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Strategies Used by State and Non-State Actors in Promoting Social Cohesion and Integration in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract:

The tragic events of December 2007 post-election violence in Kenya put to test the nature and extent of social cohesion in the country. Uasin Gishu County was one of the epicentres of the violence. The general desire of any nation is to have a socially cohesive society. However, the resurgence of ethnic violence in Kenya, despite the state and non-state strategies put in place over the years, is a pointer to social disorganization. This lack of cohesion is occasioned by government complacency and poor reinforcement of social cohesion policies. Interestingly, this phenomenon is understudied and the imperceptibility of social cohesion policy has not been adequately explained. This article presents findings from a study conducted in Uasin Gishu County in 2016. The study used descriptive survey and evaluation research designs. The study population comprised 384 household heads, 16 women leaders, 16 youth leaders, 16 chiefs, 4 sub-county administrators, 20 NGOs, 161 primary school heads, 83 secondary school heads and 28 participants in four FGDs. They were obtained through proportionate stratified, purposive, census and snowball sampling methods. Data collection was done through questionnaires, focus group discussion and observation checklists. The data were analysed using SPSS computer programme version 19 and the findings of quantitative data were presented using frequencies, tables, percentages, pie-charts, and standard mean deviations. The qualitative data were provided through narratives. The study established that 264(68%) of the household heads in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood had low trust in their neighbours and held strong ethnic identity. These respondents also said the strategies used by state and non-state actors to promote social cohesion were ineffective in addressing the root causes of ethnicity-based conflicts. This particular finding was attested to by four Sub-County Administrators in Uasin Gishu County, with a mean 4.2500. Moreover, 84% of the respondents said the policies in place had failed to address ethnic self-segregation, stereotyping, neighbourhood grievances, poor citizen participation in county development processes, non-state actors. Nineteen (93%) of the NGOs also said the strategies had failed to promote inclusivity and equitable address of basic requirements for social cohesion. Furthermore, both the private and public primary and secondary schools were reportedly limited by catchment area, government policy of categorization. Specifically, the government policy grouping schools into national, extra-county, county and ward schools limit the role of schools as national socialization institutions. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the government should revamp the National Cohesion and Integration Commission to effectively respond to current social cohesion challenges. It should also ensure that the main thrust of government social cohesion policy is to embed its tenets into other development policies.

Keywords: Diverse society, Social Cohesion, Ethno-Centrism, policy imperceptibility

1. Introduction

Social cohesion in Kenya has been a deferred dream for years. In the midst of deep tribal affiliations, the nation has suffered from weak, if any, social cohesion policy strategies that have failed to eliminate ethnic conflicts which erupt during electioneering period. Following the 2007 post-election violence, social cohesion became a critical agenda for Kenya. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission was established to address the causes of ethnic discrimination and divisions, perceptions of discrimination, unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, negative ethnicity among other social issues. Miller (1995) argues that ethnic diversity is problematic only when government fails to implement policies that nurture a common sense of national identity. Similarly, Ritzan and Woolcock (2006) posit that social cohesion is extremely vital to political reforms. They contend that inclusiveness of all of the country's institutions and communities is one of the building blocks of social cohesion. However, the resurgence of ethnic violence in Kenya's diverse society is indicative of the fact that social cohesion policies are not as effective as expected. How then can Kenyans build a society in which all can live together?

The answer to the above question can be found in Weber (1948) who says that the state has the monopoly over the legitimate use of force within its territory. In other words, government has the primary duty to bring about peace and harmony among its citizens. The views of Miller (1995) and Weber (1948) suggest that the government is primarily obligated to build a cohesive society. In situation where social cohesion policy is imperceptible and ineffective, then the government is seen to be complacent; not motivated to invest enough resources for policy implementation.

The social and economic conditions in Kenya are characterized by severely unequal resource distribution, extreme poverty levels in some regions, ethnic divisions and exclusion. For most young people in Kenya, upward social mobility is extremely difficult to achieve. These situations stifle attempts to achieve social cohesion in the country. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2013), a cohesive society is one that works towards the well-being of all its members/citizens, minimizing disparities and avoiding marginalization. Such a society strives to foster cohesion by building networks of relationships, trust and identity between different groups, fighting discrimination, exclusion and excessive inequalities, and enabling upward social mobility (OECD, 2013).

As Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) continues to launch a frontal assault on hate speech mongers, especially during the electioneering period, the political elite are busy building their political rhetoric around ethno-centrism. They consolidate their ethnic base as blocks for bargaining for power. They use these blocks to build coalitions with other ethnic groups to form political parties that have a national outlook on the surface, but is deeply ethnocentric in the middle. This explains why such political coalitions are not ideologically different from one another. They are merely driven by the political elites' personal or tribal interests. As such, the longevity of such coalitions depends on the sustained interests of the elites over the five years' electoral cycle. In most cases, these coalitions are short-lived. They cannot be relied upon to build sustainable partnerships among Kenya's ethnic groups so as to attain social cohesion. The Kenya government often intervenes or reacts to situations on matters affecting its people in different ways, depending on its strategic interest and capacity. This partly explains why the government has become complacent and its thrust in social cohesion policy has been lost in the thick of things.

1.1. Social Cohesion

There is no universally agreed definition of social cohesion. The basic understanding is that it is about shared values, togetherness, a common identity, inclusivity, reduction of disparities and peaceful co-existence. Social cohesion policy is transversal; it is like a gyroscope, a wheel on which other policies spin. According to World Bank (2012), social cohesion describes the nature and quality of relationships among people and groups in society. The constituency of social cohesion is complex. However, at its essence social cohesion implies a convergence of groups in society that provides a framework within which the said groups can, at a minimum, co-exist peacefully. In this way, social cohesion offers a measure of predictability of interactions among people and groups, which in turn provides incentives for collective action.

Singapore provides a good example of a nation that has been able to achieve some good measure of social cohesion in the recent past. This small island state with a population of over five million people is an economic power-house in South Asia. One reason for this is its social cohesion policy which is grounded on multi-racial and multi-religious harmony. The policy was adapted immediately after independence in 1965. Since then, Singapore has not experienced any serious ethnic conflicts. Estonia, a country in Eastern Europe, is another good example of successful management of ethnic relations. Its strategy of integration and social cohesion shaped its culturally diverse society to build a strong Estonian identity, common values, harmonized regional development, accessibility of education by all, encouraging the learning of the official language and the consistent implementation of the policy (Integration Estonia 2020).

Kenya is multi-ethnic society with different languages, cultures, and religions. A country with diverse ethnic communities is in fact a strong nation, not a weak one. Unfortunately, Kenya is divided along the lines of race, tribe and religion, which have been the leading causes of civil strife in the country (Ghai & Ghai, 2013). The country is saddled with tribalism and corruption. Tribalism or negative ethnicity inflames ethnic violence which continues to destabilize communities, threaten national security and disrupt government development programmes.

The former retired Chief Justice of Kenya, Willy Mutunga, writing on "National News" in *The Standard* newspaper of August 22, 2016, has said that Kenyans are to blame for rampant ethnicity, corruption and poverty. He posits that as long as Kenyans continue to elect leaders on the basis of their tribe, they should not complain that the country is not progressing. To Mutunga (2016), for as long as Kenya is divided through the politics of race, religion and tribes, it will never progress socially, economically or politically.

1.2. Nature and Extent of Social Cohesion in Kenya

The nature and extent of social cohesion in Kenya is reflected in the socio-political conditions of conflict, economic disparities, negative ethnicity, ethnicized political parties and exclusion. Political participation is clearly a tribal affair coined and perpetuated by the political elite to propel them to political power. This practice has disoriented many communities from having common vision and sense of belonging to larger diverse and united community of Kenya. As such, social cohesion in Kenya is a mirage.

In Britain after the violence sparked off by the Bradford Riots which began on 7th July 2001, Social Cohesion became a very important matter in public policy. Every effort was made to ensure there was harmony between different ethnic/racial communities in the city, namely the Asian and the majority White communities. Social cohesion programmes were established by the cities and the racial relationships have improved since then (Finney & Simpson, 2009). From this example, the role of the state is critical in provision of framework on which people and groups can co-exist peacefully. The state guarantees access to basic services to all by observing fairness and equity.

The post-colonial governments in Kenya have retained and multiplied district/ethnic boundaries that were instituted by the colonial governments. These boundaries have made it difficult, if not impossible, for Kenyans together in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society. Ethnic enclaves, created by colonial boundary-making and accepted by post-colonial African elites, are hindering the evolution of a democratic framework within which a culture of peace could grow (Ogot, 2012). The same ethnic enclaves are mushrooming in Kenya's urban centres, towns and cities. They point to an ineffective policy strategy that is adequate in dealing with the barriers of social cohesion. The cyclic flare-up of ethnic conflict in electioneering periods is clear manifestation of poor state of social cohesion in the country.

1.3. Social Cohesion and Ethnic Conflict

According to Cantle (2007), social cohesion is concerned with common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; it ensures that the diversity of people's socio-cultural backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued, that those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and that strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods. Nnoli (1989) believes that ethnicity exists in a polity in which there is a variety of competing ethnic groups and interests. Ethnic pluralism is not a sufficient condition for ethnicity to manifest itself; there must be mobilization and politicization of ethnic identities. Second, ethnicity has exclusiveness as an important characteristic; it is built on the basis of excluding those who do not share the same identity with 'us'. Third, ethnicity manifests itself in situations of competition for resources, which are scarce relative to interests around them. Finally, ethnicity is about consciousness of belonging to a group that has a common ancestry, culture, language and territory. This consciousness builds an identity that distinguishes groups from one another. Ethnicity, thus is about 'we versus 'them'. One is born into this identity and is classified by others on the basis of this identity. This identity is always dormant until groups or individuals begin to compete over state resources and power.

Oyugi (1993) argues that to speak of ethnicity is to speak of inter-ethnic interactive situations characterized by suspicion, competition, and rivalry and often conflict as well. Ethnic violence is bound to occur when ethnicity is politicized and ethnic identities mobilized collectively to outbid each other in the struggle for political power. Therefore, ethnicity is a problem for public policies when the identities are politicized and reinforced to assist competition against other groups and used to foster inequalities. This situation dichotomizes communities as 'we' and 'them'. It exacerbates exclusion, prejudice and further division among communities on the basis of ethnicity.

Social cohesion is important for sustainability and unity of the state. It is a prerequisite for sound and sustainable development. It is concerned with the active engagement of diverse ethnic groups in a truthful and transparent manner. It is also about acceptance of individual ethnic cultural differences and making the differences strong building blocks for unity in diversity. That every ethnic group, small or large, inclusively navigates the social sphere in a peaceful manner forms part of united strong nation where all are treated equally.

1.4. Social Cohesion Policy in Kenya

According to French Commissariat General du Plan (1997), social cohesion is a set of social processes that help instil in individuals the sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognized as members of the community. Social cohesion policy in Kenya is largely imperceptible. This is evident in its inability to inform or inspire communities to have sense of belonging and social order. The social cohesion policy is imperceptible because people are not sensing or motivated and are not showing feelings or embracing the tenets of social cohesion. The policy should compel or encourage and enhance good neighbourliness. Cohesive societies perceive social cohesion policies as an integral part of their peacefully and productive engagement. The opposite of this is adversarial engagement which breeds disorder and renders social cohesion policy imperceptible.

Asocial cohesion policy may not be perceived in society because the strategies used are ineffective and lack the compelling spirit of coherence, sense of unity and patriotism. Kenyans in the streets or social places call one another by their ethnic identities. It is common to hear one person addressing another thus: *Wewe, Mluhya wasemaje?* (You from the Luhya land, what do you say?) This is a typical way Kenyans address one another in social places. It shows that social cohesion has not been inculcated into the way of life of the Kenyan people. The existing social cohesion policy has not affected the way Kenyans relate in all spheres of life. The likelihood of development of closed communities in Kenya is a matter of significant interest. Communication across ethnic boundaries is often tense, and participation in common social life is mostly limited.

Kanyingi (2013) argues that ethnicity or tribalism is not a problem per se, but rather a symptom of deeper troubles. However, the manner in which political power is generated and distributed is the real issue in the country. Ethnicity is not necessarily negative until it is used negatively by politicians. Kenyan politics is largely ethnic based. Politicians build their popular support by stirring up ethnic loyalties. They promise development and other benefits to "their tribe" in return for their vote. Sometime they incite "their people" against other tribes, with the results we saw in 2008. People may respond to these ethnic appeals because they feel vulnerable; the market economic systems with its competitiveness, even greed, and the state, have fundamentally disrupted the rhythm of people's traditional lives, and exposed them to forces beyond their control and understanding. Negative ethnic feelings then spill over into other spheres of life (Ghai & Ghai, 2013).

1.5. Statement of the Problem

Social cohesion and integration are cherished human values that remain a challenge to achieve at the global level and especially in growing democracies like Kenya. Efforts to achieve social cohesion have been largely thwarted by negative ethnic and racism. These

challenges have been the triggers for ethnic conflicts that have characterized the history of countries like Kenya for years (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). Uasin Gishu County presents a microcosm of the multi-ethnic dynamics that have eroded efforts towards social cohesion and integration in Kenya. The resurgence of ethnic conflict in the region is a pointer to the fact that social cohesion and integration efforts have not been successful. The efforts by state and non-state actors have not managed to stop violence from occurring and widening cracks in the ethnic relationships among the various ethnic groups in Uasin Gishu County. The County has severally suffered devastating ethnic violence during the past multi-party general elections and unprecedented 2007 post-election violence (Red Cross, 2009).

Ethnic tensions and violence have caused instability, uncertainty and re-alignment along tribal lines in the informal settlements in Eldoret town, the headquarters of Uasin Gishu County. Some of the town's suburbs have grown into ethnic enclaves. For example, there is Yamumbi village which is primarily populated by Kikuyu community and Kapteldon village whose main residents comprise the Kalenjin community. These two particular communities currently enjoy peaceful relations, but before 2007 they were largely isolated from one another, with little substantive integration of social and cultural life (Korir, 2009).

2. Materials and Methods

The study adapted descriptive survey and evaluation research designs. It was conducted in Uasin Gishu County in North Rift Kenya. In the census of 2009 Uasin Gishu had a population of 829,049 people (GoK, 2010) comprising of Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kamba, Kisii, Turkana, Mijikenda and Hindus. Eldoret is the Capital Town of Uasin Gishu County. The study population was drawn from four Sub-Counties of Uasin Gishu County which have heterogeneous communities embroiled in ethnic conflicts in the past. The respondents included all primary and secondary school heads, household-heads, sub-county administrators, all NGOs, all women group leaders, all youth group leaders, all and all chiefs.

Sub-Counties	Households Heads	Primary School Heads	Secondary School Heads	Chiefs	Sub-County Heads	Women Group Leaders	Youth Group Leaders	NGO Leader
Soy	42,293	70	24	10	1	10	10	5
Turbo	51,284	109	45	7	1	7	7	5
Kapsaret	29,645	51	41	4	1	4	4	5
Kesses	16,979	91	56	10	1	10	10	5
Total	140,201	321	166	31	4	31	31	20

Table 1: Sub-County Distribution of the Target Population
Sources: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS 2016)

To obtain the sample size, the study used the formula by Fishers *et al.* for population over 10,000 (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The formula was as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where n = the desired sample size (assuming the population will be greater than 10,000), z-the standard normal deviation, set at 1.96 which corresponds to 95% confidence level, p-the proportion in the target population estimate to have a particular characteristic. If there is no reasonable estimate, then will use 50% (the study used 0.50), q-1.0-p and d-the degree of accuracy desired, here set at 0.05 corresponding to the 1.96. In substitution, $n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2} = 384$. The sample size for key informants was 83.

Primary data was collected using observations, interview, questionnaires, and focus group discussion methods. Secondary data comprised published information in various sites of the government, international bodies, technical and trade journals, books, magazines and newspaper, reports and publication of various associations and other sources of published information. Quantitative data which was obtained from questionnaires was coded and analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 19 based on the research objectives. Qualitative data were collected through FGDs, interviews and observation checklist were analysed according to themes in the study and presented in narratives.

3. Results

The study sought to evaluate the strategies used by the Non-Governmental Organizations to ascertain the effectiveness of each project. The aim of the study was to explore how social cohesion and integration could be attained whilst these organizations pursued their goals. Among the NGOs, 15(75%) said they responded to people's needs without conducting baseline survey; which led to poor targeting and low involvement of stakeholders in project identification and implementation. The study further established that 19(93%) of the NGOs implemented their projects but faced challenges of locality. Consequently, they mostly ended up serving only one ethnic group depending on locality or the catchment area.

3.1. Strategies used by Sub-County Administrators to Promote Social Cohesion

While executing programmes, policies and implementation of County projects, the Sub-County Administrator is consequently impacting negatively or positively on the promotion of social cohesion and integration. The study therefore sought to evaluate the strategies used by the County Government administrators to promote social cohesion. The findings were as presented in Table 2 below.

Strategies used by Sub-County Administrators	N	Mean	%age Mean	Std Dev
Provision of equal opportunities and social amenities to all people	4	1.000	200	0.000
The quality of the physical environment accounts for the quality of life for all residents	4	1.500	300	
Neighbourhood grievances around the distribution of material resources are not serious matter	4	3.250	64	0.577
Participation of all people and special those considered disadvantaged is a matter of serious concern in my work	4	1.25	24	1.500
Ethnic self-segregation by section of people in this sub-county is not a matter to worry because after all people meet at the shops, churches, and streets	4	4.250	84	0.500
Stereotyping is a factor in ethnic conflicts and it should be left to have a natural death	4	4.250	84	0.500
Valid N (List-wise)	4			

Table 2: Strategies used by Sub-County Administrators to promote social cohesion and integration
Source: Field Survey (2016)

The findings in Table 2 show that majority, 84% (mean= 4.25), of the Sub-County Administrators were not worried when some members of their sub-county isolated themselves by not participating in programmes, meetings or projects planning processes. Most, 84% (mean=4.25), of the administrators agreed that stereotyping was a factor in ethnic conflicts and its solution isto let it die off on its own. This was another goof of the strategy with the poor mobilization and non-citizen participation in implementation of projects in the sub-counties. The Sub-County Administrators were not worried about stereotyping of communities in their sub-counties as they did not see it as a threat to peace and harmony in the society. Another 64% of Sub-County Administrators noted that neighbourhood grievances, primarily around the distribution of material resources are not serious matter. The administrators rated the statement that participation of all people and special very low. The study further found that strategies used by state actors were ineffective because they did not stop the frequency of occurrence of violence during electioneering periods. The ineffectiveness was further underscored by lack of conflict insensitivity by the Sub-County Administrators. Majority (84%) of them did not address ethnic segregation, stereotyping, neighbourhood grievances, poor citizen participation in county project identification and planning processes (mean = 4.2500).

On the opinion that ethnic self-segregation is not a matter to worry, people meet at the market, shops, church, streets and work place, one Sub-County Administrator had this to say:

I agree with it. For sure people meet everywhere and socialize. It is not my duty to make them meet. Those who did not come for meetings will miss out in distribution of resources. It is citizens `choice to attend meetings (Personal Communication, Sub-County Administrator, 2016).

This statement implies that the strategies used by Sub-County Administrator were not effective in promotion of social cohesion and integration because of negative practices such as ethnic-self segregation by some ethnic groups, stereotyping, and low citizen participation in county development processes. The Sub-County Administrators did not address neighborhood grievances. There were no attempts that ensured ethnic groups come together with others in development projects to avoid each group leading parallel lives. The county government had no social cohesion and integration policy as it was affirmed by the Sub-County Administrators. This explained why they were not keen on issues of social cohesion and integration. A county with the nature of population as multi-ethnic as Uasin Gishu County with the past experience of ethnic conflicts need to have an explicit social cohesion policy.

Anton (2005) argues that social cohesion are the bonds or glue that unite people (bring people together). These bonds of social cohesion are shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunities and are detectable in five dimensions. The dimensions he identifies are belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy. He suggests that social cohesion could best be pursued through enacting the dimensions.

3.2. Strategies of County Development Projects in Promoting Social Cohesion and Integration

The research sought to find the strategies used in the county projects implementation and whether the sub-county administrators knew what the constitution said about citizen participation in matters that affected them. Every 30th of April the county executive prepares and submits budget estimates to the county assembly for discussion and by May the public participation takes place (Government of Kenya, 2010). The county administrators were thus asked if they gave these budget reports to the citizens for discussions and all of them 4(100%) were in agreement bur earlier they had scored very low in ensuring citizen participation in county development processes.

The administrators gave examples of some development projects in their sub-counties as *Inua mama na Kuku*, cattle dips rehabilitation works, improvement of health facilities, roads development, water and sanitation and educational centers. During the research one elderly member of the Kikuyu community complained that the County government had not implemented any development projects in their location. He said he preferred the former county council government in which the councilor did some road projects in their residential area. Under the current County government, the elder said that contracts for development projects were awarded to friends of those in government. Therefore, who do not finish the work and do it badly. The results of this research item were as presented in Table 2 below.

How projects were chosen by the county government	Frequency	Percentage
By residents in Public meeting	4	100.0
By MCA	0	0
Total	4	100
Monitoring of County projects by Sub-County Administrator	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	100.
No	0	0
Total	4	100

*Table 3: Strategies in Identifying Projects
Source: Field Survey (2016)*

The findings on the strategies used in public mobilization were: SMS, chiefs and village elders, civic education forum, posters, notice-boards, and local FM radios. All of the county administrators said that projects were identified by the public and that they monitored these projects themselves most of them involving other members including the public, ward administrators, opinion leaders, technical teams as highlighted in the study (Table 3).

It was noted that the sub-county administrators knew that people were supposed to be involved and were engaged the in the identification of the projects. This was in total contraction of their earlier position when they indicated the opposite refer to Table 3 above. The contraction in responses by the administrators showed they were not keen and serious in their work. During the focus group discussions, the respondents were asked to state whether or not there was a county budget meeting in the villages and the answers were negative. Seventeen people cumulated out of twenty-eight people in all the focus group discussions said that they had not heard any county meeting on budget process done in their villages.

3.3. Strategies used in Choosing Location Development Committee

The research investigated how the location development committee was chosen. What criteria were used and did it help to promote social cohesion and integration. Location is a small administrative unit composed of several villages administered by a local chief for disseminating government policy and development agenda. The results are in presented Table 4 below.

Statements of chiefs' strategies	Response rate	F(%)
Location development committee are chosen from the most spoken members of the dominant community and not based entirely on competence	Yes	9(55)
	No	7(45)
Total		16(100)
The development committee in this location is largely male activity and few women in a ratio of 3 to 1	Yes	12(71)
	No	4(29)
Total		16(100)

*Table 4: Location Developmental Committee
Source: Field Data (2016)*

The findings are majority 9(55%) of the chiefs chose location development committee from the most spoken members of the dominant community. Another 12(71%) of the chiefs said that the development committee has more men than women in a ratio of 3 to 1. In Uasin Gishu County Assembly 2016 had two elected women among 30 County Assembly Members elected and 13 more women were nominated to meet the constitutional threshold (Article 197 (1)) that 'not more than two-thirds of the members of any county assembly or county executive committee shall be of the same gender'. The findings showed that women have not used their numbers and the community has not appreciated them in leadership. The strategies were not smart and did not serve well the public and hence did not promote social cohesion and integration because the chief hand-picked people to leadership position.

During one FGD in Turbo, Tapsagoi village participants affirmed that most chiefs did not involve all people in the village when selecting committees. Another participant explained that chiefs call village elders to a meeting in their offices and the elders are asked to name people in the villages who will help the government in security, peace and development. The elders would of course choose people who they liked and that did not represent the interest of the people.

3.4. Ethnic Representation in Community Development Processes

The research investigated further to understand how the chief facilitate the community representation according to ethnic groups in the location. It was important to understand how these activities affected social cohesion and integration. Kawalerwics and Biggs (2015), exploring 2011 London riots, found that rioters were more likely to come from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods where ethnic fractionalization was high. The most disadvantaged groups were most likely to participate in picketing and demonstrations. The findings were as presented in Table 4 below.

Data	Response rate	
In forming the development committee the criteria followed is every ethnic community was asked to elect their representative	Yes	53(9)
	No	47(7)
Total		100(16)
The minority community in this location is not represented in village or location development committee	Yes	22(3)
	No	78(13)
Total		100(16)

Table 4: Ethnic Representation in Community Development Processes
Source: Field Data (2016)

Findings showed that nine chiefs (53%) agreed with the statement that in forming development committee the criteria followed was that every ethnic was groups were given opportunity to elect their leaders. Another 8(47%) chiefs disagreed with the statement. Majority of the chiefs, 12(78%), disagreed with the statement that the minority communities in this location were not represented in village or location development committee and 4(22%) of chiefs agreed with the statement. In the chief's office in Kabiyemit location, the researcher observed that in the 13 locational development committees, 11 members were from one community and only 2 people came from different ethnic groups. This affirmed that the minorities did not enjoy equal opportunities in the location to serve as a committee member.

3.5. Strategies used by NGOs (Non-State Actors) to Promote Social Cohesion

The study further sought to evaluate the strategies used by non-state actors (NGOs) in the process of promoting social cohesion and integration whilst implementing their own projects. The research was interested to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies adapted by the NGOs in order to understand why frequent ethnic conflicts during the past general elections in Uasin Gishu County.

The NGOs indicated that the project beneficiaries might be from one ethnic group depending on the location of the project. Targeting of project beneficiaries were limited to the people living in that locality. The study discussed with 19(93%) NGOs agreed that they fully supported social cohesion and integration while they implement their projects but faced challenges of locality. The projects though aimed at improving lives of all people may end up with one ethnic group depending on the population in the locality or the catchment area. The head of local NGO based in Eldoret said:

Our strategies of implementation of our programmes are working directly with local women folk, training women grass root leaders and requirement of participation of the beneficiaries. We target women as our first clients. The challenge is that the women groups are majority mono-ethnic because where we operate in an area densely populated by one community. Therefore, we may not be able promote social cohesion across ethnic groups (Personal Communication, Head of NGO, 2016).

With regard to the objective of the organizations, the study found that 6(33%) of the organizations focused on strengthening women voice, another 41% of them aimed at linking one grass root women leaders to another while another 23% were aiming at building sustainable development. Fifteen (75%) of the NGOs would response to people needs not so much through baseline survey but at face value not involving the participants in most cases because they can see the problems.

The discussion about community and groups leadership as seen by NGOs indicated that 5(29%) of them were of the opinion that leadership in the community and groups was male dominated and from one community while another 6(32%) of the respondents were of the idea that leadership was exclusive from one community and male affair, another 7(39%) of NGOs said that leadership was inclusively mixed.

According to the findings from the NGOs proved to be useful partners in promoting social cohesion and integration but faced challenges of locality. It was found that NGOs in Uasin Gishu County work on thematic areas and target rural and urban poor. The vulnerable groups were easily persuaded to engage in anti-society activities that destroyed the social relationship and create fear and mistrust in the neighborhoods. The discussion groups found that 17(89%) of the NGOS were in support of programs that aimed at establishing inclusiveness in the groups that benefit from their projects.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Ethno-centrism is in the heart of Kenyan politics. The political coalitions are based on ethnicity; two or three ethnic groups' elites coalesce and form a political outfit for purpose of attaining state power and control of state resources. From the research findings, it is clear that there are hardly any social cohesion policies in the County. The strategies used by state and non-state actors have been ineffective in promoting social cohesion because of inherent challenges in their context. Therefore, NGOs may not be relied on to promote social cohesion because they limit in targeting and locality or their catchment areas where only one ethnic group is the sole beneficiary. State actors face the challenge of imperceptibility of social cohesion policy. However, the sub-county administrators never bothered to ensure all communities actively participate in the county government development processes.

The government should revamp the National Cohesion and Integration Commission to effectively respond to current social cohesion challenges. It should also ensure that the main thrust of government social cohesion policy is to embed its tenets into other development policies. Because social cohesion is a solution to ethnic conflicts, the government should invest more resources in it. The government should further develop community structural frameworks which can facilitate and provide space for inter-cultural dialogue, peace and security.

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