



KINONDO PEACE BUILDING FORUM
HELD IN MSAMBWENI SUB- COUNTY

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prepared by

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KINONDO PEACE BUILDING FORUM HELD IN MSAMBWENI SUB COUNTY

Introduction

Kinondo Peace forum was held on 18th August, 2017 in Kinondo Social Hall, Msambweni Sub-County in Kwale County. The event was organised by Kinondo Action Plan-KAP in Partnership with Peace Tree Network-PTN. The forum was the culmination of other training activities that had taken place in the county within the year. The objective of the forum was to empower the participants with peace building skills so that they can mitigate conflicts in the families and in the society. It also aimed at bringing peace stakeholders together in order to discuss peace issues and come up with the way forward.

The one day event brought together 30 participants from different villages. It began with a word of prayer from one of the participant after which the program for the day was given.

The forum

The participant brought out some of the burning issues that were compromising peace in Kinondo Ward. Among the discussed issues was failure to attend meetings like barazas because people feel they are wasting time since no imbursement is given after the meeting. To curve this, the Nyumba Kumi leaders and other village elders said they have come up with a strategy of using the meetings held by CBOs, NGOs and other agencies to pass the required information.



Participants of Kinondo peace forum

They further noted that sometimes the residents know who is causing trouble in the community but they do not report them to the authorities. The participants saw the need to break the silence and denounce those who try to cause problems. A narrative was given of how people lived before the elections and what happened along the campaigning period. It was said that before people lived in peace and unity but now they only experience unity and no peace. This is because there is a conflict between the supporters of the MCA who won the election but was not given the certificate and the one who lost but was awarded the certificate by IEBC.

During the session it came out clearly that peace was a priority and therefore there is need to have meetings at village level to the county level. The participants called for the involvement of all types of stakeholder who can promote peace at this critical time when tensions are building up as results of the election results.

One of the participants noted that religion was paramount in peace building. He stressed that without religion there is no peace as religion and peace were two items given by God the creator. He gave the example that Islam is a source of peace and called on all people to practice good religious values which will guide them in peace building.

Apart from religion those present noted that women have a big role to play in peace building. Women can visit other villages and talk about peace even when there are tensions. They can approach each other easily and share message of peace or views that promote peace. Their sharing can promote peace and unity among the community members. People were encouraged to pray for peace and human rights activists were urged to involve all people in peace building.

Those who were present said that sometime when something negative happens people tend to think that it happens because they are being discriminated against. They gave the example of the street lights which had block out for some time and people in kinondo associated it with discrimination.



Women at kinondo during the peace forum

The transfer of open market from Kiuzini to Nyumba Bovu was another issue for discussion. People felt that everything has been transferred from the oldest region to Nyumba Bovu. This includes the chief's office, the ward Administrator's office, health Centre and even the school. This leaves nothing important to Kiuzini residents. The inhabitants felt it was necessary for the market place to remain in the place where it is so that it can facilitate mixing of people from other areas. The removal of the market would mean that the people in Kiuzini are the only ones who will be going to Nyumba Bovu but people from Nyumba Bovu would never visit their place.

Politics was seen as the cause of internal tension in Kinondo. Those who were present said that the MCA who won the elections was denied a chance to lead his people by IEBC which issued the winning certificate to the wrong candidate. The IEBC tried to recall the certificate but the person who had it went into hiding. They added that the people who supported the person who is thought to have won are not satisfied that their candidate was denied the chance to be a leader. They noted that it was



Mr. Barroh in the office of Ward Administrator

necessary for the chief to use the previous methodology to calm the situation. It was explained that previously the chief had moved from one village to another trying to identify the cause of conflict and those causing it. He would talk to the people in their specific village and write down the perpetrators who he would ask to come to his office later on. This strategy worked well and troubled regions were brought to calm. Ward Administrator Ms Mwanakombo told people not to be worried about elections and continue to live in peace as they carry out their daily activities and wait for the court to determine the petition which is already placed before it. "Do not be disturbed about who won the MCA elections, the petition was taken to court and it will rule over who won and who lost. Remember Kinondo is not only the area that has electoral petitions in court. There many other places in this country where election petition are in court and are awaiting judgment, Said Ms. Mwanakombo."

She further encouraged people to promote peace in whatever they do or say as it is a vital element to the people of Kinondo. She further said that her office together with the one of the chief are working closely to see to it that peace prevails every. The elders were urged to unite the youths who act according to the directives given by the elders. Concern was expressed over the hate speech. They noted that some people use inappropriate words while addressing others which are not good. They said that sometime those causing trouble in the society are known but no one



Mohamoud Barroh gives input on peace building

wants to bring them out or report them. There was a call for everyone to be responsible peace builder and denounce all who try to cause disturbances in the society. The fact that people are aligned to different political parties is a cause of concern. The participants said that even if a person is attacked and it happens that he or she supports a different political party he cannot be helped by others who are affiliates of a different political party. An elder who identified himself as Zima Moto said that politics should be peaceful as he himself did campaign for both Jubilee and NASA parties. He explained that he did not mind the political party but he just wanted to pass his message to all members of these parties. He however noted that elders should be involved not only in peace building but also in the administration of the county as they have knowledge on how the county should be run.

On the same line of politics Ms. Sofia Gali explained to those present how forgiveness is important when it comes to political assailants. She narrated how people destroyed her shelter where she carries out her business. As if not satisfied with what they had done the same people proceeded to her house, broke the door and splash a source pan of soup on the whole carpet. This caused more suffering and loss to her as she had not only to remove the destroyed carpet but also clean the house. According to Ms. Gali she suffered all these tragedies just because she was affiliate of a different political party.

Those present said religious leaders should be fore front of peace building as they are able to bring people from different realities together. At the beginning of this event it was stated that religion and peace are inseparable as they were given to humankind by the creator.

The participants said apart from politics there other issues that cause tension in the community. They said football was a big dividing element among the kinondo people. Kinondo has different football groups from different villages and so supporters of one group do not like the other. This goes to the extent of not attending an event when it is held by one of the groups that are deemed to be competitor. It came out that some elders do not advise the youth accordingly but emphasize on the differences that are there as far as these football groups are concerned. In regard to this, it was seen appropriate to use the matches to unite people rather than create division.

Another issue that the participants strongly raised was the lack of knowing the extended family members. They explained that people keep conflicting with each other because they do not know their family trees. They urged parents to organize meetings where relatives can meet and know

each other. They argued that this get-together will foster peace building in the community as it will provide a platform of meeting and understanding the links that joins them.

People living with disability expressed their concern of isolation saying that they are never involved in peace building meeting or programs. They argued that their presence in such meetings were vital as they can take the information to others who are not able to participate.



Participant shares ideas during the forum

Those who were present further said it is hard to speak about peace without justice. They noted that it is important to speak about justice and then peace. In addition to this the participants said that there can never be peace without justice as these two elements go hand in hand.

Causes of conflict

- Politics which divides people according to the political party that they support especially when people are not tolerant to each other
- Foreigners- Their dominance was mentioned but it was rejected not only by other participants but also by the chief who explained that the term is not appropriate as some of those who are referred to as foreigners have lived in the region more than half of their lives. He added that sometime people from just the cross road village who buys land in the neighboring village are called foreigners and this is not the true meaning of word foreigner. He urged people to accept those who come to live among them because most of the time they came from extended families through marriage or even business.
- Personal differences- some people bring their disagreements with colleagues or neighbors in the meetings. The chief advised people not to take personal issues to the whole community but to amicably settle them.



Mwalimu Mwaziphere giving guidance to participants

Clarifying the above point, Mr. Mahmoud Barroh the coordinator of Kinondo Action Plan-KAP said that they have had numerous meetings and workshops on how to handle conflict and healing of the affected victims. He encouraged people to move forward and not to keep going back to issues that were settled many years back.

Challenges

- When meetings are called for to discuss issues affecting the community, the first thing that is asked is whether there is any sitting allowance. Once there is none, people do not attend it
- Although the participants were taken from every village, some people wanted to participate in the forum by force
- Other people complained that some villages had fewer representation in the forum yet they were willing participate but they were left out
- The Ward Administrator and Mr. Barroh had to explain to the anxious crowd why only representatives from different villages were invited to the forum and not everybody.



Ward Admin& Ass. Chief participating in the forum

Way forward.

The last part of the afternoon was more taken by the way forward discussion. The participants came up with various points regarding the way forward.

1. Create a peace building commission which comprises of all people including women, youth and people living with disability. This should be done at both levels of county and national government.
2. Create means of knowing each other such as family get-together
3. Organize football tournaments where various groups from different villages can participate as a way of bringing them together and thereby promoting peace
4. Be ambassadors of peace
5. Call those MCAs who were elected this year and ask them to sign a peace agreement
6. Have an inclusive leadership
7. The people of Kinondo Ward have come up with a manifesto which can act as a guide on how people should behave for instance if one causes conflict in the community the manifesto will provide directives on how to deal with him
8. Have a peace banner signed by people of Kinondo Ward
9. The perpetrator of conflict to be brought before the elders
10. Every leader to put a signature on the manifesto that the people of Kinondo Ward will come up with
11. Have various ways of solving conflict
12. Give leaders time to speak about peace in various meetings such as barazas and other gatherings held by CBOs and NGOs
13. Have an inter-religious prayers day to pray for the country
14. Other peace forums should be held in different villages so as to get to the grass root people

15. The Chief should go from one villages to another addressing conflict issue

Conclusion

The forum was a success as all the participants showed up and actively participated in the discussion. The participants appreciated the presence of KAP and Peace Tree Network, the two organisations that partnered to hold the forum. They requested Peace Tree Network to continue partnering in other events will be organised in future.

APPENDIX: Photos from Kinondo Peace Forum



