

REPONSES TO THE KEY QUESTIONS:

1. In Kenya we have pockets of minority cultural groups living away from their original settlements. In our County of operation, Nakuru county, we have the Turkana community whose fore-parents relocated to Naivasha in search of casual employment and settled in one place where they found employment. The families grew bigger; however, the social amenities were lacking. In the 1980s, the company wound up and left the community behind as squatters, without water, electricity, dignified shelter, schools and hospitals and above all with their means of earning a living had come to an end.

There are segregated groups of people living as minorities in some regions of Kenya. For example, we have the Turkana community of about 490 persons, whose level of poverty leave them vulnerable to exploitation especially labor and early marriages for the girls so that the parents can earn bride wealth. This is in Naivasha Subcounty of Nakuru County. These are girls of age 13-18 while the young men go out in search of casual jobs instead of going to school and college. There are 6 children (5-11 years) living with disability risk growing up to be exploited since they have no access to special services as late as November 2021.

Often, the young adults find their way to across boarders where the circumstances become more grievous as far as exploitation is concerned.

1. What types of personal, situational and structural factors push minorities into contemporary forms of slavery in your country/community?

They do not have access to social and economic amenities: no hospitals, schools, ID cards and so can’t access government services easily. The majority do not participate in the democratic process because they are not registered as citizens. Thus, the girls and young women who leave the settlement become domestic servants working long hours, little pay, and overworked besides some of them being sexually exploited in the homes, The boys and young men find casual labor opportunities in the quarries in the nearby towns of Mai Mahiu and Longonot. Some become victims of prostitution along the busy highways.

1. Yes, the fact that they cannot speak the national language or even the indigenous habitant’s language means that integration with other citizens and voicing their grievances is low. It mans too those chances of participating in the economic activities is very limited. The community lives by themselves. Their parents were squatters working for a ranch and when the ranch closed down, they continued to live there, jobless and without an income. The land doesn’t belong to them and so social amenities cant be developed. They too cannot build permanent homes even if they were able to.
2. There are policies developed both at national and local government level that that support integration into the host communities. This is also true of the urban refugees within the County. This empowerment lowers the chances of vulnerabilities to exploitation.
3. Non-Governmental entities including Life Bloom, raise awareness on the need for education for the children and adults alike. They lobby for inclusion in schools, they support monetarily and grow leadership clubs among the vulnerable and survivors of forms of slavery. Include the communities in the organizations program, hold open forums, and train the minorities on leadership to be their own voices. They also train the community members on income generating activities and job training. Life Bloom implements the Five Steps Curriculum among the minority communities in her area of jurisdiction.

1. Advocating for inclusion, finding jobs, business training and providing pro bono services for legal justice. Life Bloom (our organization) first partnered with Red Cross Nakuru Branch to carry out a needs assessment on the community in 2019. In 2020/21, the community received relief food, sanitary towels and water tanks from resources mobilized by Life Bloom and Red-cross. On Dec 10th 2021, Life Bloom and Redcross led more than 20 civil societies, Faith Based organizations and government departments to celebrate the end of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence in Camp Turkana. The children living with disability were assessed for intervention and already receiving intervention and placement for special needs schools. The youth are receiving training integrated into the Naivasha Sub County government sponsored scholarships. Some men and women are also receiving income generating skills training. While the government has taken up the responsibility of issuing National Identification documents to the adults.
2. The gains from made before 2020 (pre Coviid 19 pandemic) came crumbling down as the community could not interact with the outside community due to the local travel bans and stoppage of trainings and meetings. Some of the community members lost their jobs.

The mitigation however continued albeit at low levels. Inclusion in education of about Covid, water provision, masks and soap and now Covd 19 jab.

1. National Referral Mechanisms exist. However, sensitization is very low. Often justice. The mechanisms report cases of other violations and not modern forms of slavery: like sexual exploitation. Culture too holds us back, its cultural to have early marriages etc.We have laws in Kenya that prohibit modern forms of slavery. However, not yet implemented
2. The National Referral Mechanism manual is the most popular though with very little effect because the awareness creation and ownership of the processes of reporting is very low in the country. Media, government administration mechanisms often don’t reach out to some of these left behind communities.
3. Carry out research on the common forms, and the interventions available, the level of awareness etc of modern forms of slaver in Kenya to inform a plan moving forward.

Inclusion in the policy development for programming purposes an budget.

Increase Media inclusion to raise awareness on their existence.

More raising of awareness on the modern forms of slavery which are normalized in many aspects through the existing government and civil societies structures.

Mapping of organizations and Development of networks that focus on contemporary forms of slavery and take like 3 years working on awareness creation and referral mechanisms.

Allocating more resources for these interventions to address the ever-increasing levels of contemporary forms of slavery. The lack of resources normally stops Life Bloom from scaling up our interventions.