We crossed four roadblocks where youth had put stones to stop vehicles--one was right by the Friends Peace Center--Lubao sign! When it was dark it was difficult to tell what damage had been done, but when we reached Kipkarren River, there were about ten shops burned

and/or looted.

I walked through Lumakanda a half hour ago. Most shops are closed—those that are open are selling out of goods. No calling cards so I can't add time to my computer unless someone with access to calling cards can shambaza (that's the word they use here even in English) where one person can send cell phone time to another person. There was no sign of any Kikuyu staying at the police station.

For those who know Eden Grace of the FUM staff and New England Yearly Meeting, she decided to go to the guest house at Kaimosi Hospital after the election and then got stuck there. We have been in constant SMS communication [text messaging]. She just returned safely to Kisumu.

We expect that tomorrow may be another violent day as the ODM party [Orange Democratic Movement] is doing their own inauguration in Nairobi--I would not be surprised if a million people showed up for this in Nairobi. The inauguration has been banned and the ODM leaders threatened with jail. If there is a large crowd, and if it is banned (and the leaders jailed!!!), there may be extensive violence in Nairobi. Kibaki has finally agreed to negotiate, but Raila (smelling victory) has refused until Kibaki has agreed to step down. The Head of the Election Commission admits he was pressured to give the election to Kibaki. The EU commission head says there was much rigging. In fact it was so blatant and sloppily done that I can't believe that the Kibaki Government thought they could get away with it.

The death toll since the election is supposed to be 284, but I suspect it is much higher. It is in the Government's interest to keep the toll down (if they can rig an election, they surely can rig a body count). I doubt small numbers from such places as Mbale and Chavekali, which I mentioned in a previous report, are part of the total. And there are many, many little towns like these in Western Kenya. There is a report that almost 50, mostly women and children, were burned to death in a church in Eldoret (the closest town to us where we go for shopping, etc.). This is in the Rift Province which has a much larger number of Kikuyu than Western Province where Lumakanda is. (Kipkarren River is actually in Rift Valley Province).

There is a report that 10,000 armed Kalejin youth from the Eldoret area (there were 2000 people who burned down the church) are marching on Burnt Forest, an area with many Kikuyu where there have been clashes in the past. If this kind of thing is true, then we may be in for a real bloodbath on the scale of the Rwandan genocide. It is possible that the violence has gotten out of control so that the political leaders, the police, and army may not be able to control it even if there is a political settlement.

As transportation is shut down, shortages become greater. Kisumu, which was shut down the day after the election, is already reporting food and water shortages. We have 14 and a half 200 pound bags of maize in our house so we can eat "ugali" (corn mush) for a very long time. I don't like the bread here very much, but after not having any for almost a week, I would look forward to it. But under the circumstance we eat what we've got.

**Report #5:  
January 3, 2008**

I suspect that many of you do not have a clear understanding why a rigged election could produce such violence as burning women and children alive in a church. This email is to give a brief historical background of why Kenya has seemingly so suddenly erupted into ethnic violence.

The British colonized Kenya early in the 20th Century. The nature of colonialism was total control from a strong center. In the case of Kenya, there were British settlers, few in actual numbers, but each controlling large estates. To run these estates and have the comfortable life that they wished, they needed lots of labor; the cheaper the better. So the colonial Government put a tax on each adult male where he had to work six months per year to pay the tax which was then used for the benefit of the settlers. The settlers were harsh and cruel to their African laborers.

The Kikuyu homeland is on the slopes of Mount Kenya. The amount of land they had was small for the population and consequently many of them were forced onto the settler's estates to work for them. But the Kikuyu, as everyone admits, are a very industrious, hard-working people who early on saw the benefits of education. Others became the low-level functionaries that any Government needs.

During the WWII many young men were drafted into the British army (my father-in-law was in Malawi and Burma!) and served wherever needed. Their eyes were opened by what they saw and when they returned to Kenya after the war, they found that they were given the same menial, low-paying dead end work. By the early 1950's this dissatisfaction gave rise to a protest movement called "Mau Mau." This was mostly among the Kikuyu. They forced people to take an oath to oppose the British rule. Perhaps 90% of the Kikuyu in Central Province on Mount Kenya took the oath, willingly and unwillingly. The remaining 10% were the loyalists who worked for the British colonial Government. Although Jomo Kenyatta was jailed as a Mau Mau leader, they soon realized that he was really a loyalist--his son, Peter Kenyatta, with Jomo Kenyatta's blessing, was one of the leaders of the loyalists. Kenyatta was separated from the other Mau Mau leaders.

The suppression of Mau Mau was brutal in extreme. Percentage wise more people died during the suppression of Mau Mau during the 1950's than during the 1994 Rwandan genocide--torture was prevalent, women and children were put into concentration camps with little food and medical care. Large numbers died. No one should be under the illusion that the British were "better" colonialists than the Germans or Belgians. The technique the British used here was to deny everything with massive cover-ups. Much of this history is only now being uncovered.

During this same time, the British implemented land consolidation in Central Province. The result was that the loyalists received nice, large land holdings at the expense of the Mau Mau people who were in jail. When they returned they found that most of their land

was lost. With only Small fragments of land remaining they were unable to support their Families And were forced either to work for the Kikuyu loyalists or to emigrate to other parts of Kenya which were not so heavily populated--in particular many went to the Rift Valley province.

Some of the most successful loyalists went into business, using the dispossessed Kikuyu to do the labor that they needed. In particular, the Kikuyu many times replaced Indian shopkeepers in small towns and villages. As I will discuss below, many more became the conductors and drivers of the matatus (mini-buses) that dominate Kenya land travel. By now, some of these businessmen have become tycoons.

The British, at the time of independence in 1963, handed the Government to their loyalist supporters. The Kikuyu business tycoons and the Kikuyu political establishment formed a strong bond during the Kenyatta presidency. When Moi, a Kalenjin, took over on Kenyatta's death, he quickly made a deal with the Kikuyu establishment that he would not bother their businesses and they agreed to let him on the Kenyan gravy train, which included gigantic corruption and looting of Government funds. Kibaki was at one time part of both the Kenyatta and Moi Governments.

When people -- including the Kikuyu elite -- got tired of Moi, they tried to replace him. In 1992 and 1997 Moi divided and conquered the opposition. One of the techniques Moi used was to promote violence in his homeland of Rift Valley. In 1992 perhaps 1000 Luo, Luhya, and Kikuyu were killed by the Kalenjins and more than 100,000 were made homeless (including Malesi Kinaro). As with the British rule, the Government closed the Rift Valley province to everyone and little is known of the details. When it was over, everything was publicly covered up, but everyone is still very tense, right up to now. As we can learn from the developments that led to the Rwandan genocide, each cycle of violence increases over the previous one. I have no doubt that this is why the people were burned in the church in Rift Valley rather than elsewhere.

But in 2002 Moi was too old for another term and he selected Kenyatta's son, Uhuru Kenyatta, to run for the presidency. The opposition this time decided not to become divided, but united under Kibaki and soundly defeated Uhuru Kenyatta. At this point Kibaki had the opportunity to bring all Kenyans together as a real nation, but he soon dropped all the non-Kikuyu who had helped him into office and the controlling clique became a group of Kikuyu politicians and businessmen. So, in 2007, the others (Luo, Luhya, and Kalenjin) who felt betrayed by Kibaki, joined together in the ODM (Orange Democratic Movement) to oppose Kibaki. Musyoka, a Kamba, stayed out of the coalition and formed his own party--ODM-Kenya.

To summarize, since independence the Kikuyu have directly or indirectly controlled the Government and controlled Kenyan business. Through this time, they continued and promoted the centralized system of Government given to them by the British. The President was all powerful, as he controlled the executive, legislative and judicial branches of Government. It was a hybrid presidential and parliamentary system with the President being all powerful. The 2007 election campaign revolved around



devolvement" meaning decentralizing. Naturally Kibaki and the Kikuyu opposed this since this meant giving up their power to the periphery.

Let us return to the matatu business. There are 80,000 matatus on Kenyan roads, most of which are owned and operated by Kikuyu. I estimate (I sit a lot in the matatus and have ample time to analyze the business) that a matatu has an income of \$100,000 per year: on average each Kenyan spends over \$200 per year for matatu transportation. The conductor rents the vehicle for the day, including the driver, and pays for gas and other expenses keeping whatever is left over at the end of the day. So, he has to push and push to make sure that he doesn't actually lose money. The relationship between the conductor -- who is always trying to increase the price of the ride, stuff more people into the vehicle, and get the driver to go faster -- leads to amazing antagonism. There is no customer service, but customer dis-service. The riders continually believe that they are being abused and taken advantage of. This happens almost every time one gets into a matatu.

So it is payback time. It is amazing how only Kikuyu shops and homes were burned and everyone else left intact. Those at the bottom are taking it out on those whom they feel are on top. They have no contact with the Kikuyu tycoons and politicians and so they are taking the pent-up rage of forty-four years of independence out on the average Kikuyu in their community. The Kikuyu are then retaliating by killing the other ethnic groups that happen to live in their communities. This also explains why Kibaki (read the Kikuyu elite) wished to stay in power by rigging the election--they will be the losers. At stake here is continuing with the status quo with the Kikuyu on top or changing the essential nature of the Government so that everyone has its piece (but will the Kikuyu be allowed their fair share or will they be punished).

Malesi Kinaro will want me to throw in another part of the mix. With the large population increase in the past, there are many youth. Many of these have been educated to the secondary level or even above and then they are left with nothing to do, alienated from Kenyan society. These are the shock troops of the rioters and looters. They see no future so they can easily be turned to violence. This is the tinder and the spark was the announcement that Kibaki won what everyone in western Kenya considers was a rigged election. The youth waited until the result was announced on the radio and then immediately attacked matatus (I saw the plumes of 8 burning matatus), Kikuyu shops and homes, and then the Kikuyu themselves.

Hope this helps you to understand the situation some.

## **Report #6: January 3, 2008**

It is 9:30 AM here in Kenya so I expect most of the people reading this will be happily dreaming in bed.

Today looks like the decisive day, and things don't look good. Kibaki has told the head of the African Union not to come to mediate because this is an internal Kenyan problem. In

the doublespeak of the day, this means that Kibaki is not going to negotiate and will enforce his presidency with the police and military. The Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) plans a massive inauguration of Raila Odinga today in downtown Nairobi at Uhuru Park. One million people are expected to attend. The Government has banned the gathering. BBC reports that riot police have encircled the park standing a meter apart. In other words, this looks like its going to be a major confrontation. BBC also reports from Mombasa that people have armed themselves with traditional weapons--bows and arrows, machetes, clubs, etc. Kikuyu from hard-hit Eldoret have been evacuated under police escort to Nakuru and Nairobi.

I just took a walk around Lumakanda town. While most of the shops are open, there are very few people in town. The police are very evident; talking with townspeople about the situation. The police station is filled with vehicles: including most of the town's matatus (which are mostly owned by Kikuyu). Clearly they are parked there for safekeeping. Directly to the north is a large plume of black smoke. What does it mean? Has another building been burned in the countryside? Or is it just some normal burning of trash, etc? Considering the tension, everything is under suspicion.

Beverly, Gladys' daughter, came by to see us yesterday. She lives in the rural area outside Lumakanda town, perhaps a little over a mile away. On Sunday night, after the election results were announced, she told us that she had seen fires and a lot of smoke from the houses which were being burned.

I have no money on my cell phone and only 250/- left on my laptop—about two days worth. I doubt I will get any calling cards today, but I can hope for tomorrow. Thanks, everyone, for your messages. Gladys and I are doing fine ourselves and we are absolutely in no danger. Two of our nieces (one 4 and one 13) are staying with us.

Please send all your prayers this way.

### **Report #7: January 3, 2008**

In Nairobi today it seems that the riot police, using tear gas and water cannons, stopped the rally planned in Uhuru Park to inaugurate Raila as president. The ODM called off the rally, but promised to do it another time.

Gladys told me that one of the reasons not many people are going shopping is that there are few goods left in the shops--particularly, I think, food. What is available is sold at inflated prices. The town is running out of "greens" which usually come from near Eldoret. A woman went out to the fields and picked local greens and filled a gunny sack--Gladys says these were immediately bought up.

As to Eldoret, I received this from Bainito Wamalwa "As I speak now, the Friends Church in Eldoret has 62 families who are displaced by some of them having their houses burnt. They have no shelter, food and other basics. As I said earlier, there is no way to

enter or exit Eldoret now. The food prices have gone more than tripple high. Things are not right here."

And Eden Grace reports on the situation in Kisumu:

"Here in Kisumu, Kenya's third largest city, most of the shops and businesses along the main road have been destroyed and looted. Many are now burned-out hulks, and looters are pulling metal for scrap out of what little structure remains. The transportation network has been disrupted so many goods are no longer distributed. Queues are long to buy flour where people still can. Food and fuel are hard to come by. Cell phone air time has been sold out in Kisumu and elsewhere, so most people cannot even use their phones."

There is a meeting tomorrow morning of all Americans citizens in Kisumu. There were plans for the Americans to evacuate to Uganda at 5:00 AM this morning under armed escort, but this did not work out.

Since fuel travels to Uganda, Rwanda, and North Kivu from Eldoret, these countries are running short of fuel. Barbara Wybar reports that in Uganda the cost of travel on buses/matatus has doubled.

In Lugari District, in a town far from us, 6 youth were killed by the police yesterday. Turbo is the next town on the road towards Eldoret and we have been told that the violence there was even worse than Kipkarren River. We also heard that the police there have divided into two groups--a Kikuyu group and a group of all the others. If this really begins to happen, then an actual civil war becomes a possibility. The police have been on high alert since the day before the election so they must be getting worn out and tired people are less likely to show restraint.

Nobel Peace Prize winner, Desmond Tutu, from South Africa has arrived in Nairobi, hoping to mediate, but since he made his speech asking for the end of the violence from the ODM offices, I am not sure that he will be acceptable to the Kibaki side.

Tomorrow is another day and we will see what it brings.

### **Report #8a: January 4, 2008**

Gladys and I are doing fine, staying at home like newly-weds. I walk around town for exercise and observation twice a day, once in the morning and once in the late afternoon. It is dry season now and the sun is very hot during the middle of the day. My biggest problem is funds/time for my cell phone and laptop. Long ago we stopped using the cell phone to call anyone since it uses up the little funds we have very quickly. I have also stopped looking for reports about Kenya on the internet. So we save the time for SMS [short message service] and email. By the way anyone can call or SMS us and we are not charged to receive calls or SMS's. Yesterday Eden Grace sambaza'd 500/- to me. [Note: /- = Kenyan shillings.] Then someone sent me a really long article with lots of pictures

and over 100/- was wasted in trying to download it. It was like a person dying of thirst dropping his bottle of water. Somehow Malesi at Uzima Foundation sambaza'd 300/- to me today so I am wired for another day or two. Dawn Amos figured out a way to sambaza funds to my phone from the US which she has done (at a rate of \$2.40 for \$8.00 of airtime). Unfortunately it has not arrived--we speculate that the people in Nairobi that have to send it on to me are not at work. So Gladys and I husband the little fund/time we have which is our connection to the outside world. Here in Lumakanda, we have a better radio and we are able to get BBC so we listen to it on the hour to see if there is any update.

Unfortunately the stalemate continues and there is no improvement today. Nothing is moving and there is even less in the shops. The radio says that the US Assistant Secretary for African Affairs is due to arrive in Nairobi today to try to facilitate talks between Kibaki and Raila.

Zawadi Nikuze from North Kivu, Congo, who was a QPN [Quaker Peace Network] election observer in Nairobi (I guess we can say she stepped from the frying pan of North Kivu right into the fire of Kenya), emailed me as follows:

"The situation is really getting out of hand. For us who are in Nairobi it's terrible. We can't get out of the house lest we get caught up in the riots. The last time I went out was on 28th Dec for the debriefing of the election with the rest of observers. Since then I have been indoors--it's like being under house arrest."

Bainito Wamalwa is a Friend in Eldoret and part of Eldoret Friends Church. He says that there are 62 families--some Kikuyu and some not (meaning that in Eldoret they are attacking people of various ethnicities)--living in the Friends Church. The Friends in Eldoret are doing what they can to help. Friends in Britain are collecting and sending funds to help. But how do we get it from Britain to Eldoret? They are sending it to the AGLI account in England and I can withdraw funds from my own account IF I CAN GET TO A BANK. Then we still have to figure out how to get the funds to Eldoret. Bainito may come in his car to see me in Lumakanda: but I won't have any funds available. Bainito also said that houses are still being burned in the countryside around Eldoret. The town is totally shut down except for the queue at the supermarkets where you can buy some things. One of Gladys's nephews, who lives in Eldoret, says that the Kikuyu and Nandi (Kalenjin group) are still fighting and killing each other.

I just talked to Florence Machayo who said that "they" had threatened to burn down her house because she was "sympathizing" with the Kikuyu. She has talked to Malesi who has suggested that we print up T-shirts to identify ourselves.

Eden reports that US Embassy officials were supposed to meet with the Americans this morning at the Kisumu Airport--meaning they were unwilling to travel to town to meet the Americans. I guess "fly in, meet, fly out."

As I was on my morning walk, I saw that the internally displaced people (IDP) were being moved from the police station to the Lumakanda Primary School where I was an election observer. I had missed them before because I was looking for them at the police headquarters but they were a few blocks away past the hospital. The police station was filled with trucks, matatus, cars, pick-ups, and a tractor. This included one oil tanker and one long-haul big truck--I assume that they got stuck on the highway at 6:00 PM on Sunday night and decided to park in Lumakanda. Some of the trucks were filled with household goods--particularly bed frames. People were moving their goods to the school. At the school I watched men, women, and children all carrying things into the compound--clothes, mattresses, firewood, pots and pans, a car battery, etc. It is difficult to know how many people there were, but it was in the hundreds. While much is made of the wealth of the Kikuyu, these people moving into the school looked no more prosperous than the average Kenyan--many, particularly children, were without shoes or wore only flip-flops. At first a cow and a calf were driven, then a herd of 15 cows, a few calves, and about 20 goats, then another of six cows and a calf. A pick-up truck was pushed in (the driver saying he didn't have petrol--or perhaps he didn't want to use petrol when going downhill). It was full of food--mostly maize or maize meal for ugali. I was told that there would be police protection at night.

On my walk I met a policewoman who attends Lumakanda Friends Church. I talked with her a little and moved on. Later I found out something that really has bothered me--I guess because it makes all this abstract violence personal. I was told that on Sunday evening when Kipkarren River town was being attacked by looters, as one of the police sent to quell the rioting, she shot one youth in the leg and hit a second one who perhaps died. I really can't say I blame her for whatever she did since she was just doing her job and I can have no idea what kind of pressure she might have been under. Yet it is unnerving to realize how close I am to the violence. I am certain that some of the people I know in town--for example, the young guys who are at the matatu station, usually drunk, trying to get a tip from the matatu drivers for helping get someone into their vehicles--were probably involved in the violence. But when a violent mob rules, what do you do?

### **Report #8b: January 4, 2008**

This is my second report for today. The radio is saying that 355 people have died and 150,000 have been displaced in Kenya since the election on Dec 27. I think this is a gross underestimate, as I will indicate below. The radio also reports that things are calming down. While this may be true in Nairobi and the other cities, it is not the case here in the countryside, as again I will indicate below.

At 5:00 pm, Gladys and I went on my usual walk around town. Naturally we stopped by the school where the displaced people have moved, as I mentioned in my email earlier today. When we went in, we noticed that there were eight Red Cross personnel. Fortunately, we had met Herman, the Red Cross leader, previously -- in better times. So he was willing to be quite open with us and consequently the other Red Cross workers were open as well. Here is what we learned.

I really am a bad estimator. I thought there might be a few hundred displaced persons. No, **there are 2,506 at the school.** There are a total of seven camps in the district. The one in Turbo (a hard-hit town near us) has 15,000 at the police station. Another camp has 5,000, another 4,000, another 2000, and then a few with only hundreds. This totals over 30,000 people and this is only one district; and not a particularly hard hit district as many in the Rift Valley are. So the total of 150,000 for the country must be an underestimate. I figure there are about 200,000 people in the district so this means that 15% of the population is displaced.

I asked what the people would do when things calmed down. Would they go back to their homes or return to Nairobi and Central Province? The answer was that they had nowhere to go back to since they were born in Lugari District and had lived there their whole lives. Many had moved to Lugari District during the colonial period to work on the farms of the British settlers.

The population in the camps had divided up according to the place they came from. One section was for the men and the other for the women and children. There are about 25 classrooms in the school so this means each classroom will have about 100 people in it. There are a lot of children. I was also told that people are still coming in and that there are many still in the countryside who had not yet reached the camps. I also learned that some were not Kikuyu; if you are married to a Kikuyu (husband or wife), you would also be targeted. Gladys and the Red Cross workers pointed out some of the Luhya in the camp.

The Red Cross has not sent any assistance yet and there was a shortage of food in the camp. A large truck drove up while we were there with many bags of maize. We were told that someone had gotten these from his storehouse. But we were also told of one man who had over 100 bags of maize burned (along, of course, with his house). Most of the people had run away with just what they were wearing and had lost everything; so, there is even a shortage of clothing, cooking and eating utensils. Some children have been separated from their parents and one thing the Red Cross is doing is trying to reunite the children with their parents--in the meantime the children are being assigned to a new "family" to look after them.

They reported that there are cases of cholera which means unhygienic conditions. There were definitely not an adequate number of latrines at the police station. The school had a large number, although I'm not sure if they will be adequate, particularly in the long run.

One of the issues for the Red Cross workers is that they didn't know how long this would last--would the situation be resolved in a day or two, a week or more, a month or even longer? It is therefore difficult to plan. I wonder, even after the situation has calmed down, how long will it take for people to return to their homes. Herman, the Red Cross leader, said that they would return home because a home can be rebuilt. But how long will that take and will people have the resources to do this?

We then went to the hospital to see Festus Ngetich, the medical officer in charge, who we knew from the time when my mother-in-law was sick. He was not in. The women's ward, which had only a few people when my mother-in-law was sick, was now completely filled. As we were walking back to our house, the big transit goods truck parked at the police station slowly drove by on its way to Malaba and Uganda. I wondered why they waited until dusk to leave.

We then met Festus (medical officer in charge) on the road. Yes, there were cases of cholera, but they were not too bad, but he expected them to get worse as time went on. He was working day and night. He had no blood supply so he was sending wounded patients in need of blood to Webuye, a town about 30 minutes away with a better hospital. The ambulance, he said, was going back and forth day and night, but what would happen when the tank of petrol (gas) was finished? This implied that people who needed a transfusion would not survive. On Sunday night there were many wounded at the hospital--some died, but he said, "There were many wounded people last night also" clearly indicating that the fighting was still going on in the countryside. He pointed in a northeast direction to illustrate where many of the wounded came from. He was clearly weary, doing as best he could in the circumstances, and as befuddled as everyone else as to how this could happen.

Gladys bought some tomatoes and a half kilo of beef as we walked the last block to our house.

## **Report #9a: January 5, 2008**

### **Understanding the Violence in Kenya**

Mwai Kibaki says that he will not negotiate until the violence has subsided. He is promoting the assumption that it is his opponents, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), that is orchestrating the violence. In fact the violence is counterproductive for ODM. Raila Odinga (Luo, Nyanza Province), Musalia Mudavadi (Luhya, Western Province), and William Ruto (Kalenjin, Rift Valley Province) had all called repeatedly for the end of the violence. What are the factors that have made the violence occur?

It is common practice in Kenya for a mob to kill a suspected thief. A case like this is reported in the newspaper every day or two. If a person calls out "Thief, thief" and a young man runs, a huge crowd will capture the accused thief and beat him to death unless the police are able to arrive quickly enough to save the person. I was horrified in the late 1960's when I heard then President Jomo Kenyatta speaking in Machakos supporting this practice: "Catch the thief and put this face in the mud." I myself have seen a mob run after the thief--really he has no chance of escape. When Joy (my daughter) was in Nairobi in 1994, she knew of a young man who was caught and a stone dropped on his chest--he died. Recently the papers reported that two supposed thieves were killed by a mob in Lugari District in an area far from Lumakanda. The explanation given is that the police are corrupt and if a thief is turned in, he bribes the police and is out on the street that

same day. Therefore people turn to vigilante justice. I don't completely buy this justification. For this to happen, Kenyan society must condone the basic principle that it is okay for a mob to kill someone. This, of course, is a necessary condition for the rioting and killing that is now occurring. In any peacemaking work that will be done in Kenya, one of the first concerns will have to be to confront the acceptance of vigilante justice.

Another aspect is the fact that in the 1970's and 1980's Kenya had a very high birth rate. Men born during this time are now the youth; defined in Kenya as anyone under 35 years of age. When one looks at the tree of age distribution, one will find that for Kenya there is a big bulge during the youth years of 18 to 35. In other words, there is a proportionally larger number of youth in the society than would usually be considered normal. Another aspect is that a certain percentage of these youth have parents who have died of the AIDS epidemic in the 1990's and the 2000's. In short, the older generation -- which should be guiding the younger generation in constructive ways -- is much smaller than would be expected. The youth lack guidance and control.

One must also remember that, until 2003, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund pressured Kenya not to hire more teachers and not to promote education since this was considered fiscally irresponsible. Consequently many of the youth mentioned above have had inadequate schooling. It was only in 2003 with the Kibaki victory that Kenya felt able to defy the World Bank and IMF and introduce free primary education. Approximately a million extra students enrolled in Kenyan primary schools. All the political parties in this election have promised to make secondary school education also free beginning this year.

In Lumakanda town there are a certain number of crazy people. One in particular, a rather tall, young man, speaks to me when he sees me: in extremely good English. Only his English doesn't make any sense. I once asked him his name and he replied with twenty or so names including "Kibaki" and "Mandela." One day he asked me if I wanted to go see the marijuana plants. Marijuana grows everywhere and is readily available. Likewise a cheap distilled local brew, called "changaa" in Swahili, is easily obtainable. In the last few years, Gladys has had an uncle and a cousin who died of "changaa" spiced with methanol alcohol. Although this could be considered a case of murder against the brewers who spiced the "changaa" it is not even seen as a crime since drunks are really no service to society anyway. The point is that there is a lot of potent alcohol and drugs available to the youth. Even in peaceful times the consequences from this are devastating. Then, when the opportunity for violence arises, those youth in the drug/alcohol culture are the "troops" of the mob.

Then, as before, we need to return to the matatu (mini-bus) business where most of the conductors are Kikuyu. There are designated stops for the matatus along the road -- Lumakanda is one. Each stop has five to ten (and in the cities such as Kakamega they seem uncountable) young people called "tauts" who escort you to your matatu, carry your bag (I don't let them carry mine), and put you into the matatu. They are "tipped" about 10 shillings for each person they bring in. But this is really extortion because, for example in my case, I know exactly which matatu to get into and the taut pretends to have brought



me in order to get the tip. The relationship between the conductor and the taut is terrible. Sometimes the conductors refuse to pay, resulting in loud arguments. As the matatu pulls away, tauts jump on the doorway before the door is closed demanding their tip. I have seen the conductors throw the tip on the ground. When the Kibaki government first came into power, they revised the rules for the matatus and tauts were abolished. But they quickly returned and are now as common as before. Usually these tauts are drunk, particularly in the later afternoon. But when the conflict begins, it is not at all surprising that the first target of destruction is the matatus being burnt by the tauts; I saw eight plumes of smoke from burning matatus in and near Mbale shortly after the election results were announced.

In normal times as you walk around the town and through the countryside, you see many small groups of young men, doing nothing. What life, what future, and what investment do they have in the status quo? Nothing. For these youth, it also must be remembered, looting is a very lucrative business.

The violence seen now is always there, just below the surface, erupting frequently on a small scale. The political tension from the election is nothing more than an excuse to ignite the violence on a massive scale. The violence is done by a small percentage of the population, even by a small percentage of the youth. But people here feel as helpless about how to control this violence as you all do thousands of miles away. Everyone I know here in Lumakanda condemns the violence. They well know that the violence against the local Kikuyu, whom they all know and associate with on a daily basis, is unjustified. People, including Gladys, say that it is only God who can bring back the peace.

### **Report #9b: January 5, 2008**

On the political front nothing much seems to be happening. Here we are the same with no travel outside the immediate area.

We made our usual walk around the town this morning. At the school, we were told that another ten internally displaced people arrived during the night. Otherwise all was calm and well at the school.

Bainito Wamalwa from Eldoret called and said that the central city in Eldoret was better as a few shops were open and yesterday the banks were open for one to two hours. He said that they are bringing in the bodies to the morgue. There is still conflict in some of the suburbs of Eldoret. Friends in England are sending 500 pounds to Bainito to help with the IDP's (internally displaced persons) in the Friends Church there and I'll also receive 500 pounds to help where I feel it is most needed. Getting the funds from the bank in Eldoret to me will be challenge. Bainito sambaza'd me 200/- of airtime so he is now my big buddy even though I haven't met him yet. He was going to drive by Lumakanda on

his way to Kitale, but heard that it was unsafe to pass through Turbo.

A relative called from Nairobi who said things are calming down there, but a bus headed for the west (i.e. with mostly Luo, Kalenjin, and Luhya passengers) was torched in Nakuru (a Kikuyu dominated area) and everyone died. At this point, since I have not heard anything about this elsewhere, I would consider the incident as not confirmed.

The big event for the day was that our neighbors (five miles away but in Lugari District) Florence and Alfred Machayo dropped by to see us. They had gotten a little fuel for their car--not enough to get to Kakamega and back--and decided to use it to see what was happening in the area. They went to Turbo: while there, they encountered a caravan of fifty or so big trucks headed for Uganda with an army escort. Nonetheless the army people felt uncertain and inquired about the conditions on the road. Almost nothing in Turbo is open. They also said that anyone who rented a Kikuyu owned house was burned out just like the others; so some of the IDP's are Luhyas and Kalenjins. They also told us that on the night of the election a Kikuyu had parked a truck in their compound. Area youth informed them that they were sympathizers and if they continued with this, the youth would burn the Kikuyu truck and as "punishment" their own car. A Kalenjin neighbor had agreed to take care of a few Kikuyu cows, but these were stolen along with his own as "punishment". Florence and Alfred have concluded that any relief work should be done through the Friends Church so as not to put people into jeopardy.

Joy (my daughter in D.C.) has arranged for me to be interviewed on WPFW on Sunday for a program called "Africa Now." Since people can call me without cost to me, perhaps other people might want to arrange for radio interviews elsewhere.

Our grandchildren, Eugene (7) and Danny (5), showed up for the weekend; their mother, Beverly, will come later today.

## **Report #10a: January 6, 2008**

### **Kenya and the Rwandan Genocide**

When the church was burned in Eldoret on New Year's Day, there began to be many comparisons made between the situation here in Kenya and the Rwandan genocide. Moreover a number of the politicians here in Kenya have been using the term "genocide." Any comparison at this time between what is happening in Kenya and what happened in Rwanda in 1994 is ridiculous.

Let us start with the church burning. In Rwanda churches were not burned. Rather the Tutsi who took refuge in the churches--sometimes by the thousands and even tens of thousands--were hacked to death by machetes. The church was surrounded by others so that anyone who tried to flee was killed. In Kenya, at the church in Eldoret, there were hundreds of people inside when it was burned down. Most fled. While the papers indicated 35 to 50 people were burned to death, the Red Cross now puts the numbers at

17. Clearly unlike the situation in Rwanda, the intention of the attackers was not to kill the people in the church.

The papers state that 355 people have died since the election. While I think this is an underestimate, at least 850,000 people were killed in the Rwandan genocide. The official total here in Kenya is .04% of the numbers killed in Rwanda.

Also, in Rwanda the specific intention of the genocedaries was to kill Tutsi. They hunted them down for one hundred days. If the Kenyan looters had the intention of killing Kikuyu and others, the death toll would be magnitudes higher. Rather, here in Kenya, the intention of the rioters is to destroy Kikuyu property--vehicles, shops, animals, farms, and houses.

The most important difference is that in Rwanda the government in power at that time organized and implemented the genocide. This is one of the criteria for genocide--it is the government itself which implements genocide. In Kenya there is no doubt that the Kenyan Government is not organizing any killings. Government security forces are trying their best to restore order and stop the destruction of property. The fact that they have failed for so long is of major concern, but this has nothing to do with genocide. While the Orange Democratic Movement has been accused by the Government of promoting the violence, I see no evidence that ODM is organizing it and in fact, I think, that they have no ability to stop it. The ODM leaders have asked for the end of the violence, but this has had no effect.

I myself try never to use the term "genocide" unless it completely fulfills the legal definition of genocide as in the case of Rwanda. In Darfur there is a major debate whether the situation there is genocide or not. This, to my thinking, is a complete distraction from the real issue of solving the problem in Darfur. If you are killed, you are dead regardless whether it is genocide or not. It is the deaths from violence, whether by a government or rebel groups, which we must focus on and attempt to end.

In the case of Kenya, the term "genocide" should not be used by anyone. If you hear the term being used, then you know it is propaganda.

### **Report #10b: January 6, 2008**

Jodi Richmond (temporary Head of Friends Theological College, now in Nairobi) sent Gladys an SMS asking us if anyone was reacting in a Christian way to the chaos occurring now in Kenya.

Gladys and I went to Lumakanda Friends Church today; as we always do when we are in town. At first there was almost no mention of the conflicts whirling around us, but when the preacher for today, Daniel, gave his sermon, he based it on Hosea 14:1 "Come back, O Israel, to the Lord your God; for your sins have caused you to stumble." One of his main points was that Kenyans have to ask for forgiveness for what is engulfing the

country. After the offering, I asked the Clerk if I could address the congregation on peace and reconciliation and he agreed. So I gave about a five minute talk in Swahili indicating that our hands were God's hands and that we could show our Christian/Friends concern for peace on earth by responding to help the displaced people who were in the school. They immediately conducted a second offering, collected 1208/- (a little less than \$20) and gave it to me. After the service, I asked to meet with the church leaders and they set up a committee of six people including the youth and the women to develop a plan for how the church can be of assistance. We will meet soon.

At the end of the first offering a woman was asked to say the prayer of thanks as is customary. I learned later that she is hiding a Kikuyu woman in her house. The woman was just giving birth on Sunday evening when the chaos began so this woman had her stay in her house with the new-born. If the rioters find out that she is harboring a Kikuyu, they will burn her house down.

Desmond Tutu came to Kenya, constructively met with both sides and THEN LEFT THE COUNTRY!!! I was soooooo disappointed.

While the reports on the radio say that things are getting back to normal, it doesn't seem that way here. Getry came from Lubao to Florence Machayo's house and reported at the junction of the Kakamega-Webuye and Eldoret-Webuye road, her vehicle was pelted with rocks. Keffer Mbale who lives in Kipkarren River reported that last night his next door neighbor's house was burned down.

Ray Downing and Janice Armstrong, Mennonite doctors who used to work at Lugulu Friends Hospital nearby, are now doctors at Webuye Hospital. They contacted me through email and SMS so I have their contact information. If we ever get to Webuye (not trying tomorrow after Getry's report of rock throwing) we will meet them. They had received my previous reports and confirmed that on Thursday night four patients were brought to Webuye Hospital from Lumakanda Hospital with gunshot wounds (i.e., they were looters shot by the police). One died.

Yesterday evening I went on my usual evening walk. At the school I found that the Red Cross had brought two trucks with 110 bags of maize (corn) and beans. I estimate that this will be enough for about a week to ten days. But Herman, the camp Red Cross coordinator, told me that there was no cooking oil, salt, sugar, toilet paper, hand or washing soap, and many other items. There was also a shortage of clothes since many people had run away in the middle of the night with only what they had on. I remember that the Lubao workcampers had brought some children's clothing last summer and that some of it still was at the Peace Center. I called Getry and asked her to bring what she could and she has done so and taken them to Florence Machayo's house. Now I just have to figure out how to get it from Florence's house to ours.

In the meeting after church I opened up my calendar book and saw that I had 500/- of airtime that I had forgotten all about. Was I annoyed with myself! The 500/- of airtime that Dawn Amos sent me a few days ago finally arrived. She has sent a second 500/- and

I expect it will reach me tomorrow. Do I feel wealthy! I even wasted a little of it looking at the internet news on Kenya.

In that internet news, I found that Lugari District had the second to highest number (after Eldoret) of IDP's 18,200. I also heard on BBC a report that Luo are also being attacked in Eldoret and are walking through back roads to Nyanza Province (which would take at least a week, I would think). Otherwise the Kenyan news on BBC has become old news and not much is being reported.

## **Report #11: January 7, 2008**

This afternoon the committee appointed by Lumakanda Friends Church met at our house to discern the way forward. They decided that they would go tomorrow morning as a delegation to Lumakanda School to meet with the leaders of the camp and the Red Cross people. They will find out what would be the most suitable need that could be fulfilled given our resources. We have 31,200/- (\$472) from Friends in Bristol, England, and the Sunday collection at the Church, which translates to only 12/- (18 cents) per person so we will have to focus on something doable. They will figure out what is best and then Gladys and I will go to Webuye on Wednesday and buy what is suggested. Then the Church members will go to camp, have a prayer meeting with the people in the camp, and give the donation to the Red Cross to distribute. Then we may do a similar thing the following week as way opens. Gladys is part of the delegation, but I am not.

Alfred Machayo dropped off the children's clothes, toothbrushes, and some medicines which will be part of the donation. Malesi sent a letter of introduction from Friends for Peace and Community Development and two T-shirts, saying on the front, "Friends in" and "Peace" on the back. Folks on the delegation will wear them.

In Kakamega, Friends for Peace and Community Development (Malesi, Janet, Getry, Peter, and others) are going to meet with the boda-boda (bicycle taxi drivers) who formed one of the main body of looters in that town. We will see what this brings.

When I was on my afternoon walk, I passed a young man, probably in his twenties, not very well dressed, who was trying to hawk a video. Of course I turned him down, but five paces on I realized that this was looted goods and he was probably one of the looters.

Yesterday evening, when I went to the School, I learned that most of the Red Cross workers had gone to Turbo for the food distribution that day. Turbo is the next town on our way to Eldoret and it was very hard hit by the violence. This is where it has been unsafe to pass for many days. I heard that the looters had cut down the big eucalyptus trees growing by the side of the road in order to block the road. Today I learned that the Red Cross workers had come back very late. They told me that instead of 15,000 IDP at Turbo, there were now closer to 20,000. Many were very "bitter" (the best translation I have for what was told to me in Swahili). I have also been told that this is the case at

Lumakanda School. The food brought by the Red Cross was insufficient considering the large number of people in the camp.

I have been told that there is an IDP camp near Kitale with 21,000 people. While the paper said that there were 18,200 IDPs in Lugari District, the Red Cross worker, a woman full of the facts, told me there were almost 35,000 IDPs in Lugari District. The media has upped the estimate of those killed to 500 and the number of displaced to 500,000. I hate to say it, but I told them so!!! (i.e., the numbers reported were too low). School was supposed to begin today, but was postponed until next week. What will happen to the IDPs at Lumakanda School when school starts?

I can no longer get BBC on my radio. I wonder if it has been jammed.

Prices in town for food have gone up 25% to 50%: except for meat. The town used to slaughter a cow every day, but now we are on the fourth day of the same cow so we are not buying. The point is that neither is anyone else so the price has not gone up.

## **Report #12a: January 8, 2008**

I have been asked to discuss the issue of how the violence here in Kenya is affecting the Quakers in Kenya.

Friends United Meeting (then Five Years Meeting) sent missionaries to Kenya in 1902. They trekked up country and settled in Kaimosi which is in the Western Province of Kenya. Western Province stretches from near Lake Victoria about a hundred miles north to Mt Elgon, along the border with Uganda. The British divided up the provinces by ethnic groups. Western Province is the home of the Luhya: the second to largest group in Kenya after the Kikuyu. Almost everyone in Western Province is Luhya. Of course, over time, many Luhya have immigrated to other parts of the country. Partly due to the excellent education the Quaker missionaries promoted during colonial rule, the Luhya tended to go into the educated professions--teachers, managers, government civil servants, and similar occupations.

There are more Quakers in Kenya than any other country in the world. FWCC says 137,000. FUM-Africa office is trying to get a better count, but this is going to be difficult for such large numbers. I think that the total is considerably higher. If there are 3,000,000 people in Western Province and 100,000 of them are Quakers, then 3% of the population is Quaker. While still a small percentage, it is probably one of the highest concentrations of Quakers in the world. Quaker churches and Quaker schools can be seen everywhere.

At the time of independence all the Quakers were in one very centralized, yearly meeting--East Africa Yearly Meeting. But due to mismanagement at the center, sub-ethnic group differences, beginning in the 1970's East Africa Yearly Meeting began to split apart until now there are 15 Yearly Meetings (there is actually another one which

hasn't been officially recognized yet). Much of this division was very acrimonious. Note how parallel this history is to the history of Kenya that I reported previously. Most religious groups in Kenya went through similar conflicts and divisions. Now all the yearly meetings are members of Friends United Meeting. All, except a silent worship group at Friends Church--Nairobi, Ngong Road, are programmed Friends, with singing, vocal prayer, preaching, an offering, choirs, etc.

Starting in about 1999, the many yearly meetings began to settle down and re-develop normal relationships among themselves. Now the Friends Church of Kenya includes all the yearly meetings. During the time of conflict, the Quakers were not represented in the National Christian Council of Kenya because they could not agree on who would represent them. Now the Friends Church has a representative there.

Politically the Luhya have been seen as the political "plum" that would allow someone else to run the country. If a politician could get the votes of the second to largest tribe, he would have a nice voting block. Consequently there have been many Luhya vice-presidents. Kibaki's vice president was a Luhya, Moody Awori, and there was obvious resentment against Kibaki when Awori was unable to even hold his own seat in Busia--he was defeated badly by the ODM candidate. In Moi's last government, Musalia Mudavadi was vice-president for only a short time. In the 2002 election the Luhya were determined to oust the Moi government and Mudavadi, like Awori in this election, lost his seat. He soon recognized his mistake, joined the ODM campaign against the proposed constitution in 2005, and returned to the good graces of the Luhya. He is now Raila Odinga's vice-presidential running mate. I cover these details because Musalia Mudavadi is a Friend. I am told that he sometimes attends church at Ngong Road in Nairobi. I have found him to be level-headed, a calmer speaker than most politicians, and he carried the ODM campaign very well when Raila was in the United States raising funds.

As part of the larger population of the province, the Quakers have been directly and indirectly affected by the violence. I mentioned a Luhya who was killed in Nakuru (I don't know if he was a Quaker or not). The shop of another prominent Quaker in Nairobi was looted and burned. If a Quaker lived in a Kikuyu's house, they were burned out. If they rented a house to a Kikuyu, it was also burned. There are probably many more examples of death, looted shops, and burned homes among Kenya Quakers that I do not know about. Of course indirectly everyone has been adversely affected. Prices have gone up, transport has been almost impossible, and anyone with a business has experienced decreasing sales. On top of this is the tension, the uncertainty, of what will happen; the retreating into the home and interacting with trusted neighbors only. Then there are the questions, "How can our society have fallen apart like this?" "Where have we gone wrong?" "Is this going to happen again?"

In my daily reports I try to highlight those things that I hear the Quaker community is doing: digging latrines at an IDP camp, caring for people in Eldoret Friends Church, our beginning attempts at reconciliation here in Lumakanda, attempts to dialogue with the looters in Kakamega. All these are small initiatives in hard times. As the conflict here in Kenya is no longer "news," and you hear little about what happens, I hope that you can



stay informed about our Quaker brothers and sisters in Western Kenya.

**Report #12b:  
January 8, 2008**

Dawn Rubbert (AGLI Program Manager) sent me an Associated Press news article dated yesterday, titled "Kenyan Rivals Make Concessions" by Elizabeth A Kennedy. The article included the following:

"An official in neighboring Uganda said over the weekend, 30 fleeing Kenyans were thrown into the border river by Kenyan attackers, and were presumed drowned. Two Ugandan truck drivers carrying the group said they were stopped Saturday at a roadblock mounted by vigilantes who identified the refugees as Kikuyus and threw them into the deep, swift-flowing Kipkaren River, said Himbaza Hashaka, a Ugandan border official. The drivers said none survived, Hashaka said."

This is total nonsense. The Kipkarren River is where my post office box is and within walking distance of my home. If anything like this would have happened, it would have been the talk of the town. Bodies or survivors would have been brought here to Lumakanda Hospital which covers Kipkarren River. If this had occurred, it would have been one of the biggest massacres in Kenya since the election. I have told a number of people about this story (Gladys, Florence Machayo, people from Lumakanda Church) and all have said it is "lies." I asked Dawn to contact AP to retract this article and she has done so. If you would also like to email Associated Press, the email address is [info@ap.org](mailto:info@ap.org). Unfortunately this misinformation has gone out throughout the world. I am sure that this story will be repeated over and over again, and particularly inflame the Kikuyu community towards retaliation. This is totally irresponsible journalism. So beware. Don't believe everything you read.

Back to the home front. The Lumakanda Church Relief Delegation went to the School this morning. At first the security officers would not let them in "unless they brought a little something." The Red Cross officials were not there. So they came back to our house and got the children clothing, toothbrushes, and over-the-counter medicines that had been brought from the US by AGLI workcampers, then to the Machayo's house by Getry, and lastly by Alfred Machayo to our house. When they returned, they were warmly welcomed by the leaders of the camp. The delegation asked them what their needs were and were told "soap, salt, cooking oil, firewood, Vaseline, sugar, tea leaves, and blankets." We don't really have any source for firewood. I have seen the kids going out to pick up small sticks for firewood and this is in an area with lots of trees, but 2500 people can pick an area clean of firewood in short order.

Gladys and I plan to go to Kakamega tomorrow and buy some of these items. We will then have to figure out how to get these back to Lumakanda. We are told that the banks in Kakamega are open, calling cards are available (but I don't know at what price), and the price for the matatu ride has increased from the usual 120/- to 300/-. [Note: /- is the sign



for Kenyan shillings.)

Florence Machayo came by today and we had a good discussion on the situation here in Lugari District. She came to see the District Commissioner who does not seem to be around. Florence thinks the Commissioner is afraid. Florence wants her to call a meeting of community leaders to discuss the situation, but if she is not available, how can this be done? Has the government here in Lugari District abdicated its responsibility to govern?

Today in Kakamega Friends for Peace and Community Development (FPCD) has organized people from Kakamega Friends Church to dig latrines at the police station where there are many IDP's. There was concern about the sanitation at the site.

I just received 1000/- of airtime from Dawn Amos and I feel so wealthy!

### **Report #13: January 9, 2008**

Last night Kibaki named his cabinet, mostly filled with appointees from his inner circle. Shortly thereafter we got an SMS from Eden, who is in Kisumu, saying she was seeing fires and hearing gunshots. We had planned to go to Kakamega today, but then this made us doubtful. When morning came, we called Malesi and Getry and both said that Kakamega was calm. So we went to Kakamega and back. The matatu price was double what we usually pay. Matatus were few and very crowded. The drivers and conductors were all Luhya or Kalenjins--ie, no Kikuyu. People, including the conductors, were much more subdued than before as there was not much hassling even with the high fares.

We saw a number of burned houses and shops on our way in and a very large store next to the bus station which was completely burned out. The lines at the banks were very long and we could not get all the funds we wanted, but enough for now. We were also able to buy 5,000/- of calling cards at the regular price. This will last us awhile.

I had a good meeting with the Friends for Peace and Community Development folks-- Malesi, Getry, Janet, and Shamala. We were looking at our short term and longer term strategies. It seems that they will meet with the boda-boda (bicycle taxi) drivers on Friday. You may recall from earlier reports that it is the boda-boda who were responsible for much of the violence in Kakamega. FPCD plan for this to be a listening session to hear what they have to say. I will be very interested to see what is learned.

We bought goods for Lumakanda Church committee to take to the School tomorrow. Fortunately we found Alfred Machayo in town and he carried the goods back to our house in his station wagon. We purchased soap, salt, cooking oil, and rice.

I got and read my first newspaper since Dec 28 and we bought two loaves of Kenyan bread. Bread, calling cards, and a newspaper--what a wonderful life!

### **Report #14:**

**January 10, 2008**

This morning six out of the seven members of the Lumakanda Church committee met at the church. They got a local police vehicle to carry the goods--two 50 kilo bags of rice, two 20 kilo bags of salt, five 20 liter containers of cooking oil, and ten boxes of soap--to Lumakanda School. They were very warmly received and the Red Cross gave them a receipt for the goods delivered. Gladys requested that the rice be used for the small children because it is difficult from them to eat maize (corn) and beans day after day. I took pictures of them with the "Friends in Peace" T-shirts, but I could only send the thumbnail picture since the regular one was too large for my internet system. I think I'll try again early in the morning when the connection is faster.

When I went out for my afternoon walk, I met Silas Njoroge, the leader of the Kikuyu in the IDP camp. He is perhaps my age (64) since he has a lot of white hair. He has lived here since the colonial times when the British settlers controlled Lugari District in -- perhaps he was born here. He had a large farm and a tractor, trucks, and other vehicles. His house has been thoroughly looted and burned since he is without doubt the wealthiest Kikuyu in the area. When I met him today, he thanked me very graciously for the assistance that Lumakanda Church gave to the IDP's. Many people seemed to know that I was connected to the relief, even though I was not part of the delegation: I was wearing my "Friends in Peace" T-shirt.

One need that we did not meet is Vaseline. Except for a few light showers it has not rained here for about 2 and a half months. The sun is extremely hot now (great for my solar panel) and the wind howls all day. Consequently people's skin is cracking and they need Vaseline to make it smooth. We tried to get some in Kakamega when we were there, but we could not find any wholesale.

The big question is what will happen to the IDP camp when school opens next Monday, only 4 days away. The Red Cross wanted to move the people to the large IPD camp in Turbo, but the people refused. It is too far away (more than 5 miles) and there is cholera in that camp as it has 20,000 or so people in two sites. If the school is evacuated for the opening of school on Monday, all the classrooms will have to be washed with disinfectant. Gladys knows the Head of the school who is the son of a member of Lumakanda Friends Church.

Today our electrician, Justus, came by. He is the youth leader for the ODM (Raila's) party in Lugari District. I asked him if it was true that he got beat up by the youth of one of the opposing candidates and he confirmed this. He and four other of his youth were going around the district, hanging up pictures of his candidate when two pick-ups blocked them, one in the front and one in the rear. Justus said he ran as fast as he could and was only hit a few times--he still had to go to the hospital. Others in the group were not so lucky as one perhaps broke his arm and another had a big bruise on his ribs. Both of them were hospitalized.

He confirmed that many of the looters in the community were the local bicycle taxi

drivers (boda-boda). Many have had their bicycles confiscated by the police: there is a big pile of them at the police station. Some of the bikes were put there voluntarily by the Kikuyu bicycle taxi drivers. Justus believes that there were at least 100 people killed in the district; the vast majority being youth shot by the police. He knew of only 4 Kikuyu who were killed in Matunda where 6 youth were also killed by the police. He told me that when the police kill someone, they sometimes put them in their vehicles and dump them in out of the way places. Officially there are 486 deaths--these are the ones recorded in the hospitals. 62 of these were in Western Province: I know of 9 myself, all youth shot by police. According to Justus, no youth or Kikuyu were killed in Lumakanda itself.

The African Union head, John Kufuor, who is the President of Ghana, came to Kenya to mediate. He failed. Now Kofi Anon, the former UN General Secretary, is coming to mediate between the two sides. It looks to me like this is going to be long and drawn out--procrastination is to Kibaki's advantage as he retains total power in the meantime.

## **Report #15**

### **January 11, 2008**

The major news of the day is that the internally placed people at Lumakanda School were being moved today to the IDP camp at Turbo. There are already 15,000 to 20,000 people there at two sites. The Lumakanda folks will be there together at the Turbo police station. I'll be able to visit them there, but this will be difficult: it is at least 5 miles down the road from us. So I'll have to walk to the junction at the main road and take a matutu to Turbo and back. Now there won't be two times a day visits. The school classrooms, as expected, are extremely dirty and I hope that someone will clean them up before school opens on Monday.

The biggest breakthrough for us today is that we (rather Gladys) has made personal contact with the Kikuyu side. Gladys's best friend over the years is Jacinta Latki who is a Kikuyu married to a Swede: they live in Sweden. Gladys worked for her brother, a member of the Kenyan foreign service, for twelve years including 3 in Pakistan and 2 in Zambia. Last September we visited Jacinta in Nakuru where she grew up (I think) and where she has started an orphanage for 40 children and a school for 110 children on the ten acres of her parent's plot: Phyllis Wambui Children's Home. Jacinta phoned Gladys today and told us the following: She was coming from Sweden to Kenya over the New Year's and when she reached Germany, everyone was in a panic and would not let her continue on to Kenya. I think she stayed at least a week in Germany. Last night she arrived and is now camping out with her orphans at the Nakuru fairgrounds which is serving as an IDP camp there. The orphans are of various tribes including two Kalenjin girls whom she was protecting from female circumcision. So now we have personal contact with the Kikuyu in an IDP camp. We will get more reports from her as time goes on.

In November of last year, I lent my son-in-law, Job, (Beverly's husband) the funds to buy a motorcycle so that he could go into the motor cycle taxi business. By now I know a lot about the motorcycle taxi business which in calmer times I might describe. There

are 58 motorcycles and 67 motorcycle drivers and he has been elected chair of the motorcycle taxi drivers association in Lumakanda. He said that all the motorcycle taxi drivers stayed out of the violence, partly because they were charging double for rides and thus making a good income. Also the winning MP from this area, Cyrus Jirongo, had met with the drivers and told them not to participate in any tribal violence due to the election. According to Job, most of the bicycle taxi drivers also stayed out of the looting, but of course in terms of class, a motorcycle taxi driver is far above a bicycletaxi driver.

He told me that during the days of no transportation he would sometimes drive people to Webuye about 25 miles to the west of Lumakanda. Job said that he would be stopped at Kipkarren River (and perhaps elsewhere) and asked to show his ID and say something in his native language to indicate that he was not a Kikuyu. He started wearing his orange ODM hat to show where his loyalties were.

I told him that I wanted to meet with those who had done the looting in the area. While Job said that the motorcycle drivers did not participate, he thought they would welcome a meeting. Some of the bicycle taxi drivers would also come. He said that most of the looting had been done by the "idlers" who had nothing to do. So while I may not be meeting with the actual perpetrators, I will be close. I will ask the Lumakanda Friends Church for space, ask Malesi, Getry, and Janet for one or more of them to help, and set a time, probably next Tuesday or Wednesday.

According to my stepson, Douglas, who lives in Nairobi, there is "Lots of tension. Things aren't good at all, though guys are going on with routine work. We expect things to worsen next week." Parliament is supposed to open on Tuesday and the hundred plus MP's on the ODM side (out of a total of 207) will demand to sit on the government side and not the opposition side. Kibaki's party, PNU, plus allied parties, will have only 57 MP's (one of the clear indications that ODM rather than PNU actually won the election). This will probably lead to a battle. Then on Wednesday through Friday, ODM has asked for rallies in fifteen towns in the country including Kakamega. These will be banned by the government and violence is very likely to ensue as the police attack demonstrators with tear gas, water cannons, and shooting in the air.

This is already a long enough report today, but as things have calmed down (at least temporarily), I have begun to see major criticisms by Kenyans as to the international reporting on the events. I have received enough emails to realize that even some of you have been "hood-winked." So expect my analysis of this soon.

## **Report #16: January 12, 2008**

It's late since we went to Kakamega today. In the early morning I went to the school to see the situation. Most of the IDP's had moved to Turbo and only a few were left. The school was extremely dirty which is not at all surprising. School starts Monday!!! I hope to visit the IDP folks in Turbo on Monday. Tuesday I hope to go with Malesi, Getry, and Janet to Eldoret to meet with the AVP facilitators we have there.

Yesterday Malesi, Getry, and Janet met with about 25 of the bicycle taxi drivers in Kakamega. Here is a paragraph from her report:

"Yesterday we met the Boda boda taxi drivers (Bicycle riders) and the touts and small business young men in town. They began by being sorry and sharing how the violence had made them suffer. They slowly moved to deeper things. One said 'We are nothing in this nation. We are the ones to suffer. These rich people have fridges full of food. Even if the trouble goes on for a month they will not suffer. Let us just give up and continue with our poverty'. Another said 'Madam, these people here are being untruthful. The anger expressed by all of us Kenyans for one tribe out of 42 cannot be because of one incident. We have seen rigged elections before. The problem is the attitude of 'these' people. They come to our town, to our homes and then they decide we are fools. I work in their vehicles and the way they treat you. We are just an angry lot and we hoped for change. They stole even that from us. Let us not cheat you that peace will come back. We want them out of here'. Another said, 'Our wound is real and deep. Then Martha Karua [Kikuyu minister] speaks as though we are nothing. When she talks we just feel like laying down our lives for change'. We agreed with them that there can never be peace without justice."

Gladys and I had a meeting with Dorothy Selebwa, the Clerk of USFW (United Society of Friends Women) in Kenya. I am hoping to get them more involved in the distribution of the relief aid (as a first step in reconciliation) that AGLI is receiving since this really isn't what we normally do. Since they have branches throughout the region, this will also be a good way of spreading out whatever funds we have. She will get back to me on Monday after she has contacted the USFW leaders in the 16 yearly meetings.

On the other hand I am beginning to get an overwhelming number of requests for AVP workshops. In fact I don't think we have enough experienced facilitators here to handle the load so I am thinking of inviting AVP facilitators from the US, Canada, Europe, and also English/Swahili facilitators from Rwanda and Burundi to help with the expected load.

### **Report #17: January 13, 2008**

Hoodwinked: International Coverage of the Crisis in Kenya

On Monday, January 7, Elizabeth A. Kennedy of Associated Press filed a report, "Kenyan Rivals Make Concessions". It included the following paragraph:

"An official in neighboring Uganda said over the weekend, 30 fleeing Kenyans were thrown into the border river by Kenyan attackers, and were presumed drowned. Two Ugandan truck drivers carrying the group said they were stopped Saturday at a roadblock mounted by vigilantes who identified the refugees as Kikuyu and threw them into the deep, swift-flowing Kipkaren River, said Himbaza Hashaka, a Ugandan border official.

The drivers said none survived, Hashaka said."

The next time I crossed the Kipkarren River which is in walking distance of my house, I saw that this "deep, swift-flowing" river was a rather placid, slow moving pool of water since there hadn't been any significant rain for over two months. If you threw me off the bridge into the water, I would have just stood up and walked up the bank. Moreover the "border river" is about 75 miles from the Uganda border and much closer to Eldoret than Uganda. Therefore it is not a river on the border.

If this story had been true, it would have been one of the biggest massacres in the current violence in Kenya. Even though the story was fabricated, it was passed on by at least CNN and Time. I have never seen any reference to it in the Kenyan media.

This ought to be a red flag not only for coverage of the recent events in Kenya, but overall coverage by the international media in Africa.

There are two stereotyped images of Africa. (1) The African is a happy, over-sexed, singing/dancing simple person who, as I was once told, "can't think in the abstract". The "noble savage" who has not been corrupted by the wantonness of Western Civilization is one sub-image of this. The media's obsession with the AIDS epidemic in Africa is another. (2) The African is a superstitious, violent savage full of ancient tribal hatreds. The current reporting in Kenya reinforces and is confined to this image.

Of course, people these days are too nice and they don't write this so crassly. The fact that it is done subtly, frequently by unwritten assumptions, makes it even harder to detect unless one is extremely critical of everything one reads.

Let's move on to another example. I'll leave it up to you to decide. Here is a January 7 story from Agence France Presse, titled "Police cheer as Kenya's witch-wary looters return war spoils."

"Dozens of looters who profited from Kenya's post-election unrest began returning or dumping their ill-gotten gains around the port city of Mombasa Monday, frightened of cursed goods, police said.

Television footage showed fearful, if not shameful, looters and their accomplices returning beds, sofa sets and other items after rumours that victims had deployed witch doctors to punish the thieves."

The Kenyan papers had other explanations for the return of the goods. First, the government had declared an amnesty period of two days during which anyone who returned looted goods would not be prosecuted. This was reinforced by the Imams who preached in their mosques that people should return stolen goods. The fact that this peacemaking effort by the Moslems also contradicts the violent jihadists stereotype that Moslems are not peacemakers is perhaps why this was omitted from the "witchcraft report." Christian preachers also advised the return of stolen goods. The Kenyan reports

had no mention of the alleged witchcraft.

Now let us turn to a Christian Science Monitor article by Bob Crilly on Jan 9, "Kenyans forced to flee violence find ways to cope." The author interviews a man in Kericho who lost his wife in the violence after the election. The official count is that 486 people died-- these numbers come from the people who died in hospitals or whose bodies were brought to the hospitals and morgues at the hospitals. It is likely there were many others who are therefore uncounted in this tally. As you read the articles, you assume that these were Kikuyu killed by their neighbors.

The Kenyan papers on the other hand were covering the clearly innocent people (a fifteen year old girl, a small boy) who were in the hospital in Kisumu after being shot by the security forces. The biggest "massacre" during the violence was the 43 youth rioters killed by the police in Kisumu during the weekend after the election. Kenyans are worried that a violent police state is being imposed on Kenya. Somewhere between a half and three quarters of the people killed were killed by the police and therefore were not due to "old tribal hatreds"! Have you heard this "take" on the events in the international media?

As things have calmed down, I have started seeing references in the Kenyan press about the biased, terrible coverage of this crisis in Kenya. So beware the next time you open up a newspaper or watch a news broadcast on TV about Africa. You are being told what the media thinks you want to hear and see. As one American commented to me about the coverage of Kenya, "There was enough scary black faces in the coverage!"

### **Report #18: January 14, 2008**

I didn't really write an update yesterday because it was Sunday and I was resting (well, sort of resting). My "Hoodwinked" article seems to have drawn considerable attention and may get published.

When we went to church yesterday, we found about one hundred 200 pound bags of maize (corn) in the back. After church, I asked George, the owner, why they were there. He replied that he had a big farm on the other side of the road where the Kalenjin are the dominate ethnic group. He feels he is the next target. "When they finish with the Kikuyu, they will then come for me." He has moved out all his furniture and taken it to the homes of his relatives nearby. This is another small indication that the violence is not essentially political, but a chance to plunder and loot. Today I heard two reports of cows being stolen. In the past this rarely happened in Lumakanda.

This morning, Gladys (my wife), and I went to Turbo where the Lumakanda IDP's have been transferred. I had heard that Turbo had experienced a rough time during the violence; but it is another thing to actually see an entire block of shops burned out. Many other shops in the town were destroyed. Some were wooden and burned up completely. After viewing the destruction we climbed the hill to the police station and



found our "refugees."

They were most happy to see us. "You have followed us here," was a common comment. The women, in particular, were very pleased and welcoming to Gladys who had been part of the contingent that had brought them the first allotment of food. The refugees have been placed in a just-harvested corn field so there isn't even any grass. For the first night(s) they were sleeping on the ground in the open. Now, men were building eucalyptus pole houses with plastic tops and sides. A few had found iron sheets (perhaps salvaged from their burnt shops or houses) which make a more substantial wall. The wind is blowing very hard, almost constantly, so the plastic tarps were flapping loudly. I would think this din would make it hard to sleep at night; I guess they will get used to it.

The people in the camp told us that they had not received anything since they arrived from Lumakanda two days before. Not surprisingly, blankets were their first request. They had clearly enjoyed the rice we delivered previously. Predictably it had run out since there were only two 50 kilo (110 pound) bags. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has sent us a small grant for the Lumakanda IDP's. We hope to go to Eldoret tomorrow to buy more relief supplies; but then one never knows.

Parliament begins sessions tomorrow and both sides plan on sitting on the Government side of the building so this might lead to a crisis there. There are three days of demonstrations scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Desmond Tutu raised hopes which were dashed; John Kufour, the African Union president, raised hopes which were dashed. Now Kofi Annan is scheduled to arrive tomorrow along with a few other eminent Africans. People are not getting up their hopes again.

Human Rights Watch has issued a strong statement against the Kenyan Government for using excessive force ("shoot to kill" policy) during the crackdowns, restricting the media, and the illegal ban against demonstrations.

## **Report #19**

### **January 16, 2008**

Yesterday I ran out of electricity because it has been cloudy for the last two days and my solar panel did not charge up my battery. It is cloudy again today, but I am writing this early before the little electricity I have runs out.

Last night the ODM candidate won the election for Speaker of Parliament and as soon as it was announced on the radio, we heard shouts of joy from the neighborhood. Today doesn't look so good. We had no problems in going to Kakamega (except the Supermarket, where Gladys was shopping, closed their doors and kept everyone inside when the police were chasing the youth through town. In Nairobi, Douglas Shikuunzi, my step-son, called to say that everyone in the central city was told to go home and there were no matatus so he will have to walk home.

In Eldoret today I have heard from a number of sources that things are really bad with the



youth organizing to attack the police (and vis versa). Stores have all shut down.

Gladys (my wife) and I went to Eldoret yesterday with Malesi, Getry, and Shamala (our partners in Friends for Peace and Community Development). We went for a listening session with the staff of the Eldoret Prison with whom we have done a lot of AVP (and where we did two AVP workshops with the inmates). The group was very diverse (but no Kikuyu). My favorite image is of one of the guards, who is an AVP facilitator, indicating how good AVP was with his automatic rifle pointing right to his mouth! I have become so used to seeing police, guards, etc with guns, I didn't even much notice this until he spoke about AVP. The situation in Eldoret was really bad and everyone was affected. One woman, whose husband is a Kisii (it is not only Kikuyu who are being targeted), was threatened after she was seen helping some members of her family. Others talked about most of their neighbors being burned out. The situation in Eldoret seems quite different from elsewhere (Nairobi, Kisumu, Kakamega). A Kalenjin said that most of the destruction in Eldoret was done by villagers from the countryside. There everyone who is over 25 is required to join in a group with the old warrior mentality and these are the ones who did the attacking; such as at the church which was burned down. They can only be stopped by their elders: if the elders refuse to bless their attacks. This it seems is what happened to calm down the town. The same person told us that last time the violence was spontaneous, but now the violence is being planned and therefore could be much worse. The Kalenjins consider the area around Eldoret to be their homeland and everyone else is a "stranger" that can be sent back to their home of origin.

We went by Kakamega Friends Church and found that the 65 people who had fled to the church had left because school was beginning and there is a nursery school in the Church compound. We were told that not all of these refugees were Kikuyu. They had been given a small amount of funds to travel back to their place of origin, but most did not even know where they came from since they had lived in the area for generations.

We went to Kakamega today. I helped interview new candidates for an additional AVP position and Gladys went to town with Getry to buy relief supplies--blankets, cooking oil, Vaseline, tea, and sugar for the IDP's from Lumakanda who are now in Turbo. The funds for this were supplied by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). When we arrived in Turbo the police gave us a rough time. The head officer said that the food had to be inspected by the Health Department to make sure it was fit for human consumption. Two policewomen at the entrance asked Gladys why we were helping the Kikuyu when they were the cause of all the problems. So as Gladys talked with the police, I went and found the camp leaders who knew us well. One of the leaders and the clerk came and talked with the police, letting them know that we were their friends, etc. So we unloaded the goods and the clerk wrote down a list of what we delivered. It was late in the afternoon and they were pondering whether they could distribute the goods before night. I suggested that they at least give out the blankets since it would help keep people warm in the cold night (due to the cloudiness and rain two days ago). Of course, the goods were much appreciated.

One of the people we interviewed for the AVP position was a Luo from Nyanza province.

He had many interesting stories. His brother is hiding two Kikuyu in his house. When youth blocked the road near his town, he got out of the matatu and talked with the youth and got them to remove the stones that were blocking the road.

All the matatus (and there were few of them) and trucks had green branches on the front and back. According to ODM, those who were going to their demonstrations (today is the first of three days of national demonstrations) should be carrying branches and not participate in any kind of violence. Those branches were a sign of support for ODM so that the matatu or truck would not be stopped by youth. When the matatu which we had hired to carry the goods pulled into the IDP camp questions came quickly about why they had the branches on them. The folks in the IDP camp clearly did not support ODM. The driver and conductor replied that they had to do this in order to move safely down the roads. Such is the ambiguity of the situation.

## **Report #20**

### **January 19, 2008**

I have not written for the past two days because mostly I stayed home. This was partly because I needed to catch up in my email and other work at home and partly because with the continued demonstrations by ODM, many people were not going anywhere as travel was so uncertain. My son-in-law who is a motorcycle taxi driver here in Lumakanda told me yesterday he earned only 200/- while he usually earns 800/- to 1,000/- on a normal day! [NOTE: /- is the symbol for Kenyan Shillings.]

I did go for a walk with Gladys yesterday to her sister's house about two miles down the hill. We passed the house of Silas Njoroge who is the Kikuyu leader at the IDP camp. His house was looted, but not burned. Further down the road his brother's house was looted and burned including all the maize (corn) he had in storage. They are considered the "richest" Kikuyu in the area, but neither one had a particularly fancy house--much like many of the people around here.

Ray Downing is a Mennonite doctor working at the hospital in Webuye (the largest town to the west of us, towards Uganda). He asks this question: Why was there no destruction of Kikuyu shops and homes in Mebuye? (This is also true of Bungoma and many other towns in the country.) He asks: "Why did these towns escape the violence? Who is studying the reasons why some places did not have violence?" I think these are really interesting questions--any students out there needing a research topic?

AGLI and FPCD (Friends for Peace and Community Development, our Kenyan partner) will be doing 40 one-day AVP-style listening workshops with the 900 employees of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) from the US which has a major presence in Kisumu. The conflicts in the country have brought out latent ethnic feelings among the staff. We will be doing 2 workshops per day for twenty days. We are bringing one HROC facilitator and one AVP facilitator from Rwanda to be part of each 3 person facilitator team. It will be really interesting to see how this goes. Sessions begin on Wednesday of this coming week.

Friends United Meeting (FUM)--Africa Office has spearheaded the arrangement of a Consultation for Quaker leaders in Kenya next week to consider the Quaker response to the current violence and crisis. The consultation starts Thursday evening and will go through Sunday. Gladys and I will be there (so don't expect any reports during that time). This will be an opportunity for the Quaker leadership in Kenya to really assert themselves as a peace Church. I hope they "grab it."

The ODM has not scheduled any more demonstrations but rather is now turning to an economic boycott of institutions controlled by Kibaki and associates. I don't know how that will go. The 3 days of attempted demonstrations resulted in 21 more deaths--all but one, I think, killed by police including some clearly innocent people (a mother sitting inside her house). While there are always ups and downs about some kind of dialogue, I don't see anything significant happening yet so the stand-off continues.

## **Report #21**

### **January 21, 2008**

Shortly after the first Quaker missionaries came to Kenya in 1902 and had their first converts to Christianity, the requirements of being a Christian were at great odds with traditional society. I know (or rather knew since many of these have died) some of these original converts and they are not like your every-day Christian that we know. They had to make major life changes to become Christian, usually over the complete objection of most of their family members. These folks are/were stout Christians. As time went on many others converted and living separately was no longer necessary. By now almost everyone in Kenya considers him/herself a Christian (or a Moslem). But like the US, and many other places, many of the nominal Christians rarely go to church except for weddings and funerals and it plays only a little part in their lives.

On Sunday at Lumakanda Church the preacher was the wife of the pastor. She lives in Eldoret and is having to move because she rents a house owned by Kikuyu. Many of the houses around her have been burned down. She took as her text, Mathew 5:20 which reads, "I tell you, then, that you will be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven only if you are more faithful than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees in doing what God requires." She started out by saying that Christians don't smoke or drink alcohol (all Protestant religions in Kenya forbid smoking and alcohol consumption). But then she went on to the main part of her sermon, namely, that Christians do not take up weapons to use on their neighbors. She gave the example of a man who is a pastor and took a spear to join in on the violence in Eldoret. This man, she clearly indicated, was not a Christian.

Note that this was the sermon in a small church in an out-of-the-way place. But I think that this is a common feeling among those who go to Church. While this is a Friends Church, I think that this message could be heard in many Christian churches here. In other words, the God-fearing Christians are against the violence. But that division between the "God-fearing Christians" and the nominal Christians is huge. The church-going Christians shun those who do not attend church and make little outreach to them.

This is particularly true of the youth. Consequently, when violence came, the God-fearing Christians had no points of contact with the looters. They were cowed down by fear, many expecting to be the next target of the wrathful crowds.

There is no political settlement in sight. One newspaper columnist stated today in the Daily Nation that the longer that things drag out the better it is for the Kibaki side: so, they have little incentive to genuinely engage in mediation. On the Raila side this means that time is against them so they might turn to drastic measures.

Although there were no demonstrations over the weekend, the violence did not subside. Once the genie of violence gets out of the bottle, it is very hard to put it back in. The papers report 10 or 15 deaths on Sunday. Eden Grace texted me that two people were killed in Cheptulu, the market right next to Kaimosi Hospital (which had formerly escaped the violence). Most of the deaths are in Rift Valley where the various Kalenjin groups feel that outsiders have taken away their land. This is not only Kikuyu, but also Kisii, Luo, Luhya, and other groups. This happened before in 1992 when 1000 people were killed and 100,000 or more displaced. Many people (like all those who said Kenya was such a stable country) seem to have forgotten this. As we have learned from Rwanda and Burundi, when these kinds of clashes occur and nothing is done about them, a renewed, more vicious cycle of violence will occur. This, I think, is what is happening in the Rift Valley (and I live only 3 miles from the Rift Valley). As Job, my son-in-law, told me back in about 1992 when he was in fifth grade, the Kalenjin warriors came all the way past Lumakanda attacking the Luhya--this was in the days before Lugari was a district with a police station in Lumakanda.

To summarize, the election results were the spark for the violence. The tinder was all the alienated youth in Kenyan society. As time goes on the ethnic dimension will increase and attacks will lead to counter-attacks. As attacks become successful in forcing people to leave the Rift Valley, the violence becomes self-reinforcing leading to more attacks. At this point we must be thankful that the attackers have only traditional weapons--clubs, bows and arrows, machetes, and spears. If they had guns (which, if the violence continues, they will soon acquire in one way or another) the death toll would soar and soar. Even now I am not sure that a political settlement will end the violence in the countryside, although it would give the security forces a greater chance to deal with it.

Tomorrow Gladys, my wife, and I go to Kisumu (for the first time since the violence began) to help plan the series of 40 listening workshops for the 900 employees of the Center for Disease Control. We plan to begin conducting AVP workshops at various sites in Western, Rift, and Nyanza Provinces. We have hired two more AVP facilitators to help organize this work--Peter Serete from Kakamega and Bernard Onjalo from Bondo, Nyanza Province near Kisumu. They will work under our energetic AVP coordinator, Getry Agizah. Malesi Kinaro, Gladys and I will give direction and, of course, I must raise the necessary funds.

**Report #22**  
**January 28, 2008**

On Thursday, when I was going to send you an update, my laptop completely crashed. Later in the day Gladys and I went to the Quaker Leadership Peace Conference in Kakamega. Getry Agizah (AVP coordinator) has lent me her laptop and so I am back in communication. I can't respond to emails I got before Thursday and I don't have any names in my address book; but Dawn sends out these reports and I can remember her email address.

Things are getting really bad. At 8:00 AM this morning, Eden texted me, "I'm hearing that they are already burning and slashing near the stage [bus station] in Kisumu." Five minutes later she texted, "Hearing gun shots now." By 10:00 AM she wrote, "They have closed all the roads and the airport. We are hearing much gun fire." Florence Machayo came by early this morning because we were going to visit one of the more hard-hit villages in Lugari District. When she got here, she said that people were already congregating in Kipkarren River and she had been told that in Turbo the youth had dug a trench in the road stopping all traffic to and from Uganda, Rwanda, and beyond. Gladys called the leader at the IDP camp in Turbo and he said that the IDP's were fine, but that the road was closed. Later Florence called and told us that the youth in Kipkarren River had cut down a big tree and blocked the road. So we are not going anywhere!!! (Lumakanda is between Turbo and Kipkarren River.) We also heard that a Kikuyu house in Malava was being burned (this is on the way to Kakamega) and that Kakamega is "wild." Getry says that right next to where she had fled they burned a Kikuyu's house (but were able to rescue the three children in the house), a school in town, and many other buildings.

This is all in response to rising ethnic gang fighting over the weekend, first in Nakuru and then in Naivasha. The paper says 90 people have been killed. This is mostly Kikuyu "revenge," but also included Kikuyu on Kikuyu violence in Naivasha as one gang accuses the other of voting for the wrong political party. The police are reported to be just standing by as all this happens as they are unable to control the events. The army has been brought in to Nakuru to control the town. In Lugari I had heard that the army had been deployed in some areas and as soon as I was told this, I was told they were abusing people. They would accuse someone with a bag of maize (corn) of having looted it and then seize all of that person's maize. Nobody knows where the maize goes! The army is not supposed to be involved in internal policing, but clearly as the police have become overwhelmed, the army has been brought in.

Gladys has a good friend, Jacinta, who has started an orphanage and school in Campi ya Moto, a small village near Nakuru. This is in the area where the violence is most extensive. Gladys lived there for four years while working for Jacinta's brother. She therefore knows everyone in the community. Campi ya Moto and all the houses around the orphanage have been destroyed. All the neighbors Gladys knew (and I met on our two visits last year to the orphanage) are gone to "who knows where." The orphanage which normally had 40 children now has 200. It survives only because it is being guarded by the police. They have no water and little food.

There is a glue that holds a society together. It consists of many things--customs, culture, respect for others and their property, laws and their enforcement by the police and courts, etc. The glue in Kenyan society was always weak. There was much on-going violence before the voting--for example: the clashes on Mt. Elgon that AGLI had begun working on; others in Molo/Rondai; continued deadly conflicts in the pastoral areas; and many acts of violence including the common practice of lynching suspected thieves. The police are noted for being very corrupt--I watch them collect bribes from the matatu conductors every time I am in a matatu. The courts are also known as being corrupt. Within the culture there exists great jealousy of any one or any group which seems to be doing better than others.

I am afraid that the little glue that Kenyan society had is disintegrating and that chaos is overtaking normalcy.

Much was made of it last week when Kofi Annan got Raila and Kibaki to shake hands. While this was a good, positive first step, my feeling now is that the situation is "out-of-control" of everyone. As the Open Letter to Leaders and Citizens of Kenya from the Quaker Leadership Conference I just attended states (I will report more on this at another time):

"We invite you to join us in praying for deliverance from evil spirits which are at work in our country, and continue to intercede for Kenya."

## **Report #23**

### **January 29, 2008**

I am feeling very discouraged.

Over the weekend (which now seems so far in the past) I was at the Quaker Leadership Peace Conference in Kakamega. If you would like to see the documents from the conference, please ask Dawn at [dawn@aglionline.org](mailto:dawn@aglionline.org) or by reply email. [Note: you have received the two documents pasted into one of these emails dated 1/27. If you would like the documents as an attachment then contact me, Dawn.]

It was an excellent gathering. Almost every yearly meeting and Quaker organization sent their representative(s). There is no doubt that Quakers in Kenya will now give prominence to the Peace Testimony in this time of chaos, destruction, and death. The participants were very concerned about the situation and serious in their efforts to respond to Kenyans, to Christians, and to all Quakers. They affirmed that the Quakers needed to be neutral in the political situation. I was surprised to find that I was appointed to the Coordinating Committee for current and long-term actions since Gladys and I played a rather quiet role during the conference. But AVP is on everyone's lips. Getry Agizah, the AVP coordinator, was also put on the committee, along with Hezron Masitsa (AVP coordinator in Nairobi). The committee is supposed to meet in Kakamega on Friday but who knows if we will be able to travel.

On the way to the conference those who took the bus through Nakuru saw the Total gas station on fire. This was the beginning of major fighting in Nakuru which later spread to Naivasha and then on Monday to western Kenya. This morning on the BBC news, I heard the spokesman for the Kenya Police say that everything is calm now, while the next report was the BBC reporter in Kisumu talking about all the tires burning, total lack of movement, roads cut, etc. Is the Kenyan Government in the same country that I am in?

I was going to report some news from last week when my laptop crashed. Kaimosi (the major Quaker center in western Kenya) has been quiet as I have reported before. It is along the boundary between the Tiriki (a Luhya group) and the Nandi (a Kalenjin group). But on Wednesday someone stole a cow; the other group retaliated by burning some houses, including the kiosks by the road leading into Kaimosi, and everything got out of control. Six people were killed and at least 70 houses were burnt. Kaimosi Hospital was receiving lots of people with cuts from machetes, arrows stuck in people's bodies, and other injuries from the violence. There is absolutely no political explanation for this violence since both of these groups voted overwhelming for ODM, the opposition party.

Yesterday Gladys told me that one of her relatives was going to Eldoret to take another relative who had a broken leg. When they reached Turbo he was forced to show his ID card (by name, people can tell he is not a Kikuyu). He put his relative on the side of the road while he was forced to dig up the road until he got tired. He was then required to return to Lumakanda with the relative with the broken leg rather than proceed on to Eldoret.

Only eight people out of 40 showed up at the listening session in Kisumu yesterday and they were distracted by the events going on around them. We have cancelled the workshops for today. Otherwise the Sunset Hotel where the workshops are taking place and the facilitators are staying is quite safe and they have not experienced any violence nearby.

We were supposed to go to Kaimosi tomorrow to talk to the Friends Theological College students about organizing AVP workshops in their home churches during the April vacation, but we have put this off until next week. We have been making a weekly delivery to the Lumakanda IDP's now living in Turbo, but I don't see how we can do it this week. Florence Machayo who lives only about 5 miles from us wants to have a meeting tomorrow of all the AVP coordinators and others involved in peace work in Lugari District, but I don't know if Gladys and I will be able to go even that short distance!

So you can see why I am so discouraged.

## **Report #24**

### **January 30, 2008**

One of the major problems of life here in Kenya at this time is to know what is true from what is rumor. I formerly reported on the 30 Kikuyu that were reported to have been

thrown into the Kipkarren River (even though covered by AP, CNN, and Time, it was not true). Today we got a call from Janet Ifedha (AVP facilitator from Kakamega) asking if the Kipkarren River bridge was being destroyed by youth. It is not--we just went over it.

So it was hard to tell truth from fiction with regard to the events of yesterday.

We were told that Nandi youth (a Kalenjin group across the road from us) were coming up the road to attack Kikuyu and burn Kikuyu houses up here in Lumakanda. Police were supposedly at the small bridge coming up the hill to Lumakanda, fired shots at them, and they fled. I didn't think this was very plausible since they would not know where the Kikuyu lived or had lived. Then today we went out for a short trip (5 miles) to Florence Machayo's house for a meeting of Lugari AVP facilitators. At the Lumankanda junction, all the signs (except the Jehovah Witnesses) were destroyed. Two tires had been burned on the road and we could see where the tarmac was burned and large potholes beginning to form. So what is the truth?

Then about 2:00 pm yesterday a man was walking by our house and talking on his cell phone. He said in Swahili, "A Luo has been killed in Lumakanda." Wow. So Gladys went out to find out. She was told that some Kikuyu had come to shell their maize (corn) off the cob and that it was suspected that they would spend the night and attack the local people. This is not really feasible as I think it would be certain suicide on their part to stay. But this is what people might believe. The violence in this region is frequently enhanced by the concept, "You are trying to kill me, so I will kill you first." Of course the other side thinks the same thing so preemptive violence occurs. We heard that crowd of local youth collected at the house and the police disbursed them, killing one.

Today our electrician told me that the person had been killed by the police when he was taking some things from his house and the police mistakenly thought he was a looter.

I am not even certain if someone was killed.

Our electrician told me that a person was also killed by the police in Kipkarren River yesterday. When we passed through Kipkarren River today, the normally very busy town was almost deserted. Is this evidence that someone was killed?

The violence has reached a member of the family. The brother of Gladys's brother-in-law was arrested in Chavakali (near Gladys's home area) for setting vehicles on fire. What is difficult to understand is that he is not a youth, being somewhere around 50 years old. I'm certain we will hear more about this as time goes on.

There were about 12 people from Lugari District at Florence Machayo's house. They were there to discuss the situation and what they might do. It was quite interesting to hear various people's takes on the local violence. Most seemed to think that they knew who the attackers were although they said that local people were sometimes put in trucks and taken elsewhere to do the violence and others were trucked into Lugari area to do the violence here. If this is correct, this means that there is significant preplanning of the



violence.

In Chekalini, the area where Florence lives, the high school is now the internally displaced person's camp for about 1000 Luhya who have fled the violence in Nakuru and Naivasha. Like the Kikuyu IDP's here, they have lost everything. More are coming all the time as they are being forced out of Central Province for being non-Kikuyu. So soon we are having another humanitarian disaster. A man stopped me on the road during my morning walk through town and said that it was not fair that the Kikuyu were getting relief and the others were not. At that time I did not understand since I did not know that so many internal refugees had shown up in Lugari. Lugari is the closest Luhya District along the main road that goes through Eldoret so I suspect that many of these people will stop here.

None of this, of course, is reported by the media since no one has reporters of any kind in the area. Are those who have died in Lugari District accounted for in the national total which is now officially 850? I doubt that many of them are. There are hundreds and hundreds of little places like Lumakanda, Turbo, and Kipkarren River. What is the real truth of what is happening in all these communities?

While Eden Grace and her family have been evacuated from Kisumu to Nairobi because of the violence in Kisumu, the media reports that things are becoming calmer. Perhaps this is true in Nairobi, but my step-son, Douglas, who lives in Nairobi reported, "Some skirmishes early today. Life seems not to be usual because most people appear worried about their security. Leaflets were dropped warning some communities to get out." Has the media gotten "used" to the violence and a few people killed in Kisumu and a few more in Eldoret and some more in Kibera is no longer "news"? Yesterday definitely was the worst day in Lumakanda since we returned (we were not here the first four days after the election results).

So truth, the reality of what actually is happening around you, is difficult to grasp because all those normal markers you have about your surroundings are suspect. It is so easy to be "sucked in" by rumors. And yet, to understand the dangers around you, you have to listen to others.

Enjoy the Super Bowl if it hasn't happened yet!!! There you can watch reality on TV and get instant replay from many angles on anything dramatic or controversial. Here we live in a state of unknowing.

## **Report #25**

### **January 31, 2008**

This morning things seemed to be calming down after the violence from the assassination of Mugabe Were, an opposition MP, Monday night. But today a second opposition MP, David arap Too, was assassinated by a Kisii traffic policeman in Eldoret. The Kisii are perceived to be allied with the Kibaki side so now there is already great retaliation against the Kisii. This is clearly politically motivated since now with two deaths, ODM

has lost their majority in the parliament. A second motive is to wreck the negotiations that Kofi Annan is facilitating. Will the Kibaki Government stop at nothing to remain in power???

Through Malesi and Uzima Foundation staff in Kisii (which is part of Nyanza Province), AGLI is supporting the following dialogue between the Kisii and Kalenjin (Kipsigis): "Jared, the Uzima field officer from Nyanza, and his deputy George, had began the week in high hopes. He had met elders and administrators from Borabu and Sotik districts. Meetings were planed for today [1/31] and tomorrow. Then the Kipsigis warriors struck in the night killing many Kisiis. Jared ended up being involved in ferrying the injured and dying to hospital. I talked with the PC of Nyanza because the Sotik DC was being very uncooperative. Today they have been doing some shuttle diplomacy. 6 Kisii people died from the clashes and many are still in hospital. I am so impressed by the way my staff are insisting on dialogue for the 2 tribes in spite of extreme provocation. I really thank God for that."

Tomorrow we were planning to go to Kakamega for the first meeting of the Quaker Emergency Peace Committee. Gladys was to go on to visit her father for the day. Then we were going to sleep in Lubao at the Peace Center where on Saturday all the AVP facilitators were going to meet to discuss the way forward for AVP in western Kenya. At the moment I doubt we will be going anywhere tomorrow.

Time for many more prayers for the situation in Kenya!

## **Report #26**

### **February 3, 2008**

Moses Musonga is the General Secretary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation--Africa Section. He just buried his brother-in-law who was killed with six arrows in his body in the conflict around Kaimosi between the local Luhya and Kalenjin groups who both supported the opposition candidate.

One of our brother-in-laws, Wilson, is an over the road truck driver. He carried cement from Mombasa to the Rift Valley and returns with tea for export. In the Rift Valley, he was beaten up and all the cement stolen, but fortunately they did not burn his truck. Again both Wilson and the Kalenjin who attacked him were politically on the same side.

On Friday I attended a meeting of the Quaker Leaders and yesterday (Saturday) I clerked a meeting with the AVP facilitators from the Western provinces. At this point no one thinks that the situation in Kenya is about politics--that is, about who won the election. The election was no more than a "trigger" that unleashed all the hidden, covered-up resentments that have built up over the years and decades. Although the media (including the international media) seem to report that things are calming down (ten people now being killed is reported on page 8 of the Daily Nation), there was no one in either of those two meetings who felt that this was true. Perhaps things are calmer in the cities (but not really in Kisumu) or perhaps the death of ten people is no longer "news." Or perhaps they

are tired of saying the same thing over and over every day. Many doubt that a political agreement will calm the escalating violence.

It was heart-wrenching to hear person after person tell of the violence and destruction in their community. At least two people in the AVP meeting talked about how they had voted for Kibaki while their children had voted for Raila and this had brought a great deal of tension into the family. Rather than the usual "tribal explanation" for the voting, there is another one, that the older people wanted to stay with Kibaki while the younger people wanted change with Raila. But at least in the rural areas, it doesn't seem like the youth voted very much (while their elders did). I saw a statistic which said that 81% of the population in Kenya is below 31 years of age. Hard to believe, but with the rapid population increase of the 1970's and 1980's this is a possibility. Of course it is this younger population who feels left out of Kenya's future. There is no doubt, by the way, that the MP's elected in Dec 27 last year are much younger and better educated than those from the previous parliament. Many "old" politicians who have been elected decade after decade were defeated. In a breath of fresh air (compared to the US where a politician remains in office until he retires or moves on) only 80 out of 212 PM's were re-elected (this includes the leaders such as Kibaki and Raila).

There were seventeen facilitators (including Gladys and me) at the AVP meeting. After we finished the de-briefing mentioned above, we discussed how we could reach the youth. We then talked about the kind of programs we would like to do. My goal for the next six months, pending raising sufficient funds, is to do 100 AVP workshops with 2,000 youth in at least five sites. We learned from Rwanda that it is better to concentrate in a few areas with lots of workshops to impact a community rather than spread them out everywhere with little impact in any one community. We hope that in the next week or two the facilitators will go back to their communities and develop concrete plans for AVP workshops with the youth (or as one person suggested, with the police!).

I guess I need to end with a good story. Henry Mukwanja, a Quaker, works for the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) in the North Rift Valley. On Dec 30, when the violence began, he and two co-workers were in a remote place and they stayed inside for two whole days. On the third day they ventured out but ran into a menacing group of youth who were doing violence in the area. Henry called out, "God loves you." One of the youth responded, "No, he doesn't." And then what? Everyone started laughing and the tension was broken and all was well with Henry and his companions.

## **Report #27**

### **February 4, 2008**

#### Ancient Tribal Hatreds

As I indicated in a previous report, most of the international reporting about Kenya is based on the assumption that "ancient tribal hatreds" explains what is going on. Evidence which does not fit into this framework is ignored. Let me give some examples.

- A Luhya woman from Lumakanda Friends Church is hiding a Kikuyu woman who gave birth on Dec 30 when the violence started.
- I know a Luo (who are supposed to "hate" Kikuyu) whose brother is hiding a Kikuyu in his house. I have never seen an interview with anyone who is doing this, even in the local Kenyan press.
- 3000 people in Kibaki home constituency in the center of Kikuyuland voted for Raila. There were 7 other candidates to vote for including other Kikuyu if they didn't want vote for Kibaki. Raila continually says (but its never reported in the international press) that a lot of Kikuyu voted for him.
- There is a hit list out with 25 Kikuyu who have "betrayed their tribe." They are the human rights advocates and leaders of NGO's who have criticized the government over the election tallying, the use of live bullets, the restrictions on press freedom, and, the right to hold demonstrations. In other words, some of the most vocal critics of what is happening are Kikuyu.
- Some of the violence in Naivasha was Kikuyu gangs fighting other Kikuyu gangs. Since this does not fit in -- it has been ignored.
- There are large areas of Western Province (perhaps over half of the area) and possibly also parts of Nyanza and Rift Valley provinces, but I don't have as much information about those regions, where the Kikuyu have not been forced out, their houses and shops have not been looted and burned, and they are still living peacefully with their neighbors.
- Many non-Kikuyu have been in the forefront of visiting and bringing relief to those Kikuyu in IDP camps. The Red Cross volunteers who were helping at Lumakanda were mostly local Luhya.
- I have heard one sermon and heard reports of other sermons that a good Christian does not loot, destroy, and/or kill ANYONE.

One can explain both WWI and WWII as "old tribal hatreds" between the Germans and the French/English. From before 1066 to 1914 European history can be explained as "ancient tribal hatreds" between the English and French. As you can see, this doesn't explain anything, but rather is an excuse to avoid devolving more deeply into root causes of conflict. So when you see articles about ethnic animosities (to use the current more polite term) in Kenya, please realize that you are being served only icing.

## **Report #28**

### **February 4, 2008**

While burning houses and deadly violence fills the news here in Kenya, AGLI has played a part in a great peacemaking activity!

The Kipsigis are a Kalenjin group around Kericho in the Rift Valley. The Kisii are their neighbors across the border in Nyanza Province. As soon as the election results were announced, the Kipsigis began targeting the Kisii; they were incorrectly perceived as having supported Kibaki in the election. Last Thursday [1/21] when a Kipsigis Member of Parliament [David Kimutai Too] was killed by a Kisii policeman, extensive violence broke out on the border between the two groups. Between ten

and twenty people were killed; many, many wounded; and tens of houses burned.

Jared is an AVP facilitator in Kisii and coordinator of the Uzima Foundation program there (Uzima works with youth empowerment). He is married to a Kipsigis woman who had to go into hiding in order keep from being attacked.

Malesi Kinaro wrote a proposal to AGLI to support negotiation/reconciliation meetings between the Kipsigis and Kisii elders. Naturally I agreed.

I just received the following text message from Malesi:

"Jared is walking in the air. He just finished chairing a meeting that brought together District Commissioners, Members of Parliament, and elders from Kipsigis and Kisii. He says it went so well he doesn't think fighting will continue. We have been working to see this day when we make the first step. AGLI, through FPCD (Friends for Peace and Community Development), AGLI's partner in western Kenyan, gave 108,000/- (\$1550) for this and Uzima gave 40,000/- (\$575). The journey is still long and much money needed. The Lord reigns!" [NOTE: /- is the symbol for Kenyan Shillings.]

If this has saved the life of even one person, our efforts have been rewarded. Thanks to Jared for this great effort!

## **Report #29**

### **February 8, 2008**

"Feed the Hungry."

Two weeks ago Kenyan Friends held a conference in Kakamega sponsored by the Friends Church in Kenya, Friends United Meeting--Africa Office, and Friends World Committee for Consultation--Africa Section. At that meeting, it was decided to form a committee which has been titled "Friends Church Peace Team" (FCPT). I was appointed to the committee which has now formed an "Emergency Relief and Reconciliation Programme." As its first major activity, yesterday, about 30 Friends visited a number of internally displaced people in the Trans Nzoia District next to Mt. Elgon in the Rift Valley. With funds donated from the United States, England, and elsewhere, a truck filled with food, maize (corn), beans, rice, sugar, salt, cooking oil, blankets, and soap, was to be delivered.

Gladys and I were assigned to provide the forty 200-pound bags of maize; here in Lugari District maize is cheaper since this is the maize belt region of Kenya and there is a surplus for export elsewhere. Gladys and two youth spent Monday and Tuesday bagging the 40 sacks at Florence and Alfred Machayo's home. Then on Wednesday she waited all day for the truck she had hired to take the maize to Kakamega. It never showed up so she arranged for another truck to come at 5:00 a.m. on Thursday morning. When it had not shown up by 8:00 AM, we called John Muhanji of FUM who was organizing the distribution. He decided to have the truck which was coming from Kakamega with the

rest of the goods drop by the Machayo's and pick up the maize (and us as we had traveled the five miles or so to her house). This worked out well and actually saved the transport costs.

The people who had gathered in Kakamega came up north in three vehicles and together with the truck we drove to a junction near where we were going to distribute the food. Henry Mukwanja who works for the National Council of Christians of Kenya in that region had identified about ten places where approximately 4000 people had not received any assistance from either the Red Cross, the Government of Kenya, or the World Food Program. These people noted that the Red Cross trucks passed them by to deliver food and supplies to the Kikuyu who were in an IDP camp down the road-- as non-Kikuyu, they saw this as another example of the Government's favoritism to Kikuyu over other people in Kenya.

Gladys and I joined the third group with a Seventh Day Adventist Church which was going to a small shopping center, 5 or 6 small shops on the side of the road, at Misemwa where officially there were 259 families totaling 1600 people; an average of about 6 people per family. The amount of food we unloaded seemed massive--14 two hundred pound bags of maize, for example. Yet each family was given only about 10 pounds of maize, 2 pounds of beans, a blanket, a cup of sugar, a half cup of salt, a few ounces of cooking oil, and the families with children received some rice. This would be enough only for a few days! Of course the place was packed with people waiting patiently for the distribution--many women. I estimated that 2/3 of the families were headed by women; there were many small children (the older ones, I hope, were in school), old men, youth, etc.

These people were not Kikuyu, the group usually targeted in the violence in western Kenya, but mostly Luhya and some Sabaot (Kalenjin group). There was no internally displaced persons camp like we are going to in Turbo; the people live in houses in the area. For example, in the small Seventh Day Adventist Church, eight women were living with their children. Others had rented a room in the area and a few were staying with relatives. One woman told me that she had moved with her husband and four children--and a fifth was well on its way--to live with her sister who also has four children and there was not enough food for this suddenly, vastly expanded, family. All the displaced people had come with nothing more than what they could carry.

As usual when one delves into the details of conflict, the situation is different from the usual simplistic explanation of Kibaki versus Raila, Kikuyu versus Luo. The people here had fled from Mt. Elgon where there has been an active conflict for the last year and a half. Human Rights groups in Bungoma had tallied 400 dead and 150,000 or more displaced before the election violence began on December 30. Note that this compares to the official count of 1000 dead and 300,000 displaced from the election violence. In other words, some conflicts are "more important" than others. But the fact that this conflict was not properly dealt with when it occurred indicates why so much of Kenya could erupt into similar violence.

[NOTE: David and others visited Mt. Elgon in early November 2007. AVP workshops had begun there prior to the election. David wrote a report about the history of the area and the violent conflict which had already been going on for over a year.]

The conflict in Mt. Elgon was between two clans of the Sabaot group, the Soy and Ndorobo, over land. The first group, which thinks that they have not been dealt with fairly in the land distribution by the Government have formed the Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLBF). They have automatic rifles and retreat into the forests on Mt Elgon to hide. We had seen an area on Mt Elagon where every house on the hillside had been destroyed. The election results were used by the Sabaot Land Defence Force as a reason to attack anyone in their area from another group. This included Kikuyu who fled to the camp nearby, as well as the Bugusu of the Luhya group. I had heard of a case where 11 Bugusuwere executed by the SLBF and the bodies thrown into a latrine. While I have never heard any reference to this massacre in the media (compare this to the 17 who were burned to death in the church near Eldoret), this was confirmed by a doctor at the Webuye Hospital where the exhumed bodies were later taken. So it did not take much for the Bugusu to flee. Then the Ndorobo, who were supplied by the Kikuyu in their trading across the border into Uganda, attacked the Sabaot for attacking the Kikuyu. So, Sabaot also had to flee to Misemwa.

I talked at length with Mildred, one of the 8 women living in the church. She has six children, the youngest was on her shoulder as we talked. Her husband had left for the day when the SLDF came in red uniforms (ie, this is an organized rebel group) and told them to leave. So she did. She has no idea where her husband is and there is really little way for him to find out where they have fled. She does not want to return to her farm on Mt. Elgon, where she had lived for 12 years, but has little idea what the future will bring for her.

Andrew and his wife and four children (he was also holding his youngest child on his shoulder) were attacked in the middle of the night and fled down the mountain with nothing but what they had on. He lives in a room in a house nearby. He says that he survives by doing day labor when he can. He also told me he did not want to go back. When I asked people, they told me that the land on Mt. Elgon is very fertile and well-watered and that is why they had bought plots there in the past.

While the media, both internationally and locally, reports (as the Government would like them to) that the situation in Kenya is calm and returning to normal, this is clearly not the case on Mt. Elgon. The previous night there had been some killings (unconfirmed) and hundreds more had fled down the mountain. These newly displaced people were not on the list of 259 families to receive the aid we had brought.

After three hours distributing the relief supplies at Misemwa and talking with the people, after a short sermon and prayer, we left and joined the other people at a small "hotel" where we all got a snack and discussed the pro's and con's of what we had done for the day. For example, in our case, since the site was not a "camp" and this was the first time that the group had received any assistance, there was no distribution system in place as



occurs with the Lumakanda IDP group in Turbo. On Saturday Gladys and I will go to Kakamega to meet with the Friends Church Peace Team to decide what we will do next.

Although the food seemed to be little in relationship to the need, I still felt good knowing that we had helped as we were able. In this kind of work, one cannot get discouraged by the unmet needs, but must focus on what has been accomplished. If people only eat well for a few days, it is still better than having to scrounge around for a little food and going to sleep hungry. Moreover, as I have learned in the past, visiting people who have been the victims of violence is perhaps one of the most important peacemaking activities one can do initially. As the Burundians say, "A real Friend comes in the time of need" (I am the one who capitalized the "F" in friend).

### **Report #30** **February 8, 2008**

I have not made a report for the last three days because each day I have been on the road. Tuesday Gladys and I went to Kakamega to buy relief supplies for our Lumakanda IDP's who are now in Turbo. On Wednesday, I went to Kaimosi to the Friends Theological College to work out a plan for them to do AVP in their churches during April vacation. On Thursday, Gladys and I went in the north Rift Valley to distribute relief supplies with the Friends Church Peace Team; I have reported on this in another email.

While others think Kenya is calming down, I don't. I think that it has entered another stage where the dramatic headlines of burning buildings and multi-deaths is over and a more subdued, but perhaps a more destructive and deadly mopping up, has begun. I can call this "reaping the harvest of the prior violence."

Tuesday on our way to Kakamega we stopped by Florence and Alfred Machayo's house to deal with the maize (corn) that needed to be bagged for delivery in the North Rift. Alfred was not there because he was escorting a Luhya friend of his who was a magistrate in the Nandi (Kalenjin) area. The magistrate had been told that he had to leave Nandi in a week or his house would be burned down. So, he was looking at the plot he has in Lugari District and determining how he can live there with his family. In other words, one family quietly (as far as the media is concerned) displaced. I suspect he will be out of his job also.

In the last few days another home was burned near Kipkarren River. In this case the old Kikuyu had died, but his daughter lived in his house, which was burned down, and his nice cassava field was completely destroyed. In my report on the visit to north Rift Valley, I mentioned the considerable violence on Mt Elgon. The paper reports that over 1000 teachers have not reported for work in North Rift Valley and that many students have also not returned. When we visited the Lumakanda people in the camp at Turbo, they told us that their numbers have been increasing. Two communities in Lugari District, which formerly had not been attacked, were attacked last week during the unrest and more people had fled to the camp.



In other words, houses will be burnt here and there. The violence of the past will compel people to flee as soon as they feel that they are being targeted. The targets are no longer only the Kikuyu in the western provinces, but anyone who happens not to live in his/her home area; i.e., who do not speak the local language.

It has occurred to me that the situation in Kenya is exactly the same as in the region of Rwanda, Burundi, and North and South Kivu. But in this case the issue is within one nation while the other is international. Let us compare the Rwandans with the Kikuyu. Rwanda is over-populated and so the Rwandans immigrate to North and South Kivu (and also Tanzania and Uganda) where they are considered "foreigners" by the local people and by the Governments of the region; and therefore, by the international community. Almost all the wars in the region since 1990 have been based on whether the Rwandans have the right to live as citizens, with benefits and privileges, in one of these countries. The answer is "No," but the Rwandans don't want to leave so fighting erupts.

In Kenya, the Kikuyu were originally confined to Central Province which is much smaller than Rwanda. The number of Rwandans in Rwanda is more or less equal to the number of Kikuyu in Kenya. Since 1900 the Kikuyu have moved out of Central Province to other parts of Kenya under the assumption that they were Kenyan citizens moving within their own country. But others, particularly the Kalenjin and Maasi groups take the position that Kikuyu were given land that was stolen from them by the British and therefore they don't have "rights" of land ownership in these areas.

Since Kenya is itself a nation supported by the international community, the regionalists don't have the right to expel the Kikuyu as the Congolese, Tanzanians or Ugandans have with the Rwandans. I read in the paper today that Tanzania is expelling 220,000 Burundians who have been in Tanzania since 1972; 36 years! Burundians do not seem to be very welcoming of these returnees because they really have no place to put them.

In effect our concepts of who belongs to what nation needs to be questioned/considered, while at the same time we have to address the issue of whether a group that historically occupies a certain territory has the right to exclude others. And then there has been fights over the boundaries of these "indigenous territories"--this is essentially what is happening in the conflict on Mt Elgon. I am certain that almost everyone reading this report will come down on the side of the right of a person to live anywhere "in his/her own nation." But one must remember the great "ethnic cleansing" that happened at the end of World War II when millions of people were relocated to their "home country" whose boundaries had changed substantially so that Poland, Germany, Ukraine, Latvia, etc., all became ethnically homogeneous and the multi-national countries of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia had to be broken up into ethnic enclaves. The American (and now European) efforts to keep out illegal immigrants is no more than this same issue--if Americans don't like Mexicans in their borders, why shouldn't people from North Kivu not like Rwandans, or Kalenjin's not like Kikuyu, Luo, Luyha, and others within "their borders"? There have been suggestions (not considered seriously) that Kenya ought to be divided into two new countries with the Rift, Western, and Nyanza Provinces becoming Kenya II.

These are all hard issues. I don't see anyone in the international community addressing them at any depth. Surely the United Nations and all its constituent governments are committed to the current status quo. I would like to see some considerations of better alternatives.

## **Report #31**

### **February 11, 2008**

On Friday Kofi Annan announced that an agreement has being reached between the two sides and the details will be available early this week. People are guardedly hopeful that some accommodation will be reached. But, as they say, the devil is in the details. (One of my favorite explanations of the current crisis is from a woman who said, "On Dec 30 Satan came to Kenya.") I would not be surprised that the agreement when announced might lead to another round of violence as the "hardliners" on both sides will feel that they have been sold out by the compromises. Hopefully I am wrong.

The changes are supposed to be far-reaching. I have some qualms about the fact that 8 negotiators and their political parties are chartering the course of the country, meaning that women, youth, the religious community, NGO's, and the business community are all, as usual, left out. This was the case with the compromise in Burundi and the result has been a squabbling, ineffective government. When will the world develop a system where all parts of society negotiate the conditions for a country's existence and well-being? I am certain that both political parties will see that their interests are properly served before those of the other actors in the country. It is possible that the "compromise" may lead to a political storm (rather than a violent storm) by those who have not been consulted. Or perhaps everyone is so tired that they will accept anything handed to them.

Lumakanda town, this morning (Monday), has been more like a normal day than any other since Dec 30. Many people are in town going about their various businesses, the motorcycle taxi drivers are busy, and I can easily buy a newspaper!

What the Daily Nation (Kenya's largest newspaper with a circulation of over 1,000,000!) covered today was all those affected by the violence--children not in school, children in IDP camps, colleges and other institutions who have lost their staff, manufacturing businesses that are closed, hospitals and other government offices which are understaffed as the employees fled, roads that aren't being built, lost employment, and the other costs of 6 weeks of violence and stalemate. A Quaker in Nairobi whose wholesale establishment was looted says he will re-open, but not now. A large-scale farmer I know says he is cutting back on the acreage of maize (corn) he will plant next month because he does not know if he will get seeds and fertilizer, or what price he might have to pay. The cost of travel has almost doubled--for example, a matatu from Lumakanda to Kakamega has gone from 120/- to 300/- ; and the price increase does not seem like it is going to go down to where it was before. I have seen people wanting to get a ride in a matatu asking for the price and, seeing that it is more than they have, not taking the ride.[Note: /- is the symbol for Kenyan Shilling.]

Okay, I need to report some good news. There is a place in Kenya called the Laikipia Nature Conservancy ([www.gallmannkenya.org](http://www.gallmannkenya.org)). It is a 100,000 acre preserve next to Lake Baringo in the drier parts of the Rift Valley. They have a 60 person education center and they have done peacemaking activities there in the past in addition to their normal purpose of conservation education. Right now they have 40 youth from the Nairobi slums, many of whom were involved in destruction, there for a week of "healing". They needed some help so the United States Institute of Peace [USIP], which has supported both AGLI and the Conservancy in the past, recommended us to them. As a result Getry Agizah, Peter Serete, and Martin Oloo, all young, experienced AVP facilitators, are leading these youth through the AVP course on esteem, communication, cooperation, and non-violent conflict resolution each morning. In the afternoon others lead sessions on art, drama, music, etc. The three facilitators had problems getting there because the bus broke down. I asked Getry if she was happy and she reported, "We are very happy and glad to have the Nairobi youth. Life is simple and peaceful. Just finished the sessions. We are on the truck going around the forest (where there is much wildlife)." Likewise we are continuing the daily listening sessions with employees at the Center for Disease Control in Kisumu. As the situation in Kisumu has calmed down these trainings seem to have become routine with the participants being energized at the end of each day with the training activity that is called "On the Way Forward."

## **Report #32**

### **February 16, 2008**

Actually this is a report about Uganda. For the last three days Gladys and I were visiting the AGLI programs in Bududa, Uganda. Bududa is a district on Mt. Elgon, but on the Uganda side of the border. It is actually a canyon type place with a small hill with a road all the way around it. The mountain towers up over Bududa and the slopes are filled with people growing bananas and plantains (cooking bananas). I would guess that the annual rainfall is 70 to 80 inches per year so everything is lush and green. The area is heavily populated and Uganda's birth rate is one of the highest in the world. This is very obvious in Bududa where children are everywhere. AGLI has two programs, a sponsorship program for 200 orphans (in Africa an "orphan" is anyone who has lost at least one parent) and a technical school called Bududa Vocational Institute (BVI).

I was told that there are Kenyan refugees in Bududa. In particular, there is a part Kikuyu woman and her son who were burned out of their house in Mombasa. She had been formerly wed to a man from Bududa and so she has returned to him--I understand he is not very happy about this return of a long lost wife. The son is about 14 years old and having grown up in Mombasa speaks much better English than others and is way ahead of the children in Bududa in educational achievement. But he is not allowed to go to the local secondary school free because he is not Ugandan, but Kenyan. An American couple visiting, Barbara Wybar, an AGLI peace team member currently in Bududa, has agreed to pay for his first term fees.

The previous Saturday the orphans program had its first gathering since the beginning of the year. 118 orphans showed up. The program has a teacher with first aid experience so students who had health problems were asked to see her; about 15 did. The first was a girl who had a badly infected arm with puss flowing out. One of the American couple immediately took her to see a doctor in Mbale (the nearby big town) that Eric Goldman, AGLI's former peace team member in Bududa, recommended. The girl had a bone infection and was given antibiotics and will have to have an operation to clean out her wound. Luckily she will not lose her arm.

The second was a boy who had tied a rope around his wrist as he was walking a cow down the road. The cow bolted and the rope slid off his hand, seriously scraping off the skin. The third was a girl of 13 who had a sore on her leg. This looked simple until she said she had "women's problems." After some discussion, it turned out that the girl had been raped and had venereal disease. Besides treating the sickness, Barbara wants to get her counseling which is probably not available in Bududa so she will have to take her to Mbale which is about an hour away. The rest of the children just had the usual bumps and scratches of childhood that needed to be patched up. I report this to indicate the complexity of the situation of poor children in the region.

When we returned from Bududa yesterday, Barbara called me to report that during the day, a policeman had gone to a small village nearby to arrest someone and he was attacked by a mob with machetes who slashed him to death. I was surprised because, while this happens often in Kenya, it is rare in Uganda and unheard of in Rwanda and Burundi. The people in Bududa are a Luhya group called Bugisu who are closely related to the Kenyan group on Mt.Elgon called Bugusu. The explanation of why this happened was that the violence in Kenya is becoming "contagious" to people in Uganda. On the day we went to Uganda there was a report in the paper of a violent conflict between a landlord and the kiosk owners/hawkers which became very violent and the police were unable to control the situation--it seems just like many of the conflicts in Kenya. It is easy to let the genie of violence out of the bottle, but very difficult to get that genie back in again.

### **Report #33**

#### **February 21, 2008**

Politically things are not looking good. The Government (PNU--Kibaki) side, after immense pressure from the US, Britain, the EU, and many others, has not compromised hardly at all. They are continuing to say much of what they said right after the election--Kibaki is in power and the Constitution cannot be changed to accommodate any settlement. The Opposition side (ODM--Raila) is planning to start holding demonstrations again after a week if Parliament is not called into session to vote on the Constitutional changes needed for a settlement. The Government then says they (ODM) are bringing on violence and ODM responds by saying that it is the Government who is violent when they forbid peaceful demonstrations as allowed by the Kenya Constitution and international law. The tear gas, water cannons, and live bullets are what is making the demonstrations violent. For some reason, the authorities in Kapsabet had allowed

demonstrations before and they were peaceful and the youth blew off their steam. The Kibaki side wishes to procrastinate as long as possible since with each passing day they remain in power.

Noah Weksa, a PNU Member of Parliament from Western Kenya, a Quaker, and Minister for Science and Technology, has called for a power sharing agreement--this is at some variance with the PNU hardliner stance. It will be interesting to see if some of the PNU, non-Kikuyu MP's start to break away to form that moderate middle that will be necessary for a resolution.

On Tuesday Gladys and I were at the Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT) meeting and I heard this interesting story. There are still about 1000 Kikuyu camped at the police station in Kakamega. On Sunday 350 Luhya who had been displaced from Naivasha, Nakuru, and Central Province and returned to their "ancestral land" as is the phrase here (i.e., ethnically cleansed) arrived in their truck at the police station, but the police turned them away--presumably because the Luhya would have problems staying with the Kikuyu. When the truck returned to town, not really knowing where to drop the people, the bicycle taxi drivers got aroused. In mass, as they do during the rioting, they returned with the truck to the police station and demanded that the Luhya be allowed to stay there (or they would begin attacking the Kikuyu). The police backed down and the Luhya stayed with the Kikuyu in the police station, both as internally displaced people.

In the reports on the FCPT distribution which I missed when we were in Uganda, a number of people commented that the internally displaced people would see the Red Cross vehicles pass them by, but never stop to help. FCPT is distributing to those who have not been serviced by the Red Cross. These people are ethnically mixed, but none are Kikuyu. It seems that the Red Cross is servicing only Kikuyu. People I know in Lumakanda have stopped me in the streets here to complain about the Red Cross not helping the Luhya. This should be investigated and if true, the Red Cross should be taken to task for this discrimination.

Our 42 one-day listening workshops for the 496 staff at the Center for Disease Control in Kisumu have been completed. I talked to the Director and she was very pleased with them as she had heard many positive reports from the participants. We had brought Chris, one of the HROC facilitators from Rwanda, to help out. The HROC program in Rwanda is planning listening sessions for survivors of the recent earthquake in Cyangugu at the southern end of Lake Kivu so Chris will be able to bring the Kenya experience back to Rwanda.

## **Report #34**

### **February 24, 2008**

The team lead by Kofi Annan was supposed to release the details of the power-sharing agreement between the two sides on Friday. That didn't happen. It seems like the Kibaki/PNU side is again procrastinating (they feel that time is on their side). So the Raila/ODM side has called for mass action on Wednesday (Feb. 27). Rather than just

demonstrations, as in the past (which were broken up violently by the police), ODM is calling for what I would describe as a general strike. No one is to go to work; roads will be blocked, etc. Due to the recent history of violence this action will be extremely effective--everyone will be afraid to travel or to go to work. Everyone will stay home and the country will shut down. On Wednesday we were planning to go to Nairobi for our flight to the US on Thursday. If the action is not called off by Monday, we will travel to Nairobi on Tuesday. See how effective this threat is!

Yesterday Gladys and I went to Kakamega for a meeting with CAPP (essentially peace committee members) and AVP members from the various yearly meetings. During this meeting a woman from Chwele Yearly Meeting, which is right below the fighting on Mt. Elgon, told us that the previous night a member of one of the Quaker meetings was attacked by the Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) which is responsible for much of the destruction and death on the mountain. His head was cut off and has not yet been found. (Note: Is it more "civilized" to attack people, say in Iraq, with heavy weapons so the body parts are all over the place?) Most of the Sabaot, who live higher up on the slopes of the mountain, have been displaced, so the SLDF is now moving further down the hill to steal cattle and goods killing people in the process. This area is very heavily populated by Quakers--every mile or two is another Quaker school. As the violence increases--and the current political crisis has been a great "cover" for increased attacks and ethnic cleanings in the area--the Quakers there will be more and more affected. Will the larger Quaker community in Kenya and the world take note of this and respond?

Yesterday we also bought goods in Kakamega for the internally displaced Lumakanda people who are now at the police station in nearby Turbo. We picked up four members of the Church including the pastor, James Majeta. As usual we delivered the food. There has not been significant rain in this area for almost four months. The IDP camp is at the top of a hill on fields that grew corn last year. The place is totally dry. The soil is very loose. The wind blows much of the time, sometimes very hard, and the dust blows everywhere. In an hour my hair (like everyone else's there) was covered with dust. They told me that a cow dies almost every day because there is not sufficient grass to feed them. As I looked at the cows I could see that many were thin with ribs showing. Although some of the people have moved back to their houses (see the comments about Silas Njoroge below) and some have returned to Central Province (the Kikuyu "ancestral home"), those who remain do not have homes to return to and perhaps do not even know where their "ancestral home" is.)

Here I will tell a story. You have to figure out the moral of the story. Gladys has a distant relative who works in Nairobi; but his wife and children live near us. These people are therefore Luhya, the dominant group in Lugari District. They are the ones who supply us each morning and evening with milk for our tea (and other uses). There are two older sons, Anthony, 21, and Nivan, 20. Both have completed secondary school and, as even they themselves say, are part of the "idle youth" who have nothing to do. About two weeks ago Nivan brought the evening milk about 6:00 pm. He went to the road, saw his brother and another friend, and they decided to walk over to Anthony's girlfriend's house. As they walked near the hospital and police station, there was a group of three Kikuyu

boys following them. One of them came up to Nivan and started to attack him. The attacker then pulled out a machete and tried to strike him on the head. Nivan put up his left arm to ward off the blow and the machete cut through one of his arm bones and half way through the second. They rushed Nivan to the nearby hospital. About 8:00 pm the hospital called and told us to come and see him. This we did. By the time we reached the hospital he had been stitched up, given an antibiotic, and was doing fairly well considering the circumstances. Gladys paid the hospital bill. (It cost a little over \$5. What would this have cost in the US?). Neither Anthony nor Nivan knew the attacker, but they did know the boys he was with. At this point it looked like this was an ethnic attack with a Kikuyu attacking a Luhya.

So then we went to the police station to report the incident. As soon as we arrived, the policeman said this was a case of a love triangle. If this is correct, then this is not one ethnic group attacking another, but "ethnic love" as two boys are fighting over the same girl (who is a Luhya). The only problem with this interpretation is that the girl is Anthony's girlfriend, yet Nivan is the one who was attacked. Moreover, as Anthony said to me, "If I had a rival, I didn't know it." So you can decide, "Is this ethnic hatred or ethnic love?" As I have said before, if one investigated the details of many of these incidents, the results would not be too clear.

Last Monday Gladys called the Anthony and Nivan's Mom and asked her to send them up with the evening milk. We talked with them more about the incident--Nivan is recovered well enough. ("I don't want to be a cripple," he sometimes says. Then other times he talks about how lucky he was to put up his arm to ward off the blow since he probably would have been killed.) The attacker has fled Lumakanda area and no one knows where he is. One of the other Kikuyu boys had been put in jail but he was released since he hadn't actually done anything that was a chargeable offense. We discussed with them the idea of doing AVP with the youth. Would they be able to assemble a group of 20 youth, male and female, of various ethnic backgrounds to have a workshop? They said they could so we arranged for five or six of them to come back on Friday to meet with us and Getry, the AVP coordinator; and they came. Five youth (2 female, 3 male; 4 Luhya and 1 Luo) came to discuss the situation with Getry. The result is that on March 3, Getry and two other facilitators will begin an AVP workshop with them which will include Luhya, Nandi (local Kalenjin group), Luo, and Kikuyu. They said they have known each other since they were kids in school.

But another interesting thought came out of the discussion. Getry had introduced the idea that the youth were being blamed for all the violence. Anthony responded that on Dec 30 (the evening the election results were announced and the violence started) many adults were telling the youth to attack the Kikuyu. In particular, the adults said to attack Silas Njoroge whose house was looted but not burned -- perhaps because it is close to the town and the police station. (He has now returned to his house.) If the youth killed someone, they were told they could come back for a reward. Anthony said, and the others agreed, that there was a lot of peer pressure to join in the attacks and the youth really faulted the older people for promoting this.

Ray Downing, a doctor at Webuye Hospital, (who formerly worked at the Quaker Lugulu Hospital up the mountain from Webuye) asked the question, "Why don't we study those areas (such as Webuye and Bungoma) where there was no violence?" In other words, rather than focusing only on the bad areas, why don't we try to understand the good areas? At one point I replied that I thought the Webuye/Bungoma area had not erupted into violence because the people there voted for Kibaki rather than Raila. (This voting was really anti-Raila, who they didn't like, rather than pro-Kibaki. Nonetheless, it got Kibaki the votes he needed. Ray Downing replied that the older people in the area voted for Kibaki, but that the younger people voted for Raila. Later I was in a meeting where two parents said they had voted for Kibaki while their children had voted for Raila and that this had brought great tension into the family.

This led me to realize that it is the elders (Bush, Cheney, et alter) who send the youth to war in Iraq. It is the Kalenjin elders who send their warriors to attack the Kikuyu and the church which was burned down in Eldoret. It was the elders here in Lumakanda who encouraged the youth to attack the local Kikuyu. Where the elders did not encourage the youth, or perhaps discouraged the youth from attacking, the youth were not violent. If this interpretation is correct, then it is the older people who are responsible for the violence, death, and chaos in Kenya and not the youth who physically did the damage.

I guess this is enough thoughts for one day.

### **Report #35** **February 25, 2008**

On Thursday Gladys and I will be flying to the United States for three weeks. Thus you will not be receiving any reports from Kenya (although I might send out a "Report from the US" if something worth saying occurs). I will be speaking in many places. Here is what I have lined up so far. If you need more details about a particular event, contact me or Dawn Rubbert (who sends out these reports for me).

Dave's Speaking Schedule in US for March 2008

Arrive in DC Feb 29, 7:20 AM

Sunday, March 2 - William Penn House, DC--6:30 potluck  
515 East Capitol Street,  
SE Washington, D.C. 20003  
Phone (202) 543-5560  
<http://williampennhouse.org/>

Monday, March 3 - Cincinnati, Ohio - 7 - 8:30 pm  
Community Friends Meeting  
3960 Winding Way  
Cincinnati, OH 45229-1950  
(513) 861-4353



<http://www.quaker.org/ovym/com.htm>

Saturday, March 8 - Portland, Oregon (evening)

Multnomah Meeting  
4312 S.E. Stark Street  
Portland, Oregon 97215  
(503) 232-2822

[http://www.multnomahfriends.org/stark\\_street.html](http://www.multnomahfriends.org/stark_street.html)

Monday, March 10 --St Louis, Missouri - Light repast 6:15 / Presentation 7 - 8:30 pm

St. Louis Friends Meeting  
1001 Park Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63104  
(for info call Dawn at 314-647-1287)

<http://www.stlouisfriends.org/>

Thursday, March 13 - Wilmington, Delaware 7 pm

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
1502 West 13th Street  
Wilmington, DE 19806  
(303) 654-5706

<http://www.wpc.org/>

Rt. 52/Delaware Ave. at 13th / free parking beside the church

Friday 3/14 - Wilmington Friends School (individual classes) 8 - 11 am

Friday, March 14 - Haddonfield, NJ - 7 pm

Haddonfield Friends Meeting  
Friends Avenue & Lake Street (One block west of Kings Highway)  
Haddonfield, NJ 08033  
856-428-6242

<http://www.pym.org/haddonfield-qm/haddonfieldmm/index.htm>

Saturday, March 15, - Haverford, PA - Noon to 3:00 pm

Lunch with David Zarembka - Presentation/discussion afterward

Haverford Friends Meeting  
855 Buck Lane  
Haverford, PA 19041

<http://www.haverfordfriendsmeeting.org/>

Sunday, March 16 - Bethesda, Maryland - 12:30 pm

Bethesda Friends Meeting  
7415 Beverly Rd  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
(301) 986-8681

<http://www.bethesdafriends.org/>

Monday, March 17-New York City, (tentative)  
Tuesday, March 18-New York City, (QUNO), Tentative

Wednesday, March 19-Leave for Kenya

Friday--March 21-arrive in Kenya

Hope you have enjoyed my thoughts and experiences to date. I will resume the reports after I return to Kenya in late March.

### **Report #36** **March 23, 2008**

As you may remember, I have spent the last three weeks in the United States participating in the Friends Peace Teams annual meeting and making 15 presentations on Kenya including one radio interview. The presentations went well and there was a larger turnout than expected at most of the talks. Many of the people who attended received my emailed reports from Kenya, others were long-time AGLI supporters, and a number of Kenyan nationals came (and approved most of what I said). The talk included my nine interpretations of the events in Kenya. I hope to get a chance to write it up, in which case you will receive a copy.

Gladys and I will be returning to the United States from June 15 to about July 15 so anyone who would like to arrange for us to address a group during that time, please let me know.

Adrien Niyongabo who directs the HROC program in Burundi is currently giving talks in the US. He will speak Tuesday, March 25 at 6:30 pm at Fifteenth Street Meeting in New York City: contact Anna Crumley-Effinger via [anna.crumleyeffinger@gmail.com](mailto:anna.crumleyeffinger@gmail.com) From April 3-5 Adrien will attend the FWCC Section of the Americas Annual Meeting near Indianapolis. Along with Adrian Bishop, clerk of Friends Peace Teams Council he will present an evening interest group. On Sunday, April 6th Adrien will speak at Adelphi Friends Meeting in Maryland.

Florence Ntakarutimana, also from the HROC program in Burundi, will be in the United States on a speaking tour from June 11 to July 13. She will attend Illinois Yearly Meeting from June 18 to 22 and will be the evening speaker on Thursday. Then Florence will travel to Urbana-Champaign Monthly Meeting in Illinois, and Inter-Mountain Yearly Meeting June 11-15 at Ghost Ranch in Colorado. Florence will attend both the Friends General Conference Gathering in Johnstown, PA and Friends United Meeting Triennial. Following this the plan is for her to travel to Colombia, South America, to introduce the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community program (HROC) along with Theoneste Bizimana from HROC in Rwanda.

Theoneste will then come to the United States where he will attend Iowa Yearly Meeting

(Conservative) from July 29 to Aug 3. He will be the evening speaker on Wednesday, July 30th. Afterward he will join the sessions of New England Yearly Meeting.

This fall, in October/November, we plan to bring Getry Agizah, the AVP Coordinator in Kenya, to the US for a speaking tour.

If you would like to host an event with any of these speakers, please let me know. Sooner is better. You can learn more about each of these African Partners on our new website at the same url, [www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org).

We returned to Kenya on Friday (3/21) and came back to Lumakanda on Saturday. As I move around I will have more comments on the situation--we hope to visit the internally displaced people from Lumakanda in Turbo tomorrow. The mood in Nairobi didn't seem quite as buoyant as the reports I was reading from Kenya on the internet. While everyone is relieved that a seemingly successful power-sharing agreement has been reached, the concern is now that all three major political parties are in the government, all cooperating together so nicely, perhaps the bad old days of one-party dictatorship can easily return in the form of a three party dictatorship. This remains to be seen.

As we traveled up-country through Naivasha, Nakuru, Timbaroroa, Burnt Forest, Eldoret, and Turbo--all hard-hit by the violence-- we could see the plastic huts of many displaced people still in the camps alongside the road. There was the same destruction of houses, shops, and farms as we could see before, but seeing all this again was discouraging since it all seemed so unnecessary.

After a year of delays, AVP-Western Kenya conducted the first two basic workshops with the Turkana and Pokot. The first was with older participants while the second had younger ones. There were only three women in the first workshop and two in the second, which Getry was concerned about. Since I had been told that the men would not want women to attend until they had "checked it out," this seemed a step forward. There were a total of ten AVP workshops while we were away including a good one here in Lumakanda. We are going to do some advanced workshops so that we can conduct another "Training for Facilitators" so we will have additional facilitators available to conduct workshops.

When we left for the US, it was still the dry season and dust was everywhere with four months of almost no rain. By the time we returned the rainy season had come to Lumakanda so the air and atmosphere is very different. After the dry season, the first rain is like the first snow for a five year old in America. Here everything stops for that first rain. The dogs bark, the cows jump up and down, the children go run in the rain and wiggle their toes in the mud, and everyone looks forward to planting of the new crops. It's a different kind of spring.

But the rainy season also means a lot of clouds so I don't know how much electricity my solar panel will be generating. My time on the laptop may become limited. But the day before we returned, the electric company finally put the poles and wires to our house

(we applied in September). Of course they haven't put in the electric meter yet. So communication will be touch and go (or rather "sun or meter").

## **Report #37**

### **March 26, 2008**

A good story is wonderful.

Chapter 1: Perhaps you remember that my email of February 24, concerned the two sons, Anthony and Nivan, of a distant relative of Gladys who bring us our daily milk. They are Luhya. One evening after Nivan had brought the milk to our house about 6:00 PM, he and Anthony and another friend were walking in town when a Kikuyu youth attacked Nivan with a machete. He put up his arm to keep the blow from hitting him in the head and one of his arm bones was broken and the other bone badly cut. We saw Nivan and Anthony in the hospital and then went with them to the police station. Here we were told it was a case of a fight over a girl. I asked then if this was a case of ethnic hatred or ethnic love.

Before we left for the United States we talked with the two youth about doing an inter-ethnic AVP workshop here. They organized their friends, came to talk to us, and we arranged for an AVP workshop to occur while we were away. Getry Agizah, the AVP Coordinator, and two other local Lugari District facilitators conducted the workshop, which went very well with 23 youth of various ethnicities (but no Kikuyu).

Chapter 2: When we returned, we asked to meet with the organizing committee for the workshop. Monday evening they came to our house for a discussion. I first asked them what they learned from the workshop and their responses included the use of I-messages, transforming power, and one young woman said, "Even thugs have good in them." So they had learned the lessons well. I then asked them to give an example of when they had used something they learned from the workshop.

The first young woman said that when her sister came into her room all angry and upset, instead of arguing with her, she used I-messages which calmed down her sister. The second was a young man who said that a neighbor's cows had come to eat his napier grass (grown to feed the cows during the dry season). Instead of going over to argue with him about the incident, he used I-messages which he felt had better effect in keeping this from happening again. The third, also a male, gave two examples. Two youth had been fighting for a long time and he brought them together and used transforming power to get them to resolve their hostilities. His second example was a young man with a grave problem--he had "strong homosexual tendencies." So he talked with him, advised him to be positive (another AVP principle). He said that they now talk frequently. Moreover he said that before the workshop, he would have avoided this youth as being "bad and sinful." Nivan was the fourth and talked about resolving a long-standing dispute between two youth over 5 shillings (7 US cents). The last, a female, had great difficulties with her mother who was working her very hard, but always criticizing and yelling at her. So she used I-messages with her mother and this calmed down the situation and began to repair

the relationship with her mother. Note that all the males' testimony (except one) were resolving arguments between two macho males, while the two young women's issues were family concerns. I speculate that the young women are using the I-messages as a method to assert themselves without antagonizing the other person. It is amazing that one three-day workshop could be this effective. The examples recounted here are sufficient to justify having held the workshop and there were 18 more participants and even these five young people may have used the skills learned at other times than these examples which they shared with us.

Next we talked about what they had done since the workshop. They have been meeting twice a week and have developed a play on ethnic differences which they are going to perform on April 10. They also wanted more basic workshops because they had to turn down others who wanted to come to this workshop --they had to actually send home potential participants to keep the workshop at a tenable size. [Note the ideal number of participants is 20.] A second AVP workshop will take place soon. They told us that they wanted to visit the IDP camp (of Kikuyu) in Turbo. I said, "Let's go tomorrow" as Gladys, Getry, and I already had plans to visit the camp to see how they had been doing since we left for the US.

So yesterday afternoon about 2:00 PM we headed off to the IDP camp. All five of the youth showed up. At the camp we found that there are still 4,000 people. Their chairman, George Njoroge, told me that they had settled in. The school (which has almost 700 students plus another 200 in nursery school) was going nicely although a teacher had just died (I did not ask what he died of). The Red Cross was bringing maize (corn), beans, and now flour for porridge for the children. Since the rainy season had begun, there was no more dust. On the other hand the people in the camp (from all over Lugari District) were unable to go back to their plots of land to cultivate and plant. Njoroge gave us a list of the things which he considered most important--the list really hadn't changed much except that there was now no need for flour for porridge.

We walked through the camp, surrounded by a horde of children, many of the young ones wanting to hold my hand (most young children are afraid of an Mzungu and shy away). The women, in particular, came to greet Gladys warmly. At one point we gathered together, the chairman made a short introductory speech, all eight of us greeted them, there was a song and prayer of thanks. Two camp leaders, Gladys, Getry, and myself then went into our "office"--the back of the pick-up truck where we then discussed the idea of doing an AVP workshop (which we explained) with the youth. Njoroge responded most positively to this suggestion as he said it would be a step towards getting people to be accepted back into their home community. The workshop was arranged for the following week. He promised to recruit youth from each of the ten locations (small administrative units) in Lugari District, half male/half female, find a room and chairs, and two women to cook lunch. Our prior visits to the IDP camp (the first steps in peacebuilding) made these arrangements very easy as the camp leaders were very willing to help with arrangements.

But a good story (real or fiction) needs a surprise ending. While Nivan was walking around the camp, he met the parents of the youth who had slashed him. The parents

apologized profusely about their son's behavior (he is no longer around). They asked Nivan if he would forgive their son. Nivan replied that he had already forgiven him since his wound (a large scar on his arm which will never go away) was now healed and he wanted to get on with his life.

## **Report #38**

### **March 28, 2008**

Nine Interpretations of the Violence in Kenya in Early 2008

By David Zarembka, Coordinator

African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams

People like simple explanations for world events. When I was young, "Godless Communism" explained US foreign policy and now "Al-Qaeda" serves the same purpose. I will be giving you nine interpretations of the recent events in Kenya. You may choose one or more of those interpretations that you feel comfortable with and reject others. As you will see I have some opinions.

First we need to understand the context. In about sixty days following the announcement of the election results on December 27, 2007, approximately 1000 to 1500 people were killed by violence in Kenya. This compares with 850,000 who died in the Rwandan genocide in a hundred days, 300,000 who died over twelve years of civil war in Burundi, and the estimated 4 to 5 million who have died in the eastern Congo since 1996.

Early in March I received an email from Hezron Masitsa, the AVP-Coordinator in Nairobi. He wrote that a Kenyan named Joran Shijenje had been shot and killed on his way home from work. In Baltimore, Maryland! During the two months of conflict in Kenya, when 1000 to 1500 were killed, there were 5,000 to 6,000 homicides in the United States. I also just read in the paper that one out of every hundred Americans is now in jail. Something is clearly wrong with American society-but that is not the topic of this report.

1. "Ancient Tribal Hatreds:" Almost all international coverage of the crisis in Kenya was based on the interpretation that the conflict was due to "ancient tribal hatreds". For example, on January 27, Reuters, the wire service, distributed a picture of a woman lying dead on the floor in a pool of blood with her baby boy crying on a chair behind her. The caption read, "The body of a woman lies on the floor as her child cries during ethnic clashes in Naivasha after members of Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki's Kikuyu tribe fought running battles with the Luos and Kalenjins who back Kibaki's rival Raila Odinga." The problem with this interpretation is that the woman, a Luo married to a Kikuyu, was killed by the police! In fact 43% of those killed in Kenya were killed by the police and not in any ethnic fighting. Contrary to both international and Kenyan law the police used live bullets against demonstrators, rioters, and looters.

While the international media was focusing on those burnt to death in a church outside of Eldoret, the Kenya media was focusing on those killed and wounded by the police in

Kisumu. Of the 82 people killed in Kisumu, the home city of the Luo, how many were Kikuyu were killed by the Luo? Zero, all 82 were killed by the police. In fact the Luo and Luhya (the ethnic group of most of the 139,000 Quakers in Kenya) do not kill people because they believe that the spirit of someone killed would haunt the killer with a guilty conscience. They may beat them and push them out of their homes, but they do not kill them.

Raila Odinga says that the election was not about ethnic divisions since many Kikuyu voted for him including 3,000 in Mwai Kibaki's home constituency of Central Province. More to the point, one of his daughter-in-laws is a Kikuyu. There are many, many ethnically mixed marriages in Kenya.

To understand the situation in Kenya as "ancient tribal hatreds" is to understand World War I and World War II as "ancient tribal hatreds" between the Germans on one side and the French, English, and Russians on the other. This interpretation explains nothing.

2. Stolen election: The second interpretation is that the conflict was a result of the election being stolen by the Kibaki Government. On the election day of December 27, I was a poll observer in Lumakanda where I live. The voting itself was excellent. People waited for an hour or two in the sun to vote (the lines were much shorter in the afternoon) and the voting for president, member of parliament (MP), and local county council was very orderly and well done. I watched as the votes were counted and the observers from the various political parties signed the results. Well done. It was in Nairobi during the counting that the fraud took place. As soon as the results were announced the appropriate form was taken by the Head of the Electoral Commission to Mwai Kibaki and the Chief Justice just happened to be there to administer the oath of office-this is usually done a few days later with foreign dignitaries present.

Those people who supported Raila Odinga and his Orange Democratic Party (ODM) felt that the election had been stolen from them. They had gone to the polls to vote patiently and properly and then the results were manipulated. ODM planned a rally at Uhuru Park in Nairobi and a million of his supporters were expected to attend. Although freedom of assembly is one of the freedoms people have, the Government blocked the park by ringing it with riot police who used tear gas, water cannons, and live bullets to disperse those who planned to attend. Naturally many of the tear gassed youth rioted and thus began the destruction in Nairobi. Other cities where demonstrations were planned had the same result. For some reason the authorities in Kapsabet, in the volatile Rift Valley Province, allowed the demonstration which took place peacefully; the demonstrators blew off steam, went home and there was no violence.

The Government, again contrary to international standards, clamped restrictions on the media. I had to listen to BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) to learn what was really happening in Kenya. Twice people in the United States informed me of developments in Kenya before I had heard them myself.

The difficulty with this interpretation is that, suppose that Raila Odinga did win and

should in fact be the President. The problem is still the same—a sharply divided country—with only the faces having changed.

3. Class warfare: A third interpretation is class warfare. The election results were no more than a trigger for decades long tension due to economic inequality. During the five years of the first Kibaki Presidency, after years of stagnation, the economy had grown robustly. The GNP increased by 7% in 2007. But this growth in income has gone almost exclusively to the wealthy. Kenya (along with the United States) is a nation with one of the highest rates of inequality in the world. Former President Moi's two sons are reported to have fortunes of over \$500,000,000 and none of this is inherited since their father is still living. And Kenya is supposed to be a poor country. The Kenyan elite is extremely wealthy. Many of these elite are Kikuyu so the average person who has no contact directly with the wealthy elite took their pent up rage on their Kikuyu neighbors who, really, were no better off than they were.

Another aspect of this inequality is that Government funds, economic development, and business opportunities were confined to Nairobi and Central Province, the home area of the Kikuyu, while much of rest of the country was starved for funds. People everywhere paid taxes which were disproportionately spent in the center of the country. The violence was a response to this economic injustice.

4. Youth rebellion: Another interpretation is that the violence was a youth rebellion. Many youth felt alienated in that they had no stake in Kenyan society and no hopes for a better future. While older people tended to vote for Kibaki, the youth tended to vote for Raila. I was at a meeting where two parents said that they had voted for Kibaki, while their children had voted for Raila and this had created tensions in the family. When the youth voted for Raila they were voting for change and a better future. They felt that their vote had been stolen after they had gone, naively it turned out, to the polls to vote for change.

There is no doubt that the newly elected members of parliament are much younger and better educated than the previous parliament. Note also that in this election only 80 out of 222 MP's were re-elected! Many of those who lost were the old, old members who had been in government and politics since the time of independence in 1963. The youth also wanted this change at the top—Kibaki is 76 and Raila 62.

5. Land issues: Particularly in the Rift Valley, but also in other parts of the country, the issue was ownership and control of land. When the British came to Kenya at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Kalenjin and Maasi groups in the Rift valley opposed the British militarily. As a result the British crushed them, which in those days meant not only defeating the warriors in battle, but burning their villages, killing their animals, and destroying their crops. The surviving Maasi and Kalenjin groups were then pushed north and south to the more marginal areas of the Rift Valley, leaving the fertile, well-watered land in the middle mostly vacant.

In this now mostly vacant land the British created the "white highlands". They gave large



estates to British settlers. We are not talking about the 160 acre quarter section given to American settlers (one fourth of a square mile). Karen Blixen, author of *Out of Africa*, had 6,000 acres. Others were given 10,000, 20,000, and even 100,000 acres. This is in a land where today there is only 1.5 arable acres per person. The Mau-Mau rebellion of the 1950's was partly a protest against this great inequality.

When Kenya gained independence in 1963 the Kalenjins and Maasi thought that the lands seized from them would be returned. What happened was that many of these large estates were transferred from the departing British settlers to the new ruling Kenyan elite who were mostly the loyalist supporters of the British during the Mau-Mau rebellion. Other of these estates were bought up by land companies, divided into plots and sold to those who could afford them-in most cases this meant Kikuyu from Central Province rather than the original owners of the land.

These land issues have not been resolved but allowed to fester. At the time of the 1992 elections there was violence in the Rift Valley during which an estimated 1000 people were killed. Folks in Lumakanda tell me that it was even worse than the recent round of violence. At the time of the 1997 election there was violence again. On Mt. Elgon, since June of 2006, over 500 people had been killed over a land dispute between two clans of the Sabaot, a Kalenjin group. Note that this total is one-third to one-half the number killed in the recent post-election violence. There were other deadly disputes in Molo, Rongai, Laikipia, and elsewhere. The election 2007 election results triggered additional violence in these areas.

6. Violence as usual: Although Kenya had a reputation as a peaceful, calm country -- unlike many of its neighbors, I had always considered it otherwise. On May 5, 1969 I was in Kenya when the powerful Luo Minister for Economic Development, Tom Mboya, was assassinated. Kenya felt then just as it did during the recent crisis. The glue that had been holding the country together was no longer working. One didn't know if the country would descend into chaos. The difference this time was the existence of cell phones and the internet. In 1969 we had to rely solely on word-of-mouth rumor. This time we could use our cell phones to phone or text people in other parts of the country and ask them what was happening. Then, as I did, we could report events as we saw them to the outside world via the internet.

The electioneering period before December 27 was also very violent. At least 25 people were killed. An assistant minister was discovered to have "traditional weapons" (machetes, bows and arrows, clubs, etc) in his Government sponsored vehicle and nothing happened to him, although he did lose the election. A prominent minister who had controlled the Kisii area for decades was shown on TV talking to the leader of a gang with a bow and arrow in his hand. Two minutes later the gang leader attacked members of the opposition who were alighting from a helicopter. One of the major leaders of the opposition, William Ruto, was put in the hospital for a week or more. Again nothing happened to this minister, but he also lost the election. At the local level, our electrician was the leader for the ODM youth here in Lugari District and he and four other youth, while putting up posters of their candidate, were attacked by youth from a rival candidate.

He had to go to the hospital for treatment and two of his friends were hospitalized.

Roughly every few days one reads in the newspapers of people killed by mob justice. This occurs because the police are corrupt and when people turn in a thief, within a day or two, he has paid a bribe and is out on the streets again. I have seen this myself in Nairobi where a large crowd runs after an alleged thief who survives only if the police are able to rescue him. The attitude that makes this acceptable is the same attitude that allows a person to attack a neighbor because they happen to be from a different ethnic group.

7. Centralized government: The nature of colonial rule is that everything needs to be controlled from the center by the colonial power. Consequently when the British gave Kenya independence they also passed on a very strong central government. When Jomo Kenyatta was president this centralization was increased. He was an icon that could not be challenged. As a result the president of Kenya controls not only the executive branch, but also the judicial branch, the legislature, the electoral commission, the police, and the army. For example, President Kibaki had appointed all 22 members of the Electoral Commission of Kenya which announced that he had won the Dec 27 vote.

The results of this highly centralized government are that winning the election is crucial as the candidate either wins "everything" or nothing. It also allows for the control of wealth and power by the group that controls the presidency. Kenyatta was a Kikuyu who started the trend to reward the Kikuyu over others. When Kenyatta died and Daniel arap Moi became president he quickly accommodated himself with the Kikuyu elite power structure and survived for twenty-four years until Kibaki defeated him in the 2002 election. Part of Kibaki's platform during this election, where he was supported by the Luo and other ethnic groups, was to decentralize the government and make the distribution of resources more equitable. But as soon as he gained control of that centralized power, he refused to give it up. As a referendum on centralized power, Raila won six of the eight provinces, 99 members of parliament, and control of almost all the cities outside of Central and Eastern provinces which were won by Kibaki. So the violence was a demand for what is being called "devolution" of power.

8. International Community: We must not let the international community off the hook. I will give three examples of how actions of the international community have adversely affected the situation in Kenya.

The first is birth control. Remember back around 1980 when there was a big debate about abortion in the United States and the Reagan administration cut off funds for family planning accusing them of promoting abortion? In Kenya this came to mean opposition to birth control. When I was in Kenya in 1970, in Machakos District, the family planning clinic had three people for a population of almost 1,000,000. It is the large number of children born at that time who are the youth (youth in Africa is defined as anyone under 35) that participated in the violence after the 2007 election. At that time Kenya had one of the highest birth rates in the world. It dropped considerably in the 1990's but I understand that the birth rate in Kenya is again increasing because of the emphasis on HIV/AIDS.

The second is the structural adjustment program placed on Kenya in the 1980's by the International Monetary Fund. For our example here, this meant that the Kenyan Government could not increase the number of public servants, including teachers. So as the population of school aged children was increasing rapidly, the number of teachers was not. Moreover, in 2003 the Kibaki government declared free primary school education and about 1,000,000 additional children showed up for school. The result is classes of up to 100 students with few resources for their education. So the large numbers of children born in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's have not received adequate education.

Lastly there is the issue of corruption. The former dictator of Zaire (now the Congo) is reported to have said, "I know I am corrupt, but who is corrupting me?" The centralized form of government in Kenya also allowed for gigantic corruption at the center. Kenya is known as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. In almost every case of this grand corruption there were international partners involved-businesses, governments, NGO's, and the UN agencies. I will give only one example.

Safaricom is the most profitable company in East Africa with 8.5 million cell phone subscribers. At one time it was owned totally by the Kenya Government. A few years ago they sold off 30% of its shares to Vodafone, a large British telecommunications company. Later it came out that the Government had only 65% of the shares left because 5% had been given to a mysterious company called Mobitelea Ventures. The public does not know who the officers or shareholders of this company are. It is therefore assumed to be the "bribe" that Vodafone paid for buying the Safaricom shares. The Kenyan Government is now selling off another 25% of their remaining holdings in Safaricom.

9. Spiritual/religious: The zeitgeist of Kenyan society is Hobbesian economics -- if everyone does things in their own interest, society will function for the best. This has long ago been determined to mean that the fortunate few exploit the many for their own interest. In Kenya personal and family greed is more important than societal prosperity. This is true from the rulers at the top to those at the bottom who believe that stepping on others is the way to get ahead. Rather than praising Kikuyu for their hard work and emulating their success, the violence after the election was an attempt to bring them down to the level of everyone else because of the perception that they had succeeded.

The Biblical injunctions that one should love one's neighbor and do unto others as they have done unto you have been largely ignored. Within a few weeks after the violence began, I heard a sermon at the Lumakanda Friends Church which stated that a true Christian would never loot property, burn a home, or kill someone-and this was from a woman who had to move out of her house in Eldoret because it was owned by a Kikuyu. I have heard that this message has been preached in many other churches of all denominations.

\*\*\*\*\*

So you may select those interpretations that seem most logical to you. I would say that a

viable solution to the violence requires much more than a political settlement by the two sides. Rather it means a major restructuring of Kenyan society addressing the underlying causes mentioned above. Kenyans are well aware of these issues and the need for corrective action. Unfortunately in the past in Kenya, whenever there has been a crisis, the tendency has been to ignore the underlying causes as the country returned to "normal". But "normal" in Kenya means the building up of pressures which will again explode into violence unless they are addressed. It is still too early to determine if fundamental changes will be made or all will soon be "back to normal", if there will be significant improvements for all or another round of violence, perhaps during the next election in 2012.

### **Report #39**

### **March 30, 2008**

The whole front page and four interior pages today in the Sunday Nation were titled "Kenya's Gift to America". What is this gift? The correct answer will appear in my next report. (Since the conflict has calmed down, I need some gimmick to keep you reading my reports!)

On Friday at 3:00 p.m., Gladys and I along with two others started off to take another delivery of goods to the internally displaced people in Turbo. By the time we got to Turbo, it had begun to rain and soon it was pouring. Since the IDP's cannot distribute the food and blankets in the rain, we returned home. On Saturday morning we set out again before the rains which might start in the afternoon. As usual we were greeted and thanked by the people; there were speeches, prayer, and song. As we were leaving Gladys suggested that they come to visit the Friends Church on the following day(Sunday). We then returned home where I got a speeding ticket going 78 kilometer an hour when I was supposed to be going 50 kilometers per hours (roughly 50 mph and 30 mph). Since there was no sign and it was between two towns, I don't know how I was supposed to know. Almost everyone was being stopped because the police clearly had a new toy, a radar gun to check speeds. So we paid 2,000/- bond (\$30) and I have to go to court on Tuesday in Eldoret. Bummer.

This Sunday morning we got up and went to Lumakanda Friends Church for the 8:00 a.m. service. About 50 to 60 people were there (a little below average) plus perhaps 30 to 40 children in the Sunday school. The Service lasted about an hour and fifteen minutes and after greeting people and buying the newspaper we went home. The electrician showed up. Now that the rainy season is in full swing and it is cloudy most of the day, I am only getting about 3 hours of laptop time per day--way under my needs. But while we were away in the United States, the electric company finally put the two poles and wires from the road to our house. We had ordered this in September and paid the require \$500+ fee (you can easily see why only about 10% of Kenyans are hooked up to the electric grid). Yesterday they installed the meter, but we needed to have the solar power system disconnected and the regular power connected--later we will have an automatic switch installed so that when the power goes out as it often does, the solar will be a back-up. As this was going on Gladys got a call from the pastor of Lumakanda Friends Church. The

people from the IDP camp in Turbo had come for the second church service. The first service (mostly in Swahili) is for the older people and kids, while the second one (mostly in English) is for the youth. So we went back to Church. The forty people who came from the IDP camp outnumbered the 30 or so regular people. The service was already underway and lasted over two more hours--with all those guests, the singing was better, more songs were sung, the sermon was energetic, and the prayers were fervent. It was the most lively that I had ever seen this Church. (I consider Lumakanda Friends Church to be a "tired" Church.)

At one point they had people from the IDP camp who wanted to do so to make presentations. Five did, thanking the Church for remembering them and helping them out. These were the internally displaced people who had initially been housed Lumakanda Primary School, so these were our neighbors. The first man who spoke indicated that he attended the PAG (Pentecostal Assemblies of God) Church which is located right next door and where the congregation right at that moment was singing robustly through a loud speaker. Did this increase his feeling of alienation? I had mixed feelings--it was nice for him to be in the Friends Church, but it was sad that he was not in the PAG Church because they had not done any reconciliation or relief work.

Then they asked me to give a presentation. I started with a Kirundi (the language of Burundi) proverb, "a real friend comes in a time of need," although I translated this into Swahili as "a true friend comes in a time of trouble". Next I told one of my favorite stories which I will repeat for you here. In Kampala, Uganda, there is an association of HIV+ women who hammer stones into gravel and get paid the equivalent of about 75 cents per day (if they are lucky). I have seen these women alongside the road pounding away. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the surrounding area, these women collected about \$900 among themselves to send to the US for relief. They said that they had heard that people had lost their houses and everything and had to flee and it was an African custom to help out those who were in need. So they were only helping those who needed it. I went on a little bit longer, but I tend to speak succinctly.

Then there was more singing, the sermon (which was not succinct), the offering, and the final prayers. Then the pastor, James Mugeti, who had really done a good job of warmly welcoming the internally displaced people, asked that they come again, but he asked that they give notice so that the Church could be better prepared to welcome them. I think this will happen.

After the break up of the service, Gladys and I had to shake hands with many and talk to some. I found out that a truck had brought them, that is, the forty of them rode in the back bed of the truck.

Is this not a wonderful piece of reconciliation work?

When we got back, the electricity was all hooked up. But as I wrote this report, it already cut off once!

**Report #40**  
**April 4, 2008**

Last week Val Liveoak sent me an email asking about an article she had read which told of the frenzy in Kenya to buy Safaricom shares. Since this really is an indication of what is wrong with Kenya, let me discuss it in detail.

Safaricom is the most profitable company in East Africa. It is a cell phone company that just passed the 10 million mark in customers. Celtel, the other cell phone company, has 2 to 3 million subscribers. Since there are only 34 million people in Kenya, at least one out of three people has a cell phone. You can buy a cell phone for \$30 now (and probably much less if you get a stolen one). Calls are billed by the second and only the sender is charged. The charge is high at 21 cents per minute (but there are lots of plan variations). To call the US is 38 cents per minute. So they make a lot of profit. On the other hand they have been a very creative and innovative company. I think that they were the first company in Africa to enable people to send money through their cell phones.

Currently the Kenyan Government owns 60% of the company shares. They are selling 25% of the shares at 5/- each (7.5 cents) and the minimum purchase is 2,000 shares for a total cost of \$150. The total for sale of 25% is then 50 billion shillings or almost \$800 million. Presently there are 800,000 Kenyans who own shares on the Nairobi stock exchange. The prediction is that this offer will be oversubscribed by 4 times -- 3,000,000 Kenyans. If you have a job, you can go to any bank (big ads in the papers) and borrow 10,000/- or more to buy shares. The banks never say what the costs of these loans are. [NOTE /- is the symbol for Kenyan shilling.]

These 3,000,000 Kenyans (almost 10% of the population) are the middle and upper classes of Kenya. The reason for the frenzy here is GREED. People think that they can get the shares now at 5/- and sell them when they can be traded on the stock exchange in June for 10/-, 15/-, 20/- or even 200/- and make a tremendous profit without doing anything except pay back their loans if they have them.

Here are the problems with this reasoning.

First, this offer is gigantic in terms of the economy of Kenya. The 50 billion shillings times 4 (if oversubscribed) will sit in banks for the next three months while the offer is being processed. This is a huge amount of money that the banks are/will be sitting on, but which is not lendable. Therefore interest rates will rise.

Second people are selling shares in other companies in order to buy Safaricom shares so the Nairobi stock exchange is depressed. (Frankly, if I were in the stock market business, I would not buy Safaricom shares, but the other companies whose shares are now undervalued.)

Safaricom has big, full-page advertisements in the paper. These include the risks involved which are not insignificant. First, the cell phone market in Kenya is now almost saturated

so Safaricom cannot in the future grow at the rate it has in the past. Second, a third mobile phone company is entering the market sometime soon and will create more competition that may lower the costs to customers (as it should), but will also depress Safaricom's profits in the future. There are about twenty other risks mentioned, including the return of chaos to the country.

At the price of 5/- per share the impression is that the stock is cheap. But with 10 billion shares, 5/- may in fact be an overestimate of the value of the company. If you read the financial analysis of the offering in the business section, as I do, you will note that the shares may be vastly over-valued. In other words, what if in June the shares turn out to trade at only 3/- per share? Or 1/-? People will not be able to pay off their loans with the profits from their GREED, but will need to use their regular income to pay back the loan and its expenses. If this doomsday scenario happens much of the middle class will be in hock. If this happens they will think that they have been deceived by the Government, they will demand redress, and these demands could again turn into violence as the entire economy goes into real shock.

Raila Odinga and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) are opposing the sale at this time. Their reasoning is as follows. A number of years ago the Kenyan Government sold 30% of their shares to Vodafone, a big British telecommunications company. But somehow or other a company called Mobitelea Ventures, which was registered in an offshore haven, ended up owning 5% (now it seems like it is 10%) of the shares of the most profitable company in East Africa. No one knows the identity of the officers or shareholders of Mobitelea. It seems clear that the owners of the Safaricom shares in this company are those politicians and high level civil servants who received bribes to complete the deal. This means that they are worth at 5/- per share, \$160 million (if 5% of the shares) or \$320 (if 10% of the shares). This is Kenyan corruption on a grand scale. ODM wants the directors and shareholders of Mobitelea Ventures to be made public before the Safaricom shares are sold. It is easy to see why some people in the Kenyan Government did not want to give up their offices to the opposition which, during the election, promised to investigate this scandal and many others.

Do you remember the looting, burning, police repression, and death in January and February? Kenya is back to normal, where GREED rules. This Safaricom sale is a clear indication that fundamentally, at the level of what needs to happen to reform this society, the conflict has already been forgotten. This is what happened in 1992 and 1997 when various politicians were assassinated, and what happened with the other simmering conflicts in the country.

As I noted in the last of my nine interpretations of the conflict here, this is a spiritual crisis. If people from top politicians and civil servants down to the many buying the Safaricom shares continue to put their own selfish interests ahead of the interest of the society and the country as a whole, then my friends, I think we will see another round of violence in a few years. Kenya needs to practice "Love your neighbor as yourself", "do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and other spiritual concepts that put others, society as a whole, ahead of GREED.

In response to the question that I posed in my March 30 report, Kenya's gift to America is Barack Obama.

## **Report #41**

### **April 9, 2008**

I guess we can label this report after the cynical American proverb, "No good deed goes unpunished." We can start with my speeding ticket. On Tuesday last week Gladys and I went to court in Eldoret. There is the civil court side and the criminal court side--your dear coordinator was a criminal suspect at this point. We got to court about 10:30 a.m. and were told that the police from Turbo had not yet brought in the report. We should come back at 2:00 p.m. We returned at 2 o'clock and there was still no report. No one was at the court for speeding tickets, but rather for multiple infractions mostly by matatu (mini-bus) owners and drivers. I was one of three people who were given a ticket that day so one would presume that the others would be in court also. At least ten vehicles were stopped while we were being given our ticket including a white sedan that speedily passed me up right before the stop. The rest did not get a ticket. Were they just let go? Did they pay the police a bribe?

At this point the court clerks stamped our ticket and told us to go back to the Turbo police station to talk to the police. This we did. The officer in charge was very nice and polite. As soon as he heard that we were returning from giving relief supplies to the IDP camp, he indicated he would void the ticket. I was most surprised when he asked one of his subordinates to go get the 2000/- bail we had paid. He returned this to us and I signed the form. It then became clear that here in Kenya people don't go to court, but just forfeit their 2000/- and therefore the police don't bother to take the case to court.

It was not out of our way to go to Turbo because we had received a call from the leader of the IDP camp that the Red Cross was suspicious about the AVP workshop we had organized for the Kikuyu youth in the IDP camp. Gladys and I, along with George Njoroge, the camp leader, visited the assistant Red Cross official. As soon as we explained what we were doing and gave him some of the AGLI AVP literature, he was most supportive. In order to cover all bases, we then went to visit the local District Officer who is responsible for the IDP camp and whose office is right behind that of the camp leader. He also was most supportive. He told us that things were improving because members of the IDP camp had gone back to church in the home community. Njoroge quickly informed him that we are affiliated with Lumakanda Friends Church and that this is the church that had welcomed back the refugees. The lesson here, I think, is that even small actions can have profound effects when people are searching for something positive and hopeful.

Julia O'Conner, a young British woman who is already in Kenya, had phoned me to say she wanted to participate in some of AGLI's work. Since Julia said she had experience in photography and I needed some good pictures for the next issue of PeaceWays, I invited her to attend the AVP workshop with the youth at the Turbo IDP camp. The first two



days went fine, although at the beginning the IDP youth, not too surprisingly, were rather aggressive towards the facilitators, letting out their anger and bitterness. The workshop was being held at the National Youth Center next to the IDP camp and on the third day the group was outside developing their role plays. Julia was taking some pictures of the youth when she was arrested for taking pictures! In the end, they deleted some of the pictures from her digital camera and the whole group moved out of the National Youth Center area and back into one of the classrooms (poles with plastic tarps) at the IDP camp and completed the workshop. In the end we got some nice pictures.

Last week the political parties had agreed on a cabinet of 40 ministers. Many civil society organizations felt that this was a bloated number in that 24 ministers would be more than enough. The cost of these extra ministers would be more than what the Kenyan government was asking the international community to donate for returning the internally displaced people to their homes. There was a demonstration in Nairobi led by Wangari Maathai, among others. Donald Thomas, a Quaker, who has been in Kenya since 1957, is the leader of the unprogrammed Friends meeting in Nairobi and the organizer of the AVP program in Nairobi, was also at the demonstration. The police tear gassed the demonstrators when they wanted to walk down the street to present the Government with their petition against the bloated cabinet. The Standard, the second largest newspaper in Kenya, had a picture of Donald Thomas crouching on the ground trying to avoid the tear gas. He was later taken to the hospital and soon released.

A number of people have complained to me about my April 4 discussion on Safaricom. They think that I should not have tarred everyone in the country with the label of "greedy." I am sorry that I did not write this more clearly. What I wished to convey is that those people who are participating in the Safaricom frenzy (as the papers here call it) are the ones who are greedy and not everyone in Kenya.

## **Report #42**

### **April 17, 2008**

After writing so many words on the political, social, and economic conditions here in Kenya, I thought I would to update you on what AGLI is doing about all this.

Through our partner, Friends for Peace and Community Development and their Friends Peace Centre-Lubao, AVP in western Kenya plans on doing at least 200 AVP workshops (mostly with youth) in the next six months. We plan on doing ten to twenty workshops in a community so that the program can make a useful impact. We will focus on Western, Nyanza, and northern Rift Valley provinces. This is a huge undertaking as it means an average of 33 AVP workshops per month--the most we had done in the past was during the AVP program with the gacaca judges in Rwanda when we did about 6 per month. Not counting this week, we have done 15. This goal presents numerous challenges.

First we need to have a sufficient number of facilitators. We have increased the AVP staff at the Friends Peace Center--Lubao from one, Getry Agizah, the AVP coordinator, to five, by adding Peter Serete, Bernard Onjala, Eunice Okwemba, and Caleb Amunya.

These are the lead facilitators who can go off with two other facilitators and conduct a quality workshop. We are already in the process of developing additional lead facilitators, but we also need more regular facilitators. In some cases we have "re-found" facilitators that we had trained in the past.

We are beginning to correct one of our problems. Almost all Quakers in Kenya are of the Luhya ethnic group and of the above facilitators only Bernard Onjala is not a Luhya (he is a Luo). AVP had already trained a group of Luo facilitators in Nyanza Province from the organization that Onjala is affiliated with--ARO, which is sponsored by Norwegians. The AVP group there has just turned in enrollment forms for 360 youth, that means 18 three-day basic AVP workshops, in Bondo, and in Kisumu, the city on Lake Victoria most hard hit by the violence. Next week they will begin conducting four workshops per week.

We have no Kikuyu facilitators in western Kenya. This week we are also conducting another Training for Facilitators (T4F). We have invited three Kikuyu youth from our first training at the Turbo IDP camp together with three of the youth from the village AVP here in Lumakanda (two Luhya and one Luo) to participate. All of these youth took the advanced AVP workshop last week and we received reports indicating that all of them were very "active" (the verb used here to indicate that they will be good facilitators). Of course not everyone works out, but this will be a start. We have already started using multi-ethnic teams as much as possible, but this is an area where we need to drastic improvement. The T4F will include five students from Friends Theological College who will be graduating in June and whom we hope to use to meet the increased demand for AVP workshops among Kenyan Quakers.

It is most important that we carefully monitor the quality of the workshops. Conducting this large number of workshops with many new facilitators, we need to do our utmost to insure that the quality of the workshops does not deteriorate.

There is a group of four Australians who have built a small guest house in Shinyalu, about 10 miles from Kakamega, called Takatifu (holy) Gardens. It is affiliated with Central (Kenya) Yearly Meeting. We have made an arrangement with them to use their guest house and are now holding two AVP workshops per week there. These can be residential, meaning the participants can stay overnight and do not have to travel home and return each morning. Therefore have a new plan. We do the basic AVP workshops out in the community and then bring 4 of the most "active" participants to a residential Advanced Workshop at Takatifu Gardens. In rural areas most people are of the same ethnic group so basic workshops tend not to have an ethnic mix. Bringing together people from various areas will allow us to have multi-ethnic advanced workshops. A nice part of this arrangement is that AVP supplies the facilitators and materials, while Takatifu Gardens supplies the space, food, and when needed, lodging.

I could go on and on, but you get the gist. Getry Agizah is an amazing organizer. Moreover in a culture where everyone wants to "negotiate" (i.e., overcharge), she is adamantly frugal. We have developed a menu for the workshop meals, are in the process

of costing out the menu precisely, have established a limit (\$300) on expenses for each workshop, etc. We do not pay for space. If the community wants the AVP workshop, they must provide the space.

While we have received a good response for funding these workshops, additional donations are still needed. If we receive even more funds, beyond those needed for workshops currently planned, then we will be able to offer additional workshops. Donations can be made by writing a check to FPT/AGLI with a memo of "Kenya Reconciliation" and mailing it to Friends Peace Teams/AGLI, 1001 Park Avenue, St Louis, MO 63104 USA or using a credit card on our webpage, [www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org). Thanks for the consideration.

### **Report #43**

#### **April 21, 2008**

Today was an interesting day as the counselors from the Friends Church Peace Teams (FCPT) visited the internally displaced people's (IDP) camp at Turbo. About a week ago, Jodi Richmond of Friends Theological College did a training at the Lubao Center for about thirty plus Friends who had some counseling skills. The plan was for them to then go to the Turbo IDP camp and counsel some of the 4,000 people still at the camp. About thirty of these counselors (six were experienced AVP facilitators plus three youth from the IDP camp that we trained as AVP facilitators just last week) showed up at the Turbo post office and were taken to the IDP camp. The counselors were divided into four groups--children, youth, women, and men. While the concept was that each counselor would have five people in his/her group, the reality was that most groups had about fifteen. The number of children was overwhelming. They were divided up into three or four age groups and still there were 100 or more in each group. The counseling sessions were done out in an open field. People just stood or sat down on appropriate ridges or rocks--a few school benches were brought out. All told, I think that there were at least one thousand people participating (including the children). The youth and adults talked in their groups for at least two hours!!!

As part of the program the FCPT brought some food for distribution. Gladys and I (with others) had gone there the previous week to make the last distribution of the relief supplies we had for the Lumakanda people. We were told that we could no longer give relief directly to the Lumakanda people. What we brought each time was a very small amount for 4000 people. Instead we are now to give it to the Red Cross who will distribute it to a select group--elderly people it was determined. So today the FCPT relief supplies had to be given to the Red Cross, and so it was done. During the counseling time, one group of men required me to come speak to them. Their concern was that if the food was given to the Red Cross it would be sold off and not given out in the camps. At another time two men had told shared the same concern with me. They wanted us to distribute the food right then and there ourselves because they said that those bringing the food would not be stealing it.

Will the Turbo IDP's receive the goods the FCPT gave them? We left the list with George

Njoroge, the camp's IDP chairman. I'll ask him and others when I see them next.

On March 22 The Daily Nation had a four page advertisement placed by the Red Cross telling of their work during the crisis including and long lists of everyone who had contributed. Okay, let us see how the Americans did--American Red Cross--3,250,000/-, Netherlands Red Cross--147,000,000/- (45 times more than the Americans), Canadian Red Cross--6,876,228/- (more than twice). Under "Governments, " they listed USAID--12,543,600/- and British Government (DFID)--135,000,000/- (11 times more than USAID). Is American generosity for places in distress really only a myth? Americans, by this measure, were sure far from generous in the relief in Kenya!

But then the Red Cross reports in this advertisement: "This has enabled humanitarian aid to reach each person in IDP camps countrywide." Yet all the previous distributions by the Friends Church Peace Team were made to IDP's who had not been served by the Red Cross. Person after person reported that the Red Cross trucks passed them by and never helped them out. The IDP's who are not Kikuyu claim that the Red Cross (at least in Western Province) only served the Kikuyu and neglected anyone from other ethnic groups.

As part of this effort, Kaimosi Hospital rented an ambulance and sent their head nurse, Irene Gulavi, with some medicines. I wasn't sure if this was necessary because the Government had a clinic at the camp. How wrong I was! She had a long line of people waiting for her services and she was still working away when the rest of us left after 3:00 p.m. This clearly indicated that the Government clinic was not working properly. When I asked folks whom I knew, I was told that the Government clinic had no medicine and so they just wrote a prescription for people to go buy the medicine. But since the refugees didn't have any money to buy the medicine, they didn't. So, in the end, I was sure glad that Irene came.

I talked with a number of the FCPT counselors following their sessions with the IDPs and I heard the following:

1. The youth were still very bitter and could easily be goaded into attacking and killing others.
2. The young women in the camp were being solicited by some of the policemen in the station, and with few other sources of income, some of them were falling into prostitution.
3. Almost no one wanted to go back to their home communities because they knew the people who destroyed their houses; they could see their possessions in the houses of their neighbors. Whenever they visited their former home, for one reason or another, they were asked why they were coming back. When I asked some where they wanted to go, they responded that they wanted the Government to buy land for them in places like Nakuru--which, in my opinion, was perhaps even worse than the Lugari area!

4. One person asked the FCPT counselor why there were no Nandi (the local Kalenjin group that did much of the trouble in the area) in our team. Another asked why the Luhya (the group that most Friends belong to and most of the counselors were from, and the majority population in Lugari District) did not help them out when they were attacked. Interesting questions!

5. Many of the IDP's were very angry with certain Nandi politicians whom they claimed incited people to force them out of their land, homes, and businesses.

I think that the day was a real eye-opener for the thirty or so Friends' counselors. Everyone is supposed to make a report of what they did and learned and on May 2 there will be a committee meeting to discuss this and to discern the way forward. Then the following week there will be another two-day retreat for all the counselors.

I have been asked to be the Chair of the FCPT counseling group!!! I asked them to get someone else, but they ended up selecting me anyway. I didn't think I could really refuse since this is the work I am supposed to be doing.

For me the most poignant time of the day was when we were in the field and I noticed a small toy compound obviously made by the kids. It was built solely of dirt, rocks, and twigs! Quite neatly and nicely done--much more like the home they fled than the IDP camp.

## **Report #44**

### **May 1, 2008**

It's long since I wrote. I love writing and reading from people so the fact that I have not written means I have really been kind of overwhelmed. As our leaders, Kibaki and Raila, and their teams engaged Koffi Annan we in the peace world were busy in the communities because we know that peace agreed up there does not always bring changes down in the grassroots.

The demand for reconciliation work is immense. Because I am in three places at the same time, yaani no fixed abode, I have an overview of what peace work is being done in my cycles and sometimes I just smile because the demand on everybody is immense. I have been mainly concentrating on Uzima work. We have carried out several one day workshops in Kibera for uzima youth. This is a curriculum we developed that combines trauma healing; a look at violence; then a way forward for healing by the participants. It is based on the AVP model and uses a number of exercises from AVP. We find this useful because the demand on us is high and this particular workshop really challenges the participants.

In Kibera we have come face to face with the youth who battled police; whose friends were gunned down as they ran or while uprooting the railway line; or when they had gone "shopping without money", as they call looting there. We have come face to face with intense mistrust and hatred as we have put Kikuyu and other tribes together. In Western

Kenya we began with a two 2 day mediation workshops for chiefs, divisional officers, youth leaders and a few pastors. Participants from the Kipsigis tribe had to share experiences with those from the Kisii tribe. This was intense. These are people right on the front line of great hostilities that have not yet erupted. Chiefs shared how they felt so pressured. The government was pressuring them to ensure that violence did not happen in their areas. Their people were running to them for shelter or for advice on what to do. Their own lives were in danger with 9 of them losing all they had when their homes were burned by angry youth who perceived them to be government supporters. They were surprised to realize that they faced similar challenges. One chief shared how he had cried when he saw 8 year old kids going to battle with arrows.

We then started a series of one-day workshops for the 120 youth leaders that form the border committees. Here we heard about participants having seen people dying with arrows lodged in their bodies; those who burned tires to block roads; those who made arrows; those who purchased; those who threw arrows at others; those who stoned; those who killed; just name it. Picture a situation where people are screaming and running; others are throwing stones and arrows; whistles and trumpets are blowing; gun shots and tear gas everywhere; dead bodies lying about with heads cut off; cows running all over; people singing war songs; etc.

Our aim is to let these young adults talk with no fear of victimization. Then we look at trauma; its causes, effects and consequences, we look at violence and how we can react nonviolently to violence situations. We look at cycles of violence and how the graph moves up every time root issues are not addressed. We look at the AVP themes of Affirmation, Communication, Cooperation, and Community based on trust and Creative Conflict resolution. We challenge ourselves: can we build a different society where we affirm each other rather than think of Kikuyus as thieves, Luos as arrogant and violent, Luhya as cooks and watchmen; Kalenjin as cattle rustlers and Kisii as violent. This is normally a very interesting time because it is towards the end. People get to hear what others say about them (their group) and the whole issue of stereotypes.

In all these workshops the difference at the end of the day has been tremendous. In Kibera, which began with Kikuyu youth walking alone and Luos and Luhyas alone, they were going for lunch together. In one workshop with Kisii/Kipsigis, the Kipsigis youth had to be escorted by the chief, 2 assistant chiefs and one armed policeman. This was a tough one and it really made us very tired. But my joy is that by the end of the day we were being asked to come back, this time to hold the workshop on the Kipsigis side. My fellow facilitators (the youthful Uzima staff - 3 Kisii and one Kipsigis) tell me that during this workshop I was not the person they knew as I threw one challenge after another. I was just so deeply hurt looking at these young people perceiving each other as enemies.

At the end of this particular workshop we heard exchanges like " I am so glad we came. Now we can come to your market to buy maize. We are starving." Or, " Now we can bring our maize and beans over at your market. Our people buy then at such throw away prices". We are asked over and over to help the youth to form joint groups where they will carry out joint income generating activities, sports, etc.

But I know that one such workshop cannot really heal the deep mistrust and hatred that exists in Kenya. All participants want peace, as shown by their expectations at the start of the workshop. Most do not know how to do this. The need for sustained interaction is so very very crucial. So if you have anybody who can give us funds please don't hesitate. The need for income generating activities is SO HIGH. In Kibera our youth lost their businesses and need to reactivate them. Indeed the harvest is great but the harvesters are few.

I sometimes join the Nairobi AVP for their workshops here. The demand here is also overwhelming. Next week I will be in Western Province. I will join the team there for one-day workshops with the vulnerable youth, then attend a gathering that brings Quaker peacemakers from East Africa together. After this I go to a very exciting and very different program. My sister, Professor Miriam Were, who is also the co-founder of Uzima Foundation, was given an award by the Japanese government for her involvement in Public health programs in Africa. This is a very prestigious award and it includes cash to the tune of 1 million US dollars. She has received many prestigious awards but none with cash. The Japanese cited her work with Uzima Foundation as part of the award so Uzima is sending me to accompany her. I think AMREF [African Medical & Research Foundation] is picking up the bill since they too will be going. So we leave Kenya on the 25th of May (my birthday) and come back on 2nd June. The Ministries of Health and Foreign Affairs will put up a big celebration when she comes back so I will be carried on the wave and I look forward to dancing my legs off that day.

For me this is a wonderful way to end my journey with Uzima as its Executive Director. I will continue to work with Uzima but in a different capacity.

What a long letter? Did I tell you that I will travel business class to Tokyo? Just imagine; and in our journeys among the Kisii/Kipsigis we have been climbing on top of a FULL matatu where sometimes it drizzles and drenches us!! God is good and His mercies endure forever. Does anybody have an old car they can ship to us? Or sell it and bring the cash? Climbing on top of a built-up pickup that is fully packed and twisting round those many Kisii bends is like playing with your life in the driver's hands!!

Malesi

From Dave Z:

Upon consideration of Malesi's leadership and creativity in this time of crisis in Kenya, the Working Group of the African Great Lakes Initiative decided it was appropriate for her to become a released Friend. This concept had not been introduced among Quakers in Kenya previously but it clearly seemed to fit the situation. Malesi feels called to pursue peacemaking activities during 2008 and has been released to do so. A Support Committee has been appointed in Kakamega to help her with her activities.

Part of the support given to a "Released Friend" is the provision of financial resources to

enable them to undertake the ministry to which they have been called. AGLI is committed to raising \$5,000 for this calendar

year to support Malesi. I hope that you will become part of this effort by sending a check made out to

"Friends Peace Teams/AGLI" with a memo line of "Malesi Kinaro's Release."

## **Report #45**

### **May 5, 2008**

Here in Western and north Rift Valley provinces, upcountry Kenya has returned to the normal pre-election bustle. The roads are full of vehicles, the matatus (mini-buses) are full, and people are scurrying about their business as usual here in Kenya.

The Government is pushing to have the remaining 150,000 internally displaced persons returned to their farms, which many of the displaced people are reluctant to do. Except for President Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga visiting the camps in the Rift Valley (which resulted in a farce about whether the Vice-President or the Prime Minister was "second" in the protocol pecking order), almost no work has been done to bring about any kind of reconciliation between the folks displaced and those who displaced them. Politically of course, if the internally displaced people (IDP) can return, then there will less need to support them, but one of the questions is how are these folks going to get back on their feet? Then, the question is, what will guarantee that this violence will not re-occur again during the next election as it did in 1992, 1997, and 2007? Tough issues.

One of the reasons to get the IDP's back on their farms is because the country is now looking towards a food shortage. As we drive from Lumakanda to Eldoret, we find that many farms have not been plowed. Years ago I worked in agricultural development in Tanzania and one of the rules in this part of the world is to plant as early as possible. Those who planted by April 1 now have nice green fields. But many did not plant until later and I think that their yields will suffer. While the talk in the newspaper is to return the IDP's so that they can plant, I think that the planting season is over for this year.

Even farmers in the area who were not displaced have not plowed and planted all their fields due to the uncertainty. Fertilizer prices have tripled. This means that farmers here will put less fertilizer on the crops they have planted, which again is going to lower yields.

Let me remind you again that here in the corn (maize) belt of Kenya most of the crop is consumed by people and not by cows, pigs, and sheep as is true of the American corn belt.

Lastly, while the rains have been sufficient for Lugari District, they are below average. This means that in less well-watered areas, there is another drought coming on. This has already begun the drier parts of Kenya.



As to our AGLI work, last week we had a gathering at the Friends Peace Center--Lubao for the 36 active AVP facilitators we have in western Kenya. I texted Getry that it was a nice 2 day gathering. She texted back, "I am very excited about it too. Happy AVP life. Thanks for making it a success and the support. Pass my appreciation to Mama Gladys."

Perhaps two of the facilitators were in their 50's, 3 or 4 more in their 40's, and the rest (30 or so) in their 20's and 30's. Were they lively!!! The Lubao Center has only 20 beds. Where did the other 16 sleep? On the floor on mattresses; no complaints. Gladys and I (being old fogies) did not spend the night there, but I was told that they stayed up until midnight doing role plays on transforming power. We have worked to expand outside of the Luhya group and here perhaps half were Luhya, a little less than half were Luo, and 4 were Kikuyu. We are still missing Nandi (Kalenjin), but we are working on this from a few different angles. Later this week we will do the first AVP workshops with the Sisters of the Assumption. They are based in Eldoret, but the workshop will be at their house in Turbo on the Kalenjin side of the border. They want AVP for their 125 nuns and then perhaps we can do AVP with the Kalenjin communities with which they are working. After the AVP Facilitators Gathering last week we did 7 AVP workshops including another one here in Lumakanda. This week we nine workshops scheduled.

Like Getry says, "It's exciting."

Let me end with two brief cow stories. Now that the rainy season is here the grass (and everything else) is shooting up like it does during spring in America. How do we cut our grass? We invite four local cows into the compound to chomp away for a while! The second story concerns one of the workmen who built our house. Last year one of this cows was stolen. Five months later the cow walked back into his compound. Was he astonished!

## **Report #46**

### **May 6, 2008**

Patrick Mureithi, a film-maker from Springfield, MO, has made a film called "Icyizere-Hope" about a Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) workshop in Gisenyi, Rwanda last August. If you look at the AGLI webpage ([www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org)), you can view a five-minute short by clicking on the presentation on the upper-right of the home page.

Patrick has a draft of his film which he showed in Rwanda during the commemoration of the genocide. Here is Theoneste's report:

"Icyizere-Hope: During this time of remembering the victims of the 1994 genocide the film Icyizere has been shown in different cinema centers and many times on Rwandan television. The film chronicles a HROC workshop in Rwanda. It was shot last July and August by Patrick Mureithi of Springfield, MO. The film, which is based on Rwandan culture and focuses on the inner power of healing and peacebuilding of Rwandans, has

helped people to believe that there is hope, that Rwanda can become again a peaceful society where there is no hatred, fear, and mistrust between Rwandans. Even though the film is not yet entirely completed, Icyizere will be a very important tool for HROC; we will be using it to achieve our goals of healing and reconciliation in Rwanda and other countries that have had similar experiences."

As you might have guessed from his name, Patrick was born in Kenya. After his recent trip to Rwanda, he came to Kenya for a few days to visit his relatives. While here he was interviewed by the Sunday Nation, the largest paper in Kenya, for their Lifestyle insert in the Sunday edition. Patrick just called me about this. He says that the articles will talk extensively about HROC, AGLI, and the fact that we are bringing the program to western Kenya.

You will be able to read the article online by going to [www.nationmedia.com](http://www.nationmedia.com) on Sunday and clicking on the left where it says "Daily Magazine."

**Report #47**  
**May 11, 2008**

Below is an article from today's Sunday Nation, the largest paper in Kenya. The first part is about three PM's from the Rift Valley talking about reconciliation, then the last part -- which I have put in red -- is about AGLI!!!! There are a few small mistakes (we are doing up to 20 rather than up to 2 workshops in each place).

[Note from Dawn: When this is sent out using our listserv the color will probably disappear. The section about AGLI begins with the 9th paragraph after the heading "Conflict Resolution" There are also misspellings of Gladys Kamonya's name and Kipkarren River.]

Since he did not put our website address in the article, I don't see how people can contact me since I doubt that folks will drive to Lumakanda to look me up.

[Note from Dawn: Well Dave, maybe they will "google" your name!]

Peace,  
Dave

-----

Leaders accuse state of hurrying settlement drive to please the US

Story by STEPHEN MBURU

Publication Date: 5/11/2008

The home-bound internal refugees have had mixed fortunes.

While many had a warm reception in places such as Molo, the same cannot be said of

other areas in the Rift Valley.

The icy relations that sparked the flight from their homes in the aftermath of the election dispute last year are still manifest in some areas.

Many say they fear returning home to live with their “enemies”. Indeed, some have told the government to resettle them elsewhere.

Largely unplanned

Special Programmes minister Naomi Shaaban, who is playing a key role in the settlement drive, has assured the displaced families that no one will be forced to return home.

But some MPs from Rift Valley Province, which was mostly affected by the violence, argue that the programme is being implemented in a hurry, and is largely unplanned. They say that although they embrace the return of the IDPs, there is need for reconciliation first before settlement.

The MPs, Franklin Bett (Buret), Julius Kones (Konoin) and Isaac Ruto (Chepalungu) want the government and other groups to be involved in a reconciliation programme that will help people live in peace.

The leaders argue that the most important thing now is to reconcile the people instead of using the provincial administration to force the IDPs’ neighbours to welcome them back home. They say armed police escorts and more police stations in the violence-hit areas will not help reconcile the people.

Mr Bett says he is for planned and not “false” resettlement of IDPs.

“Resettlement,” he says, “must be in a manner that will give us a permanent solution. That solution is first through reconciliation, development of forgiveness between communities and reawakening of the spirit of love among the people. That will make resettlement meaningful.” “I will not be party to false resettlement,” he told the Sunday Nation on telephone.

Mr Ruto accuses the government of hurrying the programme to please the international community, especially the United States.

“The government is in a hurry to remove an eyesore so the international community can give it accolades. It is what we call in Parliament playing to the gallery. “The government wants to be in good books with the international community,” he says.

The MP says the government should involve local political, religious and civic leaders in

the province. It should also respect the wishes of the IDPs.

“We MPs from the region are ready and willing to provide leadership for reconciliation,” he told the Sunday Nation at Parliament Buildings.

“The IDPs,” he says, “are in anguish. They are scared to go back home. It takes two to tango. They should feel happy and safe. There is need for reconciliation.

### Conflict resolution

“The provincial administration should not be involved in reconciliation. They are very poor in conflict resolution. To them, reconciliation is force.” He suggests that sociologists be involved in any programme to help heal the wounds among the affected people.

“University of Nairobi should provide experts to address the issue. This should be done after a proper census to identify genuine IDPs. We may be dealing with professional IDPs.” He also wants a solution to unemployment among the youth “to avoid a new cycle of violence.”

Mr Kones says settlement needs proper planning.

“People need to be resettled, but there is no proper planning. Let there be a process. Let people get to know why they are going to live together,” he says.

“The reconciliation process should have started first, where we bring together elders from different communities. This looks like a forced resettlement. I feel most (IDPs) were caught off-guard,” he says.

The MP says the underlying emotive issues, including land, should be addressed to find a lasting solution to ethnic conflicts. The land problem, he says, was compounded by the high rate of unemployment among the youth.

The government and the other organisations involved in the programme may need to borrow a leaf from the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) of the Friends Peace Teams, a non-governmental organisation which organises reconciliation workshops in Rwanda to help heal the wounds among the perpetrators and survivors of the genocide in the country in 1994.

The workshops, dubbed “Healing and Rebuilding our Communities (HROC)” have helped reconcile Rwanda’s main ethnic groups, Hutu and Tutsi, following the genocide that left nearly one million people dead.

AGLI was founded by David Zarembka, an American. Its main office is in St Louis, Missouri. However, Mr Zarembka operates from Lumakanda in Lugari District where he lives with his wife Gladys Kimunya. Mr Zarembka is also AGLI’s coordinator and the

organisation has started reconciliation programmes in Western and Rift Valley provinces.

AGLI says on its website that it plans to conduct more than 100 basic and advanced workshops in various communities, many of which will involve young people who were involved in much of the violence.

They will cover Bondo in Nyanza Province; Takatifu Gardens in Shinyalu, Lumakanda, Kakamega, Lugari District, and Vihiga District in Western Province; and Ndalau in Rift Valley Province.

“Each site will have up to two workshops so that each area can be adequately impacted.” AGLI is reportedly supporting reconciliation efforts on the border between the Kipsigis (Rift Valley Province) and the Kisii (Nyanza Province) where more than 30 people were killed and where hundreds of homes, a school, and numerous businesses were burnt down.

Mr Zarembaka seems to be doing what Bett, Kones and Ruto are agreed on: making efforts to reconcile communities.

“I have been at a meeting since Thursday with the Friends Church Peace Team determining how we are going to meet with the IDPs—Luhya and the Nandi in Turbo, Mwamba and Kipkappen River near where I live in Lumakanda. These were all hard hit. There are still 4,000 unhappy IDPs at the Turbo Police Station,” he told the Sunday Nation via email on Saturday.

## **Report #48**

### **May 14, 2008**

Outside of our house is a small plot of corn (maize) that our neighbor has planted. It is a luscious green, about 18 inches high, and growing like wildfire. The owner planted this corn around April 1. As we drive around the countryside, those who planted their fields about that time, likewise have lush green fields. But many others planted much later-- some are still planting. In these fields the corn is just breaking through or only six inches high. When I used to be in agricultural development, one of the rules we tried to teach farmers was "early planting" -- as soon as the rains came. I am afraid that those who planted late will have a poor crop. Then as we drive toward Eldoret, where there are large farms growing corn, many fields have not even been plowed let alone planted. Normally Kenya is self-sufficient in corn.

Then there is another problem. The cost of fertilizer has skyrocketed to three times what it was last year. This is a worldwide problem as the price of oil used to make the fertilizer and to transport it has risen so much. The fertilizer importers say that they imported the usual amount of fertilizer, but they have large stock on hand since people did not buy it. This is the fertilizer that is put on the field when planting. A second top dressing is put on after weeding. The Government has agreed to subsidize the cost of the top dressing. Yet since the farmers have not used the recommended amount of fertilizer on their corn when

planting, the yield will be depressed.

The Government has given hybrid corn seed and fertilizer to some of the internally displaced people. On the one hand some of the IDP's have sold their seed and fertilizer because they can't return to their plots to plant and on the other hand local people are complaining that the Government is showing favoritism to the IDP's. I heard that when a shipment of fertilizer was brought to Turbo for the IDP's, the local people snatched the fertilizer away and severely beat one man from the IDP camp.

Reports indicate that almost 4 million 200 pound bags of corn were destroyed during the violence--a little over 10% of the crop. The price has shot up and even though we live in the Kenyan corn belt, we are unable to buy anything but small quantities (less than a bag) of corn. The Government expects there to be a shortage of 4 million bags by August and therefore will import this amount from South Africa--at what cost I don't know since corn is now at a record world price and there will be transportation costs on top of that.

My opinion is that this is only the beginning of the food shortage. Predictions are that the harvest this year, if the weather is good, will be down by 40%. If this holds true, then another 14 million bags will have to be imported in the coming year.

This increase worldwide in food prices as already caused riots in a number of countries. Is this being reported in the American media? Then one of the major causes of this price increase is the diversion of food into making of ethanol. I think you have seen large price increases in the US in meat, poultry, and dairy products--I was amazed at the increases when I was in the US in March.

In Kenya, who is going to suffer? Naturally it is the poor who are already reported to be spending 50% of their income on food. The elite and middle class will be able to pay the increased prices. Will the plight of the poor be ignored? This will be one of those tests to see if Kenya is changing or not. If the plight of the poor is ignored, then we are back to the same old Kenya which gave rise to the violence after the election.

In the long run there is also a possibility that the rural farmers will benefit. In the past almost all countries in the world, including Kenya, have favored the urban centers by keeping food prices low. The rural folk are then unable to make a living off their land and so, many flock to the slums of the cities to try to make a living. Will high food prices make it less advantageous to live in the city and more advantageous to live in the rural areas? Will this be enough to reverse the flow of people from the countryside to the cities? Will higher food prices lead farmers to use better production techniques that increase yields?

**Report #49**  
**May 20, 2008**

Yesterday for the first time since January I met the Red Cross official responsible for Lumakanda on the street here. Later I saw two Red Cross landrovers and then a UN vehicle racing through town. (Why are they racing through town stirring up so much dust?) I speculate that there was a meeting at the government offices of Lugari District to plan the return of the internally displaced people at Turbo to their home communities! We will see.

How is the reconciliation work going?

Yesterday, Monday, Gladys and I went to the Turbo IDP camp to settle up matters with a meeting that the Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT) had on Saturday. It was to be a Bible study meeting arranged by the 32 pastors at the camp. Before we took the food last week we were told that there would be 60 people. When we took the food, we were told that there would be 102. So we left them with funds to buy more soda and the Red Cross said that they would provide more rice. At the actual meeting on Saturday there were 170 people! The pastors themselves collected sufficient funds to buy sodas for the extra, extra people. The presentation started about 11:00 AM and went to 4:00 PM and people still wanted to continue but the presenters had to leave for home. People did not want to break for lunch. There was rapt attention as no one left. This was the first time that something like this had been done in the Turbo IDP camp since it began in January. It is amazing how such a simple thing could be so effective.

The presenters were three women, Rose Imbega, Lydia Bokassa, and Jodi Richmond and one man, Joshua Lilande. Margaret Fell, Mary Dyer, Elizabeth Frye and all the other Quaker women ride again. At our meeting yesterday, one of the pastors commented that they didn't know that women could speak so well about the Bible and its issues. Most churches in Kenya are male dominated and many do not allow women pastors.

Last week we had two AVP workshops here in Lugari District. One was for youth from the Turbo IDP camp. Here the interesting point was one person who had fled the violence on Mt Elgon coming to Lugari District and then had to flee again during the post-election violence. There was also a workshop here in Lumakanda. One of the participants was a 27 year old Kikuyu man who had rented a room in town, but his parents were still in the IDP camp. His shop and house had been destroyed during the violence. His wife of six months had been a Luhya and they separated during the violence. This is very common, the stress of the violence destroyed many mixed ethnic marriages and their families.

Next week we will be doing two advanced AVP workshops at Lumakanda Friends Church. For each workshop we will bring ten Kikuyu youth from the IDP camp and ten Luhya youth from the community. This will be the first workshop where we will be bringing the two sides of the Kenyan conflict together as we do in Rwanda and Burundi. I think this will work out fine.

Last Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Gladys and I were at the Quaker Peace Network--East Africa (QPN-EA) meeting held at the Friends Peace Centre--Lubao. This consisted of mostly Kenyans with two Tanzanians, and four people from Uganda (including

Barbara Wybar, AGLI representative currently at Bududa). The most interesting point I learned was that a high percentage of the youth in Nairobi who participated in the violence and were killed by the police were Luhya. Also in certain parts of Lugari District it was the Luhya youth who did all the damage. In western Kenya there was a tendency to think that it was the other groups--Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luo, etc--who were the more violent ones. Is it a natural tendency to think that "others" are more violent than your own group? We shared our activities and those from Kenya discussed how we could work together in our peacemaking and reconciliation activities.

It is the Friends Church Peace Team which has been most active here. On Thursday thirteen of the FCPT counselors held a listening session at the Turbo District office in Uasin Gisu District. This is on the Nandi (a Kalenjin group) side of the road from Lugari, which is mostly Luhya. Many government officials, local politicians, church leaders, community elders, etc., participated. At first they were suspicious of the mostly Luhya group that they were meeting with, but in time they began to open up. They mostly complained about the Kikuyu--some of it true, some false, some stereotyping, some bitterness, and some excuses for the violence. They were not very happy to have them back unless the Kikuyu were willing to fit into and accept their Nandi culture. There was little of that "live and let live" concept needed for diverse people to co-exist peacefully. By the end of the meeting, the decision was for the FCPT counselors to visit seven Nandi communities to meet the people at the village level. On Sunday we had a briefing/organizing meeting at the Peace Centre and for seven weekdays, between Monday (yesterday) and Tuesday (next week), four or five person teams will visit the seven villages for grassroots listening sessions. I was most surprised to learn that in three of these villages, in the interior of the district, people may not know Swahili! We have one women counselor who is a Nandi (married to a Luhya) and knows the language of the Nandi. So she will go to the three interior meetings to translate if needed. Note that if a person does not know Swahili (or English) he or she cannot talk to a Nandi or Luhya without a translator.

On Friday of last week, FCPT had a listening session on the Lugari (Luhya) side at the boundary. Again the team of nineteen heard many accusations against the Kikuyu. The result from this meeting is that next week, on Thursday, the FPCT listening team will go to Mbagara, the place with the greatest violence in Lugari District, for a listening session with the community. In this case the whole team will go and hopefully the crowd will divide up into smaller groups as we did at the Turbo IDP camp. The next day, May 30, there will be an ecumenical healing service open to everyone. People from the Turbo side will come. Gladys and I talked to the pastors at the IDP camp and they plan on coming. This is what real Christianity is all about!

Unfortunately, and as much as I would like to, I have not and will not attend any of these gatherings except the ecumenical service. As an Mzungu (white person) I would be a distraction from the issues at hand. My presence might give rise to added suspicion.



At the QPN-EA meeting, Eden Grace of FUM commented that this was the most exciting thing that Quakers were doing in the world! Do you agree? Or are there wonderful other things going on around the Quaker world that are just as exciting? We are just a group of ordinary concerned Quakers trying to bring about healing and reconciliation. What is most interesting is that we don't really know what we are doing as we move forward step by step as "the way opens." We trust that God will lead us and give us the right words to use. We had to become accustomed to using the neutral words "returning community" for the Kikuyu from the IDP camps and "receiving community" for the Nandi and Luhya who we used to call "aggressors."

Today, back at Lubao, Malesi Kinaro, Getry Agizah, and Joseph Shamala are conducting a basic Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) workshop for people from diverse communities (including the Turbo IDP camp). Next week the two-week long Healing Companion training, which had been postponed in January, will start. We will be bringing Adrien Niyongabo from Burundi, Theoneste Bizimana and Chrisostome Nshimiyimana from Rwanda, and Zawadi Nikuze from North Kivu, Congo to lead the training. We hope to have ten people from the Mt Elgon conflictm, who formerly participated in the HROC basic workshop, and also the best candidates from the present training.

## **Report #50**

### **May 22, 2008**

I wasn't expecting to make another report so soon, but events have given me some "juicy" material.

Robin and Christine Dunn are from Australia and with two other Australians they have built a nice retreat center called Takatifu (Spiritual) Gardens in Shinyalu about 8 miles from Kakamega. They are working with Central Yearly Meeting of Friends and have held 15 AVP workshops in their center during the last two months. Christine sent me this in an email today:

Yesterday Robin went into town by himself to do a little shopping when something happened. He was out the front of Midland's hardware store (which is owned by some Indians) when a badly injured man ran right past him down into a side street, with a large crowd of people chasing him. The man attempted to get into Midlands and they rushed to close their shutters so the guy (and the crowd following him) couldn't get in. Robin felt he should try to find out what was happening. So he went around the corner and saw that the man was now on the ground and was being flogged with something like a fan belt. People were also kicking him and Robin had the impression it was only a matter of time till they killed him. He was suspected of stealing, but I imagine very few people in the crowd knew the actual story. The son of Midland's hardware store came out the back of the shop too and commented to Robin on how terrible it was. Robin told him that they should do something about it. hen to the Indian guy's surprise Robin walked toward the crowd. As Robin approached people kind of backed off from the "thief" and some

comments were made which made it clear that people were a bit embarrassed about what was happening.

Rob went straight to the guy and picked him up off the ground. He put his arm under the guy's shoulder and supported him to walk back towards the main road. The crowd didn't quite know what to do. Once Robin was on the main road he felt he was safe from being beaten himself, as the general public became very aware of what was going on and the mood was a lot more positive. The large crowd followed him with most making positive comments about Robin saving the guy, but some also mocking him, calling him "Kofi Annan", etc. Robin decided to take the guy to the police station, but felt it would be a bit dangerous to put him in the car. So he walked the guy to the police station about half a mile away. It seemed to him that all of Kakamega stopped to watch him walk with this man bleeding profusely and a large noisy crowd following behind him. By the end, the guy was not able to hold his own weight, so it was quite a task. Once at the police station, there was a bit of bureaucracy. The police arranged to get the guy to hospital, and didn't seem interested at all in arresting him for stealing. I guess they figured he'd been punished enough already. Later in the day, Robin visited the guy in hospital and was able to confirm that he was getting some care. Rob thinks he'll survive, although he's in a bit of a bad way.

Then I got another email from Patrick Mureithi who is producing the documentary film, "Icyizere: Hope," on the Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) program in Rwanda. (Click [here](#) to see a five minute segment of the film.)

This is Patrick Mureithi. I am now back in the US after an AMAZING experience in Rwanda and Kenya. I managed to show "ICYIZERE: Hope" to thousands of people at the Rwanda Film festival, on Rwanda Television during the official week of mourning, at the Gisenyi central Prison, and at the National University in Butare. In Kenya, I got the chance to share the documentary with students and faculty of the Aga Khan Medical University and Hospital, staff and guests of the Kenya Film Commission, the Kenyan National Association of Nurses, the Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace, the Nairobi Peace Initiative and the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. I was also interviewed by The Sunday Nation newspaper and by Citizen Television during their popular Power Breakfast Show.

All this to say that I am very very grateful for all of the people that contributed to make the film possible, and for all of the emotional support I received from family and friends alike. I will soon be editing the final version of the film which, funding permitting, should be done in 5 months. I will keep you posted on developments as they come.

Then the last item is from the Sunday Nation. The front page headline reads "Raila factor in Obama contest." In other words Kenya is being used to influence the presidential election in the United States. Raila Odinga and Barack Obama are both Luo. Here are some lines from the story:

Right-wing activists in the United States are attempting to use Senator Barack Obama's

Kenyan links to discredit him. The activists, most of them Christians, claim that Mr Obama is a relative of Prime Minister Raila Odinga, whom they describe as a "socialist who plans to introduce Sharia Law in Kenya." Right-wing activists disparate to derail his White House bid peddle falsehoods about him and Raila. Mr Davis and his wife [missionaries who are promoting these claims], noting Mr Odinga's contention that the December 27 presidential voting was rigged, said in their message, "As we watch Obama rise in the US we are sure that whatever happens, he will use the same tactic, crying rigged election if he doesn't win and possibly cause a race war in America."

I guess this is enough "juice" to swallow in one day.

## **Report #51**

### **June 1, 2008**

I hope you are interested in finding out what happened to the listening sessions that the Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT) counselors have been doing for the last two weeks in the local receiving communities. To remind you, for seven week days the FCPT counselors went to seven different locations (local communities) with the Nandi (a Kalinjin group) on the Uasin Gishu (Rift Valley province) side of the main road. Then we were going to do one listening session and an ecumenical service the next day on the Lugari side of the main road.

How did these go? The visits varied. One was cancelled because the President was visiting Eldoret and it was inappropriate to have a meeting with him so close by. Another one succeeded past our expectations. Mili Nne (Four Miles--meaning it is four miles from Eldoret) was extremely successful. The people were willing to receive the internally displaced people (IDP) who were at the Eldoret showground. The team there escorted the local District Officer and Chief to the IDP camp to talk to the people there about returning--this is the first time since January that these officials had gone to the IDP camp in Eldoret to visit the IDP's who came from their community.

At the two worst--Kipkarren River and Sugoi--, the people said that if the Kikuyu returned they would kill them. The Sugoi people had an interesting story. Sugoi is the home town of William Ruto, the leader of the Kalinjins in Parliament, and one of the main members of the ODM opposition. His house was about half a mile from where the meeting was held. One older woman got up and said that on December 30 when the violence escalated, two of her sons armed themselves to go out and hunt the local Kikuyu (kill them?). She barred the door and crying told them not to do this. She called some elders and together they decided to rescue and hide the 15 Kikuyu in their community. This they did for three nights moving them from place to place. Then they became afraid that they would be discovered and so they escorted the Kikuyu to the IDP camp at the Turbo police station. They said that they had helped out the Kikuyu, but if they returned, this time they would kill them! My thought: everything is a shade of grey.

Yet in Sugoi and also at another place called Kapsabey, the people asked FCPT to come and hold peace seminars! At Kapsabey the people said that no other church had done

anything like what the Friends were doing, asked them to build a church in the community, and offered two acres of land for the church! The team members said that they would tell the church leaders (Lugari Yearly Meeting) and they would have to come another time to discuss the idea of building a church there.

Even at Kipkarren River, in the end, the people decided to form a committee of ten elders (men), ten women, and ten youth to discuss on these matters. They met without FCPT for the first time last Thursday, but at present no one has a report of what happened.

At a place called Jua Kali ("Hot Sun" for a place where workers manufacture things in small scale enterprises), the people asked for a joint meeting with the IDP's. So this was arranged for the following Thursday. Unfortunately this did not go very well. The local people gave all their complaints to the Kikuyu, but when the Kikuyu spokesman began to respond, the crowd began to leave, interrupted him, and shouted him down. The next day I talked to George Njoroge, the Turbo IDP camp leader who had been the speaker, and he was very upset, indicating that reconciliation and return was a long way off.

The other three listening sessions were in between. In each of them there was a lot of hostile talk. Yet on the other hand, in every case even the most bitter were pleased that someone (Friends Church Peace Teams) had come to listen to them. There were a few negative comments--at one meeting someone (the son of a Quaker) said that the FCPT was bad because we were being sent by the Government to trick the people into receiving the Kikuyus back. At Kipkarren River I understand there was a sign which said, "Peace Team don't come back." In another case we were challenged why we didn't bring any Kikuyu with us.

On the Lugari side of the border (where most people, like the Friends, are Luhya), the meeting was also quite hostile. The listening session was at a place called Mbagara, the most hard hit interior part of Lugari District. In this case I understand 5 Kikuyu were killed by the community and at least 9 youth from the community were killed by the police. The people attacked the Kikuyu and carried off their maize (corn). A few days later some of the Kikuyu returned with the police, pointed out where they suspected their stolen maize to be hidden, and the police then confiscated all the maize--stolen or otherwise--so that now the people in the area are short of food.

The hostility from all of this was clearly expressed in the listening session and most people did not want to welcome the return of the IDP's. This was attended by 13 members of FCPT including Gladys and myself and perhaps 40 leaders of the community including many pastors. Most of the speakers were not the pastors. The most sensible representation was from the youth leader of an organization (I think promoted by Florence Machayo, a leading Quaker politician in Lugari District) called "Youth Forum for Peace and Justice." Among other things, he said, it was the older men unable to carry the bags of maize that gave money and alcohol to the youth to steal the maize for them and carry it to their storerooms. Therefore the youth should not be blamed. The ecumenical service the next day was attended by many more people. It really didn't end up being much of a "service,"

but rather another listening session.

Here are some of the kinds of comments heard at various of the listening sessions. Remember you are "listening" and not judging.

1. "Good" Kikuyu will be allowed to return, but the bad ones can't. "We will tell the District Office which are the bad ones who can't return."
2. The Kikuyu can't return because we have their cooking pot and if they return they will ask for it back. Another said that he had taken the door, windows, and iron sheets (roofing) from a Kikuyu house and if they returned, "They will point at my door and want it back."
3. Kikuyu have long tongues and they should cut their tongues to be short. ("Long tongue" means that they talk rudely to others).
4. One quoted a passage from Acts (sorry, but I can't remember the chapter and verse) which indicates that this land is ours and others should not come into our land. There were other examples where participants quoted passages in the Bible to justify their expulsion of the Kikuyu. For example, the Jews were 400 years in Egypt before they left so the Kikuyu have only been around for 40 years before they left.
5. Kikuyu who had title deeds to land would be allowed to return but the "squatters" (those who have no land and therefore have to do petty trading or work as day laborers for others to earn income) would not be allowed back. Note that this contradicts the concept that the Kikuyu are all rich from being good businessmen.
6. I heard one man describe how three of his nephews had been beaten or killed by the Kikuyu in Naivasha and Nakuru. When families are as big as they are in Kenya-- particularly in the days before 1980 when Kenya had one of the highest birth rates in the world--everyone has hundreds of close relatives (siblings, parents, cousins, etc) and thousands of distant relatives (2nd, 3rd, and 4th cousins which in Africa are still all considered "cousins"). Therefore when one person is displaced, beaten, or killed, thousands of relatives know this story and take it personally.
7. Many complained that the Government gave aid to the displaced people but not to the local people who were also affected by the violence.

Yesterday we had a debriefing session at Friends Peace Centre-Lubao. After we covered the material above (and much more), we assessed how we did. Here is what we said:

1. We succeeded because in every case people were willing to talk to us even if they were somewhat cautious at the beginning. We went out to listen and that is what we did.
2. While we had hoped that this would lead to acceptance of the returning community, this was not the goal of the listening session. The fact that in one case the receiving

community was willing to bring back the returnees was an extra success.

3. Even those who were most bitter and said that they would not accept (or would even kill) the Kikuyu if they returned, our listening was not in vain since they were expressing their feelings and this in itself is a step towards healing and reconciliation.

4. As I noted above, the Friends Church and its FCPT was received with gratitude even in the cases that we felt were most negative.

5. The requests for a meeting with the IDP's at Jua Kali, the two communities who requested peace seminars, the committee formed in Kipkarren River, and the escorting of the local government officials in Mili Nne to the IDP's in Eldoret were all resounding successes.

Is the task finished? Obviously not, as it really is only beginning.

## **Report #52**

### **June 5, 2008**

The newspaper gets to Lumakanda town about 9:00 a.m. so at 10:00 a.m. I went to get my daily paper. It was sold out! Why? OBAMA. Everyone wanted to read about his success as the Democratic candidate for US president. In Kenya, as far as I know in all the cultures, descent is through the father. Therefore Kenyans consider Obama a Kenyan regardless of the fact that he has visited Kenya only a few times and hardly knew his father. I heard that in Siaya, where his father came from, there was a big celebration on his victory yesterday.

I was impressed by Obama's last visit to Kenya in 2006. When he was in Kisumu, in front of everyone, he had himself and Michelle tested for HIV/AIDS. When I asked why Kenyan politicians didn't join him, I was told, "They are afraid that they are HIV positive." People in Kenya don't want to be tested because they don't want to know their status—an interesting stance psychologically. So I was impressed.

In the paper today (I had to read it on-line) one columnist noted that the elation over Obama's victory is so great that you would think he was running for president of Kenya or even all of Africa.

## **Report #53**

### **June 13, 2008**

Last Sunday was the day for the Kikuyu from the Turbo IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camp to come to Lumakanda Friends Church. About 60 people came from the camp including 13 pastors of various denominations. With about the equivalent number of local people the church was quite full and the energy level was much higher than usual.

After the service some of the pastors wanted to meet with the people from the church. After the usual "thank-yous," they indicated that they wanted Friends' help in returning to their communities. The Government is planning on disbanding the Turbo camp and returning people to their homes. This may be done by setting up mini-camps in the various communities as the people rebuild their houses. The pastors stated that they didn't want to return with the guns of the police and army, but would prefer that the Friends escort them back without weapons and uniforms. As a pacifist I was very encouraged by this realization and request. Since the Friends Church Peace Team was already planning on doing this, I told them that I would bring it forward in the next meeting (which was scheduled for the next day).

On Monday five members of the Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT), who had been asked by the local District Officer in Mili Nne (near Eldoret) to accompany the returnees back to their homes, went to Eldoret for that purpose. Alas, this did not take place because the Red Cross said that a month's supply of food would be distributed to the IDP's on Wednesday and that they should wait to receive the distribution first and then return to Eldoret on Thursday. We appointed a team to return on Thursday, but I have not heard any report of what happened.

Success leads to new issues. At the church service in Lumakanda Church, one of the IDP pastors announced that five people from the IDP camp had applied to Friends Theological College as students for the next school year and that they would be interviewed in the coming week. Friends Theological College now has course work on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution. We also just did an AVP Training for Facilitators workshop for fifteen students from the College and hope that they will soon be conducting AVP workshops in Friends Churches. But the more difficult issue was the offer of two acres in Sugoi to build a Friends Church. We discussed this at length at the FCPT's counselors training at Lubao on Monday and Tuesday. The Peace Team is supposed to be neutral and if we planted the church in Sugoi, it would look like we were evangelizing instead of doing reconciliation. Note that at Takatifu Gardens, where we have been doing a lot of AVP workshops, the local Catholic priest was bringing 20 people for an AVP workshop but cancelled it instead because he thought that we were trying to convert their people to Quakerism. If people feel this way then the Peace Team would lose its credibility. After much discussion it was determined that Lugari Yearly Meeting (which included the area of Sugoi) would work on the development of this church, while the FCPT would continue with its reconciliation work.

Alas tomorrow Gladys and I will be leaving Lumakanda on our way to the United States. Our first speaking engagement will be in Nairobi where we will speak at Friends International Centre, Ngong Road, about the reconciliation work here in western Kenya. Here is our speaking schedule while in the US:

June 17-Blueberry Hill, Northern Virginia

June 19-Loyola University, Chicago

June 25-Sacramento Friends Meeting/Friends Church joint presentation in the evening

June 26-Santa Rosa Friends House

June 27-Berkeley Friends Church or International House  
June 28-Palo Alto Friends Meeting  
June 29-San Francisco Temple United Methodist Church, session with AVP trainers  
June 30-Grass Valley Friends Meeting  
July 1-Davis Friends Meeting  
July 2-San Francisco Friends Meeting  
July 8-Richmond (VA) Friends Meeting  
July 9 to 13-Friends United Meeting

If you would like details of any event, please email me.

We will return via Burundi, Rwanda, and North Kivu (Congo) where we will see the AGLI programs and the results of this summer's AGLI workcamps. I'll send you reports from these countries when I get a chance, but I can only send you reports about Kenya if I receive information from Kenya while I am away. In one sense I am sorry that I am leaving since there are likely to be many developments in reconciliation while we are away. We will also continue holding many AVP workshops with youth, including a number in the Lugari area connected with the people returning from the IDP camp, and we will start the first practice Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) workshops with two lead facilitators from Rwanda.

**Report #54**  
**June 18, 2008**

I am in the United States, but I received this update from John Muhanji, Director of African Ministries for Friends United Meeting (FUM). He is based in Kisumu, in western Kenya. I have edited and shortened his report a little, but as usual without changing the content and message.

Peace,  
Dave  
-----

Dear Friends,

After have a very successful mission to Uganda [for Friends United Meeting--FUM], I received a telephone call from the [Turbo] District Commissioner (DC) at mid-night on Sunday asking me to join them get the IDPs from the Eldoret show ground to their homes. The DC told me that he had been to the camp and the IDPs were hostile to him because he has not been with them at all. The IDPs told the DC the only people they know who have been very helpful in ensuring that they resettle to their homes are the District Officer (DO) and the Friends Church. He was given my number by the DO and the IDPs would like to meet me from the Friends church and the DO on Monday morning. I was very tired and I needed a rest after a long week full of activities. I tried to give excuses not to go or sent someone else, but the DC said, "You have done a lot for these people and I believe you are the only person who could make this day a success. I



accepted reluctantly but at the same time I asked God to give me energy and wisdom on how to deal with the situation.

I left very early in the morning on Monday 16th for Eldoret show grounds. I met the DO and DC waiting for me. We went to the camp and met with the people and when I talked and prayed for them, they willingly went and started pulling down their tents ready to leave to their new station closer to their houses which had been destroyed. Lorries (trucks) were provided which carried them to the place. As they were pulling down their tents, we went to see the place where they were relocating. We found that there were no rest rooms and water nearby for the people as they move there. At this time the DC had left us with the DO. We called the DC and asked him to provide funds for the toilets and water, but he never came to us again. Time was moving and nothing was taking place, I felt frustrated and I called Eden [Eden Grace from FUM's Kisumu office] and asked her to send me Kshs.40,000 [\$667] to use for the process. Eden responded very fast, and I started rolling things in action. The toilets were put in place, water was also connected after buying pipes that pulled water which was 200 meters from the location. I also provided food to those people who worked on it. I also enable the connection of electricity from a nearby hospital which provided light for security. I got a wire that was also 200 metres and its accessories. It was as if I had calculated the exact amount that was required for the work available. I left the camp at 8.45 PM when the camp was having water, rest rooms and lights in a very short time. The IDPs and the DO felt encouraged and supported and the people felt that indeed the Friends Church is a true peace church that cares for the people. They commented that we have been very helpful in the process and they have seen that we are the only church that has not taken the process for granted but as a duty. They saw integrity in us and wished this church could stay with them all the time. I also used the same money to buy fuel for a government vehicle the DO was using when it ran out of fuel and were using it to carry logs and other things. They could not get the money from the DC to do anything. I felt encouraged and energised to see that we could offer a new life of hope to people who have been feeling hopeless.

I slept in Eldoret unexpected because I came knowing that I will be going back to Kisumu. The following day we went to the show ground to see those IDPs from the same place who had remained. As I arrived in the camp and went round the makeshift tents, all those who had remained came out and started pulling down their tents in readiness to join their counterparts who had left the previous day. Since everything was already in place I blessed them and asked them to move in peace to the new place. At this time I was needed for another meeting in Kisumu at 2.00pm. I left Eldoret at 11.45am and I was in Kisumu for the other meeting.

The program which the Friends Church Peace team has been doing has caused a big impact to both the communities of the Kalenjin and Kikuyus. These communities had no clue before that the Friends Church had such values in peace and reconciliation. The DO continued to say, If it was not the Friends Church which I have hidden in their wings, I would not have penetrated or made any progress in resettlement of the IDPs."

Friends, your prayers and support has been seen and heard and we encourage that we continue with the same spirit of support. There is a lot of responsibilities remaining to ensure that we continue with bonding relationship activities between the communities. The resettlement continues this week and next week.

God bless you friends.

--

John Muhanji

## **Report #55** **June 21, 2008**

Here is the next report from John Muhanji, the Director of Friends United Meetings' African Ministries. A few days ago I sent you a report of the successful return at Mili Nne. Here is a report of another successful return at Jua Kali and then a significant failure at Sugoi. I'll keep you posted on developments as they occur. Again I have edited this slightly so that you can understand the story better.

Peace,  
Dave

-----

Dear Friends,

After a very successful resettlement of IDPs on Monday and Tuesday of 16th and 17th, there was a more than successful resettlement of IDPs at Jua Kali in an area which was very bad when we visited them. The District Commission (DC) and Joshua Lilande called me and told me how the plan they had put in place was unnecessary when the receiving community took them to their houses rather than camping in their neighborhood waiting to rebuild their burnt houses. There was reconciliation spirit in the air as their neighbors received them with joy.

When the Friends Church Peace Team (FCPT) visited the Jua Kali receiving community to listen to them, they were very hostile to them and never wanted to see the Kikuyus back in the area at all. But as they continued to listen to the team they soften although they remain adamant about not receiving them, but when we visited the area with the District Office (DO) they were willing to accept them back. Therefore, on Thursday when Lilande and the DO took the internally displaced people (IDPs) to their place, the community accepted them with jubilation. This was the opposite of what we experienced earlier when we were listening to them. The good news is that the gospel of peace and reconciliation is in the air propagated by the Friends Church.

But hell broke loose when they took the other IDPs to Sugoi from Eldoret Show Ground. Sugoi had been one of the most hostile communities when the FCPT held a listening session with them. The DO called me today and wished that I had been with him. They were almost killed by the community people who never wanted to see the returning

community coming back. They asked me if I was available to accompany him but I was not available. He told me the community need the Friends Church Peace Team to be back in the area. The DO had to re-route the returnees to Turbo camp where other IDPs are. But on reaching there, the IDPs at Turbo did not want to accommodate their friends at all. The DO had to return them back to the Eldoret Show Ground for safety. The DO was very frustrated to the point that the DC ran away and never came closer to help the DO. He has organized a meeting with elders and opinion leaders in the area to talk with the them and hear what they need before the IDPs can return to their farms. The community is asking the government to release the youth who were arrested during the violence and especially those who were demonstrating against the rigged election. He is asking me and the Peace Team to be available with him to listen and encourage them to accept their brothers who are innocent return back. Please I am appealing for prayers, because the DO sounded scared because he said they petrol bombed them but nobody was hurt. The community is very hostile to the Kikuyus coming back. As we celebrate the successes, there are also challenges in the whole process.

I am encouraged by the following. So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time. There are many things that work to keep us from completing our life-missions. Over the years, I've debated whether the worst enemy is procrastination or discouragement. If Satan can't get us to put off our life missions, then he'll try to get us to quit altogether. The apostle Paul teaches that we need to resist discouragement: "So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up ." (Galatians 6:9). I believe God has a purpose for our ministry here in Kenya.

I am still thinking whether to join the DO tomorrow Saturday with the elders or to send others. Please pray with me.

## **Report #56**

### **June 25, 2008**

Here are excerpts from the report I received from Zawadi Nikuze concerning the Healing and Rebuilding Our Community (HROC) program in North Kivu. If you would like the complete 7 page reports, please email me and I'll send it to you.

To refresh your memory, North Kivu, a province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) west of Rwanda, is engulfed in continuing fighting with hundreds of thousands displaced people. The issue is very complex with at least five major groups--a Tutsi warlord army, Hutu who participated in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the local Congolese groups called the Mai-Mai, the national Congolese army (mostly from western Congo so the soldiers do not speak Swahili and can't communicate with the local people), and MONUC, the United Nations peacekeeping force (which is not "neutral" in North Kivu as they support the government troops).

Most of the workshops reported here were done in the internally displaced camps near Goma, the capital city of North Kivu.

I particularly like this testimony since if everyone in Africa followed this, there would be a much politer society--in fact we could do this all over the world and it would be a better place.

"Most of the time we are ignorant. We live a violent life without knowing. I have realized how much I have been violent to my wife and children. Thanking a child after he has brought you something is very important. Thanking a wife after she has given you food is very important. I used to say that it's her duty to give me food therefore there was no need to thank her. I have decided to change--the little things I used to consider of no use are very important!"

Ethnic favoritism is also a major problem in this region and here are two testimonies where people who have discriminated against others vow to change:

"Before coming to this seminar, my heart was heavy and broken. I have been a bitter person because of all what has happened to us since 1997. I had lot of things, a nice house but now I live in a tent and sleep on the ground. I am the vice president of women of the camp. Whenever we distribute things, I normally favor people of my tribe. These teachings have touched and from today I will never favor people of my tribe when distributing things."

"I am the "Chief of the block" here in the camp and I am a "Mtembo" [one of the North Kivu ethnic groups]. To be honest I don't treat people from other ethnic groups fairly. Whenever I am distributing food, I give them less than what they are supposed to get. I have been a bitter man, planting seed of hatred. After these three days, I have decided to change and be a leader for all ethnic groups in the camp. When distributing food, I'll give what is supposed to be given"

In so many of the testimonies, major changes in very concrete ways are so evident (after only a three day workshop!!!).

"I take care of two orphans. One of them has been behaving in a difficult manner and it was too much for me so I sent her away. Now, I have understood that she is traumatized as she lost her family in the war. I will go and get her back and help her as I can."

"I am a widow. My husband and my first born daughter were killed by Tutsi and since then I have been planting a seed of hatred in my children, telling them that Tutsis are our enemies. After hearing these teachings, I have decided to go and work on my children. Please pray for me too. I thank you for these good teachings."

"My father was killed before my eyes and some of those who killed him are here in the camp. I see them. I have been a bitter man, full of hatred and planning a revenge. When we were asked to write what has been burdening us and later on burnt, I tried to imagine that it's the beginning of a new life. I have begun a journey I don't care how long it will

take but I know that these teachings have changed me! My concern is one, there are so many people who need these teachings, how will they benefit?"

"When RIZIKI got married she was happy that she got a Christian husband. Two weeks later, she discovered that her husband was hiding behind the house each evening to smoke and drink. She lived her dreams of a happy marriage two weeks only. What followed later were beatings every now and then. She was the breadwinner of the family but at the end of the day she received beatings and threats of being killed. Her children were not attending school for she could not afford the fees. She had even changed her name FURAHA [meaning "Happy"] to MATESO, she didn't find that name suiting her. When she attended HROC workshop and she was asked to write down what burdens her the most, she said that she doesn't know what to write for her life is full of problems and she can't get enough paper to write for she has a lot--instead she started crying. The teachings helped her a lot and she's now living a new life, trying to overcome and giving hope to her children."

"I have been touched by these teachings. I am living here in an IDP camp after fleeing for my life. I was doing well. I was farming and producing for the market but now I have to survive waiting for food from somewhere. I always think of how to revenge and I hate anyone who is not from my ethnic group. After the session of a tree of mistrust I realized that my thoughts of revenge and hate contribute to it. If I want a better DRC I have to contribute by changing and being part of a trust tree and loving others. Now I have decided to change in order to plant a tree of trust."

But the workshops sometimes had their difficulties:

"As the training was going on, a man in uniform came and begun to attack the facilitators asking for money. The president of the camp called the police and the man was put in."

"The selection of participants was not balanced. One ethnic group had more than 15 people!"

"Participants didn't come as they were invited. They preferred to go for Roger West (International Evangelist, Reinrard BONNKE's son) seminar in the morning for they were given sitting allowance. [Note: it is a common practice in this part of Africa for non-profit organizations and churches to pay people--give them a sitting allowance--to attend a seminar. AGLI's programs do not do this and so sometimes people refuse to come to the AVP or HROC workshops because they are not being "paid." Frankly, if they don't come for this reason, I am glad that they are not there.]

"Only one woman in the workshop."