



Voices of Democracy

THE CITIZENS' ROLE IN KENYAN DEMOCRATIC SPACES

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#TowardsAnInclusiveSociety

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About The African Citizenship Index

Citizenship is a multi-faceted concept that is shaped by the political, economic, and social life within a place. The African Citizenship Index aims to understand the ways in which ordinary people interact with each other in economic, social-support focused and political networks across the continent. The inaugural survey was conducted by SIVIO Institute in March – April 2021 across 5 African cities: Harare, Zimbabwe and Lilongwe, Malawi in Southern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya in East Africa, Yaoundé, Cameroon in Central Africa and Accra, Ghana in West Africa.

For more information:

www.africacitizenshipindex.org

About SIVIO Institute

SIVIO Institute (SI) is an independent organisation focused on ensuring that citizens are at the centre of processes of socio-economic and policy change. It aims to contribute towards Africa's inclusive socio-economic transformation. It is borne out of a desire to enhance agency as a stimulus/catalyst for inclusive political and socio-economic transformation. SIVIO's work entails multi-disciplinary, cutting-edge policy research, nurturing citizens' agency to be part of the change that they want to see, working with communities to mobilize their assets to resolve some of the immediate problems they face.

For more information:

www.sivioinstitute.org

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1. Introduction

Towards the last quarter of the 20th century, it was becoming clear that good governance could not be achieved without the active engagement of citizens and civil society actors (World Bank 1994). As a result of this many development partners e.g. donors, financial institutions and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) started supporting what the World Bank then termed as “participatory governance”, “social accountability” or “demand for good governance” programs. This was geared towards the promotion of active involvement of citizens/Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in public decision-making and holding governments accountable.

This has evolved and expanded. Currently, on top of civic participation, citizens are increasingly engaging among themselves in all their aspects of life. They are doing this by realizing that there are things that can only be done by the citizens themselves in order to counter what Mathews (2014) terms as systematic problems of democracy. From the surface, this can be seen as personal endeavors to make ends meet but in essence, deeper within it, the engagement brings the public back in the public’s business—democracy. By the government giving citizens room to engage among themselves and with the government (meaning not clamping down on the citizens’ rights), the citizens feel empowered and ready to be part of the government.

Understanding the role of citizen participation, their voice and ways of engagement helps to give a more comprehensive understanding of development and democracy. Potentially this can also contribute towards a more accountable and responsive governance systems. It is this understanding that has made citizen participation and engagement part of the mainstream development activities (World Bank, 1994). Further, due to this, the approach of supporting the citizenry has become attractive in the whole good governance scheme (UN, 2008).

Engagement among citizens themselves and with civil societies comes in different ways. In this study, the type of engagements we sought were those that were done through citizen associations.



Different scholars have studied different subjects related to how citizens engage and documented explicit measurable outcomes of such participation. Our study, however, did not intend to measure the degree of association but was rather shaped by the need to understand contexts, dynamics, meanings and the nature of engagement. The nature of engagement was broadly grouped into political, social and economic. African Citizenship Index (ACI) project's main area of focus was to develop a better understanding of citizens and the relationships they forge with processes of development and democracy.

ACI was a five-country study covering Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe. This initial study was carried out in the capital cities of these countries i.e. Nairobi (Kenya), Lilongwe (Malawi), Yaoundé (Cameroon), Accra (Ghana) and Harare (Zimbabwe). This is the report for Kenya. The study, through a combination of a desktop-based analysis of literature and field-based research tools, sought to contribute knowledge on citizens' practices across Africa by specifically focusing on what we are referring to as 'people areas.' Specifically, the study sought to;

- i. understand how citizens organize themselves,**
- ii. identify ways in which citizens practice influence self-governance,**
- iii. analyze initiatives and formations of collaboration that they establish with each other,**
- iv. identify ways in which citizens relate with formal processes of governance and engage with official processes (protest and cooperation).**

The data for this study was collected primarily through a structured questionnaire hosted on an online platform, Survey Monkey. Through the questionnaire, citizens' responses were gathered. Responses were collected from 421 respondents. Six (6) research assistants spread across the Nairobi metropolitan region were responsible for data collection. Data was collected between March 22 and 26, 2021. We collected qualitative data through case studies in the months of April and May as a way of augmenting quantitative data. These two types of data are both presented in here. The data was presented in such a way that it resounded to the research objectives highlighted above.



2. Background to Citizen-Led Formations in Kenya

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In many of the societies in which we live, citizens may be unaware of their rights, may lack the knowledge or permission to engage, or not deem themselves as citizens with the support and power to act.

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Most theories of citizens and democracy show the vital role an informed and aware citizenry who can participate in democratic life, hold in the state. They hold the state to account and exercise their rights and responsibilities effectively. For many democratic theorists, such as Mansbridge (1997) and Pateman (1970), one important role of citizen participation is that it helps to build and strengthen citizens themselves, elevating their feelings of political worth and their political and democratic knowledge. In return, the assumption is that more informed and efficient citizens will ultimately benefit the larger society by anchoring it in a citizenry clearer about its interests and responsive to the claims of justice and the common will.

Learning about or gaining citizenship, therefore, is not only a legal process of being defined as a citizen but involves the development of citizens as actors capable of claiming rights and acting for themselves (Nyamu-Musembi, 2002). Yet, as we know, in many of the societies in which we live, citizens may be unaware of their rights, may lack the knowledge or permission to engage, or not deem themselves as citizens with the support and power to act. These wrong assumptions may make these citizens not to be citizens. Thus, to get the citizens back to their rightful place, there is need to understand where they sit currently i.e., their positions in democracy, their citizenship positions.

Although the concept of democracy is common amongst citizens, it is a commonly misunderstood word especially in the time when dictatorial or oppressive governments, regimes and leaders, single powerful parties, military leaders, and coup d'états etc. take the leadership positions. Democracy is a word derived from two terms, first 'demos' which means 'the people' basically refers to government where the supreme law and power are vested on the people (Lincoln, 1860), and the second 'kratia' which means 'power' or 'rule'. Therefore, in a democracy the people should exercise their



power by engaging among themselves. In this form, democracy can be exercised directly in large communities or indirectly through representatives. Democracy, therefore, can be described as the government of the people, by the people and for the people (ibid.).

Through this perspective, there is active and meaningful participation in public affairs by the citizens which is a clear indication of democratic societies. Citizen participation in public affairs has shown a steady increase within Kenya and Africa at large (Treier and Jackman, 2008) as there are developments in the supportive laws. These have improved the citizens' confidence with their governments since democracy indicates to what extent people believe in various perspectives (Treier and Jackman, 2008). Democracy is more than just a set of principles or institutions. It rests upon very clear attitudes, values, beliefs and practices that may take various dimensions and expressions among cultures and societies of the world (Sonoiya, 2018).

Democracy can be viewed as both a promise and a challenge. It is a promise because it is based on a cooperative and free society. In democracy, people tend to work together aiming to achieve their aspirations for personal rights, freedom, economic, social, political, and even environmental endeavours.



Moreover, by togetherness, they will achieve social justice. Democracy becomes a challenge where it rests upon the citizens and not any other institution or association (Beetham, 1994). A stronger democracy is one which citizens engage with one another in different associations and societies.

However, we have to note here that sovereignty cannot protect against self-mistakes or guarantee economic prosperity of a society. It cannot defend the social development of its own people. However, it's the participation of pressure groups and the involvement of the general public that will create opportunities and correct the mistakes that may be made in the process of democracy. It is this input by the public that will ensure happiness in the society. It is, therefore, essential for partnership building efforts to encourage pressure groups and the general public on how to bargain and compromise with the governments in full realization of opportunities within the society (Cheeseman, 2003). A society based on democratic constitutionalism is where there is compromise of ideas, research, individual opinions and recommendations and institutional interest among others. Democracies are never rigid. They take ideas and various recommendations and solutions and test them before afterwards applying them in the right order.

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Sovereignty cannot protect against self-mistakes or guarantee economic prosperity of a society. It cannot defend the social development of its own people.

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Since the repealing of section 2A of the Kenyan constitution in 1991, there have been numerous pressure groups and individual ideas that have been accepted in the system. Opposition leaders and activists like Mr. Odinga have been on the limelight most often to correct the ruling government (Gichuki, 2016).

As mentioned before, democracy focuses on accepted values, rules by the people on managing conflicts and their affairs. Democracy majorly aims at ending conflicts and maintenance of peace, cooperation, and social order. At the same time during conflict management, it must be done with lot of certainty, with a lot of consensus, agreements, and compromises with both sides in the arrangement (Treier and Jackman, 2008). This system of democracy therefore should not be used by one party in the society as a medium to exert pressure or block the voices of the minorities, otherwise the society is in trouble. Mostly, there is no easy solution to the conflict – consensus



equation. Democracy has no sense when it runs alone. It only picks from determination of the citizen and extreme tolerance and inserted principles by the people. This therefore concludes that various wars in a democratic society may not be as a result of the 'don'ts' and the 'wrongs' but in different interpretations of the democratic laws and rights (Treier and Jackman, 2008).

Political parties, interest groups, NGOs and democracy

For democracy to be strong, citizen's action in the participation on political process is required. The right of individuals to participate freely and organize themselves in the way which they deem fit to their socio-political aspirations is very fundamental to the process of democracy. There are different citizen formations in Kenya as discussed in the next section including political parties and different interest groups. These are the building blocks of democracy and good governance.

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Political parties formulate policies that they identify as gaps in the societies. They then recruit, nominate and campaign for public elections based on their ideologies. In areas where they form the majority, they implement policies in the government. Political parties are also responsible for civic education of their citizens on current affairs. They also support and motivate their candidates. In most political parties, there are rules regulating their conduct.

Party organization and elections vary greatly in regard to the rules and accepted principles. In a Democratic Party elections are elaborate and generally time consuming. This should not stop parties from holding them, though, since fair and transparent elections give citizens an opportunity to elect leaders of their choice and also boosts the confidence of citizens in their party (Muigai, 2004).

There have been numerous interest groups and NGOs that have attempted to influence public policy and persuade public officials of their views. In a democratic society, a citizen may be a member of several NGOs and interest groups. They recognize that almost if not all this group is aiming at is advocating for human rights and influence of public opinion. Numerous groups have been formed around economic issues,



labour groups, business groups still have greater influence since that is the sole interest zone of citizen (Munck, 2002).

In our data we found out that there are as many associations as there are people's interests. This means that interest groups change with change in the interest of citizens. They are dynamic. They change with new citizen's aspirations. In frequent cases, NGOs and governments work as partners that help the fulfilment of the aspirations of different interest groups. They provide ground for implementation of public policy and also expertise and personal support. These NGOs, however, operate under minimal government supervision. The major striking development in recent years has been as a result of the emergence of international and regional organizations and pressure groups. In their pursuit to serve the community, nation and global arena at large, they supplement, and in some cases, change the face of government (Ndulo, 2003). It is important to note that in the recent past, Kenyans have seen a steady rise in the number of NGOs in their societies; mostly for economic development and protection of freedom and rights of citizens and they have heavily supplemented government work (ibid.).

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To ensure unbiased news and information, media is needed, and to ensure intelligent and critical thinking, more as well as timely information about public policy is needed

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Free and independent media and democracy

In all the citizens' engagements and activities, there should exist a free public space aided by free media. In this endeavour, the media in the form of newspapers, radio, magazines, print media and the internet has ensured increased growth in communication and public debate among the citizens. Media has a role in educating and informing the public. To ensure unbiased news and information, media is needed. Moreover, to ensure intelligent and critical thinking, more and timely information about public policy is needed. Media also plays a role in advocating, even without pretence of objectivity. Citizens benefit when there is a wide range of viewpoints. In the time for elections, for example, it is impossible for all citizens to access the candidates; therefore, some will gain their views about these candidates from the media (Transparency International, 2007).

Media also acts as a watchdog over government and its institutions in the society. By holding independent and objective views, the



public can get to confirm whether the claims of the government are true and make the public officials accountable for their actions. This gives media an active role in initiating debates and also influencing public opinion through current affairs reporting. This, in turn, keeps the government on toes in the implementation of policies.

Moreover, since the media cannot report all of the government works, the media must, therefore, choose the most important aspects to dwell on. This concept is called 'agenda setting' of the media. Unlike countries where news is manipulated and fully controlled by the government, media in democratic societies cannot be manipulated to simply overlook important issues. In such systems, ideas and opinions of people are expressed freely and truth often wins over falsehoods. In his own words, writer E.B White wrote 'the press in democratic states is not useful because of its good character but because of its great diversity, as long as there are many owners, each pursuing its own brand of truth. We the people have the ability to arrive at the truth and dwell in the light.'



3. Description of Sample

3.1 Age

The respondents' ages ranged from 18 years old to above 65. Their distribution is as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Age of Respondents

AGE IN YEARS	RESPONSES	
18 – 25	21.38%	90
26 – 35	23.28%	98
36 – 45	25.89%	109
46 – 55	19.00%	80
56 – 65	7.13%	30
65+	3.33%	14
Total		421

The majority of the respondents were between ages 36 and 45 representing 25.89%. This was followed by the age range 26 to 35 representing 23.28%. People above 65 years old had the least representation at 3.33%.

3.2 Gender and Marital Status

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

GENDER	RESPONSES	
Male	54.16%	228
Female	45.84%	193
Total		421



Out of the 421 respondents, there were 228 (54.16%) males and 193 (45.84%) were females. On marital status, there were 119 (28.27%) single respondents, 255 (60.57%) married ones, 27 (6.41%) divorcees, and 20 (4.75%) widows. Married respondents were the majority.

3.3 Educational levels of the respondents

In terms of education, 40 (9.50%) had primary school education, 181 (42.99%) had secondary school education, 193 (45.84%) had tertiary level education, and 7 (1.66%) had no formal education. Of all the 421 respondents, 403 (95.72%) could read and write against 18 (4.28%) respondent who could not read and write. This high literacy level could be attributed to the city context.

3.4 Household income

The highest earner among the respondents earned between USD\$3,001 and USD\$5,000 while the lowest earned Under USD\$250.00. Table 3 below summarizes the respondents' household incomes.

Table 3: Average Monthly Household Income of the Respondents

Income		Responses
Under USD\$250.00	56.06%	236
Between USD\$251 and USD500	29.69%	125
Between USD\$501 and USD\$1,000	10.45%	44
Between USD\$1,001 and USD\$3,000	3.56%	15
Between USD\$3,001 and USD\$5,000	0.24%	1
Above USD\$5,001		0
Total		421

3.5 Sources of income

The 421 respondents earned their income through the following sources:

Table 4: Sources of Income of the Respondents

SOURCE	RESPONSES	
Formal employment (provides payslip and pays formal taxes)	18.29%	77
Formal business (registered and pays formal taxes)	15.44%	65
Informal employment (no payslip, unregistered, the business belongs to someone else)	26.84%	113
Informal business (unregistered and belongs to you)	23.52%	99
Pension	3.09%	13
Remittances (Monetary gifts)	1.19%	5
Property Investments (sales and rentals of immovable and movable assets)	4.28%	18
Farming	7.36%	13
Total		421

Most respondents 26.84% earned their regular income from informal employment where they did not receive payslips, their businesses were unregistered, or the business belonged to somebody else.

3.6 Participation in the Electoral Process

The majority 362 (85.99%) of the respondents are registered voters. A small proportion of 59 (14.01%) were yet to register as voters. Asked if they had voted in the last election, the respondents responded as shown in Table 5 below:



Table 5: Level of Participation in the Electoral Process of the Respondents

Status/Response	Yes (Registered & Voted)	No (Registered but Decided not to Vote)	No (Did not register to vote)	No (Could not find polling Station)	No (Name did not appear on registration poll)	No (was prevented from voting)	No (Was too Young -under 18)	N/A
Local Gov't/ County Elections	n=123 78.15%	n= 20 4.75%	n=29 6.89%	n=2 0.48%	n=4 0.95%	n=2 0.48%	n=19 4.51%	n=16 3.80%
Provisional Elections	n=484 43.71%	n=12 2.85%	n=20 4.75%	n=1 0.24%	n=3 0.71%	n=0 0.00%	n=9 2.14%	n=192 45.61%
Parliamentary Elections	n=329 78.15%	n=19 4.51%	n=29 6.89%	n=1 0.24%	n=4 0.95%	n=1 0.24%	n=19 4.51%	n=19 4.51%
Presidential Elections	n=334 79.33%	n=20 4.75%	n=27 6.41%	n=1 0.24%	n=4 0.95%	n=1 0.24%	n=19 4.51%	n=15 3.56%

Some of the regions of the Nairobi Metropolis are rural in nature. Thus, 347 (82.42%) respondents were from the urban areas and 74 (17.58%) were from the Rural area.



4. Mapping of Citizen's Initiatives in Kenya

4.1 Citizens and the Economy

The following is the analysis of the different ways in which citizens demonstrate solidarity with each other to achieve economic goals:

Respondents belonged to thirteen (13) different categories of associations under the economic focused groups as discusses below:

Savings and Lending Groups

Savings and Lending Groups had the highest representation where 160 (38.00%) respondents belong to Savings and Lending Groups (commonly referred to as chama). In these groups, people pool money together for a specific purpose. In order that the group's money grows, they lend to members at an interest which is lower than what the banks and major lending institutions would charge. This way they afford credit facilities to those who have been excluded by the banks especial those in informal employment such as mama mboga (market women), motorbike taxi drivers, housewives and generally those people without any payslip that can enable them secure a loan from a bank.

Table 6: Economic Focused Associations

ASSOCIATION	FREQUENCY	
	Number#	%
Savings and Lending Group	160	38.00
Labour Pooling Group	17	4.04
Production Cooperative	25	5.94
Buying Clubs (e.g., collective group to buy groceries)	28	6.65
Marketing Cooperative (involved in jointly selling commodities)	19	4.51
Common Property Group (natural resources)	19	4.51
Asset Pooling Group	12	2.85
Market Group/Platform (a place or network where members sell goods/services to each other)	21	4.99
Business Promotion Council	12	2.85
Business Advocacy/Lobby Group	9	2.14
Business Mentorship/Training Group	44	10.45
Housing Cooperative	8	1.90
Multi-level marketing schemes (e.g. Avon, Tablecharm, Tupperware)	11	2.61

Concerning the formation of savings and lending groups, 159 (38.00%) respondents answered the question. Of these, 37 (23.27%) said their group was established through trust, 34 (21.38%) said through constitution, 8 (5.03%) said by Company Limited by Guarantee, 46 (28.93%) said through association, 14 (8.81%) said their group had no formal registration, and 20 (12.58%) said they “did not know” how it was formed as that help people gain business skills in the society.

Table 7: Method of Establishment Savings and Lending Groups

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	23.27%	37
Constitution	21.38%	34
Company Limited by Guarantee	5.03%	8
Association	28.93%	46
No formal registration	8.81%	14
I do not know	12.58%	20

There seems to be a balance of gender in leadership of savings and lending groups. Respondents reported that 501 (49.75%) office holders were male and 506 (50.25%) were female. Out of the 159 (38.00%) respondents on the question how leaders are selected in the saving and lending group, 107 (67.30%) said leaders are selected through Elections, 39 (24.53%) through Appointment, 2 (1.26%) through inheritance, 7 (4.40%) through Voluntary basis and 3 (1.89%) respondents responded that they did not know how the leaders were selected.

Table 8: Ways of Selecting Leaders among Savings and Lending Groups

WAY	RESPONSES	
Elections	67.30%	107
Appointed	24.53%	39
Hereditary	1.26%	2
Voluntary	4.40%	7
I do not know	1.89%	3
Other (please specify)	0.63%	1
Total		158

For savings and lending group, meetings are regularly held. 101 (63.52%) of respondents said they have regular face to face meetings. Six (3.77%) of the respondents said they use Digital Online Platforms (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook) whereas 52 (32.70%) said their meetings a combination

of both face to face and digital online platforms. The members draw different benefits from this type of association.

Table 9: How Savings and Lending Associations Meet

MODE of MEETING	RESPONSES	
Regular Face to Face Meetings	63.52%	101
Digital Online Platforms (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook)	3.77%	6
Combination of both face to face and digital online platforms	32.70%	52

The benefits of membership in these groups include: collective security 21 (13.21%), improved access to financing 50 (31.45%), pooling together assets/savings 89 (55.97%), exchange information about market opportunities 48 (30.19%), organizing welfare support 51 (32.08%), improved voice in engaging with officeholders 14 (8.81%), exposure to new concept or ideas 84 (52.83%), collective ownership of assets 27 (16.98%), skills exchange 39 (24.53%), and income 21 (13.21%).

Table 10: Benefits of Being Part of Savings and Lending Groups

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective security	13.21%	21
Improved access to financing	31.45%	50
Pooling together assets/savings	55.97%	89
Exchange information about market opportunities	30.19%	48
Organising welfare support	32.08%	51
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	8.81%	14
Exposure to new concept or ideas	52.83%	84
Collective ownership of assets	16.98%	27
Skills exchange	24.53%	39
Additional Income	13.21%	21

The respondents raised concerns about some issues affecting their associations. Some of the common problems affecting associations are highlighted in Table 11 below:

Table 11: Problems Facing Savings and Lending Groups

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Gender based discrimination	5.03%	8
Low levels of participation	15.72%	25
Weak governance procedures	10.06%	16
Leadership	18.24%	29
Corruption	13.84%	22
Formal registration	11.95%	19
Meeting government regulatory requirements e.g., tax compliance	42.14%	67
Funding	40.25%	64
Other (please specify)	0.63%	1

From the data, the biggest problem facing savings and lending groups is meeting government regulatory requirements e.g., tax compliance with a representation of 67 (42.14%) respondents followed by funding with 64 (40.25%) respondents. Leadership was also identified by 29 (18.24%) respondents as a big problem. It is worth noting that gender discrimination is not a major problem as only 8 (5.03%) respondents identified it as a problem.

When asked if their associations owned assets in common, 65 (41.14%) of the 159 respondents in this category responded in the affirmative. Property that respondents said they owned in common included land 50 (75.76%), Minerals 1 (1.52%), Water body (Dam) 13 (19.70%), Tourist Attraction points 3 (4.55%), Grazing Lands 18 (27.27%), and Buildings 21 (31.82%) respondents.

Business Mentorship/Training Group

Business Mentorship/Training Group had 44 (10.45%) respondents. Of these, 6 (13.64%) said their group was established through trust, 6 (13.64%) said through constitution, 3 (6.82%) said Company Limited by Guarantee 11 (25.00%) said through association, 12 (27.27%) said their group had no formal registration, and 6 (13.64%) said they did not know how it was formed.

Table 12: Methods of Establishment of Business Mentorship/Training Group

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	13.64%	6
Constitution	13.64%	6
Company Limited by Guarantee	6.82%	3
Association	25.00%	11
No formal registration	27.27%	12
I do not know	13.64%	6
Total	44	

There is gender balance in leadership of business groups. Respondents reported that cumulatively 140 (50.00%) office holders were male and 140 (50.00%) were female. Among the 44 respondents who answered the question on how leaders are selected in the business mentorship group, 21 (47.73%) said leaders are selected through Elections, 16 (36.36%) through Appointment, 2 (4.55%) through inheritance, 2 (4.55%) through Voluntary basis, and 3 (6.82%) respondents responded that they did not know how the leaders were selected.

Table 13: Ways of Selecting Leaders in Business Mentorship Groups

WAY	RESPONSES	
Elections	47.73%	21
Appointed	36.36%	16
Hereditary	4.55%	2
Voluntary	4.55%	2
I do not know	6.82%	3
Total	44	

The benefits gotten had the following responses: Collective security 3 (6.82%), Improved access to financing 12 (27.27%), Pooling together assets/savings 5 (11.36%), Exchange information about market



opportunities 13 (29.55%), Organizing welfare support 7 (15.91%), Improved voice in engaging with officeholders 6 (13.64%), Exposure to new concept or ideas 26 (59.09%), Collective ownership of assets 7 (15.91%), Skills exchange 23 (52.27%), and Income 10 (22.73%).

Table 14: Benefits Gotten from Business Mentorship Groups

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective security	6.82%	3
Improved access to financing	27.27%	12
Pooling together assets/savings	11.36%	5
Exchange information about market opportunities	29.55%	13
Organising welfare support	15.91%	7
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	13.64%	6
Exposure to new concept or ideas	59.09%	26
Collective ownership of assets	15.91%	7
Skills exchange	52.27%	23
Additional Income	22.73%	10
Total		44

4.2 Citizens and Politics

The following table shows the analysis of citizen and politics in Kenya:

Table 15: Politically Focused Associations

ASSOCIATION	FREQUENCY	
	Number#	%
Campaign Group	31	7.56%
Political Party	86	20.98%
Social Movement	23	5.61%
Joint Public Petition	5	1.22%
Local Peace Committee	11	2.68%
Residents Association	12	2.93%
Online Based Civic Coalition	9	2.20%
Women's Group	47	11.46%
Youth Group	55	13.41%
Total	410	

Most respondents in politically focused groups belong to political parties with a representation of 86 (20.98%) respondents. Youth group was second with 55 (13.41%) which was followed by women's group represented by 47 (11.46%) respondents. Other associations in this category included 23 (5.61%) members in social movements, 31 (7.56%) members in campaign groups, 5 (1.22%) members in joint public petition, 11 (2.68%) members in peace committees, while online based civic coalition had 9 (2.20%) respondents and resident associations, 12 (2.93%) respondents. Politically focused groups attracted 279 respondents in total. Joint public petition as seen above had the least representation. This is because this is a new concept and not commonly practiced.

Political Party

Members of political parties were 86 (20.98%). Among these, 1 (1.16%) said their group was established through trust, 48 (55.81%) through constitution, 1 (1.16%) company limited by guarantee, 16 (18.60%) association and 20 (23.26%) did not know how their organization was formed.

Table 16: Methods of Establishment of Political Parties

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	1.16%	1
Constitution	55.81%	48
Company Limited by Guarantee	1.16%	1
Association	18.60%	16
No formal registration	0.00%	0
I do not know	23.26%	20

Proportionally, officeholders were substantial standing at 13 (15.12%). Gender dynamics in the positions of decision making are indicated in the table below:

Table 17: Males and Females in Decision Making Positions of Political Parties

POSITION	MALE	FEMALE	N/A	TOTAL
Chairperson	95.35% 82	4.65% 4	0.00% 0	86
Vice Chairperson	79.76% 67	20.24% 17	0.00% 0	84
Secretary	69.77% 60	30.23% 26	0.00% 0	86
Treasurer	61.18% 52	37.65% 32	1.18% 1	85
Committee Member 1	60.71% 51	35.71% 30	3.57% 3	84
Committee Member 2	43.37% 36	45.78% 38	10.84% 9	83
Committee Member 3	39.76% 33	44.58% 37	15.66% 13	83

There was no balance in the gender leadership in political parties as most important positions were held by men as seen above. In regard to how the officeholders select within their association, 66 (76.74%) said their officeholders are selected through elections, 6 (6.98%) said they are appointed, 1 (1.16%) said the positions are hereditary, 2 (2.33%) voluntary and 11 (12.79%) did not know how the association selected the leaders.

Concerning interactions within the parties, 2 (2.35%) respondents said they interact daily, 3 (3.53%) said it's conducted weekly 26 (30.59%) mentioned monthly, while a staggering majority of 54 (63.53%) said their interaction was annual.

Table 18: Frequency of Interactions among Political Parties

FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION	RESPONSES	
Daily	2.35%	2
Weekly	3.53%	3
Monthly	30.59%	26
Annually	63.53%	54

When it comes to modes of meetings, 33 (38.37%) said their meetings are regular face to face meeting, 5 (5.81%) mentioned digital online platform e.g. Zoom, Skype, Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook) while 48 (55.81%) said their meetings use a combination of both face to face and digital online platforms.

Table 19: Modes of Meetings of Political Parties

MODE	RESPONSES	
Regular Face to Face Meetings	38.37%	33
Digital Online Platforms (e.g Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook)	5.81%	5
Combination of both face to face and Digital Online Platforms	55.81%	48

The benefits received by the 86 respondents were, 3 (3.49%) Collective security, 5 (5.81%) organizing/ receiving welfare support, 13 (15.12%) improved voice in engaging with officeholders, 33 (38.37%) exposure to new concepts/ideas, 24 (27.91%) defence of rights, 21

(24.42%) change of government, 30 (34.88%) better social order.

Table 20: Benefits Gotten from being Members of Political Parties

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective Security	3.49%	3
Organising/receiving welfare support	3.49%	3
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	5.81%	5
Exposure to new concept or ideas	15.12%	13
Sense of belonging	38.37%	33
Defence of rights	27.91%	24
Changes/Reforms within community	24.42%	21
Change of government	60.47%	52
Better social order	34.88%	30

The respondents also raised issues that affect their operations where 8 (9.30%) mentioned gender based discrimination, 12 (13.95%) cited Low level of participation, 8 (9.30%) noted weak governance procedures, 39 (45.35%) said Leadership had problems, 39 (45.35%) cited corruption, 8 (9.30%) were concerned that their association had no formal registration, 3 (3.49%) highlighted difficulty in meeting government regulatory requirements e.g. Tax compliance, and 41 (47.67%) named funding as problem.

Table 21: Problems Facing Members of Political Parties

PROBLEM	RESPONSES	
Gender based discrimination	9.30%	8
Low levels of participation	13.95%	12
Weak governance procedures	9.30%	8
Leadership	45.35%	39
Corruption	45.35%	39
Formal registration	9.30%	8
Meeting government regulatory requirements e.g., tax compliance	3.49%	3
Funding	47.67%	41



As it can be seen in the table above, funding is the biggest problem that requires fixing in political parties as attested by 41 (47.67%) respondents. Asked if they had faced any discrimination, 7 (8.14%) respondents said they had been discriminated against at some point where 1 (14.29%) faced prohibited membership, 6 (85.71%) defined tribal/ethnic boundaries, 2 (28.57%) respondents had faced age discrimination (too young or too old).

Table 22: Forms of Discrimination Faced by Members of Political Parties

FORM	RESPONSES	
Language Barriers	0.00%	0
Prohibitive Membership Costs/Fees	14.29%	1
Defined geographical boundaries	0.00%	0
Membership defined by gender (for e.g., women's only group)	0.00%	0
Defined religious boundaries	0.00%	0
Defined tribal/ethnic boundaries	85.71%	6
Age (too young or too old)	28.57%	2
Disability	0.00%	0
Legal (not having national registration/ID documents)	0.00%	0



When asked if the association had commonly owned assets, 26 (30.23%) said yes. Among these, 18 (69.23%) said the association commonly owned land, while 25 (96.15%) mentioned building.

Youth Group

On answering how Youth groups were established 55 respondents participated and among these 4 (7.27%) said their group was established through Trust, 7 (12.73%) said their group was established through Constitution, 1 (1.82%) company Limited by Guarantee, 25 (45.45%) association, 11 (20.00%) claimed theirs has no formal registration and 7 (12.73%) did not know how their organization was formed.

Table 23: Methods of Establishment of Youth Groups

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	7.27%	4
Constitution	12.73%	7
Company Limited by Guarantee	1.82%	1
Association	45.45%	25
No formal registration	20.00%	11
I do not know	12.73%	7
Total		55

Among the 55 respondents, 21 (38.18%) were officeholders. Gender in the positions of decision making is distributed as follows:

Table 24: Gender Distribution in Leadership Positions in Youth Groups

POSITION	MALE	FEMALE	N/A	TOTAL
Chairperson	81.82% 45	18.18% 10	0.00% 0	55
Vice Chairperson	36.36% 20	56.36% 31	7.27% 4	55
Secretary	30.91% 17	69.09% 38	0.00% 0	55
Treasurer	45.45% 25	49.09% 27	5.45% 3	55
Committee Member 1	58.18% 32	18.18% 10	23.64% 13	55
Committee Member 2	36.36% 20	32.73% 18	30.91% 17	55
Committee Member 3	22.64% 12	39.62% 21	37.74% 20	53

Regarding the selection of officeholders, 31 (56.36%) respondents said their officeholders are selected through elections, 17 (30.91%) said they are appointed, 5 (9.09%) take position on voluntary basis, 2 (3.64%) did not know how the selection is done.

Table 25: Ways of Selecting Leaders among Youth Groups

WAY	RESPONSES
Elections	56.36% 31
Appointed	30.91% 17
Hereditary	0.00% 0
Voluntary	9.09% 5
I do not know	3.64% 2
Total	55

From the above table, it is evident that youth groups prefer elections as a way of selecting their officeholders/leaders



as attested by 31 (56.36%) respondents. There were 17 (30.91%) who said that their leaders are appointed though it is unclear who the appointing authority is in this case.

On the frequency of their meetings, 17 (30.91%) respondents said meetings are conducted weekly, 34 (61.82%) mentioned monthly, 4 (7.27%) claimed they meet annually. Most of these meetings are through a combination of both face to face and digital online platforms as attested by 29 (53.70%). 22 (40.74%) respondents said their meeting are regular face to face meeting, while 3 (5.56%) mentioned the use of Digital Online Platforms (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Facebook).

Table 26: Modes of Interaction among the Youth Groups

MODE	RESPONSES	
Regular Face to Face Meetings	40.74%	22
Digital Online Platforms (e.g Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook)	5.56%	3
Combination of both face to face and Digital Online Platforms	53.70%	29

The benefits attained by the 55 responds were: 8 (14.55%) Collective security, 12 (21.82%) organization receiving welfare support, 4 (7.27%) improved voice in engaging with officeholders, 23 (41.82%) exposure to new concepts/ideas, 28 (50.91%) Sense of belonging, 18 (32.73%) Defence of Rights, 16 (29.09%) Change/ Reforms within community, 1 (1.82%) Change of Government, 23 (41.82%) Better social order, and 1 (1.82%) did not specify.

Table 27: Benefits Drawn from Youth Groups

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective Security	14.55%	8
Organising/receiving welfare support	21.82%	12
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	7.27%	4
Exposure to new concept or ideas	41.82%	23
Sense of belonging	50.91%	28
Defence of rights	32.73%	18
Changes/Reforms within community	29.09%	16
Change of government	1.82%	1
Better social order	41.82%	23
Unity	1.82%	1
Total		55

On problems affecting their association, 7 (12.73%) respondents said gender based discrimination afflicted their associations, 14 (25.45%) cited low level of participation, 4 (7.27%) mentioned weak governance procedures, 15 (27.27%) claimed leadership was a problem, 11 (20.00%) blamed corruption, 10 (18.18%) said their association was affected for lacking formal registration, 8 (14.55%) said they didn't meet governmental regulatory e.g. tax compliance while 35 (63.64%) felt funding was an issue. These are shown in the table below:

Table 28: Problems Affecting Youth groups

PROBLEM	RESPONSES	
Gender based discrimination	12.73%	7
Low levels of participation	25.45%	14
Weak governance procedures	7.27%	4
Leadership	27.27%	15
Corruption	20.00%	11
Formal registration	18.18%	10
Meeting government regulatory requirements e.g. tax compliance	14.55%	8
Funding	63.64%	35
Total		55



It should be noted that in most associations, not only the youth associations, funding emerged as one of the major problems affecting them.

When the 55 youth were asked if they had experienced any form of discrimination in their association, 2 (3.64%) answered in the affirmative where; prohibitive membership costs/Fees had been experienced by 1 (50.00%) resident, 1 (50.00%) was not comfortable with defined religious boundaries, while at the same time faced age restrictions (too young or too old).

When asked if the association had commonly owned property, 7 (12.73%) said there is something owned in common by the association where 5 (71.43%) said land was commonly owned, 1 (14.29%) mentioned a water body (dam), and 3 (42.86%) cited buildings.

Table 29: Commonly Accessed Assets among Youth Groups

ASSET	RESPONSES	
Land	71.43%	5
Minerals	0.00%	0
Water body (Dam)	14.29%	1
Tourist Attraction	0.00%	0
Grazing Lands	0.00%	0
Buildings	42.86%	3
Total		7

4.2 Citizens and Social Support

The following is the analysis of citizen and social support in Kenya:

Table 30: Socially Focused Associations

ASSOCIATION	FREQUENCY	
	Number#	%
Fellowship Group /Religious Group (temples, churches, mosques, shrine etc)	220	53.66%
Burial Societies	35	8.54%
Sporting Association	19	4.63%
Entertainment Group (dance, choir etc)	22	5.37%
School Association Parent/Teacher Group	20	4.88%
Alumni Association	29	7.07%
Book/Reading Club	7	1.71%
Community Development Association	10	2.44%
Service Organisation or Club (e.g., Lions Club; Rotary International)	2	0.48%
Neighbourhood Watch Committee	5	1.19%
Communal Granary	4	0.95%
Community Feeding Group	5	1.19%
Community Foundation	8	1.90%

There were 13 categories in social support associations. Most respondents, 220 (53.66%), belong to fellowship group / religious group. Burial societies had a representation of 35 (8.54%) which was the second highest representation in the social support group. The third was alumni association which attracted 29 (7.07%) respondents. Below is the analysis:



Fellowship Group/Religious Group

A total of 218 respondents answered that they were members of fellowship group /religious group. Concerning the methods of establishment, 15 (6.88%) respondents said their group was established through trust, 86 (39.45%) cited through constitution, 2 (0.92%) mentioned company limited by guarantee, 29 (13.30%) said through association, 11 (5.05%) said their group had no formal registration, and 74 (33.94%) said they did not know how it was formed.

Table 31: Methods of Establishment among Fellowship Groups

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	6.88%	15
Constitution	39.45%	86
Company Limited by Guarantee	0.92%	2
Association	13.30%	29
No formal registration	5.05%	11
I do not know	33.94%	74

Among these members, 32 (14.61%) were officeholders. 67 (30.73%) respondents said their leaders are selected through Elections, 123 (56.42%) through Appointment, 1 (0.46%) through inheritance, 9 (4.13%) through Voluntary basis and 18 (8.26%) respondents responded that they did not know how their leaders were selected.

Table 32: Methods of Selecting Leaders in Fellowship Group

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Elections	30.73%	67
Appointed	56.42%	123
Hereditary	0.46%	1
Voluntary	4.13%	9
I do not know	8.26%	18

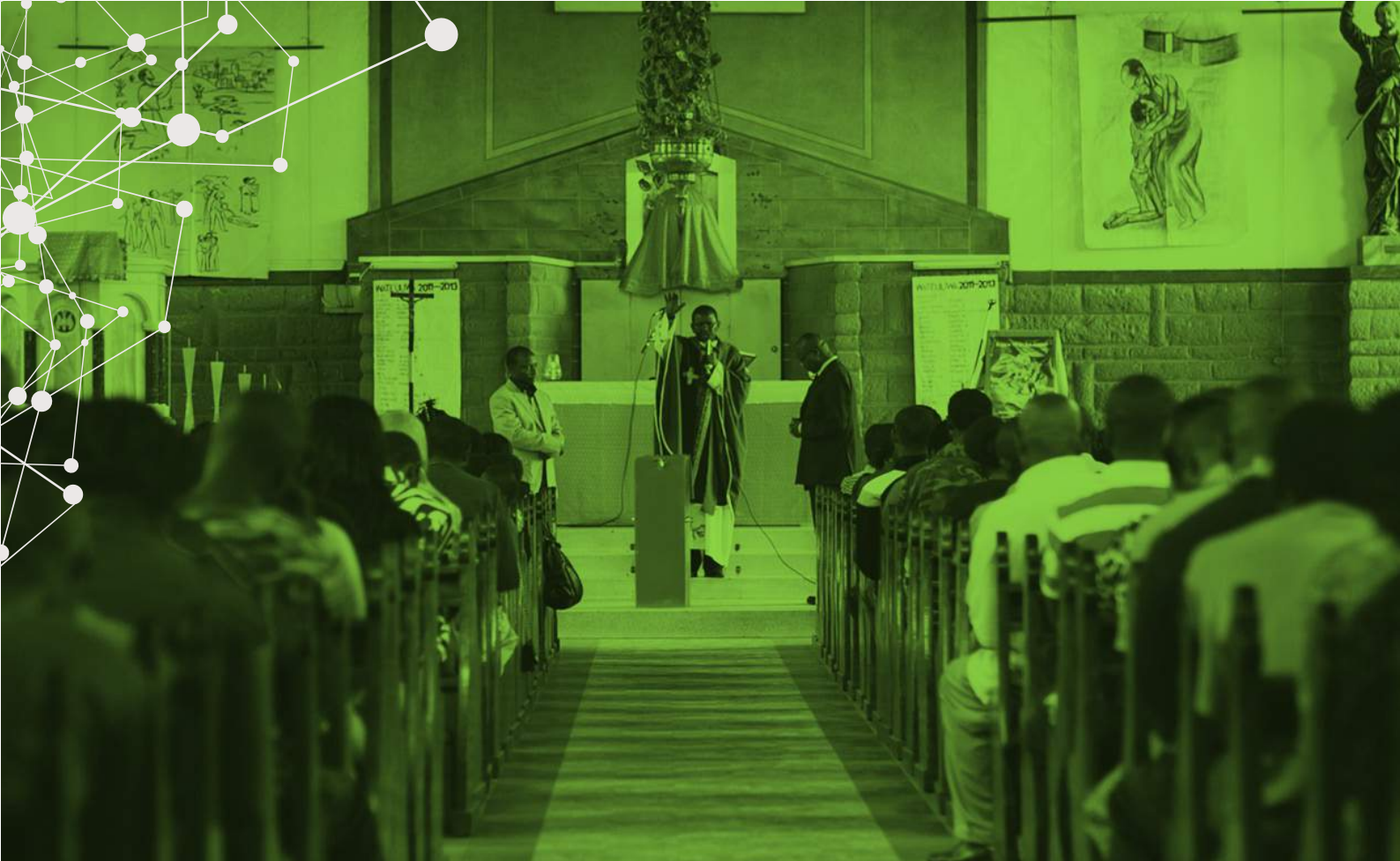


As it can be seen in the table above, leaders are mostly appointed into leadership positions as attested by 123 (56.42%) of the respondents. Election was cited by only 67 (30.73%) of the respondents. A sizeable number of respondents, 18 (8.26%) did not know how their leaders are chosen.

There were different aspects of gender that was researched. For instance, we wanted to know how gender is distributed in positions of decision making. Gender in the positions of decision making is distributed as follows:

Table 33: Gender Distribution in Leadership Positions in Religious Groups

POSITION	MALE	FEMALE	N/A	TOTAL
Chairperson	88.13% 193	10.96% 24	0.91% 2	219
Vice Chairperson	48.17% 105	50.00% 109	1.83% 4	218
Secretary	35.16% 77	64.38% 141	0.46% 1	219
Treasurer	53.67% 117	45.87% 100	0.46% 1	218
Committee Member 1	51.21% 106	42.03% 87	6.76% 14	207
Committee Member 2	50.72% 105	39.61% 82	9.66% 20	
Committee Member 3	41.06% 85	46.38% 96	12.56% 26	



As it can be seen in the above table, the position of chairperson is dominated by males having 193 (88.13%) respondents as opposed to females who were only 24 (10.96%).

Meetings are regularly held in fellowship- groups. 113 (51.60%) of respondents said they have regular face to face meetings, 3 (1.37%) of the respondents said they use digital online platforms (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook) whereas 103 (47.03%) said their meetings use a Combination of both face to face and digital online platforms.

Table 34: Frequency of Meetings among Fellowship Groups

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	RESPONSES	
Daily	0.00%	0
Weekly	63.13%	137
Monthly	20.28%	44
Annually	16.59%	36

The members draw different benefits from this type of association (see the table below). The benefits driven from the group received the following responses: collective security 8 (3.65%), entertainment benefits 6 (2.74%), organization/ welfare support 52 (23.74%), improved voice in engaging with officeholders 15 (6.85%), exposure to new concepts/ideas stood at 35 (15.98%), physical wellbeing 49 (22.37%), sense of belonging at 74 (33.79%), spiritual support 191 (87.21%) and 43 (19.63%) benefitted by networking.

Table 35: Benefits Drawn from Fellowship Groups

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective Security	3.65%	8
Entertainment	2.74%	6
Organising/receiving welfare support	23.74%	52
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	6.85%	15
Exposure to new concept or ideas	15.98%	35
Physical wellbeing	22.37%	49
Sense of belonging	33.79%	74
Spiritual support	87.21%	191
Networking	19.63%	43
Total Respondents:		219

The respondents expressed concerns for issues affecting their associations. Some of these problems are Gender based discrimination which was expressed by 6 (2.74%) respondents, Low levels of participation 33 (15.07%), Weak governance procedures 10 (4.57%) Leadership 45 (20.55%), Corruption 10 (4.57%) Formal registration 5 (2.28%), Meeting government regulatory requirements e.g., tax compliance 7 (3.20%), Funding 72 (32.88%) and 92 (42.01%) respondent mentioned other problems not on the list but did not specify.

Table 36: Problems Affecting Fellowship Groups

PROBLEM	RESPONSES	
None of the above	42.01%	92
Gender based discrimination	2.74%	6
Low levels of participation	15.07%	33
Weak governance procedures	4.57%	10
Leadership	20.55%	45
Corruption	4.57%	10
Formal registration	2.28%	5
Meeting government regulatory requirements e.g., tax compliance	3.20%	7
Funding	32.88%	72

Among the 219 respondents who are members of fellowship groups, 12 (5.48%) said they had been discriminated against in one way or another of whom 6 (50.00%) of the respondents had faced Language Barriers, 1 (8.33%) faced rigid religious boundaries, 2 (16.67%) faced Defined tribal/ethnic boundaries, 1 (8.33%) was discriminated against on the basis of Age (too young or too old), and 1 (8.33%) faced Legal hurdles (not having national registration/Identity Documents). One person mentioned other forms of discrimination.

Table 37: Forms of Discrimination among Fellowship Groups

FORM	RESPONSES	
Language Barriers	50.00%	6
Prohibitive Membership Costs/Fees	0.00%	0
Defined geographical boundaries	0.00%	0
Membership defined by gender (for e.g., women's only group)	8.33%	1
Defined religious boundaries	8.33%	1
Defined tribal/ethnic boundaries	16.67%	2
Age (too young or too old)	8.33%	1
Disability	0.00%	0
Legal (not having national registration/ID documents)	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	8.33%	1
Total respondents		12



When asked if their associations owned assets in common, 71 (32.27%) of the 220 respondents in this category responded in the affirmative. Property that respondents said they owned in common included land 61 (85.92%), Water body (Dam) 2 (2.82%), Tourist Attraction points, Grazing Lands 1 (1.41%), and Buildings 43 (60.56%) respondents.

Table 38: Assets Held in Common among Fellowship Groups

ASSET	RESPONSES	
Land	85.92%	61
Minerals	0.00%	0
Water body (Dam)	2.82%	2
Tourist Attraction	0.00%	0
Grazing Lands	1.41%	1
Buildings	60.56%	43
Total Participants		71

Burial Societies

Burial societies are normally organised in neighbourhoods. They come together to support financially, socially and materially any bereaved households among its members. This category had 35 respondents. Of these, 1 (2.86%) said their group was established through constitution, 1 (2.86) company limited by guarantee, 12 (34.29%) association, 4 (11.43%) claimed theirs had no formal registration and 17 (48.57%) did not know how their organizations were formed.

Table 39: Methods of Establishment of Burial Society

METHOD	RESPONSES	
Trust	0.00%	0
Constitution	2.86%	1
Company Limited by Guarantee	2.86%	1
Association	34.29%	12
No formal registration	11.43%	4
I do not know	48.57%	17
Total		35

When asked how their leaders were selected, 22(62.86%) said their officeholders are selected through elections, 11 (31.43%) are appointed, 1 (2.86%) are hereditary, 1 (2.86%) are voluntary.

The table below shows the gender equation in positions of decision making:

Table 40: Gender Distribution in Leadership Positions in Burial Societies

POSITION	MALE	FEMALE	N/A	TOTAL
Chairperson	94.29% 33	2.86% 1	2.86% 1	35
Vice Chairperson	20.00% 7	60.00% 21	20.00% 7	
Secretary	20.00% 7	80.00% 28	0.00% 0	
Treasurer	88.57% 31	11.43% 4	0.00% 0	
Committee Member 1	28.13% 9	40.63% 13	31.25% 10	32
Committee Member 2	36.36% 12	27.27% 9	36.36% 12	33
Committee Member 3	30.30% 10	30.30% 10	39.39% 13	

Regarding the frequencies of interactions 3 (8.57%) respondents said their meetings are conducted weekly, 11 (31.43%) monthly, and 21 (60.00%) said annually. Ways of holding meetings varied. 31 (88.57%) respondents said their meeting are regular face to face meetings, while 4 (11.43%) said they used a combination of both face to face and digital online

Table 41: Frequency of Interaction among Burial Societies

FREQUENCY	RESPONSES	
Daily	0.00%	0
Weekly	8.57%	3
Monthly	31.43%	11
Annually	60.00%	21
Total		35

While responding to the question of benefits gotten by being members of this society, 1 (2.86%) cited Collective security, 1 (2.86%) entertainment, 27 (77.14%) organization receiving welfare support, 3 (8.57%) improved voice in engaging with officeholders, 8 (22.86%) exposure to new concepts/ideas, 18 (51.43%) physical wellbeing, 6 (17.14%) sense of belonging, 2 (5.71%) received spiritual nourishment and 2 (5.71%) benefited by networking.

Table 42: Benefits Drawn from Burial Society

BENEFIT	RESPONSES	
Collective Security	2.86%	1
Entertainment	2.86%	1
Organising/receiving welfare support	77.14%	27
Improved voice in engaging with officeholders	8.57%	3
Exposure to new concept or ideas	22.86%	8
Physical wellbeing	51.43%	18
Sense of belonging	17.14%	6
Spiritual support	5.71%	2
Networking	5.71%	2
Total		35



Burial societies are mainly formed to offer welfare support from the members as attested by 27 (77.14%) members. also highly mentioned was physical wellbeing which received 18 responses (51.43%) responses.



5. Conclusion

Governance cannot be achieved without the active engagement of citizens and civil society actors. This survey sought to map those things that citizens do in the society especially among themselves. The research was conducted in the Nairobi metropolitan region.

The survey focused on three major categories of citizen initiative: economic, political and social initiatives. These are initiatives that governance and democracy cannot flourish without and in which the citizenry play a critical role.

Under economic initiatives, we surveyed several citizen associations. These associations were savings and lending group, labour pooling group, production cooperative, buying clubs (e.g., collective group to buy groceries), marketing cooperative (involved in jointly selling commodities), common property group (natural resources), asset pooling group, market group/platform (a place or network where members sell goods/services to each other), business promotion council, business advocacy/lobby group, business mentorship/training group, housing cooperative, and multi-level marketing schemes (e.g. Avon, Tablecharm, Tupperware). Among these, the savings and lending group had the highest reorientation.

Regarding political citizen initiatives, we surveyed the following: campaign group, political party, social movement, joint public petition, local peace committee, residents' association, online based civic coalition, women's group, and youth group. Among these groups, political parties had the highest representation among the respondents.

Last we had the social support focused groups. These included: fellowship group /religious group (temples, churches, mosques, shrine etc.), burial societies, sporting association, entertainment group (dance, choir etc.), school association parent/teacher group, alumni association, book/reading club, community development association, service organization or club (e.g. Lions Club; Rotary International), neighbourhood watch committee, communal



granary, community feeding group, and community foundation. Fellowship/religious group had the largest number of respondents at 220 which represented 53.66% of the study sample.



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SIVIO Institute (SI) is an independent organisation focused on ensuring that citizens are at the centre of processes of socio-economic and policy change. It aims to contribute towards Africa's inclusive socio-economic transformation. It is borne out of a desire to enhance agency as a stimulus/catalyst for inclusive political and socio-economic transformation. SIVIO's work entails multi-disciplinary, cutting-edge policy research, nurturing citizens' agency to be part of the change that they want to see, working with communities to mobilize their assets to resolve some of the immediate problems they face.

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