



Community Profile Research Report



Mathare Valley | Nairobi, Kenya

June 2008

Urban Settlements & Kenya's Country Profile

Slums are not “the problem.” Rather, they are the spatial manifestations of urban poverty, social exclusion, and inappropriate government policies. Indeed, they represent an active, grassroots attempt by the desperately poor to take care of themselves.¹

Background: Urban Poverty and Its Effects on Health in Africa²

Africa is currently undergoing an urban population explosion. Despite slow economic progress since the 1970s, African cities have experienced the fastest population growth rates in world history. As a result, African urban economies have been unable to meet local employment needs, while central governments and city councils have failed to provide adequate basic amenities like affordable housing, water, and sewage disposal. Consequently, a rapidly increasing majority of residents in Africa's large cities now live below the poverty line in overcrowded slums and shantytowns where health conditions and livelihood opportunities are poor. Among the critical problems facing the most vulnerable groups of slum dwellers, (in particular women and children), are:

- exposure to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) via poverty-driven commercial sex;
- domestic violence and child abuse
- unwanted teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortion spurred by high levels of early sexual activity
- poor access to family planning and health services as a result of social, geographic isolation, low income, and illegal residence.

The City of Nairobi exemplifies rapid urbanization amidst deteriorating economic and health conditions that characterizes African cities. With an annual growth rate of seven percent over the past two decades, Nairobi remains one of the fastest growing cities in Africa. Since the 1960s, Nairobi's population has increased from 350,000 in 1962 to over 3 million today. At the same time, more than half of the city's population lives in slum communities that occupy only 5 percent of the residential land area of the city. Despite the above precarious conditions, current predictions indicate that the city will absorb another five million people over the next two decades, mainly migrants from the countryside. This will pose enormous challenges in the areas of health care, employment, and civil order. Additionally, although poverty has always been considered a predominantly rural phenomenon, recent data show that it is increasingly an acute urban problem as well. For instance, while the proportion of people living below the poverty line increased from 48 to 53 percent in rural Kenya between 1992 and 1997, it almost doubled from 26 to 50 percent in Nairobi over the same period. This pattern is probably a reflection of the increase in the proportion of Nairobi residents who live in slums.

¹ Sclar, ED. and Northridge, MD. (2003). Editor's choice: slums, slum dwellers, and health. *American Journal of Public Health* 93(9): 1381.

² This section is excerpted from African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) (2002). *Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi's Informal Settlements*. Nairobi: African Population and Health Research Center.

Urban Settlements Defined³

Urban settlements, or slums, are communities that are characterized by one or more of the following shortcomings: insecurity of land tenure, poor structural housing conditions, deficient access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and severe overcrowding. Slums are built in areas where no development has taken place, owing either to unstable land (hillsides as in the case of many Latin American cities, or flood plains), or proximity to garbage dumps or industrial areas (Korogocho and Viwandani, two Nairobi slums, are examples of these particular conditions). Slums often crowd train tracks or pipelines. Most lack accessible roads and government-run facilities (such as health facilities) and services (such as garbage collection) (Environmental Health Project Strategic Report 12, 2004). Urban slums are often described in terms of their physical appearance, while the dignity and unique strengths of slum communities are sometimes overlooked. As reported by Nwangwu (1998), slum residents can be eager to share information about themselves, their living circumstances and their organizational structures, and are usually not shy about laying out their troubles. Nwangwu commented further, “Remarkably, they [do] not regard themselves as poor” (1998).

Nwangwu’s research suggests that certain slum communities are able to retain their dignity and self-determination by mobilizing resources to build roads, schools, health centers and sanitation blocks, and establishing rules governing their use. Where such capacity is lacking, some programs use community mobilization and capacity-building techniques to create community action groups. While slum communities are typically “at-risk” populations, they should not automatically be treated differently from any other community. Like many populations worldwide, slum dwellers take pride in their cultures and aspire to community ownership. For example, in Korogocho, it is commonly held that while a man may not have the money to own a home or buy food or water, he can gain respect in the community through his family and his children. Thus, it is important to look beyond the physical conditions of the urban slums and to recognize the great social wealth they have to offer.

Kenya⁴

In late 2007, Kenya was in a position most of Africa would envy. Its economy had been humming along, with a growth rate around 7 percent and a billion-dollar-a-year tourism industry. The country was at peace—nothing to sneeze at in a neighborhood that includes war-racked Somalia, Sudan and Congo. The country also had a democratic civil society that appeared to be in the first stages of bloom, a far cry from a near-dictatorship under President Daniel Arap Moi a decade ago. Vigorously covered by a free press, 2,548 candidates were running for Parliament, with genuine issues separating the leading parties, like strong central government versus federalism. Electoral politics in Kenya

³ This section is excerpted from Merkel, S. et al. (2007). *Meeting the Health Needs of the Urban Poor in Informal Settlements: Best Practices and Lessons Learned*. Nairobi: JHPIEGO.

⁴ This section contains an excerpt from <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/kenya/index.html?8qa&scp=1-spot&sq=kenya&st=nyt>. Accessed June 2, 2008.

were not saddled by the deep cynicism that dogs Nigeria, Africa's most populous democracy, or the one-party rule of South Africa, the continent's most developed country.

But that was before the presidential elections of Dec. 27, the charges of vote rigging that greeted the incumbent's surprise victory or the sudden flare of violence along tribal lines that followed. The contest pitted the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki, a man who has a reputation as a courtly gentleman and economics whiz but also as a tribal politician, against Raila Odinga, a rich, flamboyant businessman who rides around in a bright red \$100,000 Hummer and ran as a champion of the poor. Mr. Kibaki centered his campaign on education, having already delivered on his promise of free primary school education for all Kenyans.

Mr. Odinga led in pre-election polls, having tapped a strong current of frustration beneath the country's success. He explicitly challenged the balance of power between the country's ethnic groups. Kenya's 37 million people are split among some 40 ethnic groups. Mr. Odinga, a member of the Luo tribe, has charged that the Kikuyus, whose members include both Mr. Kibaki and the country's founder, Jomo Kenyatta, have long gotten more than its fair share of government benefits.

Early returns suggested that Mr. Odinga's party was heading for a sweep. Then what Western observers called blatant vote rigging handed Mr. Kibaki a narrow victory. Within minutes of the official announcement, the country descended into tribal bloodletting. By New Year's Day the death toll stood at more than 300, including dozens burned as they sought refuge in a church. More than 1,000 Kenyans have been killed and hundreds of thousands driven from their homes in the violence. Much of the fighting, like the voting, has been along ethnic lines. A power sharing agreement between the factions, which came after intense international pressure and mediation by Kofi Annan, the former United Nations secretary general, was signed on February 28, 2008. Both leaders have urged their supporters to respect it.

National Education Context: Background, Achievements, and Challenges⁵

The government of Kenya has continually reiterated its commitment to providing education to all citizens as a basic human right. Kenya affirms itself to the principles contained in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948). International instruments such as the Jomtien Declaration of Education for All (1990); the Dakar Declaration of Education for all (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000) that call for increased access to quality basic education and training have all been domesticated. Policies have been drawn and laws have been passed to enforce the delivery of education. These include the Children's Act of 2001, the Person's with Disabilities Act of 2003 and the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, which is the current official blueprint in the education sector, committing the government to increasing educational opportunities for all Kenyans.

⁵ This section contains excerpts from a draft policy document obtained from the Ministry of Education entitled *Policy for Alternative Provision of Basic Education*, March 2008.

The commitment by the government to access education for all is based on the understanding that a well-trained human resource is a pre-requisite for not only economic growth but also social and individual progress. It is within this context that the government launched Free Primary Education in 2003 (which witnessed the influx of about 1.3 million children into the formal school system) and Free/Affordable Secondary Education in 2008, to ensure that all school-age children enroll in formal schools. However, various constraints such as overcrowded informal urban settlements, nomadic lifestyles and child labour continue to inhibit access to formal schools.

KESSP and Recognition of Non-Formal Schools

Under the Sector Wide Approach to Programme Planning (Swap), the government together with development partners developed the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP). The KESSP is the single largest investment programme undertaken by the government in the education sector. It is situated within the broader national policy framework as detailed in the Economic Recovery Strategy and may be viewed as a sequel to the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on a Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research. In all, KESSP contains twenty-three programmes, one of which is the non-formal schools (NFS)/non-formal education (NFE) has enabled the sub-sector to benefit from services accorded to formal primary schools, key of which is the free primary education funding kitty and provision of teachers to selected NFS/NFE centres.⁶

Official recognition of alternative secondary education is more recent. Though secondary education is excluded from the pooled funding in KESSP, a secondary education strategy (2007) has been developed. The dismal secondary participation is noted even with slight increases in net enrollment being recorded from 14% in 2000 to 19.8% (girls 19.4%) in 2005. A non-responsive curriculum has also been faulted with pushing many out of schooling. The paper therefore calls for different ways of accessing information and knowledge through pursuing both formal and non-formal means.

Out of School Children and Non-Formal Schools

Over the years, there has been consistent effort to address issues of access, equity, quality and relevance of education. At the national level, commissions of education have periodically been set to review educational provision and this has been accompanied by government propelled interventions such as the free primary and secondary education schemes that seek to ease participation in education. Curriculum reviews have been

⁶ The Ministry of Education undertook a pilot funding exercise involving 59 NFS in 2004 in Nairobi to test the viability of public funding for non-formal schools. As a result in 2005, 166 NFS centres were brought on board for the initial disbursement of free primary education grants. The programme failed and in 2006 the exercise stalled. Despite the progress, the bold initiative encountered major hitches owing to the fact that most of the NFS centers operated outside the regulatory frameworks. A good number of schools were unregistered, and of those registered, few were registered within the regulatory control of the ministry of education. The resulting discordance provided a weak regulatory framework and ample opportunity for fraud and misappropriation by unscrupulous entrepreneurs. The management of public funds also demanded standards of reporting and accountability previously unknown to providers. All these factors contributed to the abrupt but justified review of the intervention. (Excerpted from Urban Primary Education Advocacy Initiative, *Falling Short: The Right to Free Primary Education*, 2007).

undertaken to address relevance and ease overload on the learners. Public-private partnerships in education have been encouraged leading to increased individual and community participation in the education sector. Despite all these efforts, a number of children remain unserved or underserved by the education system. The number of out-of-school children and youth in the country, estimated at about 1.6 million children, is substantial and is attested by their presence in large numbers on the streets, in the informal urban settlements, and around rural trade centres during school hours. In fact, a survey conducted by Oxfam-GB in 2003 noted that the country needs an estimated \$137 million to make education for all a reality by 2015 (Urban Primary Education Advocacy Initiative, 2007).

Factors leading to non-enrolment of school age children in formal schools are well-documented. Increasing household poverty, effects of harmful redundant cultural practices, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have been acutely felt in informal urban settlements, Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASALs) and pockets of poverty across the country. Most of the vulnerable children are found in these areas and are invariably identified as child workers, orphans, nomadic children, street children/youth, and adolescent parents. Their adverse socio-cultural and economic situations do not allow them to enroll in formal schools.

History and Evolution of Non-Formal Schools

In an effort to address the educational needs of out of school children and youth, a number of education and training programmes have been initiated. These educational activities became more pronounced in the 1970s. Given that they emerged outside the formal school system, they came to be referred to as non-formal education (NFE) activities. The bulk of NFE activities were run by NGOs, religious organizations, communities, philanthropic agencies and individuals. The NFE programmes comprised two general components: literacy programmes for adults and vocational training for both youths and adults. In 1975 however, an NFE centre, Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP) was conceived with the aim of providing literacy and vocational skills for youth from slums and other low-income families. The Undugu movement drew its impetus from vocational oriented institutions that preceded it such as the Village Polytechnics, the Christian Industrial Training Centres, and the National Youth Service. The UBEP differed significantly from adult literacy and numeracy as well as skill training to non-enrolled children. Many other institutions in this category have since emerged.

The 1980s were characterized by dwindling participation in formal schools which was aggravated by the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) that were designed to be economic recovery programmes. One of the visible outcomes of SAPs in the education sector was less public expenditure on education. As a result, cost sharing in education was introduced. This resulted in many disadvantaged children, especially girls, from rural communities, the urban poor and children with disabilities, not accessing formal education due to prohibitive costs associated with schooling. In an effort to reach the spiraling numbers of non-enrolled children, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with development partners, sought to provide broad policy frameworks to ease the participation of a wide variety of service providers. These providers were registered

under different government departments such as the Office of the President, Attorney General Chambers, Social Services and Ministry of Education, and sought to provide school age children with education, as well as a variety of programmes such as health, nutrition, counseling and protection services.

The various providers were instrumental in initiating low-cost schools most of which were situated in informal urban settlements. Additionally, existing institutions, such as the Dukxi and Madrassa were formalized to offer basic education. However, because these provisions did not satisfy the formal school regulations in terms of acreage, staffing, facilities and followed a quasi official curriculum, they came to be categorized as non-formal schools. Another category of schools that emerged were primarily located in the ASALs and were identified by the flexible modes of delivery. The *Lchekuti* schools in Samburu district for example adapted the formal primary school curriculum to be offered on a part-time basis for four years. Children from such schools are then expected to join formal primary schools in the fifth grades. Other examples include the *Osiligi* schools of Laikipia district and mobile schools in North Eastern Province. These institutions are predominant in ASAL, urban settlements, and pockets of poverty across the country.

In an effort to systematize provisions, the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) developed the NFE curriculum for use by these institutions. This curriculum comprises both academic and technical subjects. It is designed as a six-year course with horizontal and vertical linkages and equivalencies with the formal education curriculum. The current scenario is such that institutions for out of school children offer any of the three curricula, namely, the NFE-KIE curriculum, the official curriculum for formal primary schools or an institution based curriculum.

Despite the poor conditions in which some of these schools and centres operate, they accord many children an opportunity to access formal education and are currently recognized as a viable option of reaching non-enrolled children.

Mathare Valley

Location and Population

Mathare Valley is situated five kilometers northeast of Nairobi's city center. As one of the largest slums in East Africa and the oldest in Nairobi, Mathare is divided into different villages. Before 1950s, Asians owned much of Mathare and extracted its stones for building projects. In the late 1950s, it was dominated by Mau Mau freedom fighters, who hid weapons and conducted oathing ceremonies there.

Mathare Valley is enclosed by Pangani on the West. On the north, it is enclosed by the police depot, Mathare primary school, and Mathare Mental Hospital. Juja Road borders Mathare on the south, separating it from Eastleigh, an estate dominated by Somali immigrants and entrepreneurs. To the east, it borders Huruma estate. (See Medecins Sans Frontieres Community Map.)

According to one estimate from the Central Bureau of Statistics, Mathare Valley is home to about 90,000. However, Pastor Jepson Karau of Mathare Worship Centre and Future Kids school leader Lydia Munyala estimate Mathare Valley’s population to be closer to 800,000, which may reflect different considerations of which communities technically comprise “Mathare Valley.” On the other hand, Medecins Sans Frontieres Psychosocial Manager Beatrice Wandera insists that the population in Mathare Valley is closer to 300,000. She believes that the 2007 Mungiki crackdown and recent post-election violence displacements have essentially caused a downward population trend in Mathare. Many households are headed by single women or teenage children and average about 4-5 people in size. It should be noted that Mathare has one of the highest population density indices in the country.

Religious & Ethnic Structures

According to community informants, 70% of Mathare’s residents are native to the settlement. Sixty percent are Christian, 15% maintain traditional beliefs, and 25% are not religious.

Table 1: Mathare Valley’s Churches

Number of congregants	Number of churches	Description of services
Less than 25	30	Nursery schools
25-50	20	Nursery schools, VCT clinics
50-100	10	Nursery schools, VCT clinics, daycare, non-formal schools
100 or more	5	Child sponsorship (via Compassion International), feeding program, nursery schools

Mathare’s ethnic groups are generally clustered together in certain areas, with Kikuyus and Luos outnumbering smaller tribes, such as the Luhya, Kamba, and Kisi.

Governance Structure

There are both modern and traditional forms of governance in Mathare. The traditional governance system at the community-level has experienced high turnover: in the past four years, four different chiefs have been appointed to the post. The chief is supported by sub-chiefs and elders, who oversee the different villages of Mathare. The modern governance system places Mathare in both the Starehe and Kasarani constituencies. Every five years, an elected official (known as a member of parliament, or MP) is voted in by constituents during the general elections. The constituency is divided into wards, which are represented by elected councilors.

Employment Profile and Economic Activity

Although Mathare is located very near Nairobi’s commercial district and well within the economic hub of East Africa, community informants estimate that just 1 in 10 individuals are employed. Most men and women work in the informal sector, earning low wages with little job security. Men ages 20-35 years typically work as casual day laborers in construction, small-scale manufacturing, food/vegetable kiosks, security, or as auto mechanics. The majority of women ages 25-40 work as domestic help in neighboring

communities like Eastleigh and Muthaiga, or in small-scale businesses selling food, sundries, or second-hand clothes. Women and young girls also engage in transactional sex (earning 100kshs, the equivalent of \$1.50 USD per client) and brew chang'aa (an illegal alcoholic drink) for survival. Anecdotal evidence from health, development, and education practitioners suggests that Mathare's economic insecurity is the primary factor impacting education enrolment and retention. One school leader estimated that fewer than 30% of the school's guardians/parents are able to sustain themselves in addition to paying for school costs.

Jamii Bora Trust, Kenya's largest microfinance organization, works with many residents in Mathare via their office on Juja Road. Jamii Bora's branch in Mathare was its second; as of 2008, 72 branches operate in Kenya, serving 200,000 members. (The organization predicts that their membership will grow to 400,000 by year-end.) According to outreach coordinator Susan Saiyorri, most borrowers in Mathare use the principal loan amounts to start vegetable businesses. The minimum loan amount is 2,000 KSHS (~\$30 USD), with most first-time loans averaging 8,000 KSHS (~\$125 USD). Additionally, Jamii Bora offers health insurance, business school (3-week entrepreneurship training courses), and sobriety groups to support their members' economic and social well-being. According to Susan, most repeat borrowers are taking loans in order to send their children to school—as a member herself, she has observed that most children out-of-school are not enrolled because of economic hardship.

Healthcare Needs and Providers⁷

The child mortality rate in the Nairobi slums has been placed at over two times the rate for Nairobi in general: 151 deaths per 1,000 births compared to 61/1,000 for children under five years of age (JHPIEGO, 2007). 26% of children die as a result of diarrhea each year in the urban slums (JHPIEGO, 2007). One study conducted from January 2003 to December 2004 found that acute respiratory infections accounted for 26% of deaths among children under five in Korogocho, a neighboring slum of Mathare Valley (Kyobutungi et al., 2006).

Slum children have less access to healthcare, including immunization, and subsequently face higher mortality rates than even their rural counterparts. For instance, infant, child, and under 5 mortality rates are higher in the slum communities of Nairobi compared to rural Kenya. Full immunization coverage is also 25 percent lower in the slums compared to rural Kenya while the incidence of common childhood illnesses are two to three times higher in the slums relative to rural areas.

Adolescent boys and girls in the slums also experience far worse reproductive health outcomes than their counterparts elsewhere in Kenya. They initiate sexual and reproductive activities much earlier and are at increased risks of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

⁷ This section contains an excerpt from African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) (2002). *Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi's Informal Settlements*. Nairobi: African Population and Health Research Center.

Alcoholism (chang'aa, drugs, marijuana) is cited by healthcare professionals and community leaders as the most pervasive social problem. These informants insist that it is symptomatic of the community's greater economic woes and lack of available jobs. Healthcare professionals estimate that 20-30% of the men in Mathare suffer from alcoholism. Teenage pregnancy affects about 10% of young women, contributing to dropout rates. According to Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), common health ailments include:

Table 2: Common Health Ailments in Mathare

Ailment	Causes
Acute respiratory infections	Environment/pollution
Diarrhea, fever, vomiting	Poor sanitation/hygiene
Skin infections (Scabies)	Bacteria

HIV/AIDS and TB are also endemic to the community. At MSF's Blue House Clinic, anti-retroviral (ARVs) and drug therapies are distributed to vulnerable groups with HIV and/or TB. Residents in Mathare utilize voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) centers within the community to monitor their HIV status. There are about 10 small-scale VCT centers and 15-25 more established VCT centers that offer additional primary care services.

In the field: Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF)/Doctors Without Borders

- MSF's Blue House facility in Mathare has an active patient cohort of about 3,500 individuals receiving ARVs and drug therapies for HIV/TB
- Mothers are focus of intervention programs; entry point to address mother-child healthcare
- 4 out of 6 HIV tests conducted are positive
- More than 50% of cohort are women
- Roughly 15% of the patients are children and youth under 18 years of age
- Discordance between partners' HIV status necessitates counseling and disclosure support

In addition to MSF, several other area health centers located on the periphery of Mathare Valley offer treatment to its residents.

Health Facility Name	Affiliation	Patients treated per day
MSF-Blue House	Medecins Sans Frontieres	
Baraka Dispensary	German Medical NGO	100+
Lions Huruma	Ministry of Health (MOH)	20-30
National Churches Council of Kenya (NCKK)	Faith-based	150+
Mathare North Center	Ministry of Health (MOH)	20-30
Mathare Mental Hospital	Ministry of Health (MOH)	
Pangani Health Center	Ministry of Health (MOH)	
Eastleigh Health Center	Ministry of Health (MOH)	

St. Theresa's Health Center	Faith-based	
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Though MOH facilities offer quality and affordable consultations, prescription drugs are unaffordable, which explains the disparity in patients treated per day between MOH facilities and private clinics, which distribute drugs free of charge or at significantly reduced rates.

Finally, lay health care providers, including traditional healers and unqualified pharmacists, are a major health care resource for slum dwellers because of low cost, accessibility, longstanding cultural beliefs and distrust of the official health system (JHPIEGO, 2007).

Environmental and contextual challenges⁸

Poverty exacerbates an already precarious environment characterized by underdevelopment and lack of basic infrastructure (electricity, water, sanitation). High dropout rates, violent incidents (rape, theft), and a large population of vulnerable children orphaned by HIV/AIDS strain and break existing social networks that would otherwise provide support for community needs.

Waste disposal poses a major problem for slum residents, with negative implications for their health. “Solid waste services are...rare in poor urban settings since most slums do not benefit from municipal services. As a result, residents live among mountains of garbage and the associated vermin. Burning of trash causes air pollution, and in some communities, scavenged hospital or medical waste poses a particularly dangerous health hazard” (EHP 2004). However, it should be noted that dumping sites within the community are a source of livelihood for many residents. Additionally, as toilets are often privately owned and/or pay-per-use, many residents resort to defecating in the open or in plastic bags. As a result, human waste can be found in plastic bags or out in the open on the streets of the urban slums. These areas need well-managed, officially licensed and community-supported toilets.

Active Non-governmental Organizations and Civil Society Groups

While there are a large number of community-based organizations, no formal network exists to coordinate these efforts. There are many informal networks at the grassroots based on the Kenyan tradition of “Harambee” (Swahili for “let us all come together”) offering mutual support to group members.

Prominent NGO and civil society groups working on education issues in Mathare include FAWE’s Kenya chapter, which supports school fees and needs of 100 girls at Kiboro Primary School and St. Theresa’s Secondary School.

Education Access, Quality, and Completion in Mathare

⁸ This section contains an excerpt from Merkel, S. et al. (2007). *Meeting the Health Needs of the Urban Poor in Informal Settlements: Best Practices and Lessons Learned*. Nairobi: JHPIEGO.

There are three primary schools and one all-female secondary school formally recognized by Kenya’s Ministry of Education in Mathare. Mathare official falls within both the Kasarani and Starehe Division. Following is a list of schools in and near Mathare:

School Name (MoE)	Enrollment	Number of Teachers
Kiboro Primary School		
St. Theresa’s Girls		
Mathare 4 A	413 boys, 423 girls	4 male, 18 female
Mathare North	725 boys, 743 girls	6 male, 19 female
Muthaiga	664 boys, 672 girls	6 male, 29 female

The quality of primary education in Mathare’s government-sponsored schools and elsewhere is worrisome, especially with a national teacher shortage and limited textbooks/resources affecting urban settlements—where the number of existing schools are inadequate—most acutely. In 2007, Starehe and Kasarani Divisions ranked 6th and 7th, respectively (out of 8 divisions), based on primary-level exam performance averages. (For performance data of individual schools, please see Appendix 1).

Outside the formal government system, there are many so-called non-formal schools, which offer basic, secondary, and vocational training. Largely unregulated, they are often registered under various ministries and vary widely in curriculum delivery, staffing policies, and overall quality. In the Kasarani constituency, non-formal schools are organized into what is known as the Mathare Cluster Non-Formal Schools Association. A rapid survey was conducted among a subset of these schools to determine enrolment numbers, gender parity, and performance on national exams. Although some of the schools are located in an area known as “Mathare North”—a higher socio-economic status community and considered by some community members to be outside Mathare Valley—it is clear from this data that without non-formal schools, children in urban settlements like Mathare would not have access to basic education. (See Appendix 2 for information collected by cluster chairman Fr. Michael Tsokora.)

Curriculum

Kenya’s formal education system is an 8-4-4 system: 8 years at the primary level (learners aged 6-13), 4 years at the secondary level (learners aged 13-19), and 4 years at the tertiary level. Kenya’s Institute of Education develops curriculum and supports its delivery in all formal schools and most non-formal schools. Subjects covered include Kiswahili, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Physical Education at the primary level.

Resource Allocation & Requirements

Since the onset of “free primary education” in 2003, the Ministry of Education provides a grant of KShs 1,020 per year to cover direct teaching-learning materials and administrative expenses (in formal schools only). In urban areas, it is estimated that the total cost of primary education in lower and upper classes is about KShs 5,720 and KShs 9,126, respectively (Elimu Yetu Coalition, 2004). These higher estimates reflect the costs of the following: fees, extra tuition, textbooks, exam fees, library and science facilities, uniforms, transport, food/pocket money. A select number of non-formal

schools received a small capitation grant as part of a government-funded pilot program from 2004-2005. The Ministry of Education is in the process of formulating an official policy for non-formal schools (currently entitled, *Policy for Alternative Provision of Education*) with Dr. Sarah Ruto (Kenyatta University) and community stakeholders that seeks to support non-formal schools more systematically.

Currently, non-formal schools experience severe resource limitations: textbooks are few, structures/facilities are inadequate, and high teacher attrition (due to meager allowances and difficult working conditions) erode gains in student achievement.

School enrollment rates for adolescents in Nairobi slums are considerably lower than in other parts of Kenya, including rural areas. Only one in five of slum residents aged 12-24 were attending school at the time of a recent survey (APHRC, 2002). A survey conducted by Daraja Civic Initiatives Forum in 2006 in Kibera and Korogocho slums indicates that 48 percent of school age children are out of school in these slums (Daraja, 2006). The Ministry of Education facility-based Education Monitoring Information System indicates that up to 59.9 percent of school age children in Nairobi province are not enrolled in school (MoE, 2006). Many activists and community leaders believe that this non-enrollment figure is mostly rooted in the various Nairobi settlements. The most commonly reported reason for dropping out of school was lack of school fees, reported by two-thirds of the female and three-quarters of the male adolescents.

While most students in Mathare (across all urban settlements across Nairobi) attend non-formal schools, few are able to make the transition into formal secondary schools. One qualitative research report suggests that just 9% of students in urban slums completing primary school in the non-formal education system attained entry into formal secondary schools in 2002 (Elimu Kwa Wanavijiji Coalition, 2004).

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Source: African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) (2002). *Population and Health Dynamics in Nairobi's Informal Settlements*. Nairobi: African Population and Health Research Center.

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Appendix 1: City Council of Nairobi—Education Department KCPE 2007 Zonal Performance—Public Schools

Primary School	Entry	Eng	KIS	Maths	Scien	SST&R	2007 Total	2006 Total
Ruaraka Zone--Kasarani Division								
Muthaiga	124	69.41	63.43	62.16	56.55	59.48	311.04	314.28
Mathare North	129	56.16	47.38	46.12	46.05	48.09	243.8	253.09
Mathare 4 A	106	40.73	35.47	37.26	33.8	35.06	182.31	197.47
Juja Road Zone--Starehe Division								
Kiboro Primary	84	46.98	41.18	42.12	39.27	42.88	212.43	221.61
St. Teresa's Girls	72	64.59	50.2	54.64	50.9	53.41	273.74	300.62

Note: Exam scores are out of a possible 500 points. 250 is considered passing, enabling entry into secondary school.

Appendix 2: Mathare Cluster Non-Formal Schools Association Data

School Name	Location	Year Opened	Number Enrolled ⁹ Primary: Class 1-8 Secondary: Form 1-4	Mean Exam Scores (out of 500; passing score is 250)	Class/Level Reached
Rosa Mistica Academy	Mathare 4A & Mathare North Area 3	2001	Primary: 183 Girls, 148 Boys Secondary: 29 Girls, 33 Boys	2006: 227.8 2007: 293.7	Form 4
St. Peres	Mathare 4A	2007	Primary: 70 Girls, 50 Boys	N/A	Class 4
Stella Maris Academy	Mathare North Area 1	1999	Primary: 69 Girls, 70 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Sharpener Community Center	Mathare North Area 2	2001	Primary: 101 Girls, 114 Boys	N/A	Class 7
High View School	Mathare North Area 2	1997	Primary: 116 Girls, 82 Boys Secondary: 13 Girls, 16 Boys	2007: 283.1	Form 3
Mefag Children Centre	Mathare North Area 2	1995	Primary: 81 Girls, 84 Boys	2007: 272.3	Class 8
Believers Centre	Jangwani Mathare 4A	2006	Primary: 39 Girls, 47 Boys	N/A	Class 2
Eliza's Kids	Mathare North Area 1	2007	Primary: 18 Girls, 25 Boys	N/A	Class 2
Stelurm Elite School	Mathare North Area 3	2000	Primary: 45 Girls, 49 Boys	N/A	Class 8
Kasarani Victory	Mathare North Area 1	2006	Primary: 24 Girls, 28 Boys	N/A	Class 3
Bright Angels	Mathare North Area 3	2005	Primary: 92 Girls, 71 Boys	N/A	Class 4
Mathare Junior Centre	Mathare North Area 1	1992	Primary: 101 Girls, 112 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Mercy Care Centre	Mathare 4A	1993	Primary: 281 Girls, 296 Boys Secondary: 18 Girls, 26 Boys	2007: 271.9	Form 2
River of Life	Mathare North Area 2	2004	Primary: 83 Girls, 91 Boys	N/A	Class 5
Precious Kids School	Mathare North Area 2	1999	Primary: 183 Girls, 172 Boys	2007: 251.3	Class 8
Rolin Joystar Educational Centre	Mathare North Area 1	2000	Primary: 36 Girls, 23 Boys	N/A	Class 6
Menno Kids	Kware Mathare North	2005	Primary: 65 Girls, 61 Boys	N/A	Class 4
Denikeva Academy	Mathare North Area 2	1987	Primary: 124 Girls, 240 Boys Secondary: 28 Girls, 37 Boys	2007: 261.7	Form 4
Mawamu School	Mathare North Area 1	2004	Primary: 84 Girls, 81 Boys	N/A	Class 6
St. Erick School	Mathare North Area 2	2005	Primary: 78 Girls, 84 Boys	N/A	Class 4
Tumani School	Mathare North Area 1	2002	Primary: 73 Girls, 67 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Mercury Junior	Mathare North Area 3	2004	Primary: 43 Girls, 48 Boys	N/A	Class 5
Mogra Star Academy	Mathare North Area 2	1985	Primary: 401 Girls, 434 Boys Secondary: 132 Girls, 167 Boys	2007: 263.1	Form 4
Queens Kids	Mathare North Area 3	1998	Primary: 95 Girls, 100 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Future Kids School	Mathare North Area 1	2000	Primary: 115 Girls, 130 Boys	N/A	Class 8
Queenrose Day Care	Mathare North Area 1	1998	Primary: 126 Girls, 113 Boys	2007: 322	Class 8
Brainhouse Academy	Mathare North Area 1	2003	Primary: 160 Girls, 192 Boys	N/A	Class 8
Joyrax Humanist School	Mathare North Area 3	2006	Primary: 25 Girls, 14 Boys	N/A	Class 5
Happy Times Junior	Mathare North Area	2002	Primary: 178 Girls, 147 Boys	N/A	Class 5
Excellent Care Centre	Mathare 4A	2004	Primary: 212 Girls, 193 Boys	2006: 269.2 2007: 311.4	Class 8
Demolly Community Centre	Mathare North Area 3	2003	Primary: 119 Girls, 101 Boys	N/A	Class 6
Pope John Paul II School	Mathare North Area	1993	Primary: 58 Girls, 44 Boys	N/A	Class 8
Genesis Gospel Primary School	Mathare North Area 3	1989	Primary: 30 Girls, 40 Boys	N/A	Class 7

⁹ Almost all schools had experienced varying degrees of decreased enrolment numbers due to the recent post-election violence, which displaced many students/families.

Appendix 2 (Continued): Mathare Cluster Non-Formal Schools Association Data

School Name	Location	Year Opened	Number Enrolled ¹⁰ Primary: Class 1-8 Secondary: Form 1-4	Mean Exam Scores (out of 500; passing score is 250)	Class/Level Reached
Better Life Community Centre	Mathare North Area 2	2000	Primary: 30 Girls, 25 Boys	N/A	Class 4
Young Heirs Centre	Mathare North Area 2	1992	Primary: 116 Girls, 112 Boys	N/A	Class 5
Jojo Junior School	Mathare North Area 2	2006	Primary: 131 Girls, 154 Boys	N/A	Class 6
Source of Life Education Centre	Mathare North Area 2	2008	Primary: 36 Girls, 36 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Myto Junior Academy	Mathare 4A	2004	Primary: 135 Girls, 77 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Vumiua Day Care	Mathare 4A	1998	Primary: 45 Girls, 30 Boys	N/A	Class 7
Bricklayers Centre	Mathare 4A	1999	Primary: 210 Girls, 189 Boys	2007: 315	Class 8
Caso Upendo	Mathare 4A	1998	Primary: 260 Girls, 196 Boys	2007: 316	Class 8
Action Child Mobilization Centre	Mathare 4A	1997	Primary: 139 Girls, 107 Boys	2007: 307	Class 8
Valley View Academy	Along Juja Road; Next to Moi Airbase	1997	Primary: 404 Girls, 411 Boys	2007 (score range): 258-427	Class 8
Community Care Educational Organisation	Mathare Valley Mlango Kubwa	2004	Primary: 76 Girls, 82 Boys	2007: 312.5 2006: 270	Class 8
Eljoy Children Centre	Mathare North Area 2	2002	Primary: 87 Girls, 92 Boys	N/A	Class 3
Ngotas Junior School	Mathare Mabatini	1999	Primary: 101 Girls, 131 Boys	N/A	Class 6
Maranatha School	Matahre Mabatini	2001	Primary: 26 Girls, 27 Boys	N/A	Class 2
Trusted Care Community Centre	Matahre North Area 2	2000	Primary: 105 Girls, 73 Boys Secondary: 6 Girls, 8 Boys	2007: 281.3	Form 4

¹⁰ Almost all schools had experienced varying degrees of decreased enrolment numbers due to the recent post-election violence, which displaced many students/families.