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From: [Eija Soini](#)

Sent: Wednesday, January 23, 2008 6:00 PM

Subject: Liana news 1/2008 Kibera

Dear Liana members,
Dear Friends,

Kenya was hit by wave of violence after the disputed presidential election at the end of December. There are now at least 250,000 displaced people in the country, at least 800 have been killed, and more people lose their homes, properties and lives every day, though the situation has calmed down to some extent. The whole country is not burning, like it might look on the TV news, life goes on almost normally for most of the people here, however, some areas were and are very badly hit. These include some of the Nairobi slums and specific areas elsewhere in the country.

I was approached by Juha Ruotoistenmäki last Friday with a plead from a small organisation, "Drug Fighters and Counseling for the Young Generation" working in Kibera slum. The organisation gets funding for their normal project work from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. They work together with the Mikkeli development society (kehityksmaaseura). They run a school with more than 200 3-10 years old children from all parts of the slum. The schools has also a school feeding programme. In addition they offer legal assistance and counselling to girls who have been victims of sexual violence. They might do many more things, but I think these are the main functions. Now they are plunged in the middle of the crisis in Kibera, the worst hit slum in Nairobi. They are trying to help at least the families of the children of their school. Agnes, the project manager writes:

"In Kibera, houses burnt down and most people have been displaced from their houses, businesses burnt down, lives lost, I mean it's just incomprehensible. Children and women as usual are most affected. Practically all the areas have been affected. Most of the displaced families are camping at Jamhuri Show ground but we still have more families in Kibera, some are injured and are just in the houses. The ones who are at the camps are being served by the Red Cross ..and the individual organizations and churches that are donating towards the crisis. The problem is that, the people who have been left behind ... have nobody to reach out to them. ... We resumed work from 7th, myself, Martha, Frida and Teacher Irene. We were reaching out for our children whose homes got burnt and they were nowhere to be found. ... we are still trying to trace the rest one hundred and something, at the same time we are feeding the displaced families in dire need of food and beddings. ... After conducting a survey and finding many victims who could not access help from Red cross, we started lobbying for foodstuffs and clothes to help them. ...We are still meeting very desperate people on the ground who have not been reached by anyone and so the number is increasing day by day. Because of the insecurity in Kibera, we do not take the food to the grounds. We usually go out and mobilise these families and we distribute the food from Mbagathi District Hospital Hall. This helps us to avoid those people who would always want to take advantage of the situation."

Liana board was called together for consultation on Friday afternoon after the mail from Juha. We are not a relief organisation. The purpose of Liana is to "use the best proven knowledge to improve the livelihoods of the poor in developing countries and other poor areas while sustaining the environment, emphasising equality and joint responsibility". However, we have an interest in Kenya, three of the members live just 15km from Kibera, there is incredible misery around there, and we can do our part in helping. So, it was our unanimous decision to act according to our small abilities that were readily at hand within Liana and its board. Liana approved 500e from the existing funds. Liana members in Nairobi donated money to top it by 300e.

I bought 864kg of maize flour, 60kg of infant millet porridge flour and 104 blankets from Nakumat on Saturday. On Sunday Kirsi, Jukka and I loaded all into two cars and drove to the edge of Kibera where "Drug Fighters and Counselling for the Young Generation" has its office and unloaded it there. The total bill was 47,484Ksh, slightly less than 550 euros. The food and blankets were distributed on Monday. See the attached pictures send by Agnes. But the need is much more to keep alive the 200 families the project aims at helping.

Would you like to be involved in helping a bit more? Please, if you can operate by Finnish bank systems, put your donation to the Liana bank account in Finland (Liana ry, account number 536903-211848, please add message Kibera). Those in UK, please, contact Ric for ways to get your donation through him to Liana. Please, act before Sunday night.

Agnes wrote a list of their estimated food need per week and I have based my calculations on that: As an example, we could target to buy food for the 200 families (not persons!) for one week, that would mean (leaving out things like soap, sugar, salt, cooking fat, tea, rice... some of them very important as well) 1260kg of beans and 1600kg of maize flour. By a quick calculation this would be worth 1450euros. We have 250euros unused within Liana. There are about 55 friends on the address list, so if everyone puts 22 euros, we have achieved our target! :-). Of course we can target much higher! The needs is hugely bigger!

I am so sorry I did write this all in Finnish now, even if the aim is to have most of Liana news in both languages.

With best regards, Eija

Eija Soini
Chair, Liana ry