CONTENTS

ABBREVIATED TERMS

AMWIK	Association of Media Women in Kenya
AU	African Union
BAKE	Bloggers Association of Kenya
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organisation(s)
CKW	Concerned Kenyan Writers
CCP	Concerned Citizens for Peace
CRLG	Community Radio Listening Groups
ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
GV	Global Voices
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMLU	Independent Medico-Legal Unit
KBW	Kenya Blogs Webring
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KHRC	Kenyan Human Rights Commission
KPU	Kenya's People Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NARC	The National Rainbow Coalition
NASA	National Super Alliance
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Committee
NMT	New Media Technology
NSE	National Steering Committee
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
OWS	Occupy Wall Street
PEV	Post-Election Violence
RG	Redykyulass Generation
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SID	Society for International Development
SM	Social Media
SNA-K	Sisi Ni Amani Kenya
SR	Sahara Reporters
UGC	User-Generated Content
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WB	World Bank

MAP OF KENYA

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION – THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

The ubiquitous and fast-growing Internet platform in Africa has given opportunities to a new set of non-state actors to offer nonviolent intervention in addressing protracted conflicts with the use of new media technology (NMT). As a departure from a state-centric approach to addressing conflict in Africa, this interdisciplinary study explores the contribution of the public in responding to armed conflicts through citizen journalism. According to Bock (2012) the paradoxes inherent in the field of peace and conflict studies, and in peace processes, have long been without a solution. No one-size-fits-all approach has worked, resulting in the failure of most international peacebuilding mechanisms in several countries. These interventions tend to only scratch the surface of the issues, in part due to the highly bureaucratic, technocratic and rushed approaches used. The argument of the extant literature focusing on people-centred approaches to peace processes has uncovered one significant failure of most interventions, namely, that people's participation in their own affairs is lacking. The central role of people's participation in their own peace processes is rarely given due attention. People matter for peace processes to succeed.

There are various ways in which people's participation in their own affairs culminate in different steps that enhance sustainable peace. John Lederach (2003) views these multilayers of participation as central to constructive peace processes. Other eminent scholars, such as Galtung (1996; 2007) and Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke (2010), have emphasised empirically the importance of people-centred approaches to conflict transformation for the attainment of sustainable peace. Most especially, with the advent of the new media, there are nonviolent people and youth-led initiatives that respond to violent conflict in various capacities. One of these dimensions is that of citizen journalism platforms, where amateur reporters have moved from merely reporting crisis and disaster incidents to taking proactive steps in solution generation (Thorsen and Allan 2014).

It is against this backdrop that the study's scholarly inquisition ventures into exploring the ubiquitous phenomenon of the new media in peace processes through citizen journalism, looking at uncovering its contribution to conflict transformation. The

Ushahidi platform, which took meaningful action in crowdsourcing for crisis mapping at the height of Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV), offers a critical context for understanding the relevance of a people-centred approach to peace.

In 2008, the Kenyan community suffered fatal and gruesome post-independence political violence, owing to election irregularities resulting in over 1000 deaths and over 500,000 displaced people (Mwiandi 2008). The 2008 PEV in Kenya brought to the surface deep ethnic divisions among the public rooted in socioeconomic and political problems (Mwiandi 2008). At the forefront of those seeking solutions, especially regarding reporting the extent of the violence, was a citizen journalism platform, Ushahidi (a Kiswahili word for "testimony"), that emerged as a result of citizens' desire "to do something" when information became truncated due to the ban of Kenyan's broadcasting houses by the Ministry of Internal Security (Makinen & Kuira 2008). The mass media houses were alleged to have accelerated the violence by spreading "alarmist information", which further sent the nation into deep pandemonium (Makinen & Kuira 2008). Because of this development, according to Jeffery (2011), four bloggers teamed up to create the Ushahidi platform to report, document, and provide information to the wider populace and the international community on the extent of the upheavals. This documentation resulted in a 'mashup' of information leading to a graphic representation of the crisis on Google Maps for the purposes of documentation, justice and conciliation (Jeffery 2011). Ushahidi has since then participated in monitoring of the 2010 constitutional referendum and the 2013 election through its Uchaguzi project. It is also participating in a multi-agent consortium on early warning systems.

Therefore, a citizen journalism platform became an active reporting avenue by the Ushahidi team, in collaboration with other citizen journalists to crowdsource information on the extent and magnitude of the violence among the Kenyan populace (Rotich & Goldstein 2008; Jewitt 2009; Banda 2010). Additionally, Ushahidi also broke new ground in partnering with international and local NGOs, as well as delivering services through its open-source software to map crises and disasters in various countries such as Chile, South Africa, USA, Haiti, India, the Philippines and Pakistan (Banda 2010:57).

This research explored what the contribution of Ushahidi to peace processes means in relation to the Kenya's 2008 PEV as a citizen journalism platform through the lens of conflict transformation. The gap in literature that this research sought to fill is on the value of citizen journalism in peace processes through the use of the new media with the following specific objectives in mind:

1. To explore the role of a people-centred approach to peace processes with the use of the new media through the lens of conflict transformation.
2. To investigate how citizen journalism has contributed to conflict transformation in Africa between 2008 and 2013 in the Kenyan context.

The dearth of information in relation to new media technology (NMT) or new media in the literature is in part because the new media is a 21st century phenomenon and scholars are gradually beginning to shift their attention to understanding the significance of this development, most especially in the field of peace and conflict studies. Some scholars, such as Bock (2012), have explored the nonviolent contribution of NMT in the hands of the people without an intrinsic focus on their contribution to peace processes. Junne (2013) cursorily acknowledges the value of citizen journalism in peacemaking, without offering an in-depth analysis. Thus, in much of the literature consulted, and particularly in Banda (2010) on *Citizen Journalism and Democracy in Africa*, the focus on citizen journalists' user-generated content (UGC) is more on their democratic values, media activism and revolutionary tactics and not so much on their contributions to peace. To fill this lacuna in scholarly work, this research investigates the Ushahidi platform's responses to Kenya's 2008 PEV as a citizen journalism platform to uncover its contribution to peace processes.

1.1   Conflict Transformation and Constructive Change Processes

Conflict transformation refers to a holistic peace process that seeks to reduce structural and cultural violence by addressing their root causes through bottom-up durable construction of long-term advocacy and strategic planning (Lederach 2003:14). Broadly, the composite elements of conflict transformation encompass relationship-

building, construction of effective social structures, justice, respect for human rights and nonviolent forms of resistance.

As will be discussed in further detail in chapter two, conflict transformation is a framework that "envisions and responds to the ebb and flow of social conflict as 'life-giving opportunities' to create constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships" (Lederach 2003:14). Lederach (2003) argues that conflict transformation addresses some of the elements missing in other approaches to peace, including the lack of a bottom-up, durable construction of long-term advocacy and strategic planning, especially in relation to conflict management and conflict resolution.

Conflict transformation focuses on the holistic reconstruction of human relationships and also puts people at the centre of transformation, given their willingness to engage and move the conflict from destructive to constructive. This upward movement is known as a constructive change process. In this case, Lederach (2003:27) offers four levels of constructive change processes that must be engaged in to rebuild relationships and failed institutions, including personal, relational, structural and cultural.

Lederach (2003:27) sees the personal as minimising the destructive effects of social conflict and maximising the potential for the person's holistic growth and well-being; the relational hinges on minimising poorly functioning communication and maximising understanding; the structural as uprooting causes and conditions creating violent conflicts to promote nonviolent mechanisms for long-term peace and foster the necessary development structures to meet basic human needs; and lastly the cultural identifies and understands the contributing patterns in the rise of violence which in itself assists in building mechanisms for constructive responses to conflict.

Thus, conflict transformation is critically interested in the inclusion of people at all levels in peace processes. This makes NMT a platform to which conflict transformation and citizen journalism functionalities can be traced, as they both have "people" at their

epicentres. Citizen journalism, as a people-centred platform, has the potential to contribute to conflict transformation. Therefore, this assumption was tested in this research, through an analysis of Ushahidi and its response to Kenya's 2008 PEV as the core interest of this thesis.

Significantly, if conflict transformation allows for ownership of peace processes by the people (Donais 2012), looking at the application of the concept in the evolving new media paradigm is timely. As a key element of conflict transformation, this thesis therefore examines, through the data, Ushahidi's citizen journalism constructive change processes in responding to Kenyan political crisis.

1.2   Situating the Research in a Conceptual Context

This research rests on two broader bodies of literature, namely peace and conflict, and citizen journalism. Both bodies of literature address the central commonality of people's inclusion and participation in public affairs and the importance of such positions. The broader literature on peace and conflict focuses extensively on people's participation and inclusion as panaceas for long-term peace from post-Cold War reflections. Conversely, citizen journalism provides a new avenue for exploring how the engagement of the virtual community, also known as netizens (a term for avid and habitual Internet users including bloggers, online activists, and citizen journalists), is impacting peace and conflict in Africa before basing the theoretical framework on conflict transformation.

1.2.1   Peace Processes: The Missing Link

Multifaceted post-Cold War challenges have continued to affect peace and development in the 21st century. Since the Cold War ended with irreparable damages and the death of over 50 million people in total (Åkerlund 2005, Acharya 2008), the actualisation of global peace has remained elusive. Various endemic diseases, climate change, poverty, environmental degradation, terrorism, and intrastate violent conflicts have continued to plague the world. Thus, peace and economic scholars promulgate the unorthodox security (human security) approach as a way forward. With human security as opposed to the exclusive focus on state security, the concerns of people, needs and development

are cast as the topmost priorities of the State. This is yet to be widely achieved by many countries. Also, in the same light is the novel but yet to be attained idea of people's holistic participation and inclusion in public/political affairs, particularly in peace processes. The inclusion of people's participation in achieving lasting peace especially in war-ridden countries cannot be overemphasised.

Bock (2012) among other scholars, in evaluating the UN peace process mechanisms, found them disturbingly wanting. In responding to the implicated shortcomings of the UN peace mechanisms, Boutros Boutros-Ghali recast the UN peace initiatives in the 1992 document *An Agenda for Peace* to ensure that the UN addresses and responds effectively to its peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacekeeping challenges for the effective realisation of world peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Still, the technocratic and over-militarised nature of the UN peace mechanisms, as well as a short-term focus that does not dig deep into the root cause of violence or hinge solutions on people's participation, have continued to reflect a colossal failure (Bock 2012; Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010; Galtung 2007; Lederach 2003). Hence, the conceptual framework offered by *An Agenda for Peace* was unable to sufficiently influence the UN peace operations and the UN failed to critically address its international interventions' shortcomings (Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010). The aforementioned scholars have hence advocated for the bottom-up approach of sustainable peace from a people-centred paradigm, which, as argued later in this thesis, is important for lasting peace.

1.2.2   The 21st Century Participatory Media

The advent of the 21st century new media technology (NMT) has significantly altered the landscape of people's participation in socio-political affairs from mild to vibrant. Through the new media, new non-state actors, considered the citizen journalists, have become very prominent. Citizen journalism has become an effervescent platform where people produce powers that disrupt the mass media monopoly, shake repressive regimes, coordinate for humanitarian assistance and so on. Citizen journalism is based on the concept of 'ordinary' citizens "playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information" (Bowman and Willis,

2003). Aided by 21st century technology, citizen journalism has morphed from mere reportage to coordinating for actions and finding solutions to grievous situations.

Barlow (2010), Moyo (2011) and Mpofu (2013) argue that citizen journalism has exhibited consistency in revolutionary ideas of change. Furthermore, Jewitt (2009) accentuates the importance of the ability of 'ordinary' citizens to share information, upload content and engage in public dialogue. Gillmor (2006) stresses further that citizen journalism platforms serve as avenues to challenge and transform several aspects of society, including the government and the corporate world. Also, Aday et al. (2010) state that the new media has made collective actions as well as individual participation in public affairs more prominent. Howard's (2011:12) position reflects more on what the NMT has ushered in by stating that "technology alone does not cause political change—it did not in Iran's (2009 post-election) case. But it does provide new capacities and imposes new constraints on political actors. New information technologies do not topple dictators; they are used to catch dictators off-guard." Watson and Wadhwa (2014) infer that citizen journalism has moved from its infancy to a matured platform where citizen journalists' multiplicity of roles includes conflict management. As conflict managers, the writers examine the usage of citizen journalists' reports in strategizing and initiating actions/solutions. Thus, these scholarly insights provide an understanding of the significance of the revolutionary roles of citizen journalism in disrupting, responding and transforming socio-political spheres.

Aside from the eyewitness accounts of global events such as 9/11, the 2008 Mumbai attacks and the 2005 London bombing, the African public have also utilised the new media to coordinate and organise protests and constructively respond to socio-political challenges. These are exemplified in the North African Arab Spring protests, the Kubatana.net report of the 2008 election irregularities in Zimbabwe and the Ushahidi crisis mapping of Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (Banda 2010; Moyo, 2011; Mutsvairo and Columbus 2012). More so, Banda (2010) and Junne (2013) state that Ushahidi's UGC significantly reveals the contribution of citizen journalism's platforms in addressing violent conflict with pragmatic innovations. Equally, Junne (2013), Aday et al. (2010) and Mutsvairo and Columbus (2012) also reveal that the new media

platform is a two-sided coin where conflict can be instigated, escalated, de-escalated or transformed.

In contrast, Zuckerman (2009:187) argues for the neutrality of technology. He sees the usability of technology in the hands of the people to suit their needs, for example, to aggravate or pacify crises. Considering the plethora of examples of the significance of citizen journalism as a platform where the public produces insuppressible powers that can ameliorate conflicts, this thesis turns to the responses to Kenya's 2008 PEV on the Ushahidi platform. To what extent has the Ushahidi platform contributed to conflict transformation since the 2008 PEV in Kenya? The findings of Ushahidi's contributions to the local dynamic of peace processes through the lens of constructive change processes, an element of conflict transformation, propounded by John Paul Lederach (2003), is presented later in this thesis.

1.3   **Research Methods and Designs**

This thesis adopted an interpretivist exploratory case study approach using qualitative methods. Through the lens of inductive reasoning, this study examines the assumption that the participation of the general public through the use of NMT contributes to bottom-up approaches to peace processes. Thus, this study explores how a people-centred approach to peace processes is unfolding through the new media. Using the Ushahidi platform as the case study, it explores how this platform and citizen journalists responded to the 2008 post-election violence (PEV) and continued to engage with election-related politics and violence until the 2013-general/presidential elections. The qualitative approach undertaken by this study was selected with the quest to gain logical insights into the chosen contemporary phenomenon, in the sense that it offers an opportunity for the formulation of a valid premise that helps satisfy the curiosity of the researcher for a better understanding of the problem (Babbie 2007). Consequently, this study asks *to what extent has the Ushahidi platform contributed to conflict transformation since the 2008 PEV in Kenya?*

Through unstructured in-depth interviews of 28 participants from diverse backgrounds, data for the study was gathered. The research participants consisted of government

officials, civil society members, bloggers/citizen journalists, activists, journalists, writers and technologists. For data gathering, three and half months were spent in Nairobi, Kenya for the fieldwork and most of the research participants were based in Nairobi. Those not in Nairobi were interviewed through Skype. Research participants were within the age group of 25-55, of which 9 were women and 19 were men. The disparity of gender balance was due to the difficulty in getting as many women as men for the research interviews.

Data was analysed with thematic techniques. Through thematic analysis, familiarisation with the data allowed for the establishment of a meaningful and cohesive narrative of field research. After sorting out codes, themes and patterns, the outcome of the interviews brought about a multidimensional outcome of field results. While the data presented mixed results about citizen journalism's divisive and cohesive efforts, the Ushahidi platform's constructive change processes are nonetheless evidence as discussed later in the thesis. The data showed Ushahidi's conflict transformation roles through crisis mapping, an early warning multi-agent consortium, and monitoring of the constitutional referendum and elections. The data also revealed Ushahidi as a pioneer in other nonviolent technology involvement in addressing crisis in Kenya, especially through the bidirectional mode of information that has enabled the amplifications of citizens' voices.

1.4   <u>Research Structure</u>

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter one covers the general introduction to the research background, literature review, research methods and design and research structure. Chapter two presents the empirical rationale for this study by providing the analytical context through which to explore the Ushahidi platform in peace processes. This chapter has a number of objectives. First, it aims to justify why it is necessary to fill in the gaps in the literature on the nascent 21st century technology and the roles of new non-state actors, especially the citizen journalists and bloggers, who are influencing peace and conflict through dialogue and innovations. Second, its goal is to integrate and extend prior studies on the importance of people-centred approaches to peace processes heralded by the new media in the hands of citizen journalists and bloggers. To achieve

the two goals of this chapter, the study provides a critical analysis of existing literature on peace mechanisms and the reasons why top-down approaches, especially by international organisations like the United Nations (UN), fail to work in many instances. This failure of the peace mechanisms is explained through the work of eminent peace and conflict scholars such as Galtung, Lederach and Olonisakin on people-centred approaches to peace processes. The work of these scholars is further integrated as this chapter argues that the emergence of the citizen journalism platform in peace initiatives has increased the participation of the general public in peace processes. In other words, the NMT in the hand of the general public is equally used for ICT4Peace initiatives. ICT4Peace is an acronym for Information and Communication Technology for Peace.

Chapter three outlines the methodological approach, research design and methods used in this study, including the collection of data through interviews and how the data was analysed and interpreted. Reliability and validity of research data are equally discussed. Finally, reflections on fieldwork and outcomes as well as the limitations of the research are extensively discussed.

Chapter four presents the overview of the background to Kenya's political conflicts. This chapter focuses on the crucial interlinked details of Kenya's pre- and post-independence history of power dominance, political alliances and betrayals to the detriment of the people's freedom and development. These point to the lack of transformational political institutions to serve and build a peaceful country for Kenyans. It is almost as if colonialism never ended, as the post-independence government's dictatorial tendencies and ethno-regional elitists' power play reflect the colonial model. The Kenya African National Union (KANU), under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Arap Moi, ruled the republic for four decades in disunity and despotism. This chapter shows that during and after the *de facto* one-party system and *de jure* one-party system, the Kenyan multiparty system continued to be run with a tight fist, through manipulation and the harassment of opposition groups. Kenyan political maturity appears to be wanting in its entirety. As Kagwanja (2009: 365) writes, "Kenya was already on the precipice long before the disputed 27 December 2007 election, which sparked the cataclysmic post-election violence that brought one of Africa's most

promising democracies to the brink of state failure".

Also, the chapter goes further to delineate the role of Kenyan civil society organisations and the youth in Kenya's political transitions, especially in the 2008 post-election violence (PEV). This chapter finally unpacks the emergence of the youth as political actors in the 21st century through the use of NMT or new media to influence socio-political platforms. This chapter concludes by looking at the significance of citizen journalism platforms such as Ushahidi's in responding to the 2008 PEV and the platform's role beyond this period.

Chapter five examines the many ways NMT was used during the violence, drawing from the interviews conducted with Kenyans who developed various kinds of online platforms in attempts to positively intervene. What emerges is that although these interventions were intended to bring about peace, the data points to mixed results. One of the themes emerging from the data is whether NMT is 'a Godsend or a double-edged sword'. Another is the prevalent problem of hate speech and the reaction of the research participants to the hate speech regulation of the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC). By and large, though, particularly if compared to the mainstream/mass media, the new media is seen to have played a positive role in increasing the agency of people, and providing a platform that allows people to play a role in their own affairs. It is through this endeavour that constructive change processes are traced.

Chapter six continues with the data presentation and analysis of field material with a particular focus on the Ushahidi platform. This chapter reflects on what works, what fails, and why, in the response by Ushahidi's and other Kenyan bloggers to Kenya's 2008 PEV and 2013 general elections. The post-Ushahidi 'change-making' platforms uncovered during the fieldwork, which reflect multifaceted and extensive interventions towards sustainable peace efforts, are also presented in this chapter. Finally, it concludes with Ushahidi's data presentation, which reflects the importance of people's participation in peace processes from a local context.

Chapter seven discusses the overall analysis of the thesis, reiterating the research puzzle and conclusion, drawing from the general findings of the research in response to the research question, and within the framework of the relevant theories.

1.5   Limitations and Opportunities for Further Research

It is close to impossible to 'measure' the contributions of any given online platform accurately as a result of the vast amount of information that is shared incessantly on the Internet, especially without a longitudinal research study. The same goes for conflict transformation and constructive change processes. These are long-termed peace engagements that might be impossible to measure qualitatively in a four-year retrospective study. However, through the qualitative data collected during the fieldwork, it was possible to get a sense of the positive and negative aspects of NMT in responding to conflict.

This thesis is not without its limitations. Although the thesis situates the contribution of citizen journalism in peace processes within the holistic framework of conflict transformation, it does not mean it is unfit for other peace mechanisms such as peacebuilding or conflict management. However, a holistic approach to conflict transformation provides wider opportunity for the contributions of citizen journalism to be interpreted broadly. There is an opportunity for subsequent research to cast more light on this topic, in terms of how several peace processes interact with human-centred efforts through citizen journalism. Additionally, future research is advised to probe further in understanding the several online platforms beyond citizen journalism in peace processes. Also, aside from the tangible outcomes presented as a result of direct interaction with the key players in the scenes of digital innovations and several other intermediary organisations, further research is needed to sample the perception of the Kenyan populace on the contribution of citizen journalism platforms to peace processes. More so, longitudinal research study that incorporates all the levels of society – from the top levels of society to the grassroots – on the digital platform's roles in peace processes, can trace over time the constructive change processes occurring through the new media.

CHAPTER TWO: ANALYTICAL CONTEXT

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the analytical context for exploring the contribution of the Ushahidi platform to peace processes. This chapter intends to establish the following: first, to justify why it is necessary to fill the gap in the literature on the nascent 21st century technology and the roles of the new non-state actors, especially the citizen journalists and bloggers who are influencing peace and conflict through dialogue and innovation. Second, to integrate and extend prior studies on the importance of people-centred approaches to peace processes with the use of the new media technology (NMT) or new media in the hands of citizen journalists and bloggers.

To achieve the two goals of this chapter, the study provides critical analysis of existing literature on peace mechanisms and the reasons why top-down approaches, especially by the international organisations like the United Nations (UN), fail to work in many instances. The failure of the peace mechanisms is explained through the work of eminent peace and conflict scholars such as Galtung, Lederach and Olonisakin on people-centred approaches to peace processes. This chapter argues that the entry of the citizen journalism platform in peace initiatives has broadened the participation of the general public in peace processes through conflict transformation lenses.

By engaging the multifaceted aspects of peace processes, which include peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, conflict management and conflict transformation, this study relies on the field data to shed light on which of the mechanisms is relevant to the research puzzle. Peace processes can be seen as the broader umbrella under which several organisations and governmental institutions are addressing the multiplicity of socio-political, cultural, economic and religious conflicts. Within this array of complex peace approaches and mechanisms that have been broadly studied by several scholars and implemented by governments and peace practitioners, the contribution of the Ushahidi platform in responding to Kenya's 2008 PEV is situated. As the field data uncovered, using inductive reasoning, the Ushahidi platform and several other netizens' platforms in Kenya are contributing to peace processes under the umbrella of conflict transformation.
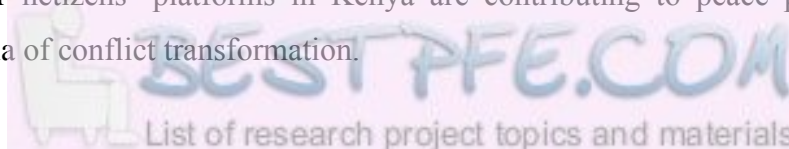
This study rests on two broader bodies of literature, namely literature on peace and conflict on the one hand and on citizen journalism on the other hand. Both bodies of literature address the central commonality of people's inclusion and participation in public affairs and the importance of such positions. The broader literature on peace and conflict focuses extensively on people's participation and inclusion as panaceas for long-term peace. This chapter will contextualise concepts such as human security, civil society and political society and explain why members of the society have become part of the political order in addressing human suffering and relentless intractable conflicts, especially in Africa. It will describe how citizen journalism provides a new avenue for exploring how the virtual community's engagement is impacting peace and conflict discourses and decisions in Africa. Thus, this chapter establishes the importance of the study in addressing the dearth of information on the emerging involvements of citizen journalists and bloggers in peace initiatives, especially in Africa. This is achieved by exploring the role of the Ushahidi platform and Kenyan bloggers in responding to Kenya's 2008 post-election violence.

2.2   The Dynamics of Peace Processes in the 21st Century

Multifaceted post-Cold War challenges have continued to affect 21st century peace and development. Since the Cold War ended with irreparable damages and the death of over 50 million people in total (Åkerlund 2005, Acharya 2008), the actualisation of global peace has remained elusive. Various endemic diseases, climate change, poverty, environmental degradation, terrorism, and intrastate violent conflicts have continued to plague the world. Thus, peace and economic scholars promulgate an unorthodox security (human security) approach as a way forward. With human security, as opposed to the exclusive focus on state/national security, the peoples' personal, health, food, and political securities, to mention a few, are considered the topmost priorities of the state. The human security agenda is yet to be widely achieved by many countries, as national security is still prioritised over human security by many governments across the world. Also in the same light is the yet to be attained idea of people's holistic participation and inclusion in public/political affairs, particularly in peace processes. The inclusion of

people's participation in achieving lasting peace, especially in war-ridden countries, which cannot be overemphasised, has continued to be under-implemented.

According to Bock (2012), the paradox inherent in the field of peace and conflict studies, and in peace processes, have long been without a solution. No one-size-fit-it-all approach has worked, given the failure of most international peacebuilding mechanisms in several countries that have only scratched the surface of the issues, partly due to highly bureaucratic systems or a technocratic rush-through approach. The argument of extant literature focusing on a people-centred approach to peace processes has uncovered one significant failure of most interventions, namely that people's participation in their own affairs matter (Lederach 2003, Galtung 2007, Olonisakin 2010, Banda 2010, Bock 2012). Thus, heavy-handed peacekeeping, surface-scratching technocratic peacebuilding initiatives and state-centric peacemaking processes have left one to wonder if human nature is inherently catastrophic.

The above-mentioned scholars have however realised that the solution lies in holistic engagement with the people; not merely making decisions for them but constructively including them in every major decision. This is the significant paradigm shift in the work of eminent scholars such as Funmi Olonisakin (2010), John Paul Lederach (2003) and Juan Galtung (1996; 2007). Consequently, the aforesaid scholars have continued to promulgate the importance of a people-centred ideology/approach in peace processes, especially within international, regional and national peace mechanisms. Thus, 21st century technology has increased the number of peace actors among the people who are willing to play significant roles in the people-led idea of peace work. Bock (2012) has discovered these roles to include using technology for nonviolence conflict intervention and prevention.

For instance, in the age of the new media, where chaos sometimes reigns on the Internet, members of the general public have devised a nonviolent techno-response to and engagement with violence (Bock 2012). In light of this, this study is taking a critical step to explore how a particular category of netizens is using the new media for human-centred initiatives for peace processes. Interestingly, citizen journalism

considered or defined by the school of journalism, as online "amateur" reporting, appears to have become a platform that influences peace and conflict. This is because the practice of citizen journalism has gone beyond reportage to include solution-generated projects designed to bring about change and transformation (Banda 2010). These sought-after transformations include socio-political justice, economic freedom, democratisation of political institutions and end-war-build-peace initiatives. In war-torn and disaster-ridden countries, citizen journalism is an online platform in which bloggers, activists, artists, musicians, students, writers and many more are reporting and coordinating for action. Often considered amateurs with little or no training in journalism, many netizens playing the role of citizen journalists have respectable jobs, while some – even while marginalised – are intelligent and concerned beings behind the keyboards. Therefore, the peace and conflict arena is receiving new types of "unexpected" actors due to the ubiquitous presence of the new media.

Empirically, peace processes devoid of people's autonomy (i.e. inclusion and participation) often collapse in the long run, save for a few short-term ceasefires and artificial peace gained through electoral processes in some cases (Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010, Jacobson 2012). The dominant positions of peace and conflict scholars, analysts and practitioners have been on all-inclusive post-conflict reconstruction mechanisms, whereby the affected community is included in peace processes. Therefore, they underscore a people-centred approach as opposed to a state-centred approach to peace, given the fact that the UN/AU technocratic and top-down conflict-handling mechanisms, in many instances, have not been significantly successful (Lederach 2003, Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010, Bock 2012). Illustrating these egregious failures and the complicated stories of the UN/AU conflict-handling mechanisms are the 2000 Israeli-Lebanon Border Murders, the 1995 Bosnia massacre, the 1994 Rwanda genocide, the 1993 Somalia tragedy and the existing DRC "rape capital of the world" disaster (Jacobson 2012: 3-4, Bock 2012, Warah 2014).

2.3   Addressing Peace and Conflict in Africa

The shift in paradigm in relation to people's inclusion, participation and significance in peace processes cannot be appreciated without discussing the evolution of the

consciousness that birthed it. The radical change around security thinking gained prominence at the end of the Cold War, due to the scourge of post-Cold War intrastate conflicts, particularly in Africa and Asia (Reed & Tehranian 1999; Acharya 2008; Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010). As indicated by these authors, the state-centric approach to security that is about the absolute territorial control and autonomy of nation-states against external military attacks became insufficient to tackle the perturbing post-Cold War realities of human suffering and neglect. Thus, in 1994, the UNDP Human Development Report established what was called a human security approach, whereby humans as opposed to the state become the central focus of security (Leaning & Arie 2000; Åkerlund 2005; Acharya 2008; Abass 2010). According to the aforementioned authors, human security establishes an all-inclusive protective mechanism where freedom from fear (protection from aggressive attacks and violation of human rights) and freedom from want (the rights to adequate standards of living) are made governments' paramount focus.

Development economists such as Mahbub ul-Haq (1999) and Amartya Sen (2000), wellknown for their human development propositions, argue for human security as the appropriate roadmap for the attainment of lasting peace and development. Development here refers to building of human capacities and attending to basic human needs while preserving the environment and preventing violent conflicts (Galtung 1996). Although this study does not delve into development dynamic, it is important to mention it as a key concept in the human security paradigm.

Economists have argued that the wants and fears of people cannot be eradicated no matter how hard a government tries because human needs are insatiable. It has also been argued that the human security objective is too broad and cumbrous. Nonetheless, Amartya Sen (2000) states that human satisfaction lies in the freedom to enhance capacities and access basic standards of living. Johan Galtung (1996) in *Peace by Peaceful Means* argues that the attainment of positive peace lies in the absence of tensions and violence and the presence of justice for all. Reiterating positive peace, Brewer (2010:7) elucidates 'the achievement of fairness, justice and social

redistribution' that follows the end of war and the absence of violence (negative peace) as helpful in creating a state of wellbeing that aids a nation-state in flourishing.

According to Åkerlund (2005) and Acharya (2008), human security becomes a crucial approach as a result of the massive loss of lives during the Cold War era, where over 50 million people died. This fatal loss was instantly followed by post-Cold War global risks and threats, among which were ethno-religious strife, intrastate-armed conflicts, environmental degradation, and proliferation of dangerous arms, incessant displacement of people, poverty, diseases and gross human rights abuses. Thus, human security offers an antidote to address these colossal problems. By focusing on human security, the states not only build the human capacities of their citizens, but also offer protections and effective service deliveries that synchronise with the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Reed & Tehranian 1999; Acharya 2008). These goals encapsulate socio-political, cultural, economic, social, physical, psychological and environmental advancement. It is apt to note that the UN has morphed the MDGs into a wider spectrum of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a proposal containing 17 goals and 69 targets to be achieved by the year 2030. This is a post-development move as a successor agenda to continue addressing endemic issues bordering on poverty, hunger, education, health and climate change. SDGs moves expose the underachievement of human security objectives, which remain bleak, especially in many African countries where intractable and protracted violent conflict persists. The prevalent cases of the strife in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, Nigeria, and South Sudan illustrate the point.

Conversely, collective security, a post-Cold War mechanism of the United Nations (UN) that is about mutual protection and defence of any state under security threat or attack, has enabled the UN to deploy peacekeeping operations into many countries with the primary aim of stopping an on-going war and restoring peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Peacekeeping is an international tool of conflict management that strives to prevent, contain or terminate interstate or intrastate hostilities with the use of multinational forces to restore and maintain peace (Hill and Malik 1996: xi). Conflict management, in the same light, attempts to reduce violence and destruction associated with a conflict

through negotiations and collaborations (Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010: 204). The UN has not always succeeded in its peace operations, which are often fraught with top-down technocracy and over-militarised responses (Mahbub ul-Haq 1999; Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010). Thus in 1992, Boutros Boutros-Ghali recast the UN peace initiatives in the document *An Agenda for Peace* to ensure that the UN addresses and responds efficiently to its peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacekeeping challenges for the effective realisation of world peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992).

Similarly, peacebuilding involves the prevention of conflict before it happens or intervention when conflict does occur to rebuild a war-torn community once the conflict is over (Lederach 2010:21). Peacebuilding comprises of addressing the root causes of a conflict, and attempts to manage, mitigate, resolve and transform central aspects of the conflict through official diplomacy and civil society involvements, while peacemaking focuses on forging a settlement between the disputing parties. It is a practical conflict transformation approach that seeks to establish impartial power relationships strong enough to forestall future conflict (Khan 1998: vii). This often includes a third-party negotiator or mediator that works with the disputing parties and stakeholders to achieve reconciliation and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, conflict transformation signifies a holistic peace process that seeks to reduce structural and cultural violence by addressing their root causes through bottom-up durable construction of long-term advocacy and strategic planning (Lederach 2003:14). It is pertinent to state that, aside for the short-term cease-fire mechanism that is often undertaken by the UN or the AU to quench raging violence, peace processes are often cumbersome and they are long-term activities. This is one of the reasons why peace and conflict scholars and practitioners are concerned about unproductive, expensive and technocratic approaches to peace processes that most often placate the symptoms, but that are not designed to address the root causes of these protracted and intractable armed conflicts.

Consequently, the conceptual framework offered by *An Agenda for Peace* was unable to sufficiently influence UN peace operations and the UN failed to critically address its

international interventional shortcomings (Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke 2010). These shortcomings, as observed by many peace scholars, are based on the UN's over-militarised and technocratic approaches and the lack of holistic and strategic engagement of the people in peace processes. Significantly, the inclusion of the people in the war-torn societies in peace processes presents a better avenue for both the negative and positive peace that Johan Galtung (1996) describes, where negative peace refers to the absence of direct violence and positive peace refers to the rebuilding of human relationship through systematic reconstruction of political institutions, fairness and justice. Brewer (2010) also challenges the over-professionalisation of peace processes to the exclusion of the larger society.

Increasingly, the role of civil society has become prominent in the quest for lasting peace, though 'civil society' is a contested concept. Civil society can be said to encompass both the formal and informal community of people (non-state actors) who occupy the public sphere with a singular or broader purpose of changing society through various voluntary transformative activities that can be socio-economic, political, or cultural in nature (Åkerlund 2005, Brewer 2010). In contrary to Åkerlund (2005) and Brewer (2010) understanding of the civil society, Chatterjee (2004:4) underlines contemporary civil society as "the closed association of modern elite groups, sequestered from the wider popular life of communities, walled up within enclaves of civic freedom and rational law" (Chatterjee 2004:4). Without taking away from Chatterjee's (2004) neoliberal middle classist understanding of the civil society, other scholars have also reflected on the involvement of civil society in public affairs to challenge the notion of the State as all-powerful by shaping the interconnectedness of the State and the people (Kaldor 2008, Brewer 2010). This means anyone outside the State can also be affected to a certain degree and share some level of discomfort, oppression and marginalisation. Thus, civil society with its intrinsic contradiction and contestation still serves the public in calling the governments to uphold their duty within the rational law and civil freedom governments fought for and won. 21st century technology has also become an enabling platform for all classes (the upper, middle and subaltern) –especially when digital technologies became more affordable– to participate

in socio-political discourses. If not through the Internet, people are becoming increasingly interconnected through the mobile phones.

Chatterjee (2004) further states that where the elite construct of neoliberal ideology is spread by civil society through its connection to the rhetoric of international institutions, aid agencies, and established NGOs, there is another domain of politics producing different results. Chatterjee (2004) sees this domain as the political society. In Chatterjee (2004) and Branch and Mampilly's (2015) views, a political society exists as a critical response to representative and community ethical deficits in the exclusive model of governance and civil society representation. Thus, political society serves as an avenue for the underclass and marginalised populace to think and act outside the state-civil society mediation and dichotomy to create their own autonomy necessary to address their downtrodden conditions (Branch & Mampilly 2015). The uprisings and popular protests in some countries in Africa including Burundi, Uganda, Nigeria and Ethiopia illustrate the notion of self-agency to demand better governance. Chatterjee (2004:4) thus defines governance as "the body of knowledge and set of techniques used by, or on behalf of, those who govern."

The curious dynamic of both civil and political society in relation to this study rests on using a holistic lens to examine citizen journalists to identify those who might be acting from civil society leanings and those from the political society milieu. It is a practical guess that the NMT might have blurred the distinction of Chatterjee (2004) and Branch & Mampilly (2015) between civil and political society. Chapter five and six of the study take further steps to break this down. By and large, the 21st century digital platform or NMT thrives nowadays on inclusivity regardless of gender, sex, race, colour, age or class. This study pays attention to these vital nuances without underplaying the dilemma of cybercrimes, cyber bullying and misogynistic treatment of women via the Internet. Within civil and political society there are nonviolent actors who are utilising the NMT for peace work or rather for the outcry that can lead to more inclusive governance where human security provision is paramount to the government and the inclusion of people's participation in peace processes more visible.

Galtung (1999) also explains that though people are not always peaceful, people across the world have formed several peace movements to address the structural and cultural violence that impact their existence. Cortright (1993) also documented in *Peace Works* the proactive but nonviolent role that citizens played in ending the Cold War, thus highlighting the importance of people's participation in peace processes. Cortright (1993) illustrates one of the strategic ways in which the citizens contributed to peace processes in the Cold War era as through peaceful protests and dialogue. Brewer (2010) takes this conversation further by underscoring how through the new media, civil society organisations (CSOs) are also becoming more visible in utilising the new technology to advance peace. This, as advanced by Brewer (2010), has increased global interconnectedness. The argument is therefore not about whether globalisation is a malevolent or benevolent phenomenon but whether its effect has changed the global arena for better or worse. The reflection goes further to appreciate the contemporary uprisings and popular protests as a form of political society demanding democratisation and better governance from 2009 to 2014 investigated by Branch & Mampilly (2015). NMT has therefore provided more avenues for the protests to be documented and broadcast globally. This has further culminated in citizen journalism reportage and UGC through various Web 2.0 platforms.

In summary, human security and peace processes are important areas in which people are not only consumers, but also manufacturers of initiatives and contributions as civil and/or political society activists or members. Humans as the unfortunate casualties of wars and violent conflicts have also stepped up to demonstrate their willingness to be part of solution-oriented conversations and innovations. In this era of global governance, which advocates for political integration, and transnational participation by both state- and non-state actors, responding and finding lasting solutions to global challenges that affect human security is a collective task (Falk 1999). Mahbub ul-Haq (1999) predicts that human security and global governance will become the necessary transformation to the 21st century's overarching challenges, and implies that people's full inputs in their own security will enhance development. In line with this, this research, through the lens of conflict transformation's holistic approach, uncovers the peace values of a citizen journalism platform where people's voices have become more

visibly amplified in addressing and responding to violent conflicts that affect their collective human security.

2.4   Conflict Transformation: The Theoretical Lens of the Study

Conflict transformation sees conflict as "life-giving opportunities" to create "constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships" (Lederach 2003:14). As Lederach (2003) argues, conflict transformation addresses some of the elements missing in other approaches to peace. These missing elements, according to Lederach (2003), are the lack of a bottom-up durable construction of long-term advocacy and strategic planning, especially in relation to conflict management and conflict resolution. Embracing the complexity of human affairs, Galtung (1996) and Lederach (2003) reflect on the inevitability of conflict and go further to promulgate useful people-centred mechanisms in approaches to peace.

Lederach (2010: x) pragmatically recasts peace mechanisms in a way that is more process-oriented, context-responsive and people-driven through conflict transformation. In peace approaches, most especially peacemaking and peacebuilding, the technocratic methods that often lead to an unresolved or unsatisfactory end to a conflict is reviewed by Lederach and then conflict transformation as a more holistic method is propagated. By definition, peacemaking is a process of forging a settlement between the disputing parties and a practical conflict transformation approach that seeks to establish impartial power relationships strong enough to forestall future conflict (Khan 1998: vii). This often includes a third-party negotiator or mediator that works with the disputing parties and stakeholders to achieve reconciliation and mutual understanding, while peacebuilding involves the prevention of conflict or intervention when conflict is over, to rebuild a community (Lederach 2010:21). Peacebuilding comprises addressing the roots of conflict, and managing, mitigating, resolving and transforming certain aspects of conflicts through official diplomacy and civil society engagement. Through peacemaking and peacebuilding approaches, conflict management and resolution are the widely used mechanisms before conflict transformation emerges.

Paffenholz (2009) writes that conflict transformation is different and broader in its holistic approach to settling conflict than conflict resolution and management. According to Paffenholz (2009), conflict transformation is an effective long-term approach to peacemaking and peacebuilding. Paffenholz (2009:3) juxtaposes conflict management, resolution and transformation by stating that conflict management focuses on the top-level approach to negotiating conflict settlements. Similarly, "management" as a notion suggests control of the parties involved in the conflict and most often overlooks the causes of conflict and ignores long-term all-inclusive facilitation. Lederach (2003:3-6) suggests that conflict resolution is faced with the danger of 'co-optation', namely, face value, quick fix, solutions that merely brush over deep socio-political problems without adequately solving them.

Dijk (2009:13) and Lederach (2010) point out that conflict transformation does not disregard the impact of both conflict management and resolution but goes on to create a balanced connection between policy and practice. Conflict transformation focuses on building constructive change and long-term infrastructure through the inclusion of all parties concerned, i.e. top-level, middle-level, and grassroots leaderships. This is a "…shift in focus from international to local actors" (Paffenholz 2009:5) where deep understanding of dysfunctional human relationships is all-encompassing for adequate long-term solutions to be sought (Lederach 2003). Thus, this shift in focus has engendered an unusual space in the peace processes arena to situate the contribution of citizen journalists as a catalyst for conflict transformation in the 21st century. Pointing to the role of people's agency, Dijk (2009) and Paffenholz (2009) strengthen Lederach's position (2003) by stating that through conflict transformation processes, there are more tangible results in terms of building bridges, restoring valuable human relationships and reducing violence in direct proportion to building positive peace (Galtung 2007). Broadly, the composite elements of conflict transformation encompass relationship-building, construction of effective social structures, justice, respect for human rights and nonviolent forms of resistance.

Dijk (2009:11) highlights conflict transformation theory as the most "comprehensive approach" that addresses the "underlying structure" of conflict. Supporting Dijk and

Diamond's analysis of conflict transformation, Maill (2004) argues that in peacemaking and peacebuilding, conflict transformation looks deeper into addressing the hidden origins of structural issues. Azar (1990) takes this further by emphasising the practicality of conflict transformation in addressing power imbalances and unjust social relationships. As a result of conflict transformation being a well thought out, holistic approach, according to Paffenholz (2009:3), it attracts no fundamental critiques. This thesis is not in any way celebrating the lack of strong critics of conflict transformation but relying as emphasised by several referred scholars on the concept of an all-encompassing approach of transforming conflict. Also, the shift in paradigm of this thesis is to take conflict transformation from its physical applications and juxtapose it with virtual applicability. As the use of the new media has shown, the global village has moved face-to-face meetings to systematic virtual engagements with equally effective results. Thus, nowadays, virtual meetings have become as important as physical assemblies.

Fundamentally, conflict transformation focuses on holistic reconstruction of human relationships and puts people at the centre of transformation, given their willingness to engage and move the conflict from destructive to constructive. This upward movement is known as constructive change processes. In this case, Lederach (2003:27) provides four levels of constructive change process frameworks with which there must be engaged in rebuilding the affected human relationship and failed institutions, namely personal, relational, structural and cultural. This means that in moving towards new relationships after a substantial breakdown in human affairs, the members of the affected community must make realistic efforts in changing beliefs, thought patterns and behaviours (Diamond 1994:3).

Lederach (2003:27) sees the personal as minimising the destructive effects of social conflict and maximising the potential for the person's holistic growth and well-being; the relational hinges on minimising poorly functioning communication and maximising understanding; the structural as uprooting causes and conditions creating violent conflicts to promote nonviolent mechanisms for long-term peace and foster the necessary development structures to meet basic human needs; and lastly the cultural

identifies and understands the patterns that contribute to the rise of violence which in itself assists in building mechanisms for constructive responses to conflict. Thus, conflict transformation is an enabling mechanism that leaves no-one out of its premises, a complete dance between the top level, middle level, and grassroots level. This makes constructive change and long-term infrastructure building all-inclusive so that all voices can be heard. Essentially, the interlinkages between conflict transformation and citizen journalism is such that they are both people-oriented and cannot function effectively without people at their epicentre. Conflict transformation thrives on local ownership while citizen journalism is a people-focused platform.

Lastly, the emerging paradigm of the new media platform provides the opportunity to explore the concept of conflict transformation in the context of a people-centred approach to peacemaking. This has been discovered through the literature consulted but is yet to be explored fully by peace and conflict scholars, thus allowing for additional exploration of the usefulness of conflict transformation as a people-focused mechanism. Significantly, if conflict transformation allows for ownership of peace processes by the people (Donais 2012), looking at the application of the concept in the evolving new media paradigm is timely. As a key element of conflict transformation, this thesis therefore examines through the data Ushahidi's citizen journalism's constructive change processes in responding to the Kenyan political crisis.

2.5   Peace Actors in the 21st Century: Citizen Journalists and Ushahidi

With the failures of institutionalised and technocratic-laden peace mechanisms in mind, this research turns to the nascent avenue in which people are producing powers to influence their own realities. In recent times, the breaking news of fatal disasters and crises such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, the Haiti earthquake, terrorist attacks, political- and violent conflicts reach everyone's doorstep at the speed of light. Similarly, 21st century Internet users facilitate the swift coordination of immediate humanitarian responses to these unfortunate disasters. This is because the ubiquitous presence of the Internet has shrunk the distance between people and enabled global communication and information sharing. Compared to 750 million Internet users in 2001, the world Internet users in 2015 has risen significantly to over three billion

(Internet Live Stats 2015). This phenomenon has increased global interconnectedness and thus the numbers and types of non-state transnational actors. The field of international relations has broadened the types of non-state transnational actors to include terrorist organisations and civil society in addition to multinational corporations. This study takes this categorisation further to include 21st century netizens, especially citizen journalists, as a part of non-state transnational actors. The following explains why this was done.

Between 2009 and 2014, with over 90 political protests in 40 African countries alone as documented by Branch & Mampilly (2015), not to mention the global documentation of revolutionary engagement of citizen journalism across the world (Allan & Thorsen 2009; 2014), it is no longer a question whether the nascent non-state actors are a force of political and civil society. A look at their historical emergence through the definition of political and civil society provides the foreground to conceptualise citizen journalists as a critical part of political and civil society in the age of globalisation. As this chapter unfolds, the understanding of civil society by Åkerlund 2005, Brewer (2010) and political society theorisation by Chatterjee (2004) and Branch and Mampilly (2015) are engaged. This is however done not through the lens of their historicity and complex contestations but through the frame of the alternative platforms upon which the general public produce power, situating the argument in contemporary climes. For instance, the post-colonial reality is often submerged in colonial legacy where urban and rural areas are still inundated with an underprivileged underclass and frustrated middle class. In all its fused dimensions, the disadvantaged urban and rural underclass and the frustrated middle class can be seen as partakers in socio-political discourses via the new media.

Turning to the citizen journalism platform, in 2008, a citizen journalism platform known as Ushahidi emerged to crowdsource information that helped in mapping Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV). One of the explanations behind this initiative is to fill the information void created by the ban of the mass media by the Kenyan government. Another driving force was the desire to document the magnitude of the violence for conciliation and justice. Working hand in hand with cross-partnered organisations such as International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), local Non-Governmental Organisations/Community Based Organisations (NGOs/CBOs),

international mainstream media outlets and other citizen journalists, Ushahidi gets its crowdsourced crisis mapping out to the world, despite debates on mainstream mass/conventional media and citizen journalism feuds on ethics and disruption of gatekeeping powers by the former. However, there is also a convergence currently taking place between the two as observed by other scholars (Gillmor 2006, Banda 2010, Dare 2011).

Proponents of citizen journalism state that this platform has created a disruptive power dynamic in the sense that the conventional media is no longer the first to report disastrous occurrences and outbreaks of violent conflict. Also, the story is no longer getting told only from the point of view of the third party and commercialised media perspectives. Online civic engagement and crisis reporting is amplifying unheard voices and marginalised stories from their own realities (Gillmor 2006, Allan & Thorsen 2009), Banda 2010). Beyond this divergence is the collaborative role of professional and citizen journalism whereby participatory journalism is covertly or overtly promoted. Gillmor (2006) argues that citizen journalism has put professional journalism on its toes to do its job better. Inasmuch as the emergence of citizen journalism seems grand and democratic, the relevance of professional journalism cannot be undermined in news reportage. Likewise, the emerging citizen journalism platform is moving in part to solution-oriented projects on overarching socio-political, peace, security and conflict issues.

Although, through the advent of the new media, citizen journalism got global recognition and entered the journalistic lexicon in 2004, a citizen-engaged press has been around for longer (Allan & Thorsen 2009). Citizen journalism is recognised as a citizens' crisis reporting phenomenon and further as a people's socio-political activism participatory platform which is not dissimilar from the 20th century or further back to the 19th century's citizen-engaged press using blackboards, radio or popular protests. However, NMT creates a new surge in information dissemination and civic participation. Additionally, the NMT has provided a platform for local citizens to take violence prevention, reporting and documentation into their own hands (Bock 2012) and to prove the democratic values inherent in 21st century digital platforms. What the 21st century media is echoing is the indivisible link between peace processes, governance

and participation, meaning that the three concepts are interlinked in praxis to the extent that if they work hand in hand, effective human security will not be a mere dream for many nations.

It is against this backdrop that this research explores citizen journalism contributions in responding to the 2008 PEV in Kenya. This research interest is to explore the contribution that emerged from the Ushahidi platform and Kenyan bloggers in responding to the 2008 PEV up until the 2013 general elections. This is to enable research-based knowledge on people's participatory contribution to peace processes with the advent of NMT.

2.6   **Citizen Journalism**

The pivotal question is: what is citizen journalism and why is citizen journalism a significant phenomenon worth researching and documenting? This is because the concept of citizen journalism is based upon 'ordinary' citizens "playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information" (Bowman and Willis, 2003). Rodriguez (2001:19) refers to the term 'citizen' in this context as those members of the society who "actively participate in actions that reshape their own identities, the identities of others, and their social environment, [through which] they produce power." Atton (2009) looks at citizen journalism from a wider concept of alternative journalism/media. In this way, Atton (2009) treats citizen journalism as a subset of alternative journalism/media. Atton (2009) states that those outside mainstream media organizations produce "alternative journalism". To expatiate further on Atton's point of view, this is a kind of journalism that is practiced outside the grasp and control of the mainstream media, devoid of secrecy but with a strong focus on advocacy journalism and representation of marginalised voices and ignored viewpoints.

Atton (2009: 265) further describes citizen journalism as a platform for amateur news producers, typically with little or no training or professional qualifications as journalists; who write and report from their position as citizens; as members of communities; as activists, as fans. Mutsvairo and Columbus (2012: 122) argue that

"citizen journalism often happens when amateur or untrained journalists engage in journalistic practices" with a mission to tell or relay stories of their perceived realities and engage in public debates (Moyo 2009). Forde (2009) corroborates this view by stating that citizen journalists "provide citizens with information they believe they need in order to make political and cultural decisions, and to participate fully in public life" (2009:6). However, according to Forde (2009), the same platform is being used by professional journalists who want to be free from the constraint imposed by their respective media organisations on which story is newsworthy or deserves attention. Barlow (2010) reiterates that the participation of professional journalists in the citizen journalism arena has blurred the distinction between the two and that professional journalists are nonetheless members of the public. Finally, Merritt (2010:28) remarks that having multiple and cost-effective platforms to create news that is not revenue-driven as in the case of traditional journalistic institutions is a unique advantage for the citizen's engaged press.

In Allan's (2009:18) words, "despite its ambiguities, the term citizen journalism appeared to capture something of the countervailing ethos of the ordinary person's capacity to bear witness, thereby providing commentators with a useful label to characterise an ostensibly new genre of reporting". There is no doubt about the glaring fascination of journalistic scholars and professionals on the neo-phenomenon called citizen journalism since it entered the "journalistic lexicon" and public consciousness in 2004. Citizen journalism made a grand entry in the reportage and documentation of the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, the 9/11 2001 USA terrorist attacks, and 7/7 2005 London bombings; and finally, its subsequent unstoppable momentum in the 2011 North African popular protest, the Arab Spring. This development is aided by the 21st century NMT where "ordinary people" – members of the public considered "amateurs" (compared to trained or professional journalists) – are now using the accessible digital tools and ubiquitous Internet technology platforms for crisis reporting. This omnipresent new media includes but is not limited to the following Internet websites and online applications such as Web 2.0 (which encompasses user-generated content, people-friendly and interoperable websites such as blogs and Tumblr), social media (a Web 2.0 tool such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Academia.edu, Instagram, MySpace

among others), video uploading sites (such as YouTube and Vimeo), open-source software platforms (e.g. Frontline SMS and Kalkun) and instant messaging services (such as WhatsApp, Viber, Snapchat etc.)

Citizen journalism is also known under several other monikers such as the following: User-generated content (UGC), network journalism, participatory journalism, alternative journalism, open-source journalism, grassroots journalism, hyper-local journalism, eye-witnessed reporting and distributed journalism. It is worth mentioning that the mass media uses the term 'participatory journalism' as well to denote a category of professional journalists that practice a kind of responsible form of journalism regarded as public/civic journalism, while professional journalism's vested interest lies in community involvement in democratic processes (Barlow 2010). Therefore, both professional journalists and citizen journalists have a hybrid role to converge and influence the society given the dual use of participatory journalism.

While this thesis presents the wide range of definitions and connotations of citizen journalism, the conceptualisations of citizen journalism by scholars such as Gillmor (2006), Forde (2009), and Banda (2010) are adopted. These scholars define citizen journalism as a platform in which members of the society that are regarded as (amateur) news producers and content generators have become prominent non-state transnational voices and are producing power. The justification is that, since the evolution of citizen journalism, propelled by the domination of the new media landscape and the constant participation by netizens, the platform has moved beyond witnessing, reporting and documenting crises to getting involved in solution-oriented ideas and actions. Bock (2012:2) affirms this summation by stating:

> Citizen reporting is not, however, simply exposing oppression by governments. It is also broadcasting potential or actual violence between groups of different identities (based on ethnicity, religion, tribe, or gang membership, for instance) at a local level. These images, too, are being beamed increasingly onto our television, computer, notebook, e-ink readers, and mobile phone screens. ICTs are impacting not just the coverage of violent events, injustice, and oppression, but also our reaction to those events, injustices, and acts of oppression. There is a link between being better informed and taking action, but there is not an automaticity of stimulus-response. The range of reactions varies from local to international levels, from the impulsive to the strategic, from passivity to full

engagement.

Moreover, Barlow (2010), Moyo (2011) and Mpofu (2013) argue that citizen journalism has exhibited consistency in revolutionary ideas of change. Furthermore, Jewitt (2009) accentuates the importance of the ability of "'ordinary' citizens'" to share information, upload content and engage in public dialogue. Gillmor (2006) stresses further that citizen journalism platforms serve as avenues to challenge and transform several aspects of society including the government and the corporate world. Also, Aday et al. (2010) state that NMT has made collective actions as well as individual participation in public affairs more prominent. Howard's (2011:12) position reflects more on what the NMT has ushered in by stating that "technology alone does not cause political change—it did not in Iran's (2009 post-election) case. But it does provide new capacities and imposes new constraints on political actors. New information technologies do not topple dictators; they are used to catch dictators off-guard." To reiterate Watson and Wadhwa (2014) point, citizen journalism has moved from its infancy to a matured platform where citizen journalists' multiplicity of roles include conflict management. As conflict managers, the writers examine the usage of citizen journalists' reports in strategizing and initiating actions/solutions. Thus, these scholarly insights provide an understanding of the significance of the revolutionary roles of citizen journalism in responding and transforming socio-political spheres.

Upon this premise, citizen journalism is therefore a significant subject of study, due to its ever-increasing role in promoting the voices of the people, encouraging citizen engagement in public debates/discourses, and reflecting the people's continual desire for social and political change. Citizen journalism has also been noted to broaden its role from reporting to crisis management. Likewise, the field of journalism is interspersed with accounts of citizen journalism's numerous disaster and crisis management innovations, which are pivotal in investigating its peace process values.

Furthermore, the relevance of this thesis hinges on extending the prior studies on peace processes and citizen journalism by bridging both fields of study as a context for establishing the importance of people's participation in peace mechanisms. Thus, to this effect, this thesis augments the dearth of scholarly information in relation to citizen

journalism and peace processes in Africa. In much of the literature consulted, and particularly in Banda (2010) on *Citizen Journalism and Democracy in Africa*, the focus on citizen journalists' user-generated content is more on their democratic values, media activism and revolutionary tactics and not so much on their contributions to peace processes. Junne (2013) however cursorily acknowledges citizen journalism's value in peacemaking, without offering an in-depth analysis. Also, Bock (2012) in *The Technology of Nonviolence* explores various ways in which local citizens take conflict prevention into their own hands with the use of NMT. However, he fails to expand this arugment to what this means for a people-centred approach in peace processes. Thus, this research explores the overlooked in-depth analysis and the underexplored NMT in a people-centred approach to peace processes.

2.7   The Evolution of Citizen Journalism

Citizen journalism has historical precedents but has been amplified by the 21st century NMT. The 21st century new media landscape has made citizens' participations in newsgathering, reporting, sharing, documenting and solution generation roles more prominent. Although citizen journalism did not become a recognised term until 2004, members of the public have not in reality just stood aside over the past decades and consumed news without making their own contributions. There are also traditional/mainstream media columns for citizens such as opinion columns and call-in programmes. The difference however is the people now have more control over their own produced news content. Even in the face of stringent constraints – war, famine, misrepresentation or deliberate silence/ignoring of their concerns by the mainstream media – members of the public have been contributing in different capacities to producing news, counterbalancing presented opinions/facts and keeping their communities informed. To this effect, Allan (2009) shares the story of an early citizen media/journalism contribution of Alfred Sirleaf in Liberia during the 1989-1997 civil war. Alfred Sirleaf kept the community abreast of news on warlord Charles Taylor's political deceit, manipulations, atrocities and tyranny through the blackboard newsstand he invented, "The Daily Talk". Sirleaf believed that an informed citizen is a liberated citizen. Likewise, in 1994, a local of Northridge in the United States of America (USA) was the first to forewarn the world about the looming earthquakes (using a wireless
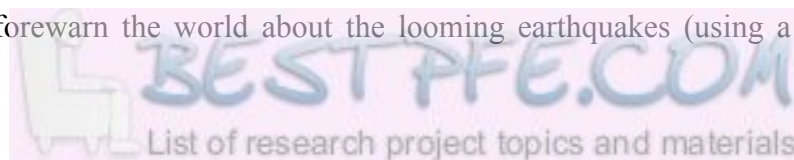
modem) before the mainstream media got wind of the news (Allan 2009:20).

To also reiterate Cortright (1993), many citizens of European and American descent, including international delegates from across the world, played significant roles in ending the Cold War. Public opinion influenced the foreign policy of powerful countries through unrelenting collaborative efforts of citizens with different professional qualifications such as artists, scientists, physicians and religious leaders. Millions of people in peace/social movements and peace activism marched days on end demanding peace and calling for the Cold War to end. These nonviolent collaborative efforts included public education and grassroots organisations cooperating with religious leaders and mass media to communicate their concerns to the world. If there were new media during the 1947-1991 Cold War era, these solidarity world peace events would undoubtedly have gained global momentum faster and many peace activists would have preferably reported and documented events using the Internet. This is not to say the old media such as print, radio and television avenues did not do the best they could in distributing information to a broader audience within a geographical location. But it was not as monumental as what is presently happening with the 21st century media.

Furthermore, in Africa, Leymah Roberta Gbowee led a women's peace movement to end the second Liberian civil war in 2003. Coordinating through information dissemination and strategic actions, Liberian women aligned to end warlord Charles Taylor's tyrannic regime. Information dissemination was key to the painstaking and enduring popular protest of the Liberian women, earning Gbowee a Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. This is to reiterate the outstanding and sometimes daunting initiatives of women, men and youths in the face of injustice, disasters, political strife and violent conflict. Nowadays, the ubiquity of the NMT allows for an array of users, including men, women and third gender or no gender, young and old, black and white, rich or poor to engage in self-agency and voicing their opinion. The new media has enabled all and sundry to be partakers in public affairs except in countries where restrictions are placed on the use of social media.

Members of the public have participated in their own realities before the evolution of the Internet. The difference in the 21st century NMT is the noticeable increase in non-state transnational actors online engagements through which they produce power, and that people's agency is advanced and has become more prominent. Unlike the era before the Internet, the 21st century new media has amplified people's voices more prominently. It is no longer dependent on the conventional media to choose which stories are reported and how this is done when public needs to be represented. Media reporting is now counterbalanced, diverging or converging with the mainstream media platform and there is constant representation of news from grassroots perspectives.

In suppressive regimes, citizen journalism acts as a platform for people to have their voices heard, condemn injustice and demand better governance, even at the risk of being jailed or killed. According to Allan & Thorsen (2009:6), citizen journalism has made unsettling waves in some states where "the State equates dissent with criminality". Citizen journalism, whose emergence spans the 21st century, has evolved to the extent of global cognizance. Finally, Bock (2012:1) explains the 21st century reality thus:

> We are living at a time of dramatic shifts in information and communication technologies (ICTs) that are transforming how we view and engage in the world. Cell phone cameras and social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) turn individuals into on-the-spot reporters, sidestepping what used to be the exclusive purview of journalists and media syndicates. The general public is now capable of taking pictures and videos of violence, sending them to friends, who then distribute these disturbing images onward, providing mass-media-type coverage in seconds. This "citizen journalism" makes us wonder what these new technologies will mean if used in places suffering from civil strife, including in countries where governments are undemocratic, civil liberties are constrained, and injustices spawn civic entrepreneurship for violent or nonviolent change, as they did in Iran in 2009, Tunisia in 2010, and Egypt in early 2011.

Ethiopia's repressive governance and state violence, where protesters and citizen journalists are gagged, provide answers to Bock's (2012) wonderment as presented in section 2.9.2 of this chapter.

2.8   Citizen Journalism versus Professional Journalism: Debates and Relevance

The subversion of professional journalism by citizen journalism is a result of the pervasiveness of the new media. Allan (2013:153) states that the normative rules of reciprocity in citizens passing news to journalists have been recast with the advent of digital technology, thus disrupting the gatekeeping role of the professional media. Professional journalism/the professional media does not appreciate the disruption of its fourth estate responsibility with the unprecedented appearance/entrance by and the massive interruption of news reportage by citizen journalism on the world news scene. Proponents of professional journalism argue that citizen journalism lacks journalistic ethics and standards to deliver unbiased news to the world, while the proponents of citizen journalism counter this notion by stating that regular people, with the advantage posed by the new media, are shaping news and information according to their reality, sometimes breaking major catastrophic news and events yet to catch the attention of the mainstream media (Allan and Thorsen 2009). Additionally, citizen journalism serves as a multi-skilled platform beyond reporting to democratically coordinating for solutions (Banda 2009).

According to Luder (2008) the emergence of digital media technologies has created a destabilising effect on the traditional dichotomy between mass communications and (inter)personal communication, such that everyday people not only have access to news, but they are now regular producers of news via their personal blogs and other online platforms. Citizen journalism captures stories that professional journalism cannot, as eyewitnesses with cameras in hand, or because it is a remote or dangerous location, and also given their proximity to the crises. Additionally, citizen journalism offers diverse perspectives, most especially on conflict; dramatic events and natural disasters affecting their reality and sometimes amplifying marginalised voices (Hauser 2014). Hence, the Internet has sparked new debates and ushered in new players in civil liberty and the disruption of the news monopoly by the mainstream media. Citizen journalism covers wide genres of news, like the professional media, on peace and conflict, disasters, sport, music, fashion, economy, politics, health and culture.

In opposition to Luder's (2008) view, other writers state that the opinions of the citizen journalist cannot be taken as news, and that more citizen journalists are focused on celebrity gossip, which is not the same as serious news. Some worry that skewed and biased reporting from a citizen journalism platform can lead to mass hysteria and side-taking as in the case of the Ukraine-Russia strife, or cause damaging economic mishaps through misinformation like in the case of "Steve Jobs heart problem" – unverified news posted on CNN iReport causing Apple's share price to plummet drastically from $105.27 to $95.41 between 9.40 am and 9.52 am in October 2008, thus, highlighting the dark side of citizen journalism.

However, this is a self-countering position, as professional journalism itself is a well-known platform for tabloids, sensational news and Hollywood gossip. The professional media has been found wanting in accountability on several fronts (Kaplan 1994:174). The professional media also has its records of brutality – of jumping to conclusions, promoting overhyped sensationalism (yellow journalism) for profit maximisation, fronting bias news (propaganda model), taking sides, propagating incorrect information and misleading the public– which are inconsistent with journalistic ethics and standards ethos. Illustrating these dilemmas are the 2003 Iraqi invasion pro-war bias, the Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky sex scandal and the biased coverage of the Libyan civil war.

Admittedly, professional journalism is a training hub for putting journalistic ethics and standards first, and has strived to uphold this professional commitment, but without success. Affecting these professional ethics and standards based on truthfulness (factual, accurate and verifiable), objectivity, fairness, transparency, accountability and independent reporting is loyalty to the media organisation, editorial agenda setting and over-commercialisation of the institution. Some of the media organisations are also state-owned and controlled, while others attempt to maximise profit and pay allegiance to their own countries, cultures and belief systems. Conversely, the professional media has come a long way in carrying out the work it is trained to do and to act as catalysts for change and transformation during political unrest/uprisings, disasters and wars, albeit asymmetrically. Numerous war reporters have lost their lives on duty; Syria serves as a recent death ground. Yet, there are others who are involved in peace

journalism. Furthermore, the professional media has been credited with uncovering conspiracies, but also with the ability to propagate rumours. Within these labyrinths of concerns the aching demand for freedom of press still exists in some countries. The strict Internet censorship in Russia, China, Ethiopia and Malaysia highlights this constraint.

Jewitt (2009), Aday et al. (2010), Moyo (2011), and Mutsvairo and Columbus (2012) argue that the practice of citizen journalism, though new, has become a pivotal phenomenon in two ways. First, it has changed the media landscape from being monopolised by the elites and conventional media to being more people-inclusive. Second, it is symmetrically prominent in civic engagment for social reform and democratic governance. Likewise, citizen journalism has allowed for counter-balanced views, information and news in such a way that the reality is retold from the perspective of the people (Gillmor 2006). Upstart (2012) also points out that there is a new breed of citizen journalism spreading "truthful" information that counters leaders'/governments' rhetoric. For example, Yemeni women documenting abuse and seeking help and solutions during the Sana'a uprising illustrate this claim. Citizen journalists are known to back up their documentation with images and videos. Dare (2011) discovered in Nigeria that the content and news of the citizen journalism platform, Sahara Reporters, especially on exposing corruption, are unashamedly copied and reposted by various professional media houses without further verification.

In restrictive regimes however, media freedom affects professional journalism as much as citizen journalism. In Malaysia for example, citizen journalist Raja Petra Kamaruddin challenging his government's nepotism was incarcerated on allegations of disrespecting Islam (Allan and Thorsen 2009). The authors also remark that some countries equate dissent with criminality as a form of abusive governmentality, making citizen journalism a targeted platform for citizens' abuse and wrongful persecutions. Reporters Without Borders website also indicates that globally, some professional journalists were harassed, detained or jailed in 2016.

The contestation and tussles between citizen- and professional journalism notwithstanding, their convergence has changed the media landscape (Mutsvairo and Columbus 2012). Gillmor's (2006) research reveals that the change that occurred with citizen journalism platforms has created an infusion of participatory and grassroots journalism between professionals and amateurs in such a way that the field of journalism is relearning how to better serve society. Ultimately, the above scholarly positions emphasise the significance of people's civic participation in socio-political affairs. Professional journalism not only reuses citizen journalism materials but international media outlets such as the CNN, BBC and Al Jazeera have created citizen journalism corners in their establishments, thus blurring the lines between professional and citizen journalism. Therefore, the significance of their converging role beyond reportage to influence international and global communities on foreign policies and peace processes is a crucial concern for this research.

2.9   Citizen Journalism Platforms in Africa

There has been exponential growth in the number of Internet users worldwide between 1995 and 2013. These statistics have skyrocketed from 16 million to 2.5 billion worldwide, with over 240 million users residing in Africa, which accounts for only 21% of the continent's population (Internet World Stats 2014). It is significant to note that, even though more than 70% of the continent lacks Internet access, there is already a strong wave of new media activism in Africa. The new media evolution has unveiled new non-state actors (citizen journalists) that have disrupted the monopolisation of information by the government and the mainstream media (Gilmor 2004, Banda 2010, Moyo 2011). They have not only disrupted these roles but also made notable socio-political and conflict-intervening inputs (Jewitt 2009, Banda 2010, Moyo 2011, Mutsvairo and Columbus 2012, Bock 2012).

Aside from the eyewitness accounts of global events such as 9/11, the 2008 Mumbai attacks and the 2005 London bombing, the African public have also utilised the NMT to coordinate and organise protests and constructively respond to socio-political challenges. Moreover, it has been discovered that local African citizens participate in nonviolent conflict prevention using the NMT (Bock 2012). This is further exemplified

in the ground-breaking coordination by netizens in the Arab Spring protests, the Kubatana.net report of the 2008 election irregularities in Zimbabwe and the Ushahidi crisis mapping of Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (Banda 2010, Moyo 2011, Mutsvairo & Columbus 2012). More so, Banda (2010) and Junne (2013) state that Ushahidi's UGC significantly reveals the contribution of citizen journalism's platforms in addressing violent conflict with pragmatic innovations. The focus of this research is therefore to learn more about Ushahidi operatives and explore the contribution that emerged from Ushahidi's response to the 2008 post-election violence. But before this aspect of the field research is unveiled in chapter five, a few stories of other African citizen journalism endeavours are necessary to show what other citizen media engagements are producing in Africa. Thus, the following countries underscore the African citizen journalism platform's socio-political resistance, exposé of injustice and corruption and Pan-African narratives.

Examples of a few African countries with significant citizen journalism activities are highlighted below. This illustration is not about the outcome but what the initiatives mean, and what they are doing, or have done, to provide alternative platforms and narratives to Africans and African realities. Many scholars have significantly discussed the phenomenon of the North African Arab Spring, which sparked widespread revolutions from Tunisia to Egypt and beyond. However, there are a few other significant pre- and post-Arab Spring developments in other African countries that capture the citizen journalism revolutionary and peace initiatives underlined below.

2.9.1 #IfAfricawasabar Botswana

'If Africa was a bar' is a satiric Twitter hashtag created by Motswana writer Siyanda Mohutsiwa in 2015, inviting Africans to connect and explore complex geopolitical and leadership issues in a light-hearted manner (Friedman 2015). Mohutsiwa's first tweet evoked extraordinary reactions from the African Twitter community, who joined to overwhelmingly participate in humorous ways to the question "If Africa was a bar, what would your country be drinking/doing?" Mohutsiwa, who was 22 at the time, explains that her inspiration around this idea was to engineer a Pan-African approach to addressing overarching African issues (Mohutsiwa 2016). Through the drinking culture

of many African countries portrayed in various tweets, serious issues on strongly held perceptions, stereotypes and new progressive thinking were on display. Mohutsiwa in her TedTalk video articulates the voice of the people that transcends beyond borders in humorous and witty ways and is important for the realisation of ideal Pan-Africanism (Mohutsiwa 2016). It can be said that Mohutsiwa has managed to create a borderless Africa on the Internet with #IfAfricawasabar going viral with over 60,000 tweets within a month (Bostwana Gazette 2015). Among the international press that picked up this trending conversation were the BBC, CNN and Buzzfeed and Mohutsiwa was later featured on these media platforms (Bostwana Gazette 2015). Aside from Mohutsiwa becoming very popular as a result of this witty satire, she succeeded in starting a participatory dialogue about Africa by Africa and for Africa. Mohutsiwa's African Twitter Bar of connection, wittiness and seriousness might engender more reflections on the continent's progress and freedom. She highlights the online platforms as a place to further the agenda of a social Pan-Africanism of interconnectivity among young Africans that can dismantle all constraints imposed by unfavourable socio-political climes (Mohutsiwa 2016).

2.9.2   The gagged Ethiopian Zone9 Bloggers

Ethiopia is one of the countries in the Horn of Africa where citizen journalists' attempt at participatory governance has been met with brutal force. The government has continually put in jail citizen journalists who produce news that challenges its despotic powers. In 2014, the Ethiopian government arrested and jailed six Zone9 bloggers (Zoneniners) alongside three journalists and charged them with terrorism, which was far from being the case (Justice Matters 2014). Zoneniners or Zone9 is a group of bloggers in Ethiopia that writes in Amharic with critical posts that challenge the government. The Zone9ers comprise male and female writers, are professionals in various fields and they exude global influence and connection in the blogosphere. Four of the bloggers are citizen journalist contributors and translators on the Global Voices network (more on Global Voices in the next section) (JWF 2015). In July 2015, in anticipation of Obama's arrival, the Ethiopian government swiftly released three of the bloggers and two journalists while the rest remained in prison (Al Jazeera 2015).

The Ethiopian government's attempts to gag the country's citizen journalists highlight the significant role that the new media is playing in making people's voices heard. This is to the extent that the contributions of the NMT users ruffle feathers to the point of landing the citizen journalists in prison. It can be inferred that for the government of Ethiopia to be stifling and gagging citizen reporters, they must be doing something meaningful. While there are some Zone9ers in jail, the Ethiopian government has added fresh blood to the mix. Yonatan Tesfaye, a Facebook protester, was arrested on May 25, 2017 for alleged anti-government incitement Endalk (2017). According to Endalk (2017), Yonatan's posts were in solidarity with Ethiopian protests that are calling for dialogue and hoping for an end to the recent Ethiopia political unrest. The Ethiopian government has continued to show no tolerance for opposing views and has repeatedly restricted freedom of expression and information. Both the citizen journalists and professional journalists in Ethiopia have continued to face unfair treatment by the government of Ethiopia, a form of state violence against the political society. Currently there are up to 20 bloggers and journalists in Ethiopian prisons (Untold Stories 2017).

2.9.3   Sahara Reporters Nigeria

Sahara Reporters (SR) is one of the leading citizen journalism platforms in Nigeria. It was conceived to fill the interactive and investigative vacuum left by the traditional media upon the country's return to democracy from prolonged military rules (Dare 2011). With investigative journalism at the epicentre of SR reporting, the platform exposes corruption, human rights abuses and political misconduct in Nigeria (Shenon 2010). Shenon (2010) reports that the founder of SR, an activist in exile, Omoyele Sowore, referred to as "Africa's Wikileaks" began this platform while seeking treatment from cult attacks in the United States in 2006. He states further that with the supports of the Ford Foundation and the Omidyar Foundation, the platform has been able to carry on unabated in its investigative journalism endeavour (Daniel 2015). It has been said that the SR's news prowess in revealing the worst scandals has resulted in the Nigerian mass media copying news verbatim from the platform with little or no acknowledgement (Dare 2011: 43). Another twist to SR reportage is the creation of satiric news reporting where socio-political issues and leaders' misfires and misbehaviour are presented with a jovial undertone. However, the paradox is hard to

miss, as in the case of Robert Mugabe's visit to Nigeria, where a tenacious SR reporter, Adeola Fayehun, ambushed him by asking when he would be vacating his political seat (Sahara TV 2015). As shown in the Sahara TV (2015) video, Adeola Fayehun and Omoyele Sowore persistently questioned Mugabe as to when there would be democracy in Zimbabwe. Mugabe, who was shielded by his bodyguards, did not answer this question. He was however warned by the SR reporters to consider democratising his country. As this video clip further revealed, Mugabe's bodyguards and other staff shielding him were not thrilled at the encounter.

Sahara Reporters citizen media has continued to push the boundaries by standing out as a corruption watchdog that spares no one. The platform name Sahara might be confused with the geographical location, but it is used to denote the founder's intention to kick up a storm in Nigeria (Daniel 2015). SR was the first to publish the photo of the Nigeria "underwear bomber", Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who had attempted to detonate a bomb inflight on Northwest Airlines on 25 December 2009 (Daniel 2015). The audacity of SR includes tracking Nigerian politicians' illegal assets abroad and being the first to insist that ailing former president Yar'Adua was not getting better before his eventual demise was made public (Shenon 2010). There are controversies surrounding Sowore's citizen journalism role. Some see it as a cover for extorting money from Nigerian politicians and that he is a puppet of the current Nigerian president, Mohammed Buhari, to frustrate his opponents (Daniel 2015). Until these speculations are investigated, one could infer that Sowore's role on the SR platform to expose corruption, injustices and malpractice in the government that has earned him enemies can be a hindrance. SR protects its sources of news and is not in the habit of revealing the identities of those who provide tips on scandalous news. SR is popular beyond the borders of Nigeria.

2.9.4   Zimbabwe Elections with Kubatana.net

Kubatana.net is a Zimbabwean online community of activists and citizen journalists that provides virtual support to civil society organisations and presents citizens' voices in various posts in the style of a blog. In their own words, "Kubatana was established in 2001. Our mission was to aggregate Zimbabwean civic and human rights information. To date we have published over 30000 different reports; over 1000 electronic

newsletters; distributed 50000 DVDs and provided ICT support to the NGO sector"
(Kubatana.net 2017). According to McNally (2014), Kubatana saw a need to serve as
the middle ground for the distribution of the wealth of information coming from civil
society and NGOs that does not often reach the general public. Thus, the platform
aggregates, indexes and makes information accessible to the public. Through
Kubatana's webpage and SMS subscriptions using FrontlineSMS, the platform is able
to reach wider audiences (McNally 2014). In addition, Khal et al. (2012:33) observes, in
the 2008 elections when the government had placed a ban on the media, Kubatana
stepped in and provided information to the public on what was happening. Kubatana
serves as an information pioneer and pundit in Zimbabwe's repressive regime. The
credibility of Kubatana is extensive, especially in providing a multimedia service that
unearths underreported developmental and human rights news in the NGO sectors and
among the people (Moyo 2010; McNally 2014). In summing up Kubatana's
bloggers/citizen journalists' roles, especially during the 2008 elections when they
exposed the ruling party's electoral violence and malpractice, Moyo (2011:7) writes:
"The Kubatana bloggers… disseminate news that potentially shakes the foundations of
Zimbabwe's hegemonic project by foregrounding the anti-establishment discourses that
threaten the survival of the political elite."

2.10   Beyond News Coverage: Citizen Journalism - Global Perspectives

In *Citizen Journalism Global Perspectives* Volume I and II, edited by Allan and
Thorsen (2009; 2014), several stories of courage, resilience, and innovation are told
about numerous citizen journalists' activities across the world. Not only are citizen
journalists reporting catastrophic natural or man-made events in real time, many are also
taking swift steps in coordinating for action. This includes crowdsourcing disaster
information, crowdfunding and donating blood for the affected. As reported in the Iran
double earthquake calamity in 2012, the citizens bypassed the government and
crowdsourced volunteers that donated blood to Iranians affected by the earthquake
(Meier 2012). Citizen journalists are also committed to exposing injustice and
maleficence in governance, some instances of which have led to the coordination for
solutions at the risk of their lives, especially in dictatorial regimes. In addition to the
previously cited example of Malaysian Raja Petra Kamaruddin's incarceration by his

government for challenging the regime's nepotism, there are other valuable global illustrations. This points to the fact that citizen journalism goes beyond aggravating tensions or exacerbating conflict, as in the case of Mumbai and the Ukraine, to providing nonviolent interventions. Beyond the role of the citizen journalists in reporting the unfortunate terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001 and in the July 7, 2005 London bombing, many more innovative stories abound. Among these stories is the case of Salam Pax, the Baghdad blogger in the 2003 US Iraqi invasion, the people's news platform OhMyNews in South Korea, Wikileaks of Iceland, the Occupy campaign in New York and the Global Voices platform. Therefore, this section highlights a few global stories of citizen journalism socio-political and civic engagements.

2.10.1 The Baghdad Blogger

Salam Pax started a blog in 2003 with the intention to keep in touch with his friend Raed who had relocated to Jordan to study to keep him abreast of happenings in Iraq (Allan 2006). *Salam Pax* is "a playful pseudonym derived from the Arabic and Latin words for peace" (Allan 2006:109). This blog, written in humorous style about everyday life in Iraq, later became a war blog, detailing the horrific account of the 2003 Iraqi invasion by the US army. Salam Pax had taken to describing his personal frustration and angry criticism of the US invasion, which to his chagrin attracted international bloggers and conventional media attention (Allan 2006). Not only did the blog give a human face to the occurrences on the ground but it also gives a unique perspective on the Baghdad situation under the US invasion. Mythen (2010:50) refers to the Salam Pax blog as one of the most famous blogs from Iraq during and after the invasion. In doubt of the authenticity of Salam Pax and to confirm that the platform is not a hoax or an Iraqi mouthpiece as alleged, the Guardian newspaper tracked down the writer and published his blog entries in September 2003 (Wall 2009). His video blogging for the BBC has also been made into a documentary (Wall 2009). Salam Pax became a prominent contributor to the Guardian. From an architectural background, Salam Abdulmunem later studied journalism for his master's degree. He also won several awards for his citizen journalism roles. Other Iraqi bloggers have also been recognised for taking brave steps to document life in Iraq after the invasion. One such

blogger is Riverbend of *Baghdad is Burning* whose work has been published in two volumes by the Feminist Press, made into a stage play in New York and dramatized on BBC radio (Wall 2009:35).

2.10.2 <u>OhMyNews South Korea</u>

OhMyNews, which was founded in 2000, is a South Korean online news site with the slogan "Every Citizen is a Reporter" (Gillmor 2004; Allan 2006). From the outset, OhMyNews assumed its readers are capable news producers, thus including the general public in participating in news reporting and creating a hybridised 21st century news culture. Gillmor (2004: 126) describes this model of participatory news culture as 'bottom-up', interactive and democratic. Allan (2006:130) affirms this with the statistic that 80 per cent of content on OhMyNews is produced by citizen journalists while professional journalists only produce the remaining 20 per cent. The strength of the site lies in gathering and publishing stories downplayed by the mass media from citizen reporters (Allan 2006). The dynamic of people's inclusion as freelance producers of news has endeared millions of readers to the news site. Likewise, citizen journalists who contribute content to the news site get paid by OhMyNews (Allan 2006). The power of the news site is so far-reaching, observes Gillmor (2004:126) and (Allan 2006:132), that four years into operation it helped elect reformist human rights lawyer Roh Moo Hyun as president. Gillmor (2004:127) also notes that OhMyNews challenges conventional media reporting, especially in downplaying information like in the case of two school girls accidentally crushed to death in 2002 by a US army vehicle. The protest that ensued after this incident was a facilitator in Roh's victory. OhMyNews continues to thrive on to date and has expanded its operation to cater for global audiences. This expansion culminated in OhMyNews International (OMNI).

2.10.3 <u>Occupy Wall Street Protest in New York City</u>

#OccupyWallStreet (OWS) is a protest movement that began in September 17, 2011 at Zuccotti park situated on Wall Street, New York City's financial district. This protest elicited a series of activities such as occupation, picketing, demonstrations, civil disobedience and Internet activism. The reasons behind OWS are corporate influence on democracy and government, political corruption and wealth inequality. Initiated by the

Canadian, anti-consumerist, pro-environment magazine Adbusters' founders Kallen Lasn and Micah White, the campaign sparked overwhelming responses, creating a Tahrir Square effect that lasted about two months in several cities in the U.S.A until its eventual disruption. This thesis however does not delve into the arrest of protesters, its success or failure or the contestation surrounding the movement but rather it discusses the role of digital media in organising the protest.

Adbusters had proposed a peaceful occupation to challenge increasing wealth disparity, corporate influence on democracy and the lack of legal consequences for the originators of the global crisis of monetary liquidation (Caren & Gaby 2011). It further raised awareness through a blog post indicating that the rest of America affected in the financial meltdown are the 99 per cent while the remaining one per cent are the rich (Greene 2011). This call for world revolution was largely promoted through digital activism, which sparked enormous responses, leading to a massive assembling of over 15,000 people during the course of the protest (Greene 2011). According to Greene (2011) the strategic use of the Internet by Adbusters led to the rise of independent activists who took to the protest, as well as helping to capture the world's attention. Writers have indicated that the use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Meetup, YouTube and individual blogs were instrumental in the overwhelming turnout of protesters (Caren & Gaby 2011; Conover et al. 2013). The writers observe the spiral offline effect as overreaching in the sense that hundreds of Occupy movements are now spread across the world.

2.10.4 Wikileaks, the Whistle-blower of Iceland

Wikileaks, founded in 2006 by Julian Assange, an Australian Internet activist, exposes and leaks news relating to government corruption and atrocities. These bold steps include leaking top governmental brutalities such as the Afghanistan war logs where the United States was indicted for war atrocities and collateral murder. According to Allan (2013:154), with Wikileaks activities, citizens become journalists and journalists become citizens. In this sense, Wikileaks relies on the public to forward credible information on governments' maleficence, injustice and corruption. Wikileaks operations have caused widespread uproar in revealing classified governmental information while protecting the sources. Wikileaks also spawned controversy around

professionalism as critics in a polarised debate see untold danger in the site's exposure of information on covert government operations (Allan 2013). Supporters of Wikileaks in the same debate praise the impartial journalism of Assange in leaving no stone unturned when it comes to exposing any form of atrocities and injustices (Allan 2013). Wikileaks' high-tech investigative journalism and whistleblowing exposés include "stories focusing on the treatment of prisoners at the detention Centre in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba; allegations of corruption in a Swiss-based bank; secret information about the internal organisation of the Church of Scientology; Republican Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin's use of private email to sidestep public record laws; and details about the far-Right British National Party (BNP) membership" (Allan 2013:156).

2.10.5 Global Voices Online @ globalvoices.org

Global Voices (GV) is an institutionalised citizen journalism platform committed to the civic duty of global justice, digital activism, human rights promotion and political transformation. GV, founded by Ethan Zuckerman and Rebecca MacKinnon in 2005, is an international community of writers, bloggers, digital activists and citizen journalists. This initiative grew from a meeting held at Berkman Center for Internet at Harvard Law School in December 2004 (Boyd 2005). Presently, GV reports are translated into over 40 languages and it boasts of a team of more than 1400 writers as global news contributors (information available via globalvoices.org). Allan (2013) considers the importance of people's ability to share what they know and what is happening in their environs via this aggregated platform as one of the standout advantages of the GV platform. There is no limit to news from Cape to Cairo and from arctic to the tropical, when it comes to what citizens are witnessing and reporting through the Global Voices online platform.

2.11 Conclusion: Citizen Journalism and Human-Centred Engagement

As this chapter has attempted to underscore, the paradox of conflict and peace studies, and especially the focus on peace processes, remains unresolved. To reiterate one of the chapter's main points, no one-size-fits-it-all approach has worked, as is evident in the failure of most international peacebuilding mechanisms to bring about peace in several countries. These mechanisms have barely scratched the surface of the problems of

human security, partly due to their highly bureaucratic, technocratic and rushed approaches. The arguments of existing literature that describe people-centred approaches to peace processes has uncovered one significant omission of most interventions, that of people's participation in their own affairs. Thus, heavy-handed peacekeeping and surface-scratching technocratic peacebuilding initiatives and state-centric peace processes have continued to leave deep scars at the epicentre of peace work. Importantly, many peace, security and conflict scholars have realised that the solution is holistic involvement of people in their own peace processes. The holistic understanding of conflict transformation through one of its key elements, constructive change processes, serves as a template to examine the role of citizen journalism in peace processes.

This chapter sheds light on citizen journalists as part of civil and political society to better capture their multi-dynamic roles in conflict transformation. Also, as this chapter has shown, in the age of the new media, where chaos sometimes reigns on the Internet, members of the general public have continued to devise a nonviolent, technologically innovative response to and engagement with violence, disasters and crisis. Not only has citizen journalist activities challenged the professional media and kept them on their toes, they have also made their voices heard to challenge tyrannical governments and governance. In Africa, as seen in a few stories on the brave face of citizen journalism, corruption and injustices have been exposed and some citizen journalists who are critical of despotic governments have ended up in jail.

The global arena has also shown numerous endeavours by local citizens and citizen journalists to amplify people's voices and demand accountability through digital activism. The Internet is ridden with all sort of actors; on the one hand there are those using technology to incite hate or instigate violence, and on the other hand there are those whose who are using it for nonviolent, people-centred solutions. Zuckerman (2009:187) argues for the neutrality of technology, which only becomes a potent force in the hand of the user, where it can be used to aggravate or pacify a situation. As depicted in this chapter, citizen journalists have found a way to make their presence felt by the media, the government and society at large, even at the risk of their own lives

and safety. As posited by Thorsen and Allan (2014), looking at the trajectory of the engagement by citizen journalists since 2008, the platform is not waning but rather becoming stronger in its commitment and resilience to participate and be heard. Not only is citizen journalism challenging political hegemony in repressive and corrupt regimes, it is also addressing overarching issues of disasters, crises and conflicts through crowdsourcing, crowdfunding and other nonviolent initiatives. Bringing forth human-centred or people-centred approaches to conflict or catastrophic situations, citizen journalists are stimulating participatory governance. It is with this in mind that this thesis turns to unearthing the significance of the Ushahidi platform's response to Kenya's 2008 post-election violence. Before uncovering the field research on the Ushahidi platform, the next chapter provides the methodological approaches this study follows.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND CRITICAL FIELD REFLECTIONS

3.1 Introduction

This research adopted an interpretivist exploratory case study approach using qualitative methods. Through the lens of inductive reasoning, this study examines the assumption that the participation of the general public through the use of NMT contributes to bottom-up approaches to peace processes. This study explores how a people-centred approach to peace processes is unfolding through the use of the new media. Conflict transformation, a holistic peace mechanism, offers the conceptual context within which the thesis puzzle unfolds. Using the Ushahidi platform as the case study, it explores how this platform and citizen journalists responded to the 2008 post-election violence (PEV) and continued to engage with electoral-related politics and violence until the 2013-general/presidential elections.

This chapter outlines the methodological approach, research design and methods used in this study, including the collection of data through interviews and how the data was analysed and interpreted. Reliability and validity of research data are equally discussed. Reflections on fieldwork and outcomes as well as the limitations of the research are extensively discussed too. The critical field reflections presented in this chapter serve as the roadmaps that offer the full picture of the thesis's endeavour to tackle the research puzzle, question and address the gaps in the literature. The field data, which was largely gathered through unstructured and semi-structured in-depth interviews, were thematically analysed.

3.2 Research Methodology

The qualitative approach was used by this study to gain insight into the chosen contemporary phenomenon. Consequently, this study asked what contribution emerged from Ushahidi in their response to the 2008 post-election violence. The study adopted an explorative qualitative research approach, in the sense that it offers an opportunity for the formulation of a valid premise that helps satisfy the curiosity of the researcher for a better understanding of the problem (Babbie 2007). The explorative nature of qualitative research methods also allows the researcher to gain an in-depth

understanding into the causal reasons, motivations and opinions that underlie a phenomenon. In this case, to answer the research question, which is about the use of the new media by the public to address violent conflict in Africa, this study finds the qualitative research method relevant. A qualitative method is relevant here as it assists in understanding the behaviour and perception that guide a particular phenomenon within a flexible framework (Yin 2011; Creswell 2014). Further, within Social Sciences, where the scientific study of human society and social relationships matters, qualitative research methods serve as a critical tool for empirical understanding as highlighted by Yin (2011) and inferred by several other scholars in:

1. conducting in-depth interviews that lead to better understanding of a situation, event or experience;
2. probing a situation, event or experience deeply to go beyond the initial responses and rationales that underpin research participants' contributions;
3. observing, recording and interpreting non-verbal communication and behaviour of research participants in their natural setting;
4. describing a phenomenon in a way that narrates the essence of an experience, event or situation within a given life context.

This study therefore explores the 'what', the 'why', the 'how', the 'who', the 'where', and the 'when' of the phenomenon under investigation. A particular focus is on what Ushahidi and Kenyan bloggers contributed in responding to the 2008 PEV and 2013 general elections. This inquiry includes how they utilise the new media platform to address the overarching issues relating to the conflict and elections. The extent to which citizens' media undertakings are relevant to a bottom-up approach to peace processes in their own circumstances is central to the research methodology. The other related questions on where, when, who and why are all going to play out as the study presents its findings.

Additionally, the methodological approach undertaken by this study is as a result of months rolling into a year and half of careful inquiry on the best methods suitable. After 18 months of initial desktop research, preliminary research visits to several places and critical analysis of past peace and conflict scholarships, this study decided on the chosen

research methodology and methods. The ethical clearance received through the Faculty of Humanity at the University of Pretoria where this study is housed affirmed the rigorous considerations put into selecting a better-suited methodological approach. This does not mean that other approaches might not work, but choosing the one that appears more appropriate to unearth the research phenomenon takes time and mastery.

3.3   Research Design, Case Study Approach and Interview Process

3.3.1   Case Study Approach in Qualitative Research

This research adopts an exploratory case study approach using qualitative methods. Marshall and Rossman (2006) state that a case study provides some degree of flexibility and independence for research design and data collection. Case study as a research strategy is an empirical inquiry that investigates a research phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 2003; Creswell 2013). In this case, the 'real-life context' is Ushahidi and the Kenyan bloggers whose roles in the 2008 PEV and 2013 elections are under scrutiny and evaluation.

The case study is considered by Benbasat et al. (1987:370) to be viable for the following reasons: it is necessary to study the phenomenon in its natural setting; the researcher can ask "how" and "why" questions so as to understand the nature and complexity of the processes taking place; and the research is being conducted in an area where few, if any, previous studies have been undertaken. Hence, a case study examines a phenomenon in its natural setting, employing multiple methods of data collection to form an intensive analysis of an individual, family, social groups, or organisations. In this way, the researcher is able to gather details and complex information about the phenomenon under investigation.

A case study allows for a multiple data collection method, with converging results helpful in establishing constructive validity of the data. These data collection methods are varied and not limited to direct observation of activities and phenomena and their environment; indirect observation or measurement of process-related phenomena; interviews –structured, semi-structured or unstructured; documentation, such as written, printed or electronic information, newspaper cuttings; records and charts (Yin, 1984:78). Case study types include single case design, multiple case design, embedded

analysis and holistic analysis (Yin 2003). In this study, an embedded multiple-units' analysis is employed with Kenyan bloggers as a sub-unit of the Ushahidi platform. Further along the investigative paradigm is the examination of the interaction between the Kenyan civil society organisations and the citizen journalists or Kenyan bloggers.

Several studies indicate that within the case study typologies, an explorative case study may be positivist, relativist, constructivist or interpretivist (Vreede 1995). This study makes use of the interpretivist approach. An interpretivist epistemology is characterized by the researcher's immersion and empathy to understand a case fully from within and focus on the meanings of events from the research participants' perspectives while acknowledging and empathising with the motivation and intentions beneath their actions (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2013; Edwards & Holland 2013). Although interpretivism offers a flexible research structure and it is concerned with the dynamic of relative and multiple realities, it nonetheless attracts major drawbacks. These shortcomings are lack of detachment and clear objectivity to the case under study. With these shortcomings in mind, being attentive in the application of this approach is key to its practical applicability.

The paradigm framework inferences vital to a case study are deductive, abductive and inductive. Following the postulations of Mills et al. (2010 ed.) on the framework of inferences, a few clarifications are necessary. Inductive reasoning on the one hand is premised on supplying strong evidence to arrive at the true conclusion of a phenomenon; this is a testing theory paradigm. Abductive reasoning on the other hand is based on logical extrapolation that goes from observation to a theory and then circles back to the theory to find a simpler explanation, whereas deductive reasoning links premises with conclusion. In other words, deductive reasoning mainly starts with a set of premises and moves to logical inference to arrive at a conclusion; this is considered a 'logical leap' from existing theory. While the three inferences have endearing characteristics for any study, on careful analysis this study chooses inductive reasoning. The reason is that the explorative focus of this study is to unearth the evidence of people's contribution to the bottom-up approach to peace processes with the use of NMT to derive its conclusion. The theory being tested here is what a bottom-up

approach to peace processes looks like. The research case study is semi-structured, open-ended in-depth interviews.

Using qualitative methods, the study conducts a three and half months' fieldwork in Nairobi, which includes time spent with the Ushahidi platform, its partnered organisations and intermediary institutions as the key informants related to the research interest. Data is gathered through semi-structured and unstructured interviews of four members of the Ushahidi platform, six other bloggers/citizen journalists outside the Ushahidi platform, seven civil society organization leaders/workers, three governmental workers, five writers/journalists, two activists and one politician. In some instances, roles are not clearly demarcated as some research participants identified as a mixture of writer, journalist, citizen journalist, activist or government worker. Information was also acquired through an informal discussion and an email exchange between the researcher and non-governmental organisations that are using mobile phones in their efforts for change, bringing the total of all engaged participants to thirty. It is a wealth of roles with an eclectic flavour. Further details are provided on the professions of the research participants under the sample selection section, and in chapter five of this study where each participant is fully introduced with their consent.

3.3.2   Unstructured/ Semi-structured open-ended interviews

Semi-structured and unstructured interviews are types of qualitative research methods used in interviewing research participants. A qualitative interview is characterised by interactions between a researcher(s) and one or more participants whereby exchange of information assists in constructing scientific or contextual meanings (Edwards & Holland 2013). The writers explain further that interviews can be a face-to-face affair, or it can be set as questionnaires or take the form of a narrative or thematic or topic-centred approach. The goal of qualitative research is to construct meaning from the perspectives of the interviewees to gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under examination. Choosing the unstructured and semi-structured interview approach, this research attempts to understand what contribution emerged from Ushahidi's response to the 2008 post-election violence.

Creswell (2003) states that open-ended methods characterised by semi-structured interviews assist the participants to better express their views for effective meaning to be constructed from their feedback. However, field reality dictates the swift movement from semi-structured questions set to somewhat unstructured system of interaction with research participants. This approach is still within the previously set agenda, as the unstructured interviews did not invalidate the semi-structured interviews; rather, they are interlinked and extend each other in application (Adams & Cox 2008). This flexibility gave room for essential information useful to the central theme of the study to be acquired. Guided by the semi-structured questions, the interactions between the researcher and the research participants veered towards rich unstructured conversations. Moving from semi-structured to unstructured interviews was not particularly difficult, which it would have been if the study had originally set out to use the structured interview technique. However, it does create the headache of shuffling through a large amount of data per interviewee.

The advantage of adopting a semi-structured interview approach is that it offers the flexibility to engage with field realities. The unstructured technique allows for rich information gathering using this open-ended method, leading to quality in-depth data. The limitation of this method, as learnt experientially, is having an overwhelming amount of data to sieve through, process and analyse. Semi-structured and unstructured questions were used alternately as the research participants offered responses that required further probing. Where necessary, the guided questions were dispensed with, allowing the research participants to speak unaided about their experiences. According to Mills et al. (2010:496), unstructured research techniques allow for clarity of events as it elicits in-depth responses from the research participants.

Although the research initially intended to administer Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to five other Ushahidi staff members, five Kenya citizen journalists and five members of other peace and conflict related non-governmental organisations (NGOs), this was abandoned to allow for more time to conduct in-depth interviews with the research participants. The elements of FGD, which according to Marshall and Rossman (2006) are that they allow one to capture reality better, especially where feelings, beliefs and

thoughts are involved, was achieved through in-depth interviews where ample time was spent with most research participants to gather data and observe their perceptions and milieu. More explanation on this will be provided in the section on field reflections.

Finally, apart from the interview techniques formally employed during this study, observations and casual conversations with friends, acquaintances and several Kenyan citizens offered unplanned opportunities to gain more data outside the scope of the formal research tools. Thus, informal conversations supplemented the collected data in addition to the semi-structured and unstructured open-ended interviews.

3.3.3   Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique largely employed by this research to obtain field information was the nonprobability snowballing method. This means that unknown research participants are selected via a chain-referral method (Edwards & Holland 2013). The researcher relied on the established relationship with the Ushahidi platform to refer other participants that met the criteria and the interest of the study. Thus, the recruitment of participants for this research occurred through the referral method with the Ushahidi platform as the starting point. This recruitment style is important because Ushahidi partners with several citizen journalists, humanitarian organisations, and civil society organisation in its work. Also, within the continuum is the possibility that the referred participants via the Ushahidi platform can equally assist in recruiting other relevant participants within the subgroups.

The referral method, which is also known as chain sampling or snowball sampling, is adopted alongside purposive sampling by this study as a result of the relevance of Ushahidi's acquaintances with several multi-dimensional organisations during the Kenya PEV. Thus, the interview process takes account of Ushahidi founders and staff, Kenyan bloggers/citizen journalists, mass media platforms, civil society organisations and other individuals and local organisations that Ushahidi either partnered with or know through their work in relation to the 2008 PEV and 2013 general elections. Even though referral methods sometimes appear like a convenient approach, this study ensures a representative sample of different actors involved or relevant to the research inquisition. In some cases, open conversations with Kenyans or visitors on the research

purpose led to more referrals of other stakeholders not covered through the Ushahidi platform. Additionally, the interviewees mentioned other valuable stakeholders during the interviews, which were followed up on.

3.3.4 <u>Sample Selection</u>

The sample selection cut across a wide range of professions related to journalism and peace activism. There were five trained journalists, three of whom had left professional journalism to focus on writing, consultancy and activism. Rasna Warah, one of the three people referred to, is a renowned writer and she occasionally writes for he Standard. Dennis Owino focuses on communication consultancy, politics, governance and investigation. He moved from professional journalism to citizen journalism. The last of the three, John Githongo, a famous whistle-blower in the government of Mwai Kibaki that exposed the large-scale Anglo Leasing scandal, is running his own organization focusing on youth economic empowerment and activism. The remaining professional journalists both work for The Standard and Kenyan Television Network (KTN). Tony Mochama works for The Standard and he is an award-winning poet and writer known for his work on his 2008 PEV reflection called *The Road to Eldoret*. James Smart works with KTN and hosts a programme called The Trend, which enables other journalists to appear on his show and discuss stories that do not get prominence.

From the Ushahidi platform, four bloggers who are also 'techies' (technologically savvy or having a career in technology) were interviewed. In addition to this, six other prominent bloggers were included. One of these, Patrick Gathara, produces satirical cartoons on his blog and for the East African Newspaper and offers political commentary for Al Jazeera English. Another, Kepha Ngito, is the citizen journalist from Kibera who mapped the population of the slum's habitats to present an accurate figure of its inhabitants for socio-political and economic inclusion. Also interviewed was the voice of a Kenyan-Asian, Dipesh Pabari, who ran a blog to crowdfund for the victims of the 2008 PEV. Many identified bloggers within the sample selection are also lawyers, activists, peace practitioners, graphic designers, photographers, researchers, civil servants and entrepreneurs.

Among the three interviewees that work with the government, Francis Kariuki is the

"Twitter Chief" from Nakuru, one works with the Steering Committee on Conflict Management and Peacebuilding and the other works with the National Committee on Integration and Cohesion (NCIC), a semi-autonomous state agency. Both governmental organisations partnered with Ushahidi on their Uwiano early warning project. Among the activists interviewed were Boniface Mwangi, a Kenyan political activist and a photojournalist known for his photo documentation of the 2008 PEV. Another, Happy Olal, is a grassroots activist in the informal Nairobi settlements of Nairobi where he coordinates a people's parliament called Bunge La Mwananchi to deliberate on a way forward concerning overarching socio-political challenges among other issues. Seven members of Kenyan civil society in different platforms were also interviewed, as well as two female intellectuals of whom one is a known writer in Kenya. They are both former members of Concerned Kenyan Writers, a Google Groups platform, formed in response to the 2008 PEV. Muthoni Wanyeki and George Kegoro were among the civil society practitioners who played active roles in influencing the arrival of the Kofi Annan mediation team in the 2008 PEV negotiation for peace.

The data collection exercise took place in Kenya between 16 August and 29 November 2016, with the researcher spending ten weeks in Nairobi conducting in-depth unstructured interviews with 27 research participants. In March 2017, during an extended stay in Kenya, a further three interviews, including one in-depth interview and two informal encounters, were undertaken. These additional interviews offered important insights into the rich data generated in the field, as will be presented in chapter five of this study.

The study originally aimed to ensure equal participation by both male and female research participants. However, the field reality stated otherwise as more men were interviewed than women. This is partly as a result of the snowball sampling method and partly as a result of low response from potential female research participants. This situation is further discussed under the section on field reflections and challenges.

3.3.5 The Interview Process

The interviews were largely in-depth and unstructured. 27 out of the 28 research

participants were of African origin with the exception of one of Ushahidi's founders, Erik Herman, who nevertheless grew up in Sudan and Kenya. Two of the research participants are of Asian Kenyan origin from India and they are locally referred to as Wahindi (meaning Indians). Three of the research participants preferred to go with 'Kenyan' as their identity when their ethnicity was asked for. Two other participants chose 'African' as their ethnicity while one participant of mixed raced identified as African-Canadian, one as African-American and one as Black African. Other participants identified their ethnicity as Luo (4), Luhya (3), Luhya/Toro (1), Kamba (2), Kikuyu (3), Nandi (1), Taita (1), and Kisii (2). The two additional people approached for informal interviews, both physical and virtual, are Kenyan and American respectively.

Of significance, though, is that many research participants felt uncomfortable to identify with a particular ethnic group as a result of the past 'ethnicized violence'. One participant was worried that since researchers from the West have shown biased reporting by painting different ethnic groups from Africa as "savages killing their neighbours", it was best not to mention her ethnicity. Another argument presented for discarding ethnic categorisation, according to one of those interviewed, was the fact that some ethnicities did not exist until the British came. Overall, the interview process in itself is a learning curve in the sense that it allowed for understanding of cultural context and identity dynamics within Kenyans.

3.4   Ethics and Recording of Interviews

An informed consent form was issued to every individual and organization that participated in this research. According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), ethical standards reduce the risk of exploitation and ensure the safety of information that is shared with the researcher. In case of where participants indicate to be protected, oral consent would suffice and their names and signatures would not be documented, though this was not the case while on the field. All the participants that were interviewed signed the consent forms. A few, however, requested to see the researcher's representation and interpretation of their contributions before the work was published. Permission was also sought from the research authority overseeing fieldwork conducted in Kenya, known as the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations

(NACOSTI), through which a research permit was obtained. All the research participants agreed to be audio recorded for the in-depth interviews. Finally, a Dictaphone was used for voice recording, and interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed.

Additionally, three participants that could not be met physically, as two were abroad (USA and UK) and the third in Nakuru County outside Nairobi, agreed to engage in Skype calls. To achieve effective recording, which was successful, a combination of audio recording and the open source software Audacity was used to better capture the interview upon receiving the participants' consent. In addition, field notes were taken during and after interviews to capture some of the impressions, facts to investigate further and so on.

3.5   Field Reflections and Challenges

The following present the reflections and challenges of carrying out field research as detailed below in the subsequent subsections.

3.5.1   Shortage of Women Interviewees

Out of the 28 participants interviewed in an unstructured format, nine were women. On the one hand, this low number does not reflect lack of effort on the part of the researcher to get more women, but their own lack of availability. On the other hand, because the research obtained its data through referral methods, more men than women were referred. Also, more men in comparison to women are visible in political, governance and leadership blogospheres, from what was observed. Out of the five key members of the Ushahidi platform that were to be interviewed, only four cooperated. The main founder of Ushahidi and the pioneer executive, Ory Okolloh, declined to be interviewed, citing too many interviews with PhD students in the past as the reason for her burnout. Inside information was however that there was unresolved feud among the five key members of Ushahidi, leading to Ory Okolloh's eventual disengagement with the platform. Additional effort was made by the researcher in her reply to Okolloh to ask a few important questions via email since a one-on-one interview had been declined. No further response was received from Okolloh.

The study initially set out to interview equal numbers of men and women but it was practically impossible to get as many women as men. This is because some women were not available to be interviewed and more men occupied the positions in which data were derived. The researcher also met with the staff of Sisi Ni Amani Kenya (SNA-K) and Afroes, two online platforms that map local peace initiatives and develop online games for civic education, who are women. Although no in-depth interviews were conducted with them, information was derived from the Internet about their work and through informal chat and email exchanges. These informal chat and email exchanges have been incorporated in chapter six to answer the research questions.

Before interviewing any participant on the field, the initial contact was with Daudi Were, incumbent executive director of Ushahidi, who took pains to help the researcher to select relevant people to consider for interviews, their roles and why they are important to the study. Subsequently, quality time was spent at the Ushahidi office to interview Daudi Were and observe the activities of the platform while waiting to get feedback from potential participants that were contacted via email. Prior to meeting up with Daudi Were, in the first week of getting to Nairobi, the researcher attended a forum with the Rift Valley Institute on the Media, Politics and Governance in Kenya titled *Communicating in Troubled Times: A Conversation on Media and Democracy ahead of the 2017 Elections*. This event enabled direct contact with bloggers, activists, politicians and professional journalists who were either part of the audience or in the panel, some of whom were later became research participants in the study.

3.5.2 <u>Changes Made to Research Focus in the Field</u>

The researcher's initial assumption before reaching the field was that the best way to answer the research questions was to focus solely on the Ushahidi platform and other citizen journalism platforms that collaborated in 2008. This assumption led to the decision to limit the years under scrutiny from 2008 to 2010, to trace any peace process initiative that might have occurred as a result of Kenyan citizen journalists' collaboration and innovations. However, upon getting to the field, it became clear that expanding the scope of the years under investigation would lead to rich data on

Ushahidi's post-emergence activities. In that case, the years in focus were spread to cover the 2008 PEV up to the 2013 general elections. Also, the struggle of selecting broader peace process mechanisms as theoretical framework was clarified on the field when it became more apparent that citizen journalism peace engagement could be best explained with conflict transformation.

Subsequently, interview questions were reconstructed for the Ushahidi platform, other citizen journalists' platforms, and intermediary organizations such as the mainstream media, the government, and civil society organisations from semi-structured to unstructured interviews because there was information that this approach could not facilitate. For example, many of the research participants have their own personal blogs or have served in different roles before their current job, which was not set in the previous semi-structured questions. Also, it became clear that being rigid with guided questions would only disallow free-flow conversations. Especially on managing to derive concrete research data from their personal stories to professional life. Finally, the fieldwork allows the researcher to unearth what a grassroots or local level peace process means to the people outside academic theorisation, with or without the top-level leaders and technocrats driving it.

Additional information was serendipitously gathered through an informal conversation with a staff member of Afroes, a non-governmental digital platform that develops several online games included *Haki 2* to promote peace and tolerance among young Kenyan voters. Through a yoga acquaintance, who works with the Kenyatta Trust transforming lives of young disadvantaged Kenyans (especially orphans) through scholarship, leadership mentorship and economic empowerment, an introduction was made with the Afroes staff member, Gathoni Mwai. She demonstrated eagerness to talk about her work. Although the meeting did not result in a formal interview, the information gathered forms part of chapter six of this study on several ways in which the new media is utilised to share information and advance peace in Kenya. Thus, through casual conversations with new friends and acquaintances at different events, introductions to numerous online platforms and their staff took place. The field reality is such that research ideas can be shaped and relevant sources can be met in unusual
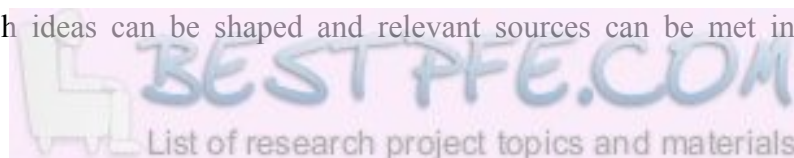
places if one keeps one's ear to the ground and is ready to mingle with people from diverse backgrounds that one meets along the way.

In conclusion, the research questions have been reviewed to fit into the exact focus of the research in line with data direction through the inductive reasoning technique used in this thesis. The questions originally asked were:

- What were Ushahidi's strategies in addressing Kenya's 2008 post-election violence?
- How did Ushahidi facilitate its activities in addressing Kenya's 2008 post-election violence?
- To what extent did Ushahidi's activities contribute to Kenya's peace processes?

They have now been reviewed as one central question, which is:

To what extent has the Ushahidi platform contributed to conflict transformation since the 2008 PEV in Kenya?

In this way, the study goes to the heart of its assumption that the participation of the general public with the use of the new media is a contributing factor in a bottom-up approach to peace processes through the conflict transformation paradigm. The patterns of reality through the fieldwork conducted in Nairobi assisted in solidifying this assumption.

3.5.3   Facilitating a Session on Conflict Sensitive Reporting

An unanticipated addition to the research exploit was being invited to facilitate a session on citizen journalism's role in conflict transformation at a conflict sensitive reporting workshop for Kenyan Journalists in Kisumu and Mombasa. This workshop was organised by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) and Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK). AMWIK was in partnership with KAS to train journalists on Conflict Sensitive Reporting in Nairobi, Nakuru, Kisumu and Mombasa. A total of 60 journalists were targeted for the interactive training to share conflict-reporting experiences, to better understand the dynamics of ethnic or religious conflicts and to collectively improve the skill of sensitive reporting of conflict. The session the researcher was requested to facilitate was titled 'Conflict Transformation in the Age of Modern Media: Citizen Participation'.

As part of the research and facilitating team in Kisumu and Mombasa it was possible to gain insight into both an academic and activist perspective on conflict reporting from citizen journalism. This event involved the training of the Kenyan journalists in attendance on how the combination of participatory journalism, peace journalism, investigative journalism, and civic journalism can enhance conflict transformation and facilitate participatory governance in the republic of Kenya. Several journalists who underwent the training had neither heard of nor read about the concept of conflict transformation, but had a good understanding of the mechanism at the end of the training. The insights gained at this workshop reaffirmed the significance of citizen journalism in Kenya's political transformation. It also directly impacted on the research's central focus as a critical field of study in the 21st century new media eruption. Finally, this workshop reasserted the importance of being people-centred to finding a sustainable solution to violent conflict in Kenya.

3.6   Data Analysis

This study engaged with thematic analysis for data interpretation. Braun and Clarke (2006:6) define thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail". Thematic Analysis (TA) is celebrated for its flexibility to effectively interpret various aspects of research and criticised for the imposed complexity that may arise from poorly demarcated research questions and poorly analysed data (Braun & Clarke 2006:27). However, the benefits of TA's application in qualitative research outweigh its drawbacks, especially since the drawbacks can be bypassed if thorough attention is paid to research question formation and data analysis. According to Guest (2012), TA is performed through the process of coding in six phases to establish meaningful patterns. These phases include familiarisation with data, creating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, outlining and naming themes, and generating the final report (Guest 2012). Though this process sounds like a straightforward and easy to complete task, it is nonetheless very daunting. Thematic analysis requires patience, rigour and discipline to thoroughly transcribe, code and analyse data in a way that allows for the systematic capture of the meaning of research

participants' experiences.

To maximise time and efforts, the 28 interviews of more than 23 hours was not transcribed verbatim. Rather, a systematic transcription, using mind maps (virtual thinking tools), and direct quotations of all the research participants were typed out. This approach assists in extensive familiarisation with the data corpus. All the audio recordings were listened to several times, notes were cross-checked and online archive materials perused to fact-check, confirm and reaffirm some positions or statements for the data corpus. Then initial code generation was embarked on, leading to the itemisation of short phrases, topics, terms, ideas, concepts, metaphors and keywords. Through a subset of generated codes, main themes, sub-themes and outliers that formed the research themes were highlighted. Themes are made up of a subset of codes and as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) themes are ideas that capture something important about the data in relation to the research questions that represent a pattern in responses. With the initial themes not fitting in perfectly into the questions that the research is trying to answer, the themes were then reviewed. Re-reading and recoding the data extracts to make sure they fit into coherent patterns was then carried out. Upon achieving coherency in theme formation, the research story begins to unfold, culminating into the final report. This however was not as easy as it sounds; the final report is a gruelling process of fact checking, idea reconstruction and information reconfirmation.

Notably, thematic analysis flexibility provides the opportunity through code generation to identify patterns that require further investigation and to ascertain the themes that "capture the qualitative richness of the phenomenon" (Komori, year unknown). Reflectively, thematic analysis is a useful technique for qualitative research; the major inconvenience of this method is how rigorous and time consuming the work of data analysis is. But if effectively exploited, it guarantees a thorough outcome of research analysis.

Through the use of thematic analysis and painstaking attention to detail, what emerged were fundamental insights into how the new media as a widely embrace digital platform shapes the response and contribution of several Kenyan citizens in addressing the 2008 PEV and beyond. These insights assist in demonstrating in chapter six of this study

what peace processes means in terms of people's participation in their own affairs and what lessons can be learnt from this.

3.6.1   Useful Supplementary Data

Several pieces of supplementary data were obtained to confirm, assert, discard, reaffirm or learn new information. These are online archival materials used to further clarify the research questions and understand the central focus of this study. Online materials and documentations referred to by research participants or come across through more research after meeting with a particular interviewee become essential. The archival materials such as online videos, blog posts, and website articles become very pertinent to extensive information required to make scientific meaning out of the situation. While field observations and casual conversations with several Kenyan citizens as well as the research participants provided contextual framework in which meanings are constructed, the online archive materials provided further conceptual and practical experiences. The knowledge gained through these online archives and documentation enriches the details that this study collates to present a cohesive and lucid narrative of data presentation. Particularly useful are online videos and interviews of people and related events. Digital visual documentations facilitate a clearer understanding of some of the people's involvements in certain situations and what they hope to transform. These days, more virtual archives are emerging, a phenomenon that can be credited to the 21st century Internet.

Particularly useful were several online interviews that research participants, organizations or persons referred to in the interviews have undertaken such as TedTalks, PopTech and so on. There were documentaries available to pinpoint what the study could reflect on and incorporate into the research. Some of the available information strengthened anecdotal evidence or assisted in germinating a fresh insight. Other information assisted in correcting unverified opinions. The meetings and interaction with the people of Kenya also supplemented the field data, which goes beyond observation but improves the researcher's knowledge on local context and dynamic, such that when online articles or videos mixed up names of people and places, it was easier to spot the inherent error. Essentially, the online archives and visual documentations have proven useful as auxiliary material to this study upon which

information is crossed checked and new evidence has surfaced.

3.6.2 <u>Data Reliability, Validity and Objectivity</u>

The key criteria for evaluating qualitative research are reliability, validity, and objectivity. While objectivity itself is a subjective phenomenon in relation to explorative case study methods in qualitative research, reliability and validity are more straightforward. To expatiate on the subjective objectivity of explorative case study, Ratner (2002) posits, "subjectivity guides everything from the choice of topic that one studies, to formulating hypotheses, to selecting methodologies, and interpreting data." This is true especially where the researcher's perception is intertwined with what is witnessed on the field. However, the methical approach inherent in data validity and reliability defeats the trouble associated with data objectivity. This is in the sense that reliability and validity of the research data encompass replicability and appropriateness of tools, process and data. Validity, which is more of a traditional approach, has been re-evaluated and suggestions of the best criteria have included credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability of data. This contestation has been construed as a case of terminology preferences (Shenton 2004). Shenton (2004:64) discusses further that validity consists of four distinct features that can be juxtaposed with credibility, dependability, conformability, and transferability as follows:

1. Credibility (in preference to internal validity);
2. Transferability (in preference to external validity/generalisability);
3. Dependability (in preference to reliability);
4. Confirmability (in preference to objectivity).

Essentially it is paramount that the researcher ensures rigour to facilitate trustworthiness and transferability of data (Tobin & Begley 2004). Research rigour implies that the researcher demonstrates integrity and competence by adhering to detail and accuracy in qualitative research. How this research ensures that these standards are met is through the following undertakings:

a) Preliminary field visits
b) Careful selection of research methods
c) Painstaking study of appropriate research design

d) Rigorous transcription and analysis of data

e) Adherence to methodical application of research methodology

Given the nature of the study, especially on the fluidity and ubiquity of the new media and the sample size in question, it may be difficult to transfer this study to another life context. There are similar circumstances that can be inferred in terms of using digital technology to make a difference. But what difference is made may differ from one context to another. This is in no way negating the credibility and validity of the data; rather, it reflects the amorphous dynamic of the new media in the hands of the public. Tobin and Begley (2004) argue the importance of the qualitative researcher justifying why specific criteria are chosen for the robustness of the data. Tobin and Begley (2004) suggest a pluralistic approach to crystallize data trustworthiness and authenticity as opposed to a narrow positivist approach.

3.7   Limitation of the Research Methods

The limitations encountered in the research methods employed in this study include the inadequacy of snowball sampling and case study techniques to draw general interferences about the research findings. This means that the findings cannot be generalised to understand the use of the new media in peace processes by the general public; rather it is only applicable to the Kenyan context. Although lessons can be drawn and inferred to understand related situations in many African countries, findings cannot be generalised.

Also in terms of sample size, the 28 research participants interviewed for this research do not necessarily represent the perceptions and perspectives of all Kenyans. Nonetheless, the research questions were answered to saturation point (i.e. a diversity of respondents began to offer similar responses over time, affirming the direction in which the research findings were pointing). The literature suggests that a sample of 5 to 20 people for an in-depth interview is sufficient to answer the research questions or solve the research puzzle.

Perhaps a longitudinal research study would allow for extensive reading of all materials available on the subject of focus as well as all materials presented or referred to by the

research participants. Due to time limitations, however, a decision had to be made to limit the fieldwork period and analyse the data, even though some key people were not interviewed, or some key sources not addressed. One study cannot do adequate justice to this topic and in addition, a limited sample selection within Kenya on citizen journalism and new media cannot be generalised across Africa. Ultimately, the study is an important contribution to knowledge. It opens a door for further debates, discourses and scholarly research on a people-centred approach to peace processes with the use of NMT.

Lastly, there was the sense of reaching saturation with the interviewed research participants as the richness of the sample is ingrained in the diverse sample obtained. However, there is still a question as to whether a certain number of interviews is enough to answer the research questions or to clearly ensure the saturation of data.

3.9   Conclusion

Through the rigorous but flexible application of qualitative research methods, this study was able to gather tangible data to answer its questions. The inductive reasoning adopted by the study allowed for the emergence of strong evidence to arrive at a valid conclusion about the research phenomenon. Using an interpretivist exploratory case study approach, Ushahidi was selected to explore the role that citizen journalists in Kenya are playing in local peace processes. Thematic analysis assisted in interpreting and analysing the data collected from 28 research participants through unstructured and semi-structured in-depth interviews. The study also supplemented its data by observations and referring to archival materials relating to the research. This chapter highlighted the interview processes and how data was gathered and analysed. It delved further into what challenges were encountered in the field and what limitations arose from the study. The next chapter presents an analysis of the context in which the Ushahidi platform and the citizen journalists' response to the violence in Kenya emerged.

CHAPTER FOUR: OVERVIEW OF KENYA'S POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY INTERVENTIONS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of Kenya's political conflicts, as the details and complexity of Kenyan political history are inexhaustible. This chapter therefore focuses on the crucial interlinked details of Kenya's pre- and post-independence history of power dominance, political alliances and betrayals to the detriment of the people. These all point to a lack of transformational political institutions to serve and build a united republic for Kenyans. It is almost as if colonialism never ended, as the post-independence government's dictatorial tendencies and ethno-regional elitists' power play reflect the colonial model.

The Kenya African National Union (KANU), under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Arap Moi, ruled the republic for four decades in disunity and despotism. This chapter shows that during and after the *de facto* one-party system and *de jure* one-party system, the Kenyan multiparty system continued to be run with a tight fist, through the manipulation and harassment of oppositions. Kagwanja (2009:365) succinctly captures this by stating "Kenya was already on the precipice long before the disputed 27 December 2007 election, which sparked the cataclysmic post-election violence that brought one of Africa's most promising democracies to the brink of state failure."

Thus, Kenyan political parties have been characterised by internal factionalism, frequent defections, ethnicisation, ethnic polarity and the party founders' domination to contest elections. Political leaders were too busy creating oligarchical structures to care about the masses that are affected by ethno-regional divisions, a disease inherited from colonialism and passed along to the despotic leaders who in turn spread the sickness as a legacy. This chapter will touch on the co-option of the state resources, including the police force, to manipulate the political system and intimidate the opposition and the people.

Also, the chapter goes further to delineate the role of Kenyan civil society organisations (CSOs), women's movements and the youth in Kenyan's political transitions especially

during the 2008 post-election violence (PEV). This chapter will finally explore the entrance of the youth through the use of new media in the 21st century and their influence of socio-political platforms.

4.2   The Triggers of Kenya's Political Strife: Overview of Kenya's 2008 Post-Election Violence (PEV)

The disputed results of the 2007 presidential election resulted in unprecedented violence that escalated into a cycle of massacres and militia warfare along ethnic lines. A mediation process led by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan – under the aegis of the African Union Panel of Eminent African Personalities (PEAP) – halted the crisis, creating a coalition government involving the two opposition leaders in the presidential election: Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga (Njogu 2013:4). Similarly, overwhelming division typified the pre-2007 political terrain in Kenya, with constant infighting within the political party and parties (during the one-party system and when multiparty system was introduced). Ajulu (1998:40) traces some of these debacles to the colonial era where power was centralised as a means of total control of economic power and resource distribution. Ajulu further states that the construction of many ethnicities by the colonialists left permanent scars of division and inequality that thrive on alliances along ethnic identities. Thus, ethnicised political contestation as a product of colonialism has continued unabated in the post-colonial realities of Kenya as an undesirable legacy of colonisation. In fact, the eruption of the first ethnic clash over political power and competition over resource distribution occurred in 1961 before Kenya gained independence (Ajulu 2002).

The extant literature on Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV) has drawn a sea of fundamental reasons on why the 2008 PEV occurred without a linear delineation. Kagwanja (2009) is among the academics that point to ethno-nationalism and populism as major reasons while Ajulu (2002:251) expands further on the complexity of "reconstruction of ethnicity, ethnic mobilisation and ethnic conflict as the main instruments of political contestation". Other scholars pin the cataclysmic events on generational conflicts around land disputes, unfair distribution of resources, tribalism, human rights abuses, corruption, despotism, oligarchy and colonial legacy. Reflecting

on many of the issues considered the chronic triggers of Kenya's 2008 PEV, leadership's mismanagement of power stands as the main catalyst that drove the chaos. Thus, in all the different dimensions in which several academics and practitioners have looked at Kenya's 2008 PEV, their research link the seedbed of Kenya's ethno-political violence of 1992, 1997, 2002, 2005 and 2007/2008 PEV to ethnicised elitist politics that thrive on patrimonial despotism. The colonial and postcolonial challenges of ethno-nationalism, inequality in resource distribution, and the tyrannical *de facto* party system have all been used by the few political elites in power to further divide the country. One of the reasons why Kenya's pre-2007 attempts at a multiparty system failed to deliver the political transformation to which Kenyans aspired hinged on leaders' autocracy (Nasong'o & Murunga 2007). Seemingly, Kenya's democracy was tainted with disruptive authoritarianism (Otieno 2010) and political ethnicity rooted in colonial capitalist penetration, first and majorly through the Kikuyu ethnic group (Ajulu 2002:253).

Kenya's political trajectory has never been historically calm. Beside the tragedy of the pre-independence Mau Mau uprising (Kenyan liberation war) in the 1950s, where according to Ajulu (2002) there was such polarisation that the landless were made to fight the landed (2002:254), and the 1998 terrorist attack on the USA embassy, Kenya's government has been unsuccessful in managing its political and communal violence. The past presidential eras showed a deep-seated unresolved culture of cataclysms based on ethno-regional bias (Nasong'o & Murunga 2007). Since Kenya's independence in 1963 till 2007, only three presidents have ruled the country, with Daniel Arap Moi staying in the office the longest for a period of twenty-four years as a democratic leader. The pre-2007 presidential eras in Kenya were fraught with division, chaos and misuse of power (Otieno 2010). Although Kenya was credited for maintaining peace the longest and as the most stable country in the East African region, the country seemed to have lived on borrowed peacetime, as the seeds of division and violence had been long sown. In Kagwanja's (2009:365) words, "Kenya was already on the precipice long before the disputed 27 December 2007 election, which sparked the cataclysmic post-election violence that brought one of Africa's most promising democracies to the brink of state failure." For instead of the Kenyan political leaders going about developing and

institutionalising a democratic system based of rules of law and holistic policies, they were swayed in the direction of political elitism (Oloo 2007).

Thus the 2008 PEV was a carried over and re-engineered consequence of an unavoidable explosion waiting to happen, considering the indelible effects of conflicts that were untransformed in the past. According to Kagwanja (2009), Kenya's 2008 PEV was a result of resurgent ethno-nationalism and a culture of impunity that played out in four interfused ways: it was spontaneous, organised, retaliatory and state-driven.

Several peace and conflict scholars, including Galtung (2007) and Lederach (2003) have asserted that the eruption of unprecedented violence often indicate deep-rooted issues that have long been systematically swept under the rug. Therefore, Kenya's legend as the most peaceful country in East Africa was abruptly disrupted when the outcome of its 2007 presidential elections led to a devastating conflict. The country sprung into bloody political violence that paralysed Kenya's social, political and economic affairs for almost two months, when Kibaki was accused of full-scale electoral fraud in the 2007 Presidential elections. Although in retrospect Kenya's political peace was much greater in comparison to the highly devastating political violence and outbreak of civil wars of its neighbours like Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, the Congo and Rwanda, nonetheless, as postulated by many academics and practitioners, Kenya's eventual political onslaught has its roots in large-scale corruption, human rights abuses, ethnic tension and division (tribalism), land disputes, economic problems including access to resources, unimplemented devolution of political powers and above all, the fact that Kenya is still swathed in its colonial legacy. This is the legacy of continual application of the colonial model of governance shrouded in misrule and oppression as opposed to restructuring of political systems that would facilitate populist unity, peace and progress (Gecaga 2007; Nasong'o 2007). The eruption of the 2008 PEV highlights the hidden fact that the legendary peace of the post-independent republic of Kenya might well be superficial.

4.3   Kenya's Colonial Legacy and Presidential 'Ivy League'

Kenya gained its independence from Great Britain on December 12th 1963 and declared itself a republic a year later on December 12th 1964. The latter date has been used to

commemorate Kenya's independence as a former British colony. Kenya is a multi-ethnic former British colony with over thirty indigenous groups subjected to the British divide and rule system of governance. Kenya has also passed hands from Arab and other European countries, which influenced its socio-cultural, economic and political development before it became annexed by the British Empire (BBC News 2017a). Arab traders from Oman and the Persian Gulf to Southern India, Indonesia, the Dutch and the Portuguese from Europe from the 1st Century AD to the 17th century AD made the Kenyan region their settlement (BBC News 2017a). The Arabs were a key influence in Kenya's Islamic culture and its lingua franca, Kiswahili (Crawfurd year unknown). Accordingly, the British succeeded in introducing a divide and rule political system to control the Kenyan ethnic groups upon taking over the region after defeating the Portuguese in the 19th century (BBC News 2017a). Kenya was also the imperial defence and internal security hub for the British in the Cold War era (Percox 2012). Furthermore, Kenya was a military base for the British during World War I. Subsequently; Kenya was an important British military base for successful campaigns against Italy in the Italian-Somaliland and -Ethiopia debacle during World War II.

Upon Kenya's decolonisation in 1964, the British Empire left the country in care of one of its prominent nationalists, Jomo Kenyatta, who had served under Queen Elizabeth II as prime minister from 1963 to 1964. Kenyatta was determined to lead the newly independent country as its first elected president in 1964 with the resolve to *harambee* spirit –meaning pulling together (Lynch 2006). From the start, Kenya was set up as a *de-facto* one-party state in the hands of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) political party under Jomo Kenyatta's leadership. In the same light, the largest ethnic group in Kenya, the Kikuyu (believed to have shed more blood for Kenya liberation than any other ethnic group), which is the president's ethnicity, dominated the *de facto* one-party state. Consequently, Kenya moved quickly from quasi-federalism to a unitary system of government (Nyström 2002). Up until the 2007 Presidential elections, Kenya had had only three presidents in its forty-three years of independence with only one failed attempted coup d'état in 1982.

After the death of Kenyatta in 1978, Daniel Arap Moi, Kenyatta's former vice-president, became Kenya's second president in 1979 upon winning the ethnic-power

obstacles imposed by the Kikuyu elites. Moi soon started failing in all his promises to unite Kenya and advance its socio-political and economic landscape by taking the route of personalising and centralising the political powers (Nasong'o 2007). Soon Moi focused on ethnic lines by putting more faith in his own ethnic group, the Kalenjin. The power transferred from the Kikuyu (one of Kenya's main ethnic groups) to the Kalenjin spelt doom for the country. This reality, added to the existing feud about unequal pre- and postcolonial land distribution, triggered a lot of public agitation and resentment among other disadvantaged ethnic groups in Kenya. During Moi's 24 years of leadership, there were more ethnic divisions, torture and detainment of political opposition members, unexplained killings of opposition members, communal and ethnic strife, failed devolution of powers and an unsuccessful multi-party system (Otieno 2010).

Then, when power shifted back into the hands of a Kikuyu Kenyan, Mwai Kibaki in 2002 through the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), ousting the KANU 40 year's rule, Kenyans' hope surged. This burgeoning hope for a united Kenya was once again dashed when Kibaki's office reinforced the existing impunity (Nasong'o & Murunga 2007). Among many challenges that deteriorated under Kibaki's leadership were corruption, human rights abuses, ethnic strife and a failed referendum attempt in 2005. Therefore, Kenya's political systems failed to deliver socio-political and economic development for the people. State provision of human security and protection from abuse and violation of rights similarly elude the people whose hope was based on a fortified democratic system of governance. In 43 years of an independent Kenya, up until 2007, with three seated democratic presidents, more seeds of discord and less seeds of peace were sown, hence the continual germination and harvesting of violent conflicts.

4.3.1   Jomo Kenyatta 1964-1978

Jomo Kenyatta ruled for 15 years from 1964 until his death in 1978 (Otieno 2010). Kenyatta was the first post-independence Kenyan president (founding president). He was a Prime Minister from 1963 to 1964 under the rule of Queen Elizabeth II and Malcolm MacDonald as Governor-General, and then became Kenya's first president after independence in 1964 (BBC News 2017a). Kenyatta won unopposed under a *de*

facto one-party state of his political party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU). Wanjala (2002) notes that the constitutional amendments in the first few years of independence gave the late president Kenyatta so much power that he became a monarch (cited by Gecaga 2007). By 1966, Jomo Kenyatta had begun to use political terrorism through monopoly of sanctions, economic rewards and patronage to ensure that political opposition involving Oginga Odinga could not compete openly with the ruling party (Ajulu 2002:260). Thus Gecaga (2007:67) writes, "Kenyatta used his monolithic power to destroy or push into oblivion all pro-democracy and people-centred movements that had been involved in the struggle for independence and land rights, thereby emasculating institutions meant to provide checks and balances on the executive."

Kenyatta's era was alleged to have been in favour of his ethnic group in terms of land distributions, job opportunities and other economic advantages as he wielded absolute control over public resources (Ajulu 2002). Kenyatta waged colossal control over all sectors of political institutions including the armed forces, the police, the civil service, the provincial admiration and the academy in a way that gave him absolute power over Kenyan economy (Amutabi 2007; Gimode 2007). His power was unparalleled and Kenyan economy and political sectors were treated as his personal properties. Kenyatta surrounded himself with a powerful Kikuyu group known as the Kiambu mafia. The Kiambu mafia grew stronger in strength and power during the Kenyatta era (Ngunyi 1993 cited in Ajulu 2002). They were wealthy Kenyans with supreme access to the presidency and were massively influential. Several political oppositions were detained during Kenyatta's presidency and the fall-out between Kenyatta and his first vice president Oginga Odinga led to massive disruptions of public peace and numerous political killings.

4.3.2   Daniel Arap Moi 1979-2002

Daniel Arap Moi, who had been Kenyatta's vice president for twelve years succeeding the late president in a democratic election, ruled the country for 24 years. Under Moi's leadership, a questionable multi-party state was introduced in 1992 but did not stand the test of time, as power did not change hands. Moi still won the elections. Moi seemed to have been in power for the longest as he was Kenyatta's vice president for twelve years,

from 1966 to 1978, when Kenyatta passed away, and he was acting president from 1978 to 1979 before another election was conducted and Moi became the official president of the Republic of Kenya.

The Moi era caused more havoc in the political history of the country than promises delivered. The Moi era was known for the personalisation and centralisation of political powers and the summary detention of those who opposed him (Nasong'o 2007, Murunga 2010). Ajulu (2002) puts this as a stepping up of the consolidation of power witnessed during Jomo Kenyatta's era to asphyxiate political competition in power laden with despotism and patrimony to safeguard his political office. As a result, Moi targeted opponents of democracy, lecturers, students, political rivals, media personnel and civil society activists as rebels that undermined his leadership. They were harassed, arrested, detained, tortured and jailed by the Moi administration with a complicit judiciary, police and prison system that assisted him to repress the country. Gimode (2007) details the horror that the Mwakenya Movement, a group of democracy advocates, suffered at the hands of the Moi government as heinous and brutal. The Moi government arrested hundreds of Mwakenya members, tried, tortured and jailed them on the grounds that they were an illegal group planning to overthrow his government.

4.3.3 Mwai Kibaki 2002-2013

Mwai Kibaki was Arap Moi's vice president for a period of ten years from 1978 to 1988. He also held cabinet ministerial positions in the Kenyatta and Moi governments, including time as Minister for Finance (1969–1981) under Kenyatta, and Minister for Home Affairs (1982–1988) and Minister for Health (1988–1991) under Moi. Kibaki served as an opposition Member of Parliament from 1992 to 2002. He unsuccessfully stood as a presidential candidate in 1992 and 1997. He served as the leader of the official opposition in parliament from 1998 to 2002 and in the 2002 presidential election. Kibaki was elected the third president of the Republic of Kenya in a landslide victory following the resignation of Arap Moi in response to a manifesto calling for his withdrawal from dictatorial/lifelong political powers (Otieno 2010). Kibaki had initially planned to run for the presidency under KANU as a veteran loyal member who had played several important roles in the party. He lost the presidential bid to Uhuru

Kenyatta whom Moi endorsed while Kibaki felt slighted and betrayed by Moi (Kagwanja & Southall 2009).

Kibaki then defected from KANU and formed the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). To ensure victory against the lifelong KANU, LDP joined with the National Alliances Party of Kenya (NAK) to form the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). Raila Odinga was a member of NARC as he had left KANU after his disappointment with Moi's conduct. Raila campaigned tirelessly for Kibaki who had gone abroad for medical treatment after a terrible road accident. Kibaki won in a landslide victory by garnering 62% of the votes while 31% went to Uhuru Kenyatta (Roberts 2009).

4.4 Details of Kenya's Power Play and Political Tumult

Kenya was the envy of many African countries and the international community praised Kenya as the epitome of democratic stability and an economic powerhouse with a booming tourism industry. Despite the ethnic discord and tensions caused by unequal representation, power struggles and land friction, it was still believed that Kenya would pull through. However, there were too many unresolved socio-political and economic problems that were ineffectively addressed. The calibre of elitist leaders that the country has produced seemed to continually put their own personal interests to the fore.

The first notable instance of political discord was between Jomo Kenyatta and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. Odinga, who fathered Kibaki's prominent opposition in the 2007 presidential election, Oginga Odinga was the first Kenya's first vice president to the founding president Jomo Kenyatta. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a prominent figure in Kenya's struggle for independence, served as Kenyatta's vice president from 1964 till 1966 before the pair's abrupt falling out based on their different political ideologies (Gimode 2007). According to Gimode (2007), the constant clash between Kenyatta and Odinga led him to resign from the KANU political party and to stand in fierce opposition to Kenyatta. Kenyatta was said to have thrown the political career of Odinga into disarray with the help of his sidekick Tom Mboya (Gimode 2007). Tom Mboya, a freedom fighter that was later assassinated in 1969 (the second in a series of assassinations that followed the falling out between Kenyatta and Odinga). Pio Gama

Pinto, a freedom fighter, politician and journalist, was assassinated in 1965 and was considered the first causality of the Kenyatta-Odinga rivalry.

A few years later, in 1975, Josiah Mwangi Kariuki, a Kenyan socialist politician, was brutally murdered with top police officers implicated while the case remained unsolved (Gimode 2007). All the assassinations were said to be politically motivated, with the blame being shifted from one person to another and one ethnicity to another. According to Ajulu (2002:261), Kariuki was a casualty of intra-political rivalry; this was despite him being a Kikuyu because he was far removed from the Kenyatta Kiambu coalition, "the family". There were myriads of political killings and retaliations that followed these assassinations born out of the Kenyatta-Odinga rivalry (Oloo 2007). Despite the lack of a successful military coup like in many African countries, the Kenya post-independence realities became dark and murky with leaders putting their personal interests first and using the political institution to silence a strong opposition.

According to Linus Kaikai (2013) on Daily Nation news, "the killing of Mboya and the shootings in Kisumu were part of a season of heightened intolerance that saw the Kenyatta administration crack down on political opposition, ban political parties and detain political leaders." Oginga Odinga had gone ahead to form the Kenya's People Union (KPU) in 1966, but the KPU was banned in 1969 after the death of Mboya, leaving KANU as the only party that carried on to contest elections. Thus, a *de facto* system was once again reinstated. Prior to the formation of KPU, the post-independence party that started to challenge KANU was KADU (Kenya African Democratic Union), which was summarily absorbed by KANU after the election, was not in its favour (Oloo 2007).

After an open verbal attack and clash that lead to the death of at least 50 Kenyans and several injured in 1969, Odinga was arrested and detained for two years and later consigned to political limbo until Kenyatta's death in 1978. The falling out between the two close friends, who had been united with the common goal of liberation, was fuelled by the international community with the debris of the Cold War at its epicentre. The ideological war between the West and the East separated Kenyatta and Odinga. The former went west while the latter went east.

Kenyatta's successor, Daniel Arap Moi, appointed Odinga as chairman of the Cotton Lint and Seed Marketing Board; nevertheless, Odinga did not last in this position. Odinga and Moi's feud began as a result of Odinga's relentless criticism of Kenyatta's policies, which Moi was hell-bent on executing. According to Gimode (2007), Odinga's speech on the state of governance in Kenya when he travelled to Britain landed him an expulsion from KANU. Moi then amended the constitution to make Kenya a *de jure* one-party system from a *de facto* one-party system since the proscription of Odinga's KPU party in 1969 (Gimode 2007:240). He was placed under house arrest after the failed coup attempt against the Moi government, which he was implicated to have spearheaded.

With the introduction of a multiparty system in Kenya during the ruling of Arap Moi, several crises occurred leading to the killing of some political opponents. Prior to Moi's reign of terror, Kenyatta's era had seen not less than 26 political detainees whom Moi freed upon getting to power (Gimode 2007). Moi would later revert to detention as a means of control, like his predecessor had previously done in abusing the police, judicial and prison systems. Moi was to curtail the influence of those he perceived as a threat to his leadership, thereby reinforcing the fears of Kenyans who thought Moi would deliver on his promise of curbing corruption and neutralising tribalism, which was such a big deal during Kenyatta's presidency. This is especially the small Kikuyu elite, a.k.a. the Kimabu Mafia that had grown stronger with feelings of superiority during Kenyatta's leadership. Although Moi pledged to follow *nyayo,* the "footsteps" of Kenyatta, which earned him the title *'Nyayo'* and his regime the moniker *'Nyayo era',* this should have served as a warning sign. Moi was also dubbed 'professor of politics', having been the longest serving president in Kenya. His application of *Nyayo* ultimately went against the context of peace, love and unity and followed specific political objectives that mirrored his inherited legacy from Kenyatta. These objectives were based on control of the state, consolidation of power, legitimisation of his leaders and broadening of Moi's political base and support. Ultimately, human rights, economic freedom and development and human security concerns were pushed to the back burner. In this way, Kenya moved from a plutocracy to despotism.

Moi personalised and centralised Kenya's political system and made it tough for the opposition to make any successful political moves or register a political party (Nansong'o 2007). Kenya remained a *de jure* one-party state largely under Moi who used the state police force to suppress any critics of his regime (Otieno 2010). An attempt by Kenyan politicians, activists and lawyers to stage a protest popularly known as the Saba Saba riot ended with several killed or injured and landed Raila Odinga and a few others in detention in 1990 (Oloo 2007; Gimode 2007). Inexorable pressure got Moi to repeal a *de jure* one-party Kenya from 1982 and move to a multiparty system in December 1991. In the same year, the father of Raila Odinga, Oginga Odinga, alongside other political opponents, had formed the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), which was instrumental in pressurising Moi to amend the party system (Nasong'o 2007, Oloo 2007). FORD would later split into different versions in 1992, making it difficult for a stronger opposition to displace KANU from power. According to Oloo (2007) Kenyan political parties were characterised by internal factionalism, frequent defections, ethnic polarity and the party founders' domination to contest elections. Oloo (2007:108/9) provides details of power monopolisation exercised by the Moi regime to stifle opposition of access to media, voters and other necessary resources to participate fairly in the 1992 and 1997 multiparty elections. The police force and ethnic clashes were instigated to intimidate opposition supporters, resulting in skirmishes at Likoni constituency in Mombasa in 1992 and the Rift Valley and Coast Provinces in 1997. Moi won both elections and KANU did not get kicked out of power until 2002.

The Goldenberg scandal was another Moi government gold corruption scandal and Kibaki was also implicated in this racketeering (Otieno 2010). The Moi government was found to have subsidised exports of gold beyond standard arrangements during the 1990s by paying Goldenberg International 35% more in Kenyan Shillings than their foreign currency earnings. The Kenyan economy also nosedived during Moi's leadership. In the literature on Kenya, from political to cultural, the Moi era takes a special space for being the centre of all Kenya's socio-political and economic problems. This is not totally surprising as it was the longest dictatorial presidency in the political history of the Kenyan republic.

In a turn of events, in 2002 Moi retired and Kibaki won the 2002 presidential election after four decades of KANU rule. It was a triumph resulting in alliances being formed and hopes being raised. Kibaki had contested under the coalition of Kenyan political parties, the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). This coalition would later suffer brutal division, leading to a separation of alliances. It was within this divided coalition in the multiparty system that Raila Odinga's political party, Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), vied with Mwai Kibaki's party of National Unity (PNU) for the post of the presidency in 2007. Kibaki and Raila were formerly long-term political allies till the NARC days, when he left to form the ODM as a result of Kibaki's betrayal to keep his promises, which included making Raila Odinga his prime minister. Kibaki reconstituted via the newly formed alliance, PNU. Both Odinga and Kibaki had been on Kenya's political scene for decades in different roles and capacities. Kibaki was Daniel Arap Moi's vice president for a decade while Raila Odinga was a member of the Langata parliament in 1992 and Minister of Energy and Roads, Public Works and Housing from 2001 to 2005. Raila Odinga is also the son of the first vice president of Kenya, Oginga Odinga. The Kenyan political elites were constantly forming and reforming alliances as if changing clothes, which reaffirms the challenges cited by Oloo (2007). Finally, the Kenyan political landscape appeared like a well-ingrained system of elitist political alliances, constant betrayals and concurrent belligerence.

4.5   Kenya's 2008 Post-Election Violence Imbroglio

The presidential elections that were conducted on the 27th December 2007 had Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga as its main contenders. As mentioned above, both candidates had previously cooperated under the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) and had won against Uhuru Kenyatta in 2002 (Otieno 2010). Upon falling out of the NARC coalition, both Kibaki and Odinga had pitched their tents against each other in the 2007 presidential election. Thence, on December 30th, 2007, the results of the presidential elections announced by the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) plunged the country into an unprecedented political, security and humanitarian crisis. There were reports of extensive rigging in favour of the incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki (Bock 2012). The widespread mayhem that occurred between January and February 2008 saw over 1,000

casualties, displacement of not less than 500,000 people, over 2,000 refugees and massive ruination of properties (Mwiandi 2008; Kagwanja & Southhall 2009).

In the accounts of several scholars and human rights reports, the initial violence was spontaneous as a reaction to the perceived rigging of the elections by the government. Subsequently, while more facts emerged about the election and Kibaki was hurriedly sworn in, more violence erupted in the Nairobi slum and the Rift Valley province. Odinga's supporters likewise declared him a winner, leading to two presidents in one seat. After the declaration of two presidents occupying the same presidential seat, a spontaneous pandemonium became retaliatory and later morphed into more organised strife, and before long, the violence had become state-driven. Thus, reiterating Kagwanja (2009), the violence mutated from spontaneous, to organised, to retaliatory and state-driven.

Yamano et al. (2010) report that the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) garnered support from Kenyans that were keen on a decentralised political system. This is because of the Kibaki-led government's failure to implement its political devolution manifesto, polarising the political support along ethnic lines. According to the International Crisis Group's report (2008), Kibaki, a Kikuyu, had pulled a few ethnic groups to his side while many other ethnic groups, hoping for a different political outcome, had gone to Odinga's Luo side, yet the ODM remained stronger. Elections are often conducted by a coalition of ethnic support and Odinga happened to have had more. Also, ODM thrived by garnering youth support, resulting in a youth mobilisation campaign ("let's wake up youth, it's our time") that worked in its favour.

To secure majority votes, Yamano et al. (2010) state, the political strategy of Kibaki and Odinga was to choose their vice presidents from the Luhya ethnic group as one of the largest remaining ethnicities that could influence the voting outcomes, because no single ethnic group in Kenya could produce the needed majority votes. This Luhya vice president ticket alliance or strategy gave Odinga an edge over Kibaki at 75% over 23%. The regional support from the Kalenjin ethnic group also gave Odinga 88% of the votes (Yamano et al. 2010). What also propelled the support given to Odinga by many ethnic groups in Kenya was their hope in devolution of power. Since both Moi and Kibaki had

failed to achieve this demand, Kenyans thought it was time to try the son of Kenyatta's opposition leader, Raila Odinga, who had envisioned a more centralised political system in Kenya. Raila Odinga had managed to imprint a populist stand in the mind of his voters.

Thus, all evidence pointed to Odinga winning the 2007 presidential elections. However, the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) reported that Kibaki won 46.4% and Odinga acquired 44.1% of the total votes (Yamano et al. 2010). These results were considered untrue and some ECK commissioners and international/external observers called for investigation of the election results. External observers provided evidence of undeniable rigging which revealed the misconduct of some electoral officials who had been seen tampering with polling results and doctoring election results (International Crisis Groups 2008). Nonetheless, Kibaki was hurriedly sworn in and flown to safety in a coastal military facility and the internal security minister suspended all live media broadcasts. In response to this audacious despotism, an immediate outbreak of violence in the Nairobi slum and other major Rift Valley cities ensued.

At the time of the hushed swearing-in of Kibaki, opposition members had rejected the 2007 election results and were calling for Odinga's inauguration as the winner of the election. The public had asked the electoral officials to recount the voting results, but they refused amidst an outcry about rigging, stating the matter had to be handed over to the court. Kenyan voters were reported to have begun immediately to contest the election results as rigged in favour of Kibaki. The attacks were primarily against the Kikuyus by the Kalenjins, while in the Rift Valley province politicians were said to have deliberately fuelled the existing land dispute debacle.

The main targets in the Kenya's 2008 PEV were PNU members and Kibaki associates, who were mainly from the Kikuyu and Kisii ethnic groups. The subsequent progressions of violence reported had been organised and influenced by politicians, businessmen, village leaders and local leaders. The Kikuyu settlers in Eldoret, a Kalenjin homeland, were butchered and burned in their hideouts. Thus, Eldoret in the Rift Valley became the epicentre of the Kenya's 2008 PEV. Subsequent retaliation later ensued with mobilised Kikuyu gangs, including the fierce Kikuyu ethnic gang Mungiki

unleashing violence against the Luo, Luhya, and Kalenjin ethnic groups. According to Gecaga (2007:71-85), Mungiki began as a religious group aiming to restore the lost African tradition of the Kikuyu ethnicity and emancipate their people to do away with Islam and Christianity, which were seen as foreign to their custom. Thus, the cultural and political principles of self-determination, self-reliance and self-pride valued by the group became corrupted. Over the years, *Mungiki* had morphed into an urban vigilante and militia group that sometimes served the notorious interest of political leaders.

As detailed in the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights report (2008), in the continuous devastating confusion and commotion of the tribal bloodletting, violence spread to other part of Kenya's Rift Valley province. These places included Nakuru and Naivasha, and other provinces where places like Kisumu, Embu, Meru, Mombasa, Kakamega, Bungoma, Busia, Webuye and the Nairobi slums equally became the hub of Kenya's 2008 PEV. Residential expulsions, land eviction, maiming and killings of people of different ethnic groups were included in the attacks of these areas. What started as anti-Kikuyu attacks transformed into Kikuyu retaliatory killings that drew more blood from the Kenyan populace. In Eldoret, well-organised Kalenjin warriors carried out attacks against the Kikuyu and in this case, the anti-Kikuyu incitement pointed to well-orchestrated ethnic attacks to rid the Rift Valley of Kikuyus. Local leaders, businessmen and politicians participated in organising the attacks and paid for them to be carried out. The main economic and tribal reason was to evict the Kikuyu settlers and take back their lands, which meant the confiscation of established Kikuyu farmland and properties.

While the enlisted criminal gangs set Kenya ablaze, the police also joined in the attacks, killing and maiming Kenyans, including children. In what is seen as an ethnic alliance, the police systematically attacked Kenyans that were not from their respective ethnic groups. According to Gimode (2007), the deployed misuse of police power to repress and oppress citizens dates back to colonial Kenya. Particularly during the leadership of Kenyatta and Moi the police were used to arrest, harass, torture and intimidate the opposition (Gimode 2007). The legacy of police brutality is ingrained in Kenyan postcolonial politics to protect the political elites and suppress any form of dissent or

opposition. The police were collaborators in stifling people's freedom as the elitist leadership had failed to democratise and reform their operations. Also, the elitist generational conflict of power struggle had a devastating effect on collaboration and cooperation among Kenyans. For instance, the historical context of power and proprietorial privileges disenfranchised the Lou and favoured the Kikuyu; the Kikuyu being (one of) the largest ethnic groups in favour of centralisation of power while the Lou felt marginalised and canvassed for political devolution or decentralisation of power. The oligarchical legacy from the founding president trickled down to all the politicians on the corridor of political powers in Kenya, not to mention the legacy of the divide and rule approach of the British Empire that had become an integral part of Kenya's socio-political fabric (Nasong'o 2007).

There had continued to be pre- and post-independence discord over the uneven distribution of land in Kenya's Rift Valley province. Land dispute is a post-white settlers issue where from the end of the British era and the departure of white landowners, the Kenyatta era favoured the Kikuyu 'Kiambu Mafia' in land redistribution and other resources (Adar & Munyae 2001). Furthermore, Daniel Arap Moi's divide and rule policies inflicted in the 1990s had an adverse effect on the 2008 PEV, especially on land distribution. Also, the fall of Kenya as the central hub of serenity in the East African region had adverse effects on other countries, such that the 2008 PEV not only affected Kenya's populace and their economic situations but also induced a calamitous spread-over consequence on its neighbouring countries in the East African region. The effect of Kenya's PEV on its neighbours, such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, South Sudan and Eastern Congo, were fuel scarcity and non-delivery of other essential commodities because of route blockage as these countries use the Mombasa-Malaba highway for freight services to their countries.

After the pandemonium of almost three months that had crushed Kenya's "peaceful coexistence", Kofi Annan's mediation team, an African Union intervention effort, succeeded in forming a coalition government through negotiations and mediation. The coalition government that was eventually formed at the end of the 2008 PEV between the PNU and ODM retained Kibaki as president, while a non-existent prime minister position was created for Raila Odinga. The coalition agenda hinged on power sharing,

constitution and legal reform. The Kenyan civil society organisations (CSOs) are said to have played a significant role in facilitating Kofi Annan mediation team's arrival in Kenya. Therefore, the role of the Kenyan CSOs in the nation's political terrain is discussed next.

4.6   Kenyan Civil Society and the Media

The civil society organisation (CSO) landscape in Kenya is very complex and discussing it in detail is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, stating in brief the emergence and evolution of Kenyan CSOs will assist in situating their role in Kenya's political landscape in relation to this study. In the previous chapter, civil society was conceptualised as both institutionalised and non-institutionalised non-state actors with various set goals to influence their communities. Thus, under this umbrella of eclectic roles, we find the youth-led action with the use of the 21st century new media, a place where Ushahidi pitches its tent.

According to Nasong'o 2007 and Wanyande (2010), the Kenyan CSOs began to flourish in post-colonial Kenya to serve as transformational and developmental platforms for various ideas and agendas. The authors explain further that the government of Kenya, which first appeared forward-looking, began to crack down on CSO activities that challenged their bureaucratic tendencies and activities. Before long, in 1990, the Moi administration passed a parliamentary act, under the Non-Governmental Organisations Co-ordination Act, that made it compulsory for CSOs to register their mandates (Wanyande 2010). This act gave the government overwhelming autonomy to refuse or approve any CSO that was considered detrimental or beneficial to the national interest. The result was abuse of power by the board in charge of CSOs registrations. The Kenyan CSOs have also on the one hand been trying to tame the government, and on the other hand been dominated by politicians interested in partisan power (Nasong'o 2007). Despite all the challenges faced by Kenyan CSOs, their role was nonetheless vital to ensuring a multiparty Kenya.

The post-Moi leadership has seen more thriving CSOs in Kenya, especially since their decisive role in bringing Kibaki to power. However, in recent times, the relationship

between the Uhuru Kenyatta government and the CSOs has become strained. The Uhuru Kenyatta government not only legislated laws to restrict funding for CSOs, but has also placed stringent rules on expatriate workers working for CSOs (Brass 2016). Since the eras of Jomo Kenyatta and then Arap Moi, intellectual scholars have made themselves visible against all odds (including undue arrest, restriction and dismantling of groups) to demand a better country (Nasong'o 2007; Amutabi 2007). There are all kinds of civil society leaders in the heterogeneous CSOs of Kenya, including academic scholars, activist intellectuals, social activists, and organic or community activists (Amutabi 2007). The categorisations of the civil society leaders comprise also the religious leaders, social justice activists and political reformists serving as interest groups members with divergent goals towards democratic values and socio-political affairs.

Otieno (2010) states that the Kenyan CSOs have been negotiating and contributing meaningfully to governance and political transitions years before the disputed 2007 elections. In 2002 the Kenyan CSOs took the duty upon themselves of educating Kenyans and challenging the leaders about accountable governance (Otieno 2010). This effort, according to Otieno (2010), led to the full participation of several CSOs in shaping the content and context of politicians' manifestoes (Otieno 2010). This is because as concerned citizens and groups of people wishing to see the authoritarian KANU regimes that had ruled for 40 years with untold impunity and corruption defeated, the collaborative efforts of "civic education activism" became their focus (Nasong'o & Murunga 2007; Otieno 2010: 101). The Kenyan intelligentsia within the civil society organisations infiltrated the political consciousness to influence and shape the political agenda in the nascent multi-party systems to transform past political impunities.

Wanyande, Chege and Omondi (2010) point out that the CSOs are far from homogenous in their focus, objective and approach to achieve equity and transformational governance. Some CSO activists are considered "reformists" while some are seen as "status-quo advocates" due to the multiple roles played in the 2002 elections (Chege & Omondi 2010:9). In the *de jure* single-party system of the 1990s,

the Kenyan CSOs had participated vigorously in creating space for "competitive politics" (Chege & Omondi 2010:9). Thus, by 2002, some had aligned with the political party considered to be transitional. This political transition watershed led to the presidential victory of Mwai Kibaki in 2002, which initially offered incredible promises to Kenyans but quickly dashed all hopes through a series of corrupt practices (Hoste 2013). Part of the reason for the failed promises was the swift abandonment of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) promising decentralisation of power and the conclusion of the review of the on-going constitutional process (Nasong'o & Murunga 2007).

Nasong'o (2007) notes the overexcitement and overconcentration of CSOs hinging on multiparty elections, and less on strategic political engagement and transformation, as an unintended setback to their democratic struggle. Then the scale was tipped in the unexpected violence following the 2007 presidential elections where over a thousand Kenyans were killed and several thousand others displaced. The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) displacing the authoritarian KANU had done little to reform democratic values and the CSOs had not succeeded in instating the desired populist government. However, Kenyan civil society activists and the intelligentsia once again sprang to action to demand peace and justice and work harder for political reformation, which culminated in their role in bringing the Kofi Annan mediation team to Kenya during the 2010 referendum (Wanyeki 2010). During the 2007 elections, the role of the CSOs was double-edged. Many CSOs aligned with the ODM led by Raila Odinga as a more inclusive party with "its broad-based ethic compositions and its rhetoric on reforms" (Chege & Omondi 2010:9). This is similar to the NARC alliance of the CSOs in 2002, which saw some CSO luminaries joining the Kibaki government (Mbeke 2010). These eager alliances seemed unavoidable considering the restriction placed on the CSOs and the crackdown on same entities by both the Kenyatta and the Moi administrations (Wanyande 2010). In the period between 2003 and 2007, many CSOs were muted due to funding problems but subsequently rediscovered their voices when their republic was suddenly set ablaze by the disputed 2007 election (Mbeke 2010).

In the midst of this unfortunate pandemonium, the Kenyan CSOs reunited and their efforts led to a significant role in the Kofi Annan-led mediation (Wanyeki 2010). According to Wanyeki (2010), Kenyan CSOs, particularly Kenya for Peace with Truth & Justice (KPTJ), a coalition that included the Kenyan Human Rights Commission (KHRC), Red Cross and women's movements, played a very important role in the wake of the 2008 PEV. Wanyeki (2010:37-43) highlights six critical roles played by the Kenyan CSOs "towards and following the Kenya National Dialogue and Reconciliation (KNDR)" in 2008 before the mediation team arrived as follows:

a) Monitoring and documentation to provide data and analysis of both the election and the violence
b) Ensuring domestic contributions to and the leadership of the humanitarian/relief efforts
c) Generating the internal demand for peace
d) Generating the internal demand for truth and justice
e) Generating domestic pressure for a political settlement
f) Developing scenarios and recommendations for the mediation process

After the mediation process, Kenyan CSOs continued to monitor implementation of the mediation agreements as well as providing technical input into all investigative reform and procedures arising from the mediation process (Wanyeki 2010:47-49). According to Wanyeki (2010:50-51), with the unrelenting efforts particularly by the KPTJ, their penchant for truth and justice was misunderstood as a pro-ODM stand. She states further that within the overstretched CSOs were some individuals with partisan points of view with how they engage with analysis and intervention. Also, the Ministry of Internal Security chose not to engage with the CSOs.

Just like the CSOs, the Kenyan media played a vital role in facilitating democratic governance in the 2002 elections (Mbeke 2010). Media freedom was restricted in Kenya until 1993, when the constitution granted more freedom of press (Mbeke 2010). This allowed for the media to flex its muscle in challenging the government until politicians started investing in the media (Mbeke 2010). This freedom of press was short-lived as

by 2007 the media was seen as partisan and divisive. The media was widely accused of escalating the violence with their reportage, which led to the ban of live broadcasts and the indictment of Joshua Arap Sang of KASS FM at the ICC. During the disputed election result, "the National Media Group 'lost' its elections results database and backup that could provide clarity in the tidal wave of confusion" (Wanyeki 2010). Wanyeki (2010) states further that the Kenyan Television Network (KTN) database became compromised as the tallying period was nearing its end.

Mbeke (2010) holds a contrary view in his highlights of the mass media's role in campaigning for peace and reconciliation after the 2008 mayhem. Not only did the media start to ask for peace but it also supported Kenyan CSOs in various peace initiatives (Mbeke 2010:154). The common view is however that the media failed to either halt or de-escalate the 2008 PEV. Also, the Kenyan media had been a victim of maltreatment at the hands of past leadership, most especially the Moi government. According to Gimode (2007), the Moi administration used the partisan police force and judicial system to harass, arrest, torture and jail print media journalists critical of his government. This meant the Kenyan media was vilified by the Moi administration, with heavy restrictions on media rights. Thus, the history of the Kenyan media is non-linear in their acts of activism, truth seeking, compromise, complacence, profit making, ethnic bias and collaboration for a transformed republic. In the next section, the emergence of a new form of media is discussed, particularly in relation to the role of Kenya's youth.

4.7   Women in the Kenyan Political Struggle

The women of Kenya have never been silent observers in Kenya's political struggle. Although the focus of this thesis is not on Kenyan women pre- and post-independence struggles and contributions, it is significant to reflect briefly on the efforts of Kenyan women in fighting for a truly independent country. Dating back to pre-independence Kenya and in spite of the entrenched patriarchal system enforced by the colonialists, the voices of Kenyan women have always been heard in public affairs (Nasong'o & Ayot 2007). Furthermore, despite the insurmountable odds created by the colonial system to subjugate African women and Kenya's confusing multifaceted political transitions shrouded in gender disparity, Kenyan women have shown unrelenting courage to

demand a united country. The participation of Kenyan women in the independence struggles as well as in the Mau Mau revolt through various women's movements was born out of the desire for a better Kenya. Although the government of Kenya continues to let down its women, Kenyan women have not given up the quest to demand a progressive country.

The struggle continued, as women relentlessly demanded an equitable society. For instance, among several female Kenyan activists arrested for dissident acts was Wangari Maathai, a political and environmental activist. The Nobel Peace Laureate was not new to state harassment. She was arrested for starting a protest for the protection of Uhuru Park in the 1990s and she later went into exile. Also, tortured at *Nyayo* House was the dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Nairobi, Professor Micere Mugo in 1982 by the Moi government cracking down on dissenters (Gimode 2007). In the multiparty system, representations of women in positions of decision-making have increased. Wangari Maathai was Assistant Minister of Environment and Natural Resources between 2003 and 2005 during Kibaki's first term in office among other political roles she played. Women continue to advocate for their inclusion through women's movements and various platforms such as FIDA-K (Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya), the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) and the National Council of the Women of Kenya (NCWK). The Ushahidi platform was also flagged, founded and led by a woman, Ory Okolloh, at its inception.

4.8   The Youth and the 21st Century Media

To understand the emergence of the Ushahidi platform, it is important to understand the prominence of the youth in Kenya, and their reliance on 21st century media. The youth of Kenya have been mentioned in the literature on Kenya's politics as contributors to the state of affairs in numerous ways. They have been described as being the exploited, the marginalised, the deprived, the excluded, the betrayed, the reckless, the puppets, the goons, the revolutionaries, the innovators and the future transnational/intercultural leaders (Mwangola 2007; Musila 2010; Rasmussen 2010, Njogu 2013). This is the multidimensional reality of the largest demographic group of people in Kenya (Githinji 2017).

The Kenyan postcolonial era saw a youth that was recruited into the youth wings of political parties as the political/ideological defenders, supporters and task bearers of the 'elders' (Mwangola 2007:150). In the first 40 years of Kenya's neo-colonial politics, the youth contribution was not featured as significant because attention was majorly shifted to an elitist political power struggle and the youth were inadvertently caught in the crossfire of power dominance. The youth are not thriving in the post-colonial era that promised hope; rather, their lives are swathed in economic deprivation, division, marginalisation and exploitation (Rasmussen 2010). Compounding the unrealised socio-economic success of the Kenyan youth, like in most African countries, is the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank during the 1980s. As argued by Murunga (2010) and Njogu (2013), the policies and fiscal austerity measures designed by the IMF-WB to heal the ailing macroeconomic problems of most African countries only aggravated them due to bad implementations, donors' double standards and lack of local inclusion. With Moi's authoritarian regime in Kenya, the implementation of SAPs was particularly unfruitful, creating a further decayed economy, abject poverty, increased corruption, and heightened unemployment rate (Murunga 2010; Njogu 2013).

Thus, in post-independence Kenya, especially with political divisions and the incessant quest for control, the youth represented purveyors of violence and political messengers (Mwangola 2007). Within the marginalised narratives, the politicians are giving children the privilege to be part of the political game against those who strive for relevance and inclusion. Among the 'Young Turks' as they were referred to were the sons of prominent leaders and political opponents like Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, who were drafted into the political realm like it was their patrimony (Mwangola 2007). These 'Young Turks' have refused to grow up as they are still considered as young people though they are over 40. Those who did not fall into the hitherto mentioned categories, such as the Mau Mau fighters, were implicated as dissidents. This does not mean that all youth are seen as delinquents or privileged sons of politicians; for instance, Tom Mboya was a Pan-African trade unionist negotiating independence at the Lancaster House Conference. He was likewise elected conference

chairman at the All-African People's Conference convened by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, all before the age of 30 (Mwangola 2007) before his unfortunate assassination at the age of 38 in 1969. Pio Gama Pinto, who was also assassinated at the age of 37, was a freedom fighter, politician and journalist who had made several noteworthy initiatives, including becoming a member of the House of Representatives in 1964 before he was killed in 1965 (Gimode 2007).

There are also other youth that have been used by political leaders as 'puppets' and 'goons', such as the youth within the Mungiki movement, the Maasai Morans, the Kalenjin Warriors, and the Chinkororo groups (Kagwanja 2005). From what Kagwanja (2005:57) categorises as the fighting generation to the lost generation, the KADU and KANU both mobilised Kenyan youth for the power struggle, with KANU engaging the youth to torment the KPU, which later morphed into youth co-option and transmuted "into a deadly instrument of political tribalism and terror" during the Moi era. Mwangola (2007) highlights the three generations of youth categorised since independence as the Lancaster House Generation (LHG), the Lost Generation (LG) and the Uhuru Generation (UG). She breaks these classifications down as follows: LHG consists of the Lancaster House Conference's independent negotiators while the LG represents the generation succeeding the LHG who failed to gift opportunity and freedom (Uhuru) to those coming after them. The LG got the unfinished historical mission of the LHG loaded onto them. The UG who have emerged since the multiparty era are bubbling with the passion to see the unrealised potential of Kenyan freedom implemented. Still, it is not yet *Uhuru*, "Not Yet Uhuru" being the title of Oginga Odinga's autobiography, denoting that freedom or independence has not yet been attained, since the black leadership is as oppressive as the colonizers. The concept is thus used here to denote the continual political struggle in Kenya in the attainment of selfless and inclusive leadership.

Within the UG are the youth who have risen to challenge the rhetoric and elite hegemony that goes against nation building and national unity. Included in the UG that attempted to stand up to Moi's despotic ruling were the university students. According to Gimode (2007:239), university students, lecturers, journalists, lawyers and

courageous politicians saw the sham in the Moi administration. As reported by the Daily Nation, in 1981 when Moi prevented Oginga Odinga from running in the Bondo by-election for no apparent reason rather than disenfranchising a legitimate candidate, the university students took to the streets in demonstration against KANU (cited in Gimode 2007:240). Amutabi (2007) states that Moi became threatened by the democratic discourses and stands of the university and unleashed the security agency to infiltrate the University of Nairobi.

These series of surveillance and raids led to the suspension and expulsion of student leaders and the detention of some lecturers. Some who could escape the reign of terror of the Moi era, who had combined the use of police harassment, corrupt judiciary and arbitrary jailing of Kenyans, escaped to exile (Gimode 2007:241). Students also lost their lives in the crossfire of the aborted coup d'état of 1982 where they had gone to celebrate the overthrow of the Moi government by the Kenyan Air Force (Daily Nation 1982 cited in Gimode 2007). The crossfire between the rebels and the Kenyan Air Force resulted in the unfortunate death of students seemingly hoping for a change and a better government. This sad incident did not elicit empathy from Moi, who eventually closed the University of Nairobi for a period of one year and dragged several students to court and charged them with mutiny (Gimode 2007).

According to Gimode (2007:242), over 63 students were held in custody for six months and only got clemency through Moi in 1983. Many others were sentenced to prison for subversion offences. Other scholar activists like David Onyago Oloo eventually fled the country to avoid being recaptured and sent back to jail after being freed through amnesty in 1987. His offence was being in possession of a handwritten document promulgating the role of students and youth in the struggle for democracy two days after the coup attempt (Sunday Nation 2003, cited in Gimode 2007:242-3). The Moi government sent several Kenyan citizens into exile; especially those who escaped being caught for an alleged subversion agenda. Criminalising and demonising activists and political dissents were embarked upon as a propaganda exercise by the government using the state-owned broadcasting television and Radio KBC (Kenyan Broadcasting Corporation) (Gimode 2007).

With all the loss and gain of Kenya's post-independence struggles, the crippling 2008 PEV occurred and on the scene of finding solutions with all the commotion that was going on were old and new actors. The traditional well-established CSOs were unrelenting in their quest for peace and justice in this time of turmoil. Therein also entered the new age voices whose means of contribution was through writing, creative campaigns and utilisation of NMT. For instance, leading to the 2013 elections, the first election since the 2008 mayhem, three DJs (Disk Jockeys) of the Ghetto radio station went on hunger strike for peace. According to Njogu (2013:3), these DJs were on hunger strike for six days while broadcasting through the Ghetto radio station, imploring Kenyans to #Vote4Peace and #Vote4Kenya in the 2013 elections. Musila (2010) refers to these new voices with intellectual public participation and interventions as the "Redykyulass Generation". The Redykyulass Generation (RG) is construed "as a contemporary generation of politically engaged youths who have successfully used various genres of popular cultural productions and media platforms to engage with Kenyan social imaginaries" (Musila 2010:279). These new agers have risen to broaden intergenerational debates and challenge the "geronto-masculine" (gerontocracy masculinity) political culture of Kenya, where the political sphere has forever been infiltrated with old male elites. Musila (2010:295/6) writes:

> "This generation displays innovative appropriation of media platforms including broadcast media and cyberspace as strategic platforms for engagement with Kenyan public cultures. Additionally, through their use of various media and genres — ranging from theatre, television, cyberspace, satire, fiction and essays — this generation challenges conservative understandings of knowledge and sites of knowledge production. Underpinning the Redykyulass Generation's interventions in Kenyan public life through the years have been the twin strands of political critique and validation of youth voices and experiences. Against this background, it is hard to underestimate the contribution of the Redykyulass Generation (which I see here embodied by both Kwani? and the Redykyulass trio) in convening various platforms of critical intellectual engagement with Kenyan public life."

The Redykyulass Generation, mainly comprising youths –men and women– decided to do something positive and different from the malevolently divisive opinions on the Internet. Therefore, the participation of the youth in all capacities in the Kenyan

political turbulence realm cannot be overemphasised. This is where the Ushahidi platform enters the picture.

Significant in this regard, and forming the focus of this research, is the fact that the Ushahidi platform responded to the lack of information during the escalation of the violence due to the prohibition of live broadcasts by the Minister of Internal Security, John Michuki. Okolloh (2009) recounts the idea that birthed the Ushahidi platform as the urge to lessen the information vacuum created by the ban of the live media by the government. She states further that Ushahidi created the opportunity for bidirectional information and the crowdsourced reports that culminated in the mapping of the crisis sorted out the information vacuum. Okolloh (2009) and her team, later realising the local and international implications of this platform to crowdsource information for necessary humanitarian help in crisis and disaster situations, extended the service beyond Kenya. Later, Ushahidi spearheaded a joint initiative called Uchaguzi to monitor the proceeding of Kenya's 2010 constitutional referendum and the 2013 elections. Ushahidi's various roles and impact as unearthed by this study will be discussed further in chapter six of this thesis.

Goldstein and Rotich (2008) explain that "digitally networked technologies" can be used to promote hate or to amplify nonviolence solutions. However, for the latter to be achieved, initiatives like the Ushahidi platform that documents crises or disasters is useful to make that difference. Along the same line of work done by Ushahidi is another initiative called Mzalendo, created by Ory Okolloh and another Kenyan in 2006 to keep a watchful eye on the Kenyan parliament as a means of keeping tabs on accountability (Goldstein & Rotich 2008). However, the focus of the study is Ushahidi and not Mzalendo, because the former's responses to crises and disasters that impact directly on peace is critical to this research. Thus, Kenyan youth are making use of the ubiquitous NMT to revolutionise their environment by being visibly participatory in a human-driven and nonviolent approach to peace.

4.9   Conclusion

Kenya's 43 years of political antecedents showed a presidential trajectory of 'Ivy League' leaders who succeeded in entrenching themselves permanently in the political terrain. Kenya's leadership problems are complicated by its colonial legacy, culture of inequality, uneven land distribution and ethnic politics. Leadership problems take centre stage as other issues could be ameliorated with the institutionalisation of transformational leaders who put the country and the people first. These 'Ivy League' leaders who constantly portray themselves as hounded by enmity are also long-term political allies when interests are aligned, and when interests differ, pitch tents against one another while dragging the country along in their chaos. The latter manifests itself in the incessant falling out of political parties, rivalries, ethno-nationalistic agendas and the poor implementation of the multi-party system. These presidents' proximity to power took the country hostage, which was manifested in the continual tension and ensuing divisions among Kenyans. The oligarchic structure allowed for more alignment along ethnic lines, not necessarily in isolation but in smaller ethnic groups who considered themselves disadvantaged teaming up to produce a different political leadership that would represent their interests.

Unlike other African countries such as Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Libya, Kenya's only attempted military coup failed. Nonetheless, an ingrained oligarchical structure in the country disenfranchised citizens' inclusion and fair participation in political leadership and access to resources. These inequalities serve as a benchmark for the internal chaos that had brewed over time, which later culminated in political divisions and dissatisfactions. These longstanding inequalities and power struggles plunged the country into a devastating political conflict in the 2007 general elections, as this chapter has demonstrated. At the root of this lay the colonial legacy and ethno-national interests, with no regard for inclusive governance, leaving the youth marginalised and manipulated into serving the interests of the political elites.

This chapter demonstrated further that the marginalised youth rose to participate against all odds in transforming the political landscape of Kenya. The CSOs, the students' and women's movements have all demonstrated unrelenting commitment to participate

effectively in their own governance. The new media has also brought about the 'Redykyulass Generation', comprising writers, citizen journalists and artists who are engaging intellectually and bringing forth innovations needed to change the ingrained status quo. Among these new age solution finders is the Ushahidi platform that emerged in response to the 2008 PEV.

CHAPTER FIVE: CITIZEN JOURNALISM IN THE KENYAN DIGITALISED SPACE: WHAT IS THE STORY?

5.1 Introduction

The Kenyan new media space of 2007/8 was not nearly as populated as it appears today. As opposed to the 3 million Internet users in 2008, standing at 8.7% of 38 million Kenyans, Kenya now has over 21 million users, standing at 45% of 47 million inhabitants in 2016 (Internet Live Stats 2017). Notwithstanding the relatively small number of Kenyan Internet users in 2008, citizens had taken to social media and Web 2.0 sites in different capacities. Some started to blog, podcast, post on Facebook and tweet, covering wide ranges of overarching issues. It was said that Kenya was one of the few African countries to embrace the advent of the new media technology (NMT) or new media significantly from the start (Zuckerman 2009). This means that as the nascent technology was opening up in Africa, online interactions became increasingly meaningful to many Kenyans. Since then, there have been increased numbers of socio-political, economic, cultural, entertainment and sport bloggers permeating the Internet, some of who have become household names or distinguished citizen journalists.

This chapter examines the many ways in which NMT was used during the violence, drawing from the interviews held with Kenyans who developed various kinds of online platforms in attempts to positively intervene. Beginning with the conceptualisation of what the new media means to the interviewees, this chapter presents various ways in which NMT is impacting socio-political, peace and conflict discourses in Kenya. What emerges is that although some of the interventions by netizens were intended to promote peace, this was not always the case. One of the themes emerging from the data is whether the NMT is 'a Godsend or a double-edged sword'. By and large, though, particularly if compared to the mainstream media, NMT is seen to have played a positive role in amplifying people's voices and mobilising them for action. The data also highlights the trajectory of the lessons emerging from the 2008 PEV, culminating in critical steps taken by several local Kenyan peace actors/builders/activists in engaging in citizen journalism to prevent reoccurrences of ethno-political conflict with the use of the NMT.

In other words, the field information points to the vibrant and divisive online engagements of Kenyan citizens in various capacities. Despite the understanding of the new media as a double-edge sword, many Kenyans have sharpened the 'positive edge' to advance socio-political discourses and conflict transforming innovations. This chapter presents the 'godsend or double-edge sword' dichotomy of the NMT, the dynamic of the new media in shaping discourses in Kenya since the 2008 PEV, incitement of online hate speech and why it is regulated and the roles of the mass media and citizen journalism in the entire conundrum.

5.2   The Politics of Incitement: Kenya Mass Media in the 2008 PEV

Kenya's mass media, which includes the print media, radio and television was a triad of complicit professional journalists who fuelled the 2008 PEV with what they reported and how they reported. For instance, one of the local-language radio stations, Kass FM, was accused of spreading ethnicised messages that fuelled the 2008 PEV. During the ICC investigations and proceedings, Joshua Arap Sang, the head of operations at Kass FM, was arraigned to answer for his role in instigating conflict by driving the 2008 PEV with his ethnicised broadcasts favouring the Kalenjins. The TV stations and print media were not neutral either. Their broadcasts and materials were skewed towards agitating one ethnic group against the other. Clearly, ethics and standards of journalism regarding objectivity, impartiality and accountability were off the table.   Several research participants agreed that the mass media engaged in divisive and biased practices. For example, in an interview George Kegoro, the director of the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), stated that he did not see the mainstream media adhering to the ethics and standards of journalism in the way they had regularly succumbed to government pressure and manipulation, especially in 2008.

Hamzal Egal, a Somali-Kenyan lawyer who blogs at 365 Insight Africa and was the originator of the famous twitter hashtag #KenyanIamnotaterrorist to address misconceptions of Somali terrorism, feels that the mass media in Kenya does not know the power it wields in terms of sharing unbiased information and being a platform of inclusivity. He recalls the exacerbation of the 2008 PEV as partially a product of acts by the mainstream media, where it focused more on the carnage of the conflict and omitted

the human dynamic of conflict. As gathered from several research participants, not only did the Kenyan mass media incite conflict during the 2008 PEV, but the international media platforms also exaggerated the state of the conflict and made it appear as if it were a civil war when it was not. The counterbalance to this reporting, as expressed by many interviewees, came from bloggers on the ground whose posts gave more accurate details of the conflict.

Tony Mochama, a Kenyan journalist, poet and writer who works with the Standard Group (one of the largest media groups in East Africa) in The Standard newspaper division, also implicated the mass media in the escalation of the 2008 PEV. He states that the mainstream media, including The Daily Nation and The Standard, as well as prominent TV stations, took out advertisements that were "provocative". He adds:

> Of course, more vernacular radio stations took on even more, should I say violent messaging? We saw that with people like Joshua Arap Sang accused in the ICC. And three days after conflagration began to happen in Kenya, there was a general headline, you know of "We Want Peace" across all the major newspapers in Kenya and that was in 2008; January 3rd actually. Three days after you know, what people now acronym as the PEV, the post-election violence had begun. Which is the media's attempt to overcorrect the situation.

The way Juliana Rotich, former Executive Director of Ushahidi, sees the Kenyan mass media as the mouthpiece of the government, where the national television serves the government. She concludes that public television does not represent the masses and that the private media organisations belong to certain powerful individuals with the intention to make a profit. Similarly, James Smart, a professional journalist in Kenya, states that the mass media in its act of reporting lacks neutrality, which in turn polarised the public in the 2007 presidential elections by heavily focusing on the politicians and by taking sides. Despite the brief peace embarked upon after the 2008 PEV, Smart thinks the media has still been unable to report effectively on elections. The mass media avoided taking any responsibility when accused of fuelling violence by reporting uncritically during the 2013 elections. This, according to Smart, is a disservice to the people and to the profession.

During the 2013 general elections, though, it was also said that the mainstream media were telling positive stories, which some research participants considered created a false picture of what was really happening. Despite the peace that Kenya has enjoyed since the 2008 PEV, there are still fundamental issues left unaddressed, such as land distribution and economic inequalities. After the mainstream media was vilified for its undesirable role that aggravated the 2008 PEV, it decided to steer clear from sounding controversial or 'unpeaceful'. The downside to this stance is that the citizens feel that the mainstream media has become fearful and has not integrated the lessons learnt from the 2008 PEV effectively. As a matter of immediate concern, some research participants feel that the Kenyan mass media has become a sounding board for the politicians, thus becoming the mouthpiece of "official truth."

On the mainstream media's 2008 PEV reporting, Kui Kihoro Mackay, a Kenyan blogger and PhD student, refers to the international news, especially the BBC (as she was in the UK at the time), as 'delusional' in the way it romanticised the notion of a peaceful country that is shocked into devastating violence. She deems this a BBC illusion in that Kenya had witnessed previous political disruptions in 1992, 1997 and 2002. The BBC later only offered non-substantive news about the upheaval by showing constant images of violence without a human story. Mackay considers the reporting by the international news simplistic and detached, in the sense that it played the ethnic division card, which affected how the Nigerian community where she lives perceived the situation. She explains that on getting back to Nigeria where she resided during the conflict, she was barraged with questions as to her ethnicity, whether she is Kikuyu or Kalenjin, which was of no importance to anyone before the violence. Thus, the media, instead of drawing the attention of the world to the political issues responsible for the conflict, was promoting 'tribalism' by pitting one ethnic group against the other in its reporting.

Dipesh Pabari, a Kenyan-Asian ex-blogger, recounts his observation of the international media reporting on the 2008 PEV as being biased. For instance, the news of a couple that was attacked in Kisumu with a Kenyan husband from the Kikuyu ethnic group and a British wife was highly sensationalised. According to Pabari, the husband who had

escaped being shot was the target of the attack, and their house and hospitality business built on Lake Victoria in Kisumu was set ablaze by war mobs. However, the international media made it out to be about the affairs of the British citizen (including their two children) and no details of the main target of the violence surfaced in the news.

Some research participants also reflected on the way in which the local media reportage at first played the ethnic identity card by focusing on which group was killing which, instead of engaging in sensitive reporting that would help draw out human empathy. In Mackay's understanding of local news that she accessed online and from family and friends, it seemed much was not done or said. She had the impression that the local media was not saying much, or was either biased or saying the wrong things. The history of political and ethnic bias often affects the local media that pays little attention to accuracy and in-depth information.

Boniface Mwangi, a Kenyan political activist and photojournalist, considers the mass media's schemes to make an ever-greater profit and the lack of contextual analysis of stories and issues that it reports on as the bane of the profession. He states:

> I think the Kenya media, I know, even in the other part of the world exists to make profit. No one sets a media house for charity. So they will not do anything that will affect their profit. I think the other thing is actually that Kenyan media refuses to have a historical context when it comes to issues, they go for daily news without giving the people contextual perspective about why is this thing happening, who is this person really and where do they come from? So they do a lot of story that is touch and go. They are very shallow and they are just about selling papers and eyeballs. That means you cannot rely on the media to educate the people. They just inform, they inform on whatever they want to inform and the information must be based on how it lessen the effect on the profit. The media in this country is a big let-down I actually may not entirely blame the media. I think what I will actually blame is the media owners. Who are the media owners? They are the politicians.

Juliana Rotich, former Executive Director of Ushahidi, takes Boniface Mwangi's concerns further by examining the mass media bias from the angle of privatisation of media industries, where there are no public platforms financed by the public to serve their interest and represent the masses without profit motivation. She deems the Kenya

Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) that ought to serve the people as a smokescreen for the government, therefore discarding it as mainly a government media company instead of a nation's television station. Many research participants think the public has little stake in private media houses because they exist to make a profit and serving the people is then not the foremost priority of these enterprises. Where the profit is, they swarm like honey bees to get a cut.

Tony Mochama, Kenyan journalist and poet, thinks the mass media is not scrutinizing what these politicians' intentions are for leading the country by not effectively questioning politicians' agendas and manifestos. Thus, the government gets away with cosmetic truth that contributes to the polarisation and convulsion of the country. However, Mochama does not think the media set out to be a blatant incendiary device and that it did not foresee the 2008 violence even though its disposition towards commercialism played a negative role. Realising this, the mainstream media's attempt to foster peace led to an over-correctional attitude of peace at all costs in the 2013 elections that still did not restore the marred image of the media. This is why Mochama relates to NMT as a facilitator of 'accountable' conversations among the citizens and feels more is still required to achieve transformed governance.

Yvonne Owuor, acclaimed Kenyan author of *Dust* –a 2014 novel set to portray the inimical history of violence in Kenya against the backdrop of the 2007 election –thinks that the failure of the Kenyan media has continued to date. She asserts that the mass media in Kenya has become more sophisticated but still falls short of addressing real socio-political issues. She considers the inherent problem of the Kenyan media as partly being the result of the firing of intelligent journalists and partly the exceeding focus on advertising. She views the citizens' self-representation, facilitated by the advent of the new media, as a means of 'fighting back'. She considers local peace initiatives, including the Concerned Kenyan Writers (CKW), Ushahidi and the citizens mobilising for peace a proactive step. The politicians, according to Owuor, that are permeating the new media spaces have continued to threaten the unity that the Kenyan citizens harnessed in 2008. She believes more transformation will occur if the citizens realise the power they hold, which in this case will make them see how irrelevant the

politicians are in determining their socio-political and economic advancement. This realisation she sees as a tool to reduce the power of politicians over the mass media.

Critiquing the mass media, Wambui Mwangi claims that the mainstream media is hierarchical and centralised to the point of not having social logic but institutional logic, where it makes sense to only itself. The imbrication of the mainstream media in the Kenyan political terrain has led many media houses to pride themselves in their connection with Kenyan's elite class. This connection makes it difficult to be objective.

At the height of Moi's autocratic regime, the Daily Nation did speak out against his regime. In subsequent years, The Standard became opposed to Uhuru Kenyatta's government. But since this time, Mwangi stresses the 'misogynistic' reportage of Kenya's mainstream media. She describes the Kenyan mainstream media as elitist and biased, and entrenched in a culture where women are vilified, and men are praised. Mwangi finds that the mainstream media is engaged in an institutionalised form of blaming and shaming of women. She however thinks the new media is forcing the mainstream media to be more representative and objective.

In defence of mass media, Rasna Warah, professional reporter and author, looks into the unjustified curtailing of the power of the media in 2008 by the state. According to her, this step resulted in dire effects that resulted in the overcautious disposition of the media to report anything that was deemed violent or contrary to peace in the 2013 elections. However, she thinks the media has gone too far and that 'underplaying' what is really happening is also a form of exaggeration. She thinks the media has been co-opted into taking sides. The media is portrayed either as being anti-government or as being ethnicised. Warah states that despite these problems, the Kenyan media, compared to that of other African countries, is still one of the most professional institutions in Africa. She sees a Kenyan Republic that still respects the media and believes in factual reporting. But, according to Kepha Ngito, a grassroots activist, power dynamics have shifted since the advent of NMT and the emergence of citizen journalism. He notes that citizen journalism has significantly reduced the mainstream media's monopoly on power to report and inform society. NMT has created checks and balances on this

monopoly on power and gives more power and freedom to the citizens to participate proactively in news production and consumption.

In the past, as presented in chapter three of this thesis, the mass media was able to facilitate a democratic revolution in Kenya, where the efforts of strong media organisations influenced the multi-party system. As already mentioned, the mainstream media played a significant role in challenging the Moi and Kenyatta regimes. However, it was not long before the Kenyan media began to, instead, favour politicians and profit making. It is perceived by many research participants that the government is controlling the media.

Interviewees did acknowledge that there are some within the mainstream media who continue to report truthfully. Despite the problems inherent in the mass media during the 2008 PEV, Marceline Nyambala, AMWIK Director, believes that the mainstream media still has in its favour the fact that it has a long history of professional reporting, including developing checks and balances that have assisted in building trust and credibility. She concludes that the mainstream media will continue to be relevant but needs more creativity and zero tolerance for corruption to restore its 'former glory'. She notes greater convergence between citizen journalism and the mainstream media, with the possibility of these complementing one another in so far as the latter read the reporting of the former and do follow-up reporting if possible.

All in all, interviewees seem to suggest that the Kenyan media is a necessary 'evil' that, despite its destabilisation, is nonetheless vital to the unity and development of the state and the Kenyan communities. Moreover, the visible hate speech permeating the online community has become a source of worry for many Kenyans. The reactions of the research participants to hate speech by the online community and the politicians before and after the 2008 PEV is mixed. It hinges on whether or not to regulate hate speech as will be discussed in the next section.

5.3   Hating the Hate Speech and Netizens' Aversion to Censorship

Since the 2008 PEV, the Kenyan community has become more aware of hate speech

permeating the Kenyan discourse. The advent of the new media has made this more widespread with far-reaching effects. The government of Kenya, through an interdependent policy, set up a regulatory body to monitor and address hate speech, most especially from the media and online spaces. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) was set up in 2008 by the act of parliament with a clear mission "to facilitate and promote a society whose values are harmonious and non-discriminatory for peaceful co-existence and integration" (NCIC website). This makes NCIC a constitutional commission.

Sellah Kingoro, Assistant Director of the research, policy and planning wing of the NCIC, provides insight into why hate speech regulation is important in Kenya's political climate. She explains that the commission is a statutory body established under the National Cohesion and Integration Act (Act No.12 of 2008) following the 2008 PEV, an outcome of the Kofi Annan mediation. The NCIC is set up to promote national unity by eliminating ethnic, clan and religious discriminations and advocating for cohesiveness of the republic. The NCIC is a state agency with a semi-autonomous power, independent enough to carry out its mandates. The Enforcement, Complaint and Legal Department of the commission handles hate speech and regulates the public display of hate through NMT among its danger-zone platforms. NMT is flagged as a danger zone because of its power to reach thousands of people in a short time. Partnering with the offices of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) and the Director of the Public Prosecutions, the commission set up a task force through which an instance of hate speech is criminalised. This, according to Kingoro, is the last step, as mediation and conciliation are the first steps taken to address hate speech among the citizens. When these steps fail, the next option is to take the perpetrator of hate speech to court through the Director of the Public Prosecutions.

According to Sellah Kingoro, the online platform can be corrosive in its use to instigate hate against other ethnic groups, which is all from lessons learnt from the past conflicts. Among the methods employed to dissipate the effect of any online hate speech is to follow up with positive intervention. This comes in the form of a positive message of peace, especially since, according to international law, it is not within NCIC's

jurisdiction to remove social media posts. Another way that the NCIC undertakes its work is through the politicians and influential members of the community, including musicians and bloggers, to promote peace. Although the commission has come under harsh criticism for being selective in prosecuting offenders or being unfair or appearing ineffective or worse still, considered unnecessary, Kingoro thinks otherwise. She explains that sometimes it is hard to know whom the hatemonger is, or in a situation where they are known, the jurisdiction of the country in which they reside might prevent any action to be taken against the offenders. The latter refers to Kenyans in the diaspora where censorship might be disallowed or hate speech is defined differently. She clarifies further that people tend to politicise any offenders that are arrested, especially if they are part of the government but belong to a certain political party and this is seen as scapegoating. Kingoro denies any truth of scapegoating political leaders based on their political affiliations, as the commission is fairly independent. Paradoxically, it is noted that the government funds the commission, which makes its autonomy questionable.

In the instance where offenders come from any of the political parties, Kingoro explains, most critics are satisfied, but when a musician or a blogger is affected the commission is accused of "going for the small fish". Kingoro reasserts that though the commission is seen as censoring information, it is hardly the case, as curtailing the impact of hate speech is what the NCIC does. Asked if this is not a clear violation of people's rights to express themselves, Kingoro's understanding of the 2010 constitution is based on the premise that all rights must be respected. This negates the absolute power of free speech of one person against the other. There are consequences and it is within these consequences of what is considered discriminatory speech that the commission deals with hateful utterances. Thus, Kingoro states, the appreciation of the Kenyan context in terms of division along ethnic and political lines within the mandates of NCIC are necessary tools. It is generally inferred from the positions on hate speech regulation that it is necessary to consolidate the work of the government, civil society and members of the public that are invested in building a peaceful community.

Peter Mwamachi, a peace officer who works at the National Steering Committee (NSE) on Peace Building and Conflict Management, sees the hate speech regulation as

necessary to curtail the negative use of NMT. Some research participants considered the work of the NCIC as being highly relevant to monitoring and curtailing both the politicians and the influential members of the public who spread ethnicised prejudices and hate through the Internet.

Jessica Musila, Director of Mzalendo, recalls that Kenyans in the diaspora were fuelling hate speech in the lead up to the 2008 PEV, such that it could be said that Kenyans abroad ethnicised positions shown in the prejudices that they spread online. David Kobia, a software engineer and a pioneer member of Ushahidi, agrees with Musila's account of Kenyans at home and abroad that engage in online hate speech that might have fuelled more discord among people.

Other research participants considered the introduction of the regulations as ill-conceived in the sense that it became difficult to separate, according to James Smart, "hate speech from the speech that I hate". Kepha Ngito opposes the hate speech regulation. He thinks it is not productive that "heavy discussions" are not tolerated and deliberation not encouraged in society as a means to resolve the ingrained divisions in the community. In Ngito's words: "Hate speech is a manifestation of something heavy that people are trying to let out and it doesn't help if you tell them not to say it." Similarly, Erik Hersman, one of Ushahidi's founders, is averse to the censorship of online freedom of speech; he thinks freedom of speech is too important to curtail.

Irungu Houghton, Associate Director of the Society for International Development (SID) considers the constitutional provision to prohibit hate speech and protect the rights of individuals against online discrimination, prejudices and vile statements made against their dignity, ethnicity, and orientation as a necessary step. However, everyone worries about the implementation of this act. According to John Githongo, Director of the Inuka Trust, historic crisis is essential for hate speech regulation to be meaningful, such as in the case of the Holocaust in Germany and structural racism in the United States. But in the case of Kenya, there is not a solid enough reason for it nor has the government invested in its effective implementation.

Juliana Rotich advices that there should be education and sensitisation about hate speech and 'voices that poison' that can offer clarity about what hate speech means and the nuances between dangerous speech and incited incidents, as opposed to making a regulation that criminalises hate speech without people understanding what this entails. Some research participants still feel it is unclear what the blurred lines between hate speech and dangerous speech are. They have also noticed that punishments are selective, depending on the importance of the one who engages in hate speech, with more prominent politicians being let off the hook. Many think the government's conceptualisation and contextualisation of hate speech needs renewing so as to not to wrongly criminalise those who are speaking out against structural marginalisation.

The research participants who see the hate speech regulation as necessary are also concerned about its effective implementation. Patrick Gathara, a citizen journalist and cartoonist, says even though this guideline is geared to stop ethnic incitement, it is not effectively enforced. Beyond this point, he thinks the steps to control and proscribe speeches that are considered offensive and outrageous is undesirable in the sense that it is sometimes used to shut down those with radical stands on governance. He once found himself in that radical category with the government being on his trail. He has no doubt that some speeches can be very dangerous but the yardstick to make people accountable is still questionable in its implementation as he worries about its misuse.

Tony Mochama sees the hate speech regulation as a "Band-Aid on a deep wound", in the sense that the underlying factors of conflicts and the deep 'intertribal' hatred that still live with the people are not successfully resolved. To him, the hate speech regulation act is a 'Western circus', sounding very 'American and European'. He states that the 'tribal poison' of division and resentment has become inter-generationally rampant among the most educated Kenyans as the custodians of it. He feels that genuine change in the system and improved interpersonal relationship based on transformational education and not punitive actions can change the problem and "wake the sleeping Kenyans from their chronic mass amnesia".

According to Marceline Nyambala, Director of AMWIK, there is unwarranted hate speech among government and non-government stakeholders, which makes the hate speech regulation necessary. However, she also considers its implementation ineffective. For example, she states that the government's digital communication team consists of famous ex-blogger Dennis Itumbi who sometimes launches verbal attacks on civil society and gets away with it. Rasna Warah worries about the effective implementation of the hate speech regulatory act because it does not name and shame the perpetrators of these speeches, as it should. Wambui Mwangi, a Kenyan intellectual, finds the constitutional provision where freedom of speech and the hate speech prohibition is in the same article (30) confusing.

Interviewees concur that the hate speech incidents in the 2008 PEV involving media houses and politicians make the regulation of hate speech necessary. But, as has been reiterated in this section, the problem remains with the interpretation and implementation of the regulations. Otherwise, its ambiguity can cause more challenges and infringe on the rights of Kenyans to speak out about inequality and marginalisation.

Regardless of the aforesaid concerns surrounding the hate speech regulation, several participants concur on four fundamental matters that stand pari passu other contested issues driving socio-political problems in Kenya. They are noted as: a) the public perception of partisan politics that drives hate speech; b) insensitive media reporting that drives hate speech; c) social media instigation of violent conflict through hate speech; and, d) politicians' incitements of hate speech via their deeds, acts and speeches that invigorate division and conflict. In addition to the above, the majority of the research participants, blame the Kenyan political violence on 'tribalism', stating that nationalism ended in 1966 as the 'tribal' division ensued between Kenyatta and Odinga, while some blame it on land and economic inequality and unequal resource distribution. Just as the literature is contentious on this issue, so are the people.

5.4   Kenya Civil Society Organisations and Ushahidi in the 2008 PEV

Many civil society organisations (CSOs) played a significant role in working together for solution-oriented actions during the 2008 PEV. Several groups of CSOs who cared
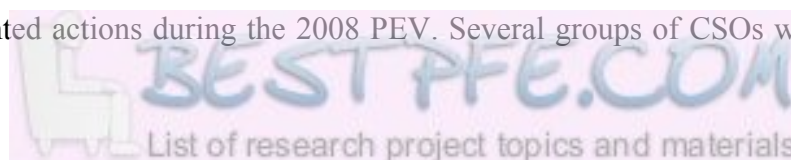
about a progressive and integrated future for Kenya came together and formed platforms that helped in bringing the Kofi Annan African Union (AU) mediation team. Spontaneous groups such as Concerned Kenyan Writers, Concerned Citizens for Peace (CCP), Election Violence Response Initiative (EVRI) and networks of community peace workers, comprising civil society organisations such as Society for International Development (SID), all worked together and produced the document *Citizen Agenda*. This document, which helped to summon regional and international assistance, detailed the coalition's mandate for restoration of peace in Kenya. Other CSOs such as African Centre for Open Governance (AfriCOG), Kenyans for Peace with Truth and Justice (KPTJ) and the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) worked tirelessly to rebuild peace and demand justice for the affected Kenyans in the 2008 PEV. As uncovered, the nascent Ushahidi made some cogent efforts to bring to the attention of these coalitions the emergence of the platform and offered collaboration with data mapping and other useful information that it had been able to gather. However, with the urgency with which these alliances were tasked and their inability to comprehend the relevance of the new media at the time, Ushahidi was cast aside.

It was mentioned by a few research participants that several women's organisations such as FIDA, FEMNET and Urgent Action Fund were at the forefront of gender violence and rape issues in the 2008 PEV. The Kenyan women activists who were actively ensuring that the country transitioned peacefully and that the victims of gender violence during the 2008 PEV got justice, visibly worked with KPTJ. This was because of existing and trust alliances among these established organisations, a comradeship that was not extended to the Ushahidi platform. Perhaps the Ushahidi open-source software could have been useful in gathering the gender violence data needed for prosecution or justice, but it was unknown or considered insignificant by many of these organisations. Where it was mentioned, through the efforts of Daudi Were representing Ushahidi at the time, the offer was not taken up. Asking if George Kegoro could recall what Ushahidi contributed to the peace effort in 2008, he replies:

> I know Ushahidi but they will have to talk about the things they did and personally, if I say I was aware of what things they were doing or that they were a big and important part of what we were doing, I will not be telling the truth because I can only describe what we did. I can also only describe what was done to us because social media became an important source of backlash against us. I

know we were vilified through social media. We were called; I think I am confusing the periods. This is in 2013 just before the last election, "evil society" web of evil that was drawing by people in the establishment and there were individuals who were supposed to be in that web of evil. Muthoni Wanyeki was there; Willy Mutunga the retired justice was there as the patron of that group and so on were there.

George Kegoro, KHRC director, was influential in the 2008 PEV peace negotiation. He was the former Executive Director of the Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists who served as the secretary to the Commission of Inquiry into the 2008 PEV and in 2004. Additionally, he served as the Secretary to the Commission of Inquiry into the Goldenberg corruption scandal. He clarifies however that the vilification of the CSOs came from the people in the government and not from everyday Kenyans. George Kegoro credits the dual effect of the new media, which allowed his team to launch a counterattack to address the government vilification of the CSOs in 2013 by providing information on what they were doing and why it matters. About his participation in the Commission of Inquiry into the 2008 PEV to investigate the factors surrounding the violence following the announcement of the election results, Kegoro states that the inquiry's findings implicated the state security as key perpetrators of violence. Further, the commission recommended internalised mechanisms in the form of tribunals to try the key perpetrators of violence instigation, and consideration could be given to refer some of the matters to the ICC. Given that several local organisations including FIDA had represented several women who were victims of gender abuse and violence during the conflict, the Commission of Inquiry favoured internalised mechanisms localised in Kenya. In the mediation process, Kegoro alludes to the local influence of bringing aboard the Kofi Annan mechanism, and that several NGOs and CBOs, notably the KPTJ, CCP and other local stakeholders, participated in bringing the mediation mechanism to Kenya to first reinstate peace and pursue justice later.

Numerous civil society organisations, including the KPTJ, CCP and others, met with the Kibaki team demanding peace and the Raila team demanding justice to see how to get the two to stop the raging violence. Pre-Kofi Annan mediation included former president of Zambia Kenneth Kaunda, former president of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano and former president of Tanzania Benjamin Mkapa, with whom the local

stakeholders, including George Kegoro, had met to debrief and articulate their demands. Kegoro considers local stakeholders as extremely important in the post-conflict reconstruction in Kenya to the extent that their role got them mentioned in a death threat list circulated by PNU-Kibaki supporters. Kofi Annan, in his report titled *Back from the Brink: the 2008 Mediation Process and Reforms in Kenya*, credited several Kenyan groups, including KPTJ, CCP, and the business community, for mobilising for peace. However, the nascent new media players, a.k.a. the citizen journalists, did not make the list both in the mediation report and from Kegoro's account because they were not engaged with on a larger scale.

According to Irungu Houghton, a powerful member and convener of several of the alliance's meetings, the Ushahidi platform was overlooked in the CSO circle during the 2008 PEV because mobile and online technologies were understood as simply useful for communication through calling, messaging and emailing. It was incomprehensible to the civil society that thrives on the traditional approaches of lobbying, advocacy and petitioning that the Kenyan youth had found citizen journalism an effective platform to gather needed information that might help in peace processes. Houghton only discovered the potency of the Ushahidi platform abroad after the coalition government had been formed and Kenya had returned to normalcy. He encountered the work of Ushahidi on crisis and disaster mapping in the United States, which as he states made him feel ashamed for disregarding the platform when it began operating in Kenya.

With this setback of inclusion for Ushahidi, the platform kept abreast of most of the activities of different CSO alliances. Although the CSO coalitions hardly acknowledged Ushahidi's existence in the 2008 PEV scramble for solutions, some of the Ushahidi members, including Daudi Were, Juliana Rotich and Ory Okolloh, were regular partakers at the alliance's meetings and events. The CSOs inability to recognise and absorb the Ushahidi's platform initiative into their midst aside, part of Kenyan society outside the closed door of coalition meetings was aware of Ushahidi. The Ushahidi crisis mapping and information gathered about the hotspot of violence in the Rift Valley were used for Red Cross humanitarian deployment and police intervention.

Instead of blaming the disconnection between the Kenyan CSOs and citizen journalists, it would be helpful to focus on the lack of knowledge about the potential of the new media and what it can offer the public. Given the fact that the new media was only beginning to grow and the CSOs were used to a certain way of doing things, in the face of the unprecedented pandemonium it is not surprising that they did not know what to do with the new media beyond using it to communicate and exchange information. One could argue, as presented by Adam and Mampilly (2015), that civil society is set up in a way that might disenfranchise the political society; however, given the urgency of the situation and the lack of in-depth understanding of the new media power at the time, this disconnection was an oversight. At the present time, there is some collaboration between civil society and the citizen journalists who themselves are institutionalising their products. In the case of Ushahidi, their Uwiano early warning consortium serves as a key example. This thesis presents more information about the Uwiano consortium in chapter six.

Furthermore, the Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) has presented a more inclusive platform for both Kenyan media and citizen journalism. AMWIK was established in 1983 with a commitment to enhance the status of women in Kenya and Africa. The organisation is a non-profit membership establishment for women journalists and communicators. AMWIK has grown to include dynamic and diverse groups of media actors and non-media stakeholders such as female journalists of numerous media houses, independent content producers, freelance journalists, bloggers, academics, students of journalism, media owners, government ministries, NGOs and so on. AMWIK uses traditional media and new media to create awareness around gender inequality, build capacity of journalists to understand women's issues, and promote women's participation in leadership and decision-making. Finally, AMWIK strengthens media capacity in governance, human rights, social justice, reproductive health, violence against women and peace-related issues among others. AMWIK seeks to influence policies and governmental decisions relating to its thematic areas. The organisation's influence spreads across over100 radio stations and over 50 TV stations that are now part of the AMWIK membership.

At the time of conducting the fieldwork, AMWIK was in partnership with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) to train journalists on Conflict Sensitive Reporting in Nairobi, Nakuru, Kisumu and Mombasa. A total of 60 journalists were targeted for the interactive training to share conflict-reporting experiences, to better understand the dynamics of ethnic or religious conflicts and to collectively improve the skill of sensitive reporting of conflict. The aim is to increase journalists' contribution to conflict prevention and reconciliation. The researcher was invited to facilitate the Kisumu and Mombasa workshops on transformative journalism, especially since the workshops identified the importance of citizen journalism and social media in the process of conflict prevention and conflict transformation. Marceline Nyambala, AMWIK Director, recognises the sensitisation of journalists as significant in propelling society towards peaceful coexistence.

Though the Community Radio Listening Groups (CRLG) runs in 30 counties out of 47, AMWIK worked exclusively with the retaliatory town Naivasha after the 2008 PEV to reconcile the community. Naivasha is divided heavily along ethnic lines and according to Nyambala; the intervention by AMWIK was one way to reunite the community. CRLG also assists in issues surrounding Female Genital Mutilation and civil education on constitutional matters. As a part of the media stakeholders in Kenya, Nyambala believes that the involvement of AMWIK in using the (new) media skills to improve Kenya is a step in the right direction. Although she believes that much has been done, much is still needed to prevent another violent conflict in Kenya. On this note, she sees the role of the NMT in peace work as very important in a way that converges with the media effort in Kenya. The NMT, according to Nyambala (2016), is an alternative platform that amplifies the local dynamic of information and intervention such as the early warning mobilisation (i.e. Uwiano) and crowdfunding initiatives. Some AMWIK members have transitioned to blogging and she understand the role of the NMT in this transformation as a space where potential change agents among the middle class, upper class, political elites and the government are engaging every day with the grassroots movement. Therefore, AMWIK invests in collaborating with Kenyans citizen journalists in its programmes.

Boniface Mwangi's organisation, PAWA 254, a Kenyan youth hub for socially conscious artists and activists has garnered support from several civil society organisations for picketing and campaigns against corruption and inequality. PAWA 254 has brought together other CSOs working with youth and women to mount more pressure on the government to advocate for rights and responsibilities of all Kenyans against socio-political ills and vices. Youth and women agencies are more visibly represented in the recent collaboration between several civil society and political society groups such as PAWA 254, Inuka Kenya Trust, and AMWIK. Several of PAWA 254's members are citizen journalists/Bloggers and artists who are heavily involved with online activism via Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Google+ and so forth.

John Githongo, a former whistle-blower in the Anglo Leasing scandal of Mwai Kibaki's regime and a pioneer of Inuka Kenya Trust, sheds light on why this organisation is relevant, most especially to the 21st century reality. He states:

> We are a non-governmental organisation, we are involved in issues of identities, ultimately, that we as Kenyans and Africans have to create our identities, own our problems first, and solve them. And we do that by facilitating debates among young people in particular. Yes, we use social media heavily. We have a lot of twitter hangouts; we are engaging about ten different Counties with young people debating these issues. … You can't just talk, and you've got to engage in livelihood issues that face young people. Because what is being discussed, there is a disconnection between that and what young people are seeing happening around them.

Githongo describes how their organisation has a social media programme called Maskani Ni Sisi which was initially set up in 2013 to counter the politicised 'tribal' animosity that was promoted by the political parties.

In a nutshell, the Inuka Kenya Trust problem solves and facilitates dialogue among the youth to bridge the divide and disconnect between the youth and the public, partly by social media platforms. Civil society organisations such as the KHRC and SID have also adapted to the 21st century reality of listening to what the citizen journalists are saying and responding accordingly. It is still not conclusive whether in future the Kenyan CSOs will be ready to work alongside the political society streaming online as netizens and citizen journalists and beyond to influence the socio-political dynamics of

the country. What is established is that the CSO works with the Kenyan mass media, the Kenyan mass media currently converges with the citizen journalists and the CSOs now relate with the citizen journalists, but the research could not establish a more sustainable inclusivity and convergence among the three. Additionally, the common foreboding among these three entities is that the 2017 elections might not be free from violence because all the issues that influence conflict are yet to be mitigated effectively. Finally, no one could rely on the Kenyan mass media to do much because it is still recovering from the blaming and shaming of the 2008 PEV, a side effect that the citizen journalists seemed to have been spared.

5.5 Watchers of the Watchdogs: Here Comes Citizen Journalism

It would be incomplete to discuss Ushahidi without first contextualising the evolution of citizen journalism in Kenya. During the pre-2008 conflict in Kenya, a few bloggers were already building a reputation. They were the citizen journalists that represented the freedom that comes with NMT. Several of these citizen journalists' blogs have been mentioned in many writings as valuable to socio-political discourses imbued with democratic values. Some of these blogs are sukumakenya.blogspot.co.ke, mentalacrobatics.com, kenyanpundit.com, whiteafrican.com, afromusing.com, julia.na, and mashada.com. Numerous research participants feel instead that citizen journalism only became prominent after the 2008 conflict, but agree that the platform has become a formidable force ever since.

On the power of citizen journalism in Kenya, a professional journalist with Kenya Television Network (KTN), James Smart, reflects: "Citizen journalism as a platform has become effective in watching the watchdog which is the mass media." Kepha Ngito, founder of Map Kibera, proclaims that, "Citizen journalism works because it is a people-focused platform". This platform could cut like a knife when taking the government or the mass media to task, even in the face of political oppression and repression. It is also a platform burgeoning with divergent representations of the socio-political and economical needs of all sectors of society – from the upper elites to the lower-working class. It is the platform where solutions are called forth depending on the circumstances and how invested the principal actors are in the situation, although the

plethora of information that is daily being churned out on the Internet makes it easier for some issues to receive little or no attention.

Growing in strength, the Kenyan blogosphere runs an aggregated forum where every blogger in Kenya can appear. Two of these aggregated forums are famous inside and outside Kenya, namely BAKE and KBW. BAKE stands for Bloggers Association of Kenya, while KBW is the initialism for Kenya Blogs Webring. These bloggers' contributions have been reported by some of the research participants to shape the leadership, socio-cultural, political and economic realities of Kenya. Four interviewees, Dennis Owino, Juliana Rotich of Ushahidi, Daudi Were and Kui Kihoro Mackay belong to one of these two platforms. Daudi Were, who has been a key member of Ushahidi, founded KBW in 2005 (with 900 to 1000 members) of which Kui Kihoro Mackay is a member. According to Mackay, KBW in its prime exhibits the collection of blogs by Kenyans and friends of Kenyans around diverse issues on Kenya. This blog aggregate platform also displays links to other blogs and the site attracts readers from all over the world. Through Kenyan blogs, KBW's overarching issues are raised and discussed and networking within and outsider Kenyan became stronger among the users.

Therefore, coordinating the blogosphere in a cohesive and collective format to amplify diverse voices was part of the reasons behind blog-aggregating forums such as BAKE and KBW, according to Dennis Owino and Daudi Were. Since 2012, BAKE runs an annual bloggers prize known as BAKE Awards in recognition and celebration of exceptional Kenyan bloggers in different genres. Each year, the Kenyan online community participates in voting for the winners of BAKE Awards.

James Smart relates to citizen journalists as a community mouthpiece and harbingers of needed information for intervention. To him, it is easier for citizen journalists to bring out the truth as they see it as opposed to the profit-oriented mass media burdened with heavy equipment and different agendas. These citizen journalists often have an organic understanding of the situations in the community in which they live. Smart considers this home advantage as the reason why it has not been smoother for both the citizen journalists and the mass media to work together effectively and converge on several

fronts. Yet, the participation of the citizen journalists in reporting news has improved investigative journalism. In this sense, the public reporting of a phenomenon can be further dived into and probed before being broadcast. However, the mass media is still failing to investigate news flagged by citizen journalists. Smart considers the need for both platforms to co-exist and worry less about hijacking of roles of prime importance as the 21st century reality is such that the one-time consumers of news are now producers of news. He articulates:

> I think one of the things that the citizen journalists and bloggers do and the role they play is very critical, in a way democratising the news environment. Because what we had in 2007 was a media, which took sides. They decided this side was right and this side was wrong and the journalists that polarised the republic mediated the conversations that were happening in the public. For example, the information that I would get is information that I am politically aligned to and agreed to in the mainstream media. And the information that is coming from the other side that I have blocked and I don't align to, I would shut out. And so it was clear from the public mind that this was how the mainstream media is set out, especially from 2005 till 2007.

On the contrary, George Kegoro highlights that the Kenyan online community was very divisive in 2007. He observes the stark division permeating the Kenyan socio-political sphere and how the new media helped promote division and hatred in the Kenya's 2007 elections. He clarifies:

Ordinary Kenyans were very divided, I mean the period to 2007, and social media was extremely divisive and polarised platform across the country. There were bloggers and blogs, a lot of them based out of the country, that were pushing hate and vitriol on both sides and that was what happened and that has been acknowledged and included in the investigation and in the report of the Waki Commission.

Rasna Warah has a different grasp of the citizen journalism platform in comparison to professional journalism; citizen journalism does not have highly rated quality control and fact-checking mechanisms. Thus, Warah feels citizen journalism cannot operate effectively without the mainstream media. In her observation, some people who engage in citizen journalism sometimes start to blog because they are frustrated about not getting a job with the media organisations. Having read both good and bad quality news from citizen journalism platforms, she considers a few bloggers, in particular Wandia

Njoya (who started her blog in 2014), as worthy of following due to the way they articulates their stories with passion and standards. The convergence point, she says, is that citizen journalism is a source of information to the mainstream media where a story can be picked up for further investigation.

Patrick Gathara, a strategic communications consultant, commentary analyst, writer, blogger, and award-winning political cartoonist and graphic designer, has a different perspective in evaluating the mass media. Patrick Gathara is a household name in the media arena, most especially the online platforms. He produces satirical cartoons on his blog and for the East African newspaper. He also runs political commentary and writes for the Al Jazeera English. Gathara is one of the most renowned citizen journalists in Kenya. Although he does not stamp a citizen journalist label on his public contributions, he is considered one by some research participants, who mentioned his name to illustrate their points. Gathara worries that many professional journalists have become "celebrity journalists" since the advent of the NMT in such a way that the popularity provided by the online engagement distracts them from quality investigation. As a citizen and a contributor to the mainstream news, he views the Kenyan mass media as the "amplifier of official truth", meaning they regurgitate government's propaganda with little or no investigation and objectivity. Thus, he asserts that the Kenyan mainstream media has become a sounding board for the politicians and the political elites. While he thinks citizen journalism has generated colossal pressure to check these regurgitation practices, he feels it has not done enough to hold the mainstream media accountable. He believes that the mainstream media still enjoys larger audiences and that the demand for accountability by citizen journalists would get the press to up their game.

Additionally, Gathara considers the lack of interest, curiosity and commitment to know the core truth of a story as the problems facing the Kenyan press. He underlines the internal politics of pacifying the elites and avoiding stepping on toes as the main issue affecting the quality of professional media reportage. According to him, in situations where some journalists endeavour to tell hard-core news, they sometimes get their

stories cancelled by their press organisations if it would affect the organisation's revenue negatively. In some cases, journalists get fired if they become deviant in telling a story that is to be benched or killed. Gathara also thinks that the blaming and shaming of the mainstream media during the 2008 PEV affected their subsequent reporting, especially during the 2013 general elections. Therefore, the mainstream media decided to take a backseat and treaded with caution. He feels that all the endless attacks against the mass media have resulted in peace lobotomy, a case of artificial unity masquerading as the real peace.

Gathara reflects that the blogosphere is no less polarised, with bloggers divided along ethnic lines. Despite this division, he thinks of it as a continuation of the 2008 endeavour in that citizens have become relentless in speaking up on issues that affect their freedom and the transformation they hoped for in Kenya's troubled political topography. Citizens' critical online contributions and questioning themselves and the government become the visible gains of the post-2008 period. Gathara, for instance, produces online graphic cartoons to illustrate overarching issues he yearned to see addressed. He has also noticed that one undesirable effect of the new media is the government's utilisation of technology by employing young Kenyans with new media skills to boost their agenda. Also, he views the new media as impartial in what he considers 'biting your own fingers' till it bleeds out the disease. For instance, when the government official Ezekel Mutua broadcast online that he had secured an American visa on his diplomatic passport, he received overwhelming questions by Kenyan netizens on how he was able to procure a diplomatic passport when he ought not to have one. The Kenyan government's reaction to citizens' queries resulted in the prompt withdrawal of Ezekel Mutua's diplomatic passport (Vidija & Mwangi 2016). The conclusion drawn from this incident by Gathara is how Facebook and Twitter matter and what is said on these platforms can open a can of worms.

Although the Kenyan blogosphere was implicated in hate speech during the 2008 PEV, many of the interviewees agreed that in 2007 the mass media polarised the news and divided the public in their news conduct much more than the havoc seemingly caused by the nascent citizen journalists' platform. Equally, Irungu Houghton provides his

observations of citizen journalism as a phenomenon that is more interactive, representative and inclusive. He explains:

> Citizen journalism is a phenomenon platform for self-expression for the fulfilment of… I guess the third leadership. The beauty of it is that it provides an opportunity for anybody, more or less anybody who is able to get a smart phone, to speak, to research, to have access to information, and to formulate their own opinions and to do analysis. So I think for me, the advent of social media is something tremendously powerful.

In recent times, a few satirical hashtags have been generated via Twitter by @KOT (Kenyans On Twitter) to challenge obnoxious news and misrepresentations of people's realities in Africa. This points to the multidimensional growth and role of the new media in the way it is used by citizen journalists. @KOT, which started in April 2015, now enjoys over 80,000 followers and is famous for many of its punchy "#Someonetell" hashtags, some of which are #SomeonetellCNN, #SomeonetellFox, #SomeonetellSouthAfrica, #SomeonetellAljazeera, to challenge misrepresentations, misapprehensions and anomalies in humorous or sardonic way. Another example of citizen journalism's progress is the use of text messaging by Sisi Ni Amani to campaign for peace. Sisi Ni Amani is a platform that connected local peace actors and activists to send out peace messages through SMS in the 2013 elections. This platform, which will be discussed in depth in chapter six, saw the value of collective peace through interactive engagement of the community. The platform, using the citizen journalism approach, chose not to send news but short messages of peace in different local languages to the community members who subscribed.

Dennis Owino, freelance professional and citizen journalist, celebrates the commitment of the citizen journalists who wanted the ICC to prosecute the leaders implicated in the 2008 PEV: "The ICC cases were much helped by the evidence that were collected by the citizen journalists and supplied to the Kenyan Human Rights Commission whose reports were used in prosecution." Owino considers the mass media a partisan entity and he decided to quit his job to freelance. He has an overwhelming following of over 31,000 people on Twitter and he has since gone ahead to start a communication consultancy firm called KenyaInsight.com (described as Kenya's Most Authoritative Independent Site, it is thoughtful and provides balanced analyses, opinions,

investigations, and media facts). This media independence allows Owino and his team to work neutrally on governance, politics and investigation within Kenya. Thus, the citizen journalism platform has become a space for professional journalists who want free hands to report and the world that they have encountered to thrive.

In the 2008 post-election realism, when many families found themselves homeless with dashed hopes for tomorrow, a blog sprang up to crowdfund to help some of these displaced Kenyans. Dipesh Pabari, a Kenyan-Asian of Indian origin, began a blog, sukumakenya.blogspot.co.ke, to raise money to help the IDP in Kisumu. Pabari explains that he was compelled to start the Sukuma, first, as the urge to support his parents who already started assisting IDP in Kisumu, and second, to air his frustrations and disappointments with the socio-political situation in Kenya. Within the first week of setting up the crowd funding, $10,000 was raised to assist the Kenyan IDP and the account of how the money was spent was updated on the Sukuma blog. Pabari describes how he started the blog as a fundraising appeal for displaced victims of the post-election violence, in part due to the fact that his parents, who were running a charity in Kisumu at the time, had first-hand experience of what was happening there. They witnessed Luos returning home from 'upcountry'' and Kikuyus and others trying to get out of Kisumu.

> So, the blog was set up very much as an appeal to raise funds, which would directly be used for getting people on the bus, basically paying for people to leave, paying for people who are coming back to have food and shelters and basic things like blankets etcetera … So, basically it was very simple, it was just a blog, this is the situation in Kisumu, this is the stuff that is not reported by the mainstream media and I was just appealing to friends and friends of friends and to whoever had attachment particular to Kisumu and Kenya at large to contribute.

Within weeks, the blog had raised ten thousand dollars, which was used to assist the people in Kisumu. Pabari explains that he felt compelled to keep reporting on his blog to share with readers how their money was being spent, and due to the nature of blogging, he shared many individual stories. This was of interest to the readers, some of who had close family connections with those in Kisumu.

Everyone wanted to know what is going on. I think that went on for the first few months. After that when the so-called opposition decided to have peace and they shook hands on the agreement that was, you know, a very strong sense of disillusionment from Kenya at large. Kenyans, I, particularly, I personally and I am sure many others felt that we had been taken for a ride. People stood up, after watching politicians rip this country apart and with a shake of a hand, the very people that were fighting and telling people to kill each other say we are at peace now and life goes on. Thousands were displaced and the solution they were presenting to the country was by no means adequate, by no means enough and there was a very strong sense of anger that was when the blog became more of an activist portal.

Pabari's irate blogging got many people to read and prompted more Kenyan activists to give him articles to post on his blog, especially with the censorship of the mainstream media and much of the hypocrisy of the politicians hidden in plain sight. Sukuma blog served as a platform for Kenyan citizens and concerned friends to vent and talk about their reality. He also blogged about the contradictions in the print media and this got more attention from his readership. This blog grew enough for Pabari to be invited to write for other media platforms, including the mainstream media such as Pambazuka, The Star and East Africa News. He was invited to television programmes and his activism got the attention of renowned Kenyan activists such as Mualimu Mati, Philio Ikonya, Ory Okolloh and Erik Hersman who are part of the Ushahidi platform.

Pabari was also invited to run workshops on how to blog. The two things that made Pabari's efforts stand out in 2008 were first, he was a solo writer without any NGO ties or backing, and second, he was an Indian face and voice who was responding to an unprecedented situation. Not only that, but he was also targeting the Indian communities, the 'sleepy-middle class' of Kenya with massive business ventures. Recalling the Media Focus on Africa awards for those citizens who were key actors that influenced peace, Pabari states that his parents were recipients of the award as their role in local peace activities of fundraising and assisting displaced Kenyans in different capacities were acknowledged.

Pabari eventually stopped blogging in 2009 due to his dissatisfaction with the political status quo. He was disappointed that the change he wished would happen in terms of political freedom and responsible leadership in post-conflict Kenya never happened.

Thus, after two young activists who were testifying in the ICC against their leaders were supposedly killed in mysterious car accidents, followed by a threatening text message that he received about the cheapness of life in Kenya, he pulled out. However, before pulling out and saying goodbye to one of the ten most read blogs in Kenya in 2008, he challenged the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) that was running a campaign on ecosystem protection while the staff of the same organisation were driving huge cars in Nairobi. His campaign against UNEP got the attention of the international and local media and bloggers. Eventually, the UN portal felt concerned enough to ban his blog from the UN portal as terroristic.

In addition, his experience as a citizen journalist propelled Pabari to take up an unpopular intellectual magazine run by a retired veteran librarian couple in Kenya called Wajibu (a journal for social and ethical concern). This magazine had been running for about 20 years with basic graphic design until Pabari invested to improve Wajibu's production and distribution. This engagement ran for three years before he left it to be continued by the couple. From his blog, Pabari world opened up further as he was able to get involved in another magazine called Awaaz, which focuses on retelling the lost, hidden or fragmented story of the Indian community's involvement in Kenya's independence. Working alongside veteran Kenyan actor, playwright and journalist John Sibi-Okumu, Pabari went ahead to participate actively in the Samosa festival, organising and getting to do more with Kwani Trust.

The crowdfunding role of ex-blogger Dipesh Pabari in the 2008 PEV is one way many citizen journalists have made themselves relevant. There are more. Boniface Mwangi, a trained journalist, decided to go on a solo photojournalism mission to portray the heinous reality of the 2008 PEV. This mission he undertook from the perspective of a citizen journalist who was deeply disturbed by the country's polarisation and ethnic fragmentation. He was not pleased by the attitude of the professional media and he decided to do this job of showing his country the danger of war and to educate them on how to avoid a repeat. On his decision to exhibit the graphic photos he took of the 2008 PEV, he states:

I think you shouldn't do an exhibition just for the sake of it. Ours was actually using the exhibition as a trigger for conversations. So the images were not isolated. You have to see the pictures and then you have cataract of sight and we got facilitators and we also dialogue. Guys could come and say the most hateful things about other communities and you get to can talk to them. So, it was actually an open space for conversations. If someone says 'I hate this tribe' then we say let's talk about why you hate this tribe and you get to educate people. We were using the images for education. I think it is very dangerous to just use photos without context. So the images were contextual. They were actually there to trigger dialogue, to make you upset, offended or angry or pained or hurt then we use that pain, use that hurt or use that anger to have a dialogue and educate you the effects of tribalism and tribal politics… There was actually a lots impact of the exhibition. No one went to the exhibition and was left unchanged.

After the 2008 PEV and the horrific killings that he witnessed and documented, Mwangi resigned his position with The Standard to take up his position as a caring Kenyan, in contrast to his previous limited involvement as a photojournalist who reports graphic images of conflicts. As a human being that was distraught by the violence, Mwangi decided in 2010 to do "Picture Time", a travelling exhibition across Kenya "as a tool for cohesion and dialogue". The exhibition of gruesome images of burnt bodies and houses provoked deep emotions among the people that culminated in uncomfortable dialogue that needed to happen for collective action, reconciliation, community cohesion and social justice. *Kenya Burning* was the first book that Mwangi made out of his conflict photos and in 2016 he published *Unbounded*, a compilation of his personal stories and his community struggle and triumph, depicting the harrowing and humorous life events he witnessed and documented.

Captured in *Unbounded* was Mwangi's grandmother's influence on his outlook on life, especially in relation to his stance on poverty, inequality and corruption. From his photo activism and the human concern that Boniface displayed in the 2008 PEV, he was invited by TED Talks in 2010 to speak about his activism in Kenya and why it mattered. Mwangi has since become a senior TED fellow, not for his journalism training but for his activism and citizen media engagement. He is also widely known for his *Vulture* and *Pig* parliament protests. Mwangi runs a blog and he is the founder of PAWA 254, a Kenyan youth hub for artistry, dialogue and collaboration. Mwangi considers himself a citizen journalist. He recently vied for the position of Member of Parliament (MP) for the Sarehe constituency in the 2017 general elections and lost.

Reflecting on the responses to the 2008 PEV by citizen journalists, Yvonne Owuor says that the alternative platform offers a counter-narrative that debunks whatever official narrative the government is putting out to the public. Thus, the official narrative becomes unsustainable in the face of many other outlets presented by the NMT, although the government has now learnt to use same NMT to be prominent. Owuor thinks the power that citizen journalists wield is so great that they are sought after by political elites. Hence, she worries that the independent Kenyan citizen journalists are getting corporatized when they are offered payment they cannot refuse, diluting the authenticity of the space they occupy and the power they wield. It has been noted by many research participants that more voices are springing up to replace those lost to corporatization.

The significance of citizen journalism in contemporary Kenya led a research participant to raise their concern about the blurred line about what is mainstream media in the 21st century. The participant argues that since citizen journalism is becoming more visible, it in itself has become a mainstream means of news gathering and sharing, including other innovations brought on board. It took a while for the Kenyan CSOs to recognise the importance of online participation beyond communication and information exchange. But they can no longer deny that since the 2008 PEV, the new media interactivity has begun to revolutionise the public sphere in Kenya.

5.6   The Dynamic of the New Media in the Context of Kenya's 2008 PEV

The advent of the new media impacted Kenya's community in many ways before and during the 2008 PEV. Several research participants speak to the glaring ethnicised partisan politics flooding the online community both at home and in the diaspora during the 2007 elections and when the conflict erupted. In a way, Kenyan bloggers were implicated in sparking hatred during the 2008 PEV. Some research participants reflected further on the political correctness of some bloggers in the virtual community that pointed out ethnic disunity and the spouting of hatred in Kenya. This, they say, is the cadre of bloggers that wanted lasting solutions to the perennial socio-political and tribal problems in the country. This proactive cadre in the blogosphere was quick in monitoring news coming from both Kenya and abroad. During the 2008 PEV, Kenyan

citizen journalists challenged the misleading news that the international media organisations like the BBC, CNN and Al Jazeera were reporting about the Kenyan crisis. A few research participants concur that this bold move of the bloggers forced the international media organisations into unexpected accountability as opposed to the one-sided narrative of inferno and death.

Conversely, the glaring divisions within the Kenyan community reflected deeply on the UGC of Kenyan's bloggers and citizen journalists during the 2007 elections and in the violent conflict that followed. On the one hand, according to Daudi Were, Kenyan bloggers congregated around the issues of the 2007 elections to blog more on issues related to politics and the elections, especially those that normally focus on other fields of interest such as entertainment, food, human rights or sport. The online community became the extension of the country's mayhem at the time. Were sheds light on this conflation of occurrences:

> In 2007 elections, the divisions that were happening offline were also happening online. The bloggers were not speaking with one voice on politics. There were people on all sides of political divides. Where it started to become significant and where it helped that we were organised, was in the period after voting day and before the announcement of the results. There was a poor period of uncertainty and the mainstream media either couldn't or wouldn't report a lot of things that were going on but the blogospheres had more freedom so they were able to report what was going on.

On the other hand, Boniface Mwangi challenges the overwhelming praise of the new media in the wake of the 2008 PEV. He believes that Kenya would have burned to the ground in 2007/2008 PEV were as many Kenyans online as the numbers imply today. This is because according to him, there were some uncontrolled posts, which were very divisive and hateful. Kui Kihoro Mackay acknowledges that though the new media platform is more mature than before and that it is used in raising a plethora of issues nowadays, it was starkly polarised in 2008. Recalling what transpired during the 2008 PEV, Mackay remembers the online community using Mashada, the weblog of David Kobia (a co-founder of Ushahidi) to spew the vilest ethnic hatred against one another under the cover of anonymity. Kobia confirmed this to be true. He explains that a spate of hate speech came up on his online forum and weblog, Mashada. The amount of

hateful comments on his blog frightened Kobia so much that when Ory Okolloh called on citizens "to do something about the conflict", especially when the mass media was afflicted by the governmental order to stop broadcasting live, he did not hesitate to do something. To vindicate himself for not being a party to the hatred spewing from the online forum, he shut down the weblog that he had started in1998 (long before it was called blogs) and put all his efforts into jointly starting the Ushahidi crowdsourcing platform. The invitation to start something positive got David Kobia's attention and he became one of Ushahidi's pioneer members.

While Ushahidi was crowdscourcing information on the violent conflict, another blogger was crowdfunding to assist the internally displaced people in Kisumu. Dipesh Pabari, a Kenyan-Asian of Indian descent, rose to the occasion in an effort to assist his parents who were inundated with helpless neighbours fleeing for their lives. By creating this blog, he was able to call widely for financial assistance to augment his parents' efforts. Pabari raised over $10,000 within the first week of his crowdfunding endeavours. In his opinion, the new media has enabled Kenyans to be more involved, more aware, more reactive and more creative in using digital activism to respond most especially to socio-political occurrences. In the face of all the commotion in 2008, Jessica Musila cites the new media as the convenient avenue where information was exchanged and updates were obtained. Musila, who resided abroad at the time, was relieved to have the opportunity to regularly communicate interactively with her family in Kenya. She recalls that other Kenyans in the diaspora were using the same medium to keep abreast of things and in touch with their families. She finds the new media's accessibility to confirm from family members what exactly was happening and uncovering the mass media's exaggeration of the violence or where reporting was inaccurate, significant. Using the Google Groups podium, a group of Kenyans known as the Concerned Kenyan Writers (CKW) contributed to the discourses on political violence by producing over 150 articles that were shared on various platforms.

The Concerned Kenya Writers comprise authors, academics, journalists, bloggers, politicians, artists, poets, scientists and so on. With the new media platform to operate, the CKW were able to influence the middle class and challenge the dominant narratives

about the 2008 PEV and demand peace to be restored with their various undertakings. Wambui Mwangi, a Kenyan intellectual and professor of political science formerly with the University of Toronto who maintains madkenyanwoman.blogspot.com, recalls receiving an email from Germany that one of the CKW's articles had been translated into German. Through the new media, some of the CKW's articles were distributed beyond the shore of Kenya. Yvonne Owuor credits her participation in CKW for the desperate need to express her concern for seeing her country crumpling in a bloodbath. She considers the primary role of CKW as a platform to articulate what would have been otherwise articulated in writing, collectively. The articles that CKW produced were out of in-depth conversations within the group to express their resentment, their anger and their anticipations. Owuor does not see the CKW as cohesive, as some members took sides, some of who are now in government, but essentially it exposed their contradictions, delusions, and ugliness and provided a new vocabulary to engage. CKW allows the understanding of the power of writers in framing narratives. Essentially, the CKW provide an archive of documentation on the 2008 PEV and the variety of thought that emerged from stakeholders. In 2009, to consolidate CKW's efforts and make them available to a wider audience, Kwani Trust produced *After the Vote: Dispatches from the Coalition of Concerned Kenyan Writers,* an anthology of work addressing the conflict.

Rasna Warah, a renowned Kenyan-Asian writer and editor, thinks Internet Communication Technology offers an opportunity for diverse as well as ominous usages. Recalling the usage of the NMT in Kenya's 2007 elections, she sees it as a platform where people spewed hate speech, and promoted negative ethnicity and a divisive agenda. She implicates Kenyans in the diaspora in this saga and thinks the negative-minded have lost their hold and credibility in the eye of the public in the recent clime. She has noticed beyond the "gloom and doom" users of the NMT are the enlightened Kenyans that talk about governance accountability on Twitter, who she follows and considers progressive. The platform, she says, is a "push and pull" where the negative and positive coexist. She concludes that the NMT is essentially more positive than negative in its usage, citing the example of Boniface Mwangi as a proactive Kenyan and the @KOT group that utilise the social media platform for good.
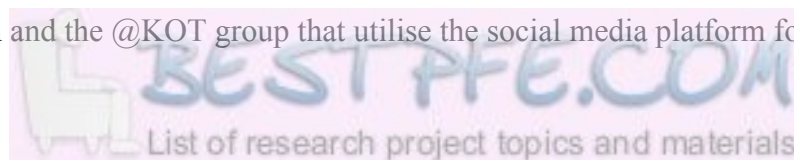
According to Hamzal Egal, the Ushahidi platform was one of the few online platforms that gave accurate information on the conflict. Ushahidi managed to crowdsource useful information that put the violence in clear perspective, which helped the Kenyans in diaspora to know exactly what was happening. The shocking impact that came with the exaggerated reportage of the international media was cushioned by the information coming from the Ushahidi platform. Aside from the diaspora having the opportunity to follow the news at home, the locals were able to get real-time information about the hotspots of violence. Significantly, the reduction of insecurity that emanated from the Ushahidi platform that gave genuine information was considered helpful towards restoring a sense of calm. In the hotbed of chaos, Ushahidi was still able to collaborate through interactive mashup maps crowdsourced for an inclusive participation among the citizenry to tell what they saw or what they or their community were going through. This crisis mapping effort, according to Daudi Were, resulted in the deployment of humanitarian assistance and security intervention where necessary.

Nevertheless, the reverberations of the indictment of the mass media and the implication of the blogosphere in instigating hatred are still being felt today. Many of the research participants feel that hate speech has not diminished yet. The National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) mentioned previously was established in 2008 following the PEV and put in charge of prosecuting hate speech offenders. Hate speech perpetuation is not limited to anyone; politicians, journalists and bloggers are all indicted to be a part of this continual division. There is a general sentiment among the research participants that genuine peace is yet to be attained in Kenya as the root causes of political discord and violence are yet to be addressed. However, since the Kenyan republic reconciled after the 2008 PEV, the new media has become more ingrained in people's daily lives. For instance, from 2012 to 2013 Ushahidi and its sister organization iHub co-facilitated a research project, Umati, aimed at monitoring dangerous speech. "The Umati project seeks to identify and understand the use of dangerous speech in the Kenyan online space, in order to find and use non-government ways to reduce its effects of violence on the ground" (iHubResearch 2013). The project went further to create NipeUkweli – an outreach effort to debunk inciting myths in order to reduce the possible effects of dangerous speech. Dennis Owino observes that

the Kenyan community in all its facets now relies on the new media for information and for awareness. He states that Kenya is now a community that no longer asks what the mass media is saying but rather what Facebook or Twitter is saying. Equally, the Kenyan government ensuring an effective presence on the Internet reaffirms this epic shift to the 21st century media.

It was also reiterated that the new media has been pushing the mass media to raise the rigour of its reporting. This is because the public is talking and with a faulty analytical process by the mass media, this lack of depth loses or enrages the audience. Part of the significant dynamic of the new media in Kenya's public life is the proliferation of the masses and the government whose attention has been captured to monitor the news and to have their own presence on the Internet. It has been echoed that the Kenyan government through the NCIC is planning to restrict political commentary on social media ahead of the 2017 elections against using inflammatory language, hate speech and ethnic contempt (CPJ 2017). This move if implemented would suggest a government that is on the one hand scared of instigation of violence through the Internet, and on the other hand, one that is ready to police its political and civil society. KICTANet's (2017:8) policy brief on Internet shutdowns and elections in Kenya in 2017 reckons that this move will "abrogate the human rights such as freedom of expression and assembly. Access to information and political rights" and economic activities will also be penalised. KICTANet (2017) reckons compared to other African countries that engaged in the widespread shutting down of the Internet both totally and partially in the 2016 elections, the Kenyan republic has a more advanced constitution that presents no legal basis for Internet closure.

There were non-linear views on hate speech among the research participants. Many participants pin the issues of Internet violence on state atrocities more than the citizens' discordant excitements. Some view it as a state ploy to silence criticism, some think the root cause of hatred if not addressed will continue to produce this diatribe, while others think it is necessary. Sellah Kingoro, assistant director of research, policy and planning at the NCIC, while weighing the issue of hate and dangerous speech on social media, still feels the 2013 elections benefitted largely from the interactivity of this medium and the fact that no one is kept in the dark regarding the happenings. She says:

> I think social media contributed a lot to the stable situation that we had in 2013. You know violence is more of mob psychology thing, especially violence around elections. You want to have as many people as possible thinking in a certain way, and then it is easy to spark lament into action. Now social media was a way in which most people were reaching out to themselves. And in my subjective view, social media designed or modified, you know, the way people were thinking as groups in the various places they were in. So, if for instance, my worry was, if violence would have sparked out in a larger volume at any place then it would have been really easy for the entire country to actually get into violence. Because the most effective way people were actually keeping in touch was through social media.

She states further that there has been significant improvement since 2008 in keeping people in the loop regarding what is happening and that the plethora of information going out through the new media is assisting in dispelling violence on a larger scale.

> In 2008 we did not have a lot of applications that would keep people together especially over the mobile phones. But in 2013 apps like WhatsApp, which put people with similar thinking together with a political party or people with similar geographic region or even extended families, they were in touch real-time. Being in different places there was that update of what is happening where. And I think that is what kept the condition simple because the information going around was "well in Nairobi is going on well". "In Mandera things are okay"… And that information knowing that "people are keeping it well in the other places, we better keep it well in our place", I think that contributed a lot in having very little violence in 2013.

Undoubtedly, the new media is a force that is attracting all kind of actors and regulations; it is no longer a child's game. The dynamic of this platform has engendered a community of life that is flourishing online and offline. The Kenyan community is growing exponentially in the way it is engaging with the new media. It goes without saying that the members of the general public are increasingly proactive in the use of NMT, so also is the multiplicity of issues that are getting prominence on the Internet. According to John Githongo, the real news has moved online, with the members of the public playing an active role. Thus, the nascent new media in 2008 has since shown relatable growth and maturity in its usages and applications. Still, the issue of censorship is a contentious one when it comes to democratisation of people's rights and freedom. But the Kenyan community wishes to err on the side of caution since issues

around its protracted history of ethnic division and animosity are yet to be resolved. While acknowledging all concerns, the new media has sprouted formidable citizen journalists in Kenya and they are the watchers of watchdogs, the poker of consciousness and the disruptors of the status quo. They are both the desirable and undesirable non-state actors transforming the political sphere with critical and disruptive reportage as they engage also in solution-seeking initiatives and endeavours. Still, the new media is not freed from the two-sided coin effect it has created in the minds of the people as a potential weapon or a dove in the hands of the users.

5.7   New Media in Africa: Godsend or Double-Edged Sword?

The 28 interviewees unanimously agree that the new media –especially social media, encompassing Twitter, Facebook as well as Web. 2.0 sites, and finally text messaging services –is an interactive platform for the masses to share information, connect, and transform their situations and communities. According to Juliana Rotich, one of the founding members of Ushahidi, the advent of the new media has created a channel of documentation and increasing power of public participation. Hence, the Internet has switched the unidirectional mode of information to a bi/multi-directional mode. Ben Mulwa, a governance consultant and politician, calls the social media platform "the future" by looking at the rising engagement and connection among the people. He observes the continual ways in which people are finding common and diverse ground to address overarching socio-political and economic issues as phenomenal. In Kenya alone, online news has become mainstreamed and printed newspapers are becoming redundant. John Githongo, an ex-journalist and the current director of Inuka Trust, in reference to the online participation of Kenya youth, states that the new media has become a platform to monitor the leaders' actions. Making the leaders' legitimacy come under strong scrutiny. Therefore, a particularly clear stand by many interviewees is that NMT espouses the agency of the people to participate in their own affairs, for good or bad. This means that depending on the utilisation or the deployment NMT, it can instigate violence or quench unrest or provide the platform for nonviolent collective actions to reiterate Bock's (2012) and Zuckerman's (2009) positions. NMT has nonetheless become the globalised platform upon which the world interacts and revolves around itself.

Echoing the benefits of the new media platforms, Githongo stresses that overarching political issues, attacks and scandals that normally take a long time to deal with now takes less time with the advent of social media. For instance, the Kenyans On Twitter (@KOT) account spares no time in using the interactive platform to inform and broadcast satirical messages that target the government and the general society. Githongo also illuminates further that the new media has made it harder for the government to deceive the public, such that the public no longer trust the government and this scepticism has reduced the legitimacy of the government. This is an unfortunate but transformational benefit of the new media, as he describes: "The ability of the state to manage and manipulate the predominant narrative in the society has been eroded severely." Githongo thinks that the public has become the watchdog of the leaders and the mainstream media over the past two years. In turn, the mainstream media has lost credibility because the business model of the mainstream media makes it vulnerable to the government as they seek advertisement. Likewise, the circulation of the mainstream media is down as a global trend. Githongo concludes that the mainstream media's lofty attitude of seeing the new media as beneath their empire has now changed, as many media houses are now infiltrating the Internet, playing catch-up and rebranding their products.

Githongo's insights resonate with Ben Mulwa's reflection on the futuristic ethos of the new media and he clarifies in detail why NMT is important in this present time. He speaks about the visit of Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook:

> When he posted about the lunch he had with our cabinet secretary for information and technology, there's a comment I posted on that that he has got no idea what his invention has done to Kenya and Africa in general because now we don't need to rely on the state to tell us anything. We don't need to rely on the state radio or state TV to tell us what they want us to hear, everything has changed, and everything is real-time. In fact, when you sit now in the evening, the news you are watching on TV, chances are you actually knew about that at 10 am this morning. So new media has completely revolutionised the way we are engaging, the way we are doing business and the way we are networking.

Apart from the fact that new media allows people access to news faster than ever before, Githongo describes that it allows for networking and connecting with large numbers of people.

> Through the nature of my work, I have been able to meet amazing people who are so equally passionate about this country through social networks, something that would have been completely impossible ten years ago. I have been able to reach out to so many people and create a following of people that I don't know will be possible without the new media, especially social media. So, in my view, this is like Godsend to Africa. We have been able to completely frustrate corruption pursuits in government or in government departments through the social media. We have been able to unearth some of the worst scandals through the social media... When it comes to citizens' awareness, the social media has taken the frontline in terms of driving the agenda, making people understand their rights.

Peter Mwamachi, who works with the government unit of the National Steering Committee (NSE) on Peace Building and Conflict Management, credits NMT for the collaborative initiatives between the government, civil society and citizen journalists on early warning mechanism called Uwiano. To him, this consortium works, because of the NMT's ubiquitous accessibility that facilitates real-time news aggregation and collection of rich information. Mwamachi emphasises further that the NMT is like a sword that cuts either way. However, the plethora of information that is out there from several people has made verification of reports or news easier, and the fact that the information is now available on self-check platforms helps clarify errors. He provides insights as to how the evolution of the new media is assisting the Uwiano early warning consortium by stating that "Uwiano gathers its information through indicators; where peace monitors send in information, through conflict early warning and response system, through the crowdsourcing with code 108 where members of the public send in messages, through phone calls and through the media both electronic and traditional."

Absalom Shalakha, programme manager of PeaceNet, a member of the Uwiano consortium, reinforces the versatility of the new media, which he explains as follows:

> For me, technology cuts both ways, where people are able to share information as quickly as possible, now crowdsourcing organisations are coming in and early warning mechanisms are coming in. People are able to share information as

quickly as possible. But again, technology has made it easier for people to mobilise, I mean start something, we are looking at WhatsApp, we are looking at some many groups. So, something that initially would take time for people to get involved, right now so many people are able to mobilise for example in Kisumu people were able to mobile violence through WhatsApp. So, for me, technology has helped us, to be able to identify, and response to conflict quickly, but it has also helped to fan animosity.

For many research participants, including Absalom Shalakha, the new media shapes interaction among people and is also used in igniting hate speech and incite violence. He recollects that the outbreak of the strife between the two groups in Kisumu was exacerbated through WhatsApp group mobilisation to attack and retaliate. However, swift reporting to Uwiano through the same platform was used in deploying the security agency that halted the attacks. Also, evaluating the ubiquitous nature of the new media, Hamzal Egal states:

In terms of social media and new media, if we were to group them together, the reason why myself and people in my line of work or an average citizen use it, is that it gives you a platform to put your thoughts and your processed understanding of your own situation—your organic, local situation—out there and you share it with the world. And not only do you share it with the world, but you are able to get feedback from people from all walks of life. People who cannot even identify with you ethnically or in any other socio-differences cannot, how can I put it, they cannot relate to you but can relate with what you say from their context. And that is what the new media has done.

He goes on to offer another benefit of NMT:

The other reason and more important reason of using this form of media is that it allows you to highlight issues that are not captured by the mass media. Issues that affect your locality, issues that may be, even forget your locality, issues that affect you as an individual. You can put it out there and it gives you an audience that you will never have had if you were not using this type of media... The avenue of exchange of information is vast and I will say that it has brought the world closer, it has made the world aware of a lot of the plights or a lot of differences that people have. It is a tool of great value and it is also a double-edged sword... It is also a double-edged sword because you can have a lot of negative stereotyping and in case of Africa, a lot of tribalism being expressed but I believe it has done more good than bad.

Within the framework of those in the foreground of information gathering and sharing, awareness creation, presentation of organic stories and representation of self or one's

agency for networking, feedback and collaborative actions are those netizens occupying citizen journalism platforms. Thus, many research participants believe that citizen journalism has taken firmer root in Kenya as the mass media partly relies on news from the citizen journalists. Thus, citizen journalism has enhanced the way in which news is being relayed. According to Ben Mulwa, the role of citizen journalism during the 2008 PEV wasn't widespread, as the new media was still nascent in Kenya. However, he considers the role of the citizen-engaged media as significant in two ways; one is in getting the attention of the international community and second in informing the people in Kenya of what is going on. Daudi Were, current executive director of Ushahidi, observes that prominent voices within the mainstream media platform in Kenya, including the mass media itself, has made it difficult to effectively function as a mainstream media reporter without a Twitter or Facebook account for yourself or for your media organisation or company. Muthoni Wanyeki, regional director of Amnesty International East Africa, sees NMT as significant in providing a vast space for citizens' expressions.

Irungu Houghton states that the shift in power to the ubiquitous NMT has diminished dependency and monopoly of information by the mainstream media. What he considers the monopolisation of information by six big media houses, which is largely dominated by corporate and political interests under the control of Kenyan politicians, has dwindled. He concludes that social media is an alternative platform that has also become a driving force for mass media functionality. James Smart agrees with this assertion as he illuminates the growing interests of the mass media in utilising the new media. It has shown in this age, he opines, that the online platforms cannot be underestimated in reaching wider audiences and in making the mass media's presence global. According to James Smart, the online platform has growing exponentially to the extent that the public has been self-trained to effectively use the new media, be it in questioning the politicians or in shaking up the mass media. Thus, the critical mass of the public with chronic interests in their own affairs such as governance and politics are in many ways, from the comfort of their homes, shaping the government and the mass media. The fundamental importance of the role of the public with the new media, Smart explains, is in filling the huge gaps that the mass media has left unattended. These wide

gaps he says are on politics and governance, as the mass media tends to focus on the politicians and not their roles in governance.

With the advent of the new media, it is no longer business as usual for many establishments, for better or for worse. George Kegoro reflects on the present status of the new media in Kenya, which is such that remarkable growth is happening on the Internet. Thus, he describes:

> I think social media has significantly grown. It is important because citizens taking things into their own hands by reporting. And information that could never have come out usually easily comes out. So, it is playing an important role in highlighting information that could otherwise have not come out. Because legacy media is sometimes shamed to pick stories it never wanted to pick because social media has picked them. So, I would say that it is playing a key and important role in breaking news, in bringing to the public place and public discussions, conversations that may have been subverted.

Kegoro, as a late convert into the new media arena, acknowledges the indefatigable power of the NMT as very important in the new way of seeing things. The convergence is such that everyone is now online and whatever traditional or conventional platform is used, many more organisations are converging online to further enhance their work or plight or case. Since making demands with the use of the NMT is considered a vital endeavour, Kegoro construes this as a key part of citizen engagement since 2008. However, he rates mainstream media credibility higher in comparison to citizen journalists' news, especially as mass media believability is considered necessary to accept the trustworthiness of a story:

> What social media still lacks and it would never, I guess, get is the level of credibility that the mainstream media has. Because you read this story about this incident that has happened in a place, you go the traditional media and you ask to whether the story is there, to verify – bitter question of trust – and it could well be true but you are like if it is this bad, why is the newspaper not picking it yet? And when the newspaper picks it, usually that confirms then that story is true… But what of course happens is that social media also pushes the mainstream media.

Dennis Owino, journalist and blogger, counters this notion. He believes that the new media platform has allowed for a wide range of information from the citizens that have

helped in revealing the manipulative stances of the mass media as well as its propaganda. Many of the interviewees tend to think that the mass media's credibility has nosedived significantly in Kenya. As John Githongo notices, both the mainstream media and citizen journalism engages in sharing untrue content or hoax news. He says regardless of the source, when the mainstream media failed to verify news as part of the journalism ethics, it tends to regurgitate fictitious news. To be able to distinguish hoax news from real news, he observes that an internal system of verification is currently happening within the citizen journalism platform in such a way that those closest to the news can identify untrue news shared.

The new media double-edged sword or two-sided coin dynamic lies in what the users consider prominent and what is driving its deployment. On the one hand, the widespread usage of NMT allows people with all sorts of agendas and opinions to infiltrate and proliferate the Internet with fake news, ethnic diatribe, and instigation of discord, stereotyping or negativism of Africa. On the other hand, the benefits seemed to outshine the disadvantages of this negative usage of the NMT in the sense that it has grown people's connection to build understanding and compassion on issues they would have otherwise gathered from third parties. Further, the organic sharing of personal stories from the reality of the affected, leading to organic feedback, is growing the Internet community's awareness and helping to build a stronger network of a global village. For instance, when Hamzal Egal started the Twitter hashtag #KenyanIamnotaterrorist to showcase the reality of Somali-Kenyans who were harassed by the police and labelled terrorists just by virtue of coming from Somalia, an Al Shabab territory, he recorded overwhelming support and understanding from the online community. In his view, it means that every side of the story is presented, and people can have a holistic understanding of the situation, instead of a manipulative perspective that glorifies the oppressors and vilifies the oppressed.

Wambui Mwangi, a Kenyan intellectual, presents what she has observed as significant advantages and drawbacks of the NMT respectively. One of the drawbacks of NMT that she has observed is the use of the Internet by the government and international agencies as surveillance to monitor people. She considers this an undesirable invasion of

people's privacy. Another debilitating drawback of the use NMT noticed by Mwangi is the misogynistic and sexist treatment of women online, especially by Kenyan politicians and popular bloggers. For instance, celebrity blogger Robert Alai, who has been discredited by some interviewers as no longer independent in his political criticism of Kenyan leaders, believes that women who dress skimpily deserve to be shamed publicly. This was his Twitter response in 2013 to a wave of assaults on women because of how they dressed. A few famous women like Esther Passaris, a Kenyan politician, that tried to call Robert Alai to order was met with stern insult. This according to Mwangi is a carryover effect of patriarchy, in a society where debasing and objectifying women has now found its tentacles spreading into online interactions.

Furthermore, Mwangi ponders this development as a tough fight, where women with better coordination on how they respond to these misogynistic attacks are addressing the issue. For example, she explains that president Uhuru Kenyatta had made a sweeping statement denigrating a mother whose daughter was raped by her uncle, asking where she was at the time of the attack. Kenyan women took to Twitter to point out the president's lack of perceptiveness and compassion. The president's office later issued an apology as a result of the Kenyan women's Twitter war. In the same light, Kui Kihoro Mackay, reflecting from a feminist perspective, agrees that the Internet is unkind to women and that online assault and abuse of women takes place daily. She does not see the cyber shaming, bullying, misogynistic and sexist treatment of women successfully dealt with in spite of the unrelenting efforts of e-pro-feminists platforms. She thinks this is a universal policy issue, which needs more attention. By and large, she concludes that the online platforms can no longer be dismissed as a means of proactive or deleterious conversations, debates, actions and contributions. In line with Mwangi, the solution to the above concern is to find a way to use the same digital space communicability to amplify women's voices to enhance and expand public conversations in an inclusive manner.

Nevertheless, Mwangi credits the NMT for the creation of a new public space blending with a new sense of citizenship and identity in which public power is created and magnified. One other obvious advantage of the virtual realm is the ubiquitous

interconnectedness and vast global linkages. She reckons that 85% of Kenyans have mobile phones, some of which have infiltrated the NMT. Mwangi sees Ushahidi's role during the 2008 PEV as the best example of what the NMT in its nascence could do, to organise an intervention through mobile phones and the Internet. She takes this assertion further to how the NMT is useful in talking, creating and coordinating for activism and business advancements, especially among Kenyan farmers and women traders. To her, there is no limit to the information and knowledge that one can gain through the Internet. She articulates:

> The Internet has also made it possible for people to avail themselves of the very large store of knowledge that is the legacy of the human race. So that for the first time, you might not need to have gone to a graduate school for five years in order to have read Maya Angelou. It is just out there. You can download it, you can read it in the car or wherever. That's huge.

Wambui Mwangi believes that among the veteran, nascent or recurring actors who want to mend the tattered political fabric of Kenya are women under the appendages of various notable professions such as artists, musicians and writers. She has noticed since 2007 that those Kenyan netizens that have garnered overwhelming influence are artists like poets who have become the best political theorists, many of whom are neither journalists nor academics. The cumulative effect of having this space is checkmating the political leaders and advancing socio-political growth. NMT in Kenya is also used in such a way that institutions transfer their content from the online platform to other media. As her contribution to the 2008 PEV discourses, in her novel *Internally Misplaced,* Mwangi revisits a Nairobi under siege after the 2007 elections, and presents a day in the life of this character as Kenya went ablaze. She uses her blog madkenyanwoman.blogspot.com to advance critical debates on socio-political and patriarchal issues affecting the advancement of Kenyan women in leadership.

Marceline Nyambala asserts that the use of the new media can no longer be ignored for both its advantages and drawbacks. She realises that the world is becoming an extension of its virtual space, where digital migration is occurring and all artificial barriers are broken on the Internet. Thus, a truly global village is created. She recalls the role of citizen reporting in addressing wrongdoings and demanding justice in the case of

musician Koffi Olomide. Congolese musician Koffi was video recorded kicking one of his female dancers at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in July 2016. This generated uproar on the Internet when the video was posted, with many Kenyans becoming livid and demanding that Olomide be deported and his concert cancelled. The act of public beating of a female adult to the extent of a police intervention enraged Kenyans regardless what transpired. The Internet rage through Twitter and Facebook got Olomide arrested, deported and his concert called off (Digital Report 2016). Still, Nyambala thinks the use of the NMT has been able to achieve some things but not others. For instance, she recalls the existing struggle in using the NMT to address perennial gender-based violence and corruption. On a case-by-case individual basis however, Nyambala feels that NMT has helped in addressing some grim issues as in the case of Koffi Olomide, but not on a wider range of public issues.

As observed alongside Nyambala's concerns, within Kenya, not all issues get picked and dragged to the Internet 'court'. Some important issues do fall through the cracks. For example, the 2008 internally displaced Kenyans had walked back to Kenya from Uganda in October 2016 to demand the fulfilment of the promised resettlement by the government. They had had initially settled in Kiriandingo in Uganda where they made their way back to Kenya on foot, and later occupied the Kenyan parliament seeking resettlement plans (Rajab 2016). These people with little children became refugees even in Nairobi and were brutally whisked away one night by some hired security personnel and dumped in the Rift Valley of Nakuru (Rajab 2016). The government did not budge and the Internet was not enraged. Thus, on NMT's capacity for offering an outcry for justice and peaceful interventions, Yvonne Owuor states that the primary mediator of conflict is human beings and the NMT is a mere passageway to amplify what is going on the inside. She reflects:

> "The capacity and willingness of each human being to delve into the truth and confront their own darkness rather than allocate that darkness to others, which is the tendency even with the new media right now. And that is where it starts, it starts with the human being and the platform will shape itself to the desire of that human being. So, unless there is an equal determination by a group of

people, who are willing to work into the truth no matter what it says about them and their own illusion, it is not going to change. It will just evolve into what you see the newspapers are today advertisement platforms and government mouthpieces."

Owuor worries that both the benevolent and malevolent capacities of the new media are largely the doing of the people and the government, such that the government is trying to occupy every facet of social media:

> So, our social media has been hijacked. We know very well that intelligence and security forces also have Twitter accounts and they use perception management techniques to influence direction. The government itself has hired bloggers; they have official bloggers who change conversations so it reflects badly on whomever they see as the opposition. And then we fall into line with more dominant, more organised, and more determined to frame, not just the narrative but to change the social media into their image and likeness.

Owuor's concern reverberates, echoing Zuckerman's (2016) understanding of the NMT or the Internet as a neutral platform that can be used for good or for bad. The fact that governments are deploying their own resources to occupy the Internet shows its undeniable influential powers due to its omnipresent nature. Thusly, Irungu Houghton cautions that on the other side of the new media there is still danger of unverified news such as electronic gossip and negative ethnicity and bigotry:

> With that power bestowed by the social media came great responsibility because the articulation that we bring to that space always has to be tempered with national values and national ethics. So we have also seen this media being used extremely badly to generate either cynicism or sense of passiveness within citizens or to drum up negative ethnicity and hatred and this concept of 'the other'. And I think this is the danger with technology. In the same hands, the phone can either be a megaphone, an amplifier to reach the country by an individual citizen. But in the other hand, it can also be a panga that you can use to slice somebody because they come from different ethnicity or different gender or have a different sexual preference or they are in anyway different to who you are."

Jessica Musila's concerns resonate with Houghton's fear that NMT is a powerful space that can make or mar human relationships. Used constructively, collective solutions can be found; used destructively, more divisions are caused. The new media is a platform

that can serve whatever is at the heart of the user. She laments, "New media technology is both a convergence and divisive platform, it is interesting that the discourse on Facebook is becoming very antagonistic and now on Twitter, people seek the information that they do not have. But at the same time there are also very many armchair political analysts."

The dynamic of the feedback on the values of the NMT is paradoxical; all the research participants agree as to its democratic powers and celebrate its inclusivity paradigm, but are also cautious about the danger innate in its wrong usage. Boniface Mwangi, a Kenyan activist and politician, explains that, "Online is powerful for mobilising, organising, informing people what is happening, updating people and then you take the action offline". In his views, action is still largely taking place offline. Mwangi warns of the danger of overrating social media for action that people take. He believes that offline endeavours (for example meeting and talking to people offline) is where the main action takes place. Speaking further on the power of the NMT, Mwangi inadvertently admits to the untold power of virtual engagement in influencing peoples' actions and how that may produce a ripple effect in how offline activities are carried out. He believes that social media will liberate Africa from tyrannical leadership, citing the effect of '#ThisFlag' twitter campaign as having given Mugabe a hard time. Recounting his own experience with the Kenyan leadership, he explains further:

> … If you look at right now I have been taken to court by the deputy president because of a post I did on social media. What did I post? The truth! Why is he suing me? Because the mainstream media, would never say those things, but I am able to say that. That he is a murderer and a thief, which is truth and I am going to court to prove that since he has sued me. So, the fear among politicians – and you saw that in Uganda when they shut down the Internet and another Africa country Zambia shut down the Internet as well – is it that African governments are afraid of technology, they are afraid of the citizens and their mobile phones because within a few second you can mobilise people. You can send a WhatsApp message with a video that depicts the true state of the country or that mocks a politician and when you have a dictator they are corrupt people, then don't like to be mocked. So, I am a very big fan of technology and social media because I know that takes away the power from the traditional medias and empowers millions of people and when you want to do censorship, you cannot censor everyone.

It can be said that access to information and online engagement is unrestrictive. On the one hand, there has been a democratisation of space through the new media, and on the other hand, the insulation of exclusion through homophily, gender insensitivity, cyber harassment and techie languages. Although the positive overshadows the negative, nonetheless the binary roles of the new media cannot be missed, as expressed by the majority of the research participants. Depending on how its usage manifests itself from one place to another, it can be a godsend or a double-edged sword. Nonetheless, its widespread power and influence in the 21st century socio-political realities cannot be dismissed.

Metaphorically, John Githongo compares the new media as a global phenomenon to an animal that is growing with its own consciousness and personality and people are attempting vigorously and desperately to give it form, name, face and an identity, to no avail, as it is too big like an elephant that can only be partly and slightly touched at a time either at its trunk or leg; mysterious creature that is touched in the dark by many people without knowing fully what creature this is. That is the new media. This large and mysterious creature has however continued to shape discourses, actions and responses globally. It is not going anywhere and for those invested in using the NMT as the narratives have shown, some ripple effects are visible.

5.8   Conclusion

This chapter has unpacked the complexity of relationships between different actors in the media space drawing from the field data. From those in the traditional, mass or mainstream media, to civil society actors, to citizen journalists/bloggers, it is a complex relationship. On the one hand, the progressive element of Kenyan society is evident in the way the new media or NMT is utilised. On the other hand, the new media has the potential to incite violence. As the chapter illuminates, several interviewees reflected on the dual roles of the new media technology for division and for cohesion, whereby the Kenyan media institutions were implicated in polarising the country in the 2007 elections and the Kenyan bloggers were equally seen as being complicit. Above all, beyond the challenges of division and disunity are the reiterations of the participation of all the diverse actors that are working towards peace in Kenya.

Two vital issues are at play in the upward move towards peace by Kenyans. On the one hand, the citizen journalists and Kenyan netizens, both in political and civil society, have continued to use the new media for nonviolent peace innovations and on the other hand, the hate speech regulation tends to focus on addressing inflammatory speech and ethnic discrimination. However, it is difficult to know whether the hate speech regulation has contributed to peace in Kenya or not. Perhaps the context of post-election violence that necessitated its emergence leaves out the question of state versus human protection. Some of those interviewed saw it as a necessary tool, while others perceived it as unnecessary censorship of people's freedom of expression. One can look at this development from the perspective of human rights debates, political violence debates or peace and justice debates. Whichever angle one takes, it is essential to note that post-conflict reconstruction of society needs to invest in rebuilding the society as well as the political institutions. What is more relevant to this process is including the people in their own affairs. If the hate speech mechanism is not serving Kenyans or they all agree it is violating their right to free expression, it needs to be looked at within a framework of national dialogue inclusive of all Kenyans.

Furthermore, if the state is not consolidating these efforts by allowing the people that elected them to participate in solving the root causes of political violence, more divisions will be sown. It was disclosed in the feedback from the research participants that the outcry from the people, especially those with visible voices on the Internet, is that the government's reluctance in addressing long-term socio-political and economic problems might send the country back to violence. Finally, as peace and conflict scholars have warned, lasting peace can only be achieved with people's inclusion in formulating their own way forward as either a political society or a civil society. As data presented in this chapter suggests, the use of the new media, with all its inherent possibilities and challenges, has become a people-centred online platform that contributes to building both negative and positive peace.

CHAPTER SIX: USHAHIDI IN THE KENYAN DIGITALISED SPACE – WHAT IS THE CONTRIBUTION?

6.1   Introduction

The fieldwork that explored Ushahidi's contribution to conflict in response to Kenya's 2008 PEV unveiled several significant findings, including Ushahidi's post-conflict participation in the context of witnessing, responding to and acting in the 2010 referendum and the 2013 general elections. The findings also present the difference between the Ushahidi platform and Ushahidi organisation and the metamorphosis from one to the other. Ushahidi's growth into an establishment has nuanced its citizen journalism and expanded its technology base to the extent of giving birth to other relevant sister organisations. The continued involvement of Ushahidi in several aspects of Kenya's political milieu provides the background necessary to understand how Ushahidi has contributed to conflict transformation in the Kenyan context. Also, the data presented in this chapter includes relevant stories from different online platforms that have continued to engage in post-conflict constructive change processes.

In this chapter, the important and relevant works from some of these platforms are presented alongside the contribution of the Ushahidi platform in addressing Kenya's 2008 PEV through to the 2013 general elections. These contributions developed in different ways that delineate constructive change processes as a key element of conflict transformation. The data in relation to Ushahidi and several other initiatives uncovered during the fieldwork point to the new media revolution that is taking place. What has been seen in the numerous endeavours of Kenya's netizens and citizen journalists are the bottom-up approaches of constructive change processes where citizens are constantly finding avenues to reduce violence, increase justice through direct interaction with social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. This chapter, therefore, embarks on telling the stories that represent the contributions of Ushahidi and other platforms during the 2008 PEV in the context of the local dynamic of a people-centred approach to peace processes.

6.2   Third Party Perceptions of Ushahidi's Contribution in the 2008 PEV

A few research participants could not pinpoint any direct contribution to peace processes from citizen journalism platforms such as Ushahidi since Kenya's 2008 PEV. For instance, Rasna Warah, a Kenyan-Asian writer and editor with two recent books titled *UNsilenced: Unmasking the United Nations' Culture of Cover-ups, Corruption and Impunity* and *War Crimes: How Warlords, Politicians, Foreign Government and Aid Agencies Conspired to Create a Failed State in Somalia*, sees no peace value in Ushahidi's work. Her stand on Ushahidi's activities and outcomes is tied to her broader understanding of peace processes as a journalist and former UN staff member. In both her books, Warah has revisited many of the UN peace operations that have resulted in colossal failure. This first-hand insight led her to dismiss the UN as a trusted institution to be entrusted with global peace. She emphatically distrusts the UN's big talk, less delivery with a Band-Aid wrapped around the truth. Similarly, she does not see Ushahidi as having a positive role in the 2008 PEV to peace processes. She expatiates:

> It has quite a lot of attraction, you know, everybody was talking about Ushahidi. It has a very smart young group of people behind it and personally I think what it did was a mapping exercise. Basically, they mapped the troubled spots in the country. But beyond that, I don't know what they did. So, once you've mapped the violence, then what? What will that mapping lead to? Does it mean that more security officers are sent to that area or does it mean the Red Cross is now going to send their ambulances there? I couldn't make the connection between the actual mapping of the problem and impact on the ground. For me it is a mapping exercise, which does not mean it is not useful but let's just call it mapping and not a peacebuilding tool because it is a technology, it is not a project. My criticism is that so now after you've mapped, where does the information go? Is it going to the government, is it going to the NGOs, is it going to the community themselves? I think it is asking for too much for a technology to be the solution to a conflict. Technology itself can only do so much.

While Warah's concerns are critical, academic evidence most especially from Bock (2012) and Banda (2010) and field evidence gathered from the research participants have shown that Ushahidi's mapping exercise assisted in humanitarian and security responses. Ushahidi's crisis mapping was used in deploying humanitarian assistance, as records have shown, to troubled spots used by the Red Cross and the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU). Also, when Warah later alludes to new media's creation of awareness among the people and effectiveness of getting the government's attention to

address problems through the sharing of evidenced images or video, she is inadvertently speaking to the missing context of localisation of peace processes. This is in the sense that, as Lederach (2003) and Galtung (1996; 2007) postulate, the inclusion of the citizens in peace processes can lead more quickly to sustainable peace. However, how this inclusion results in constructive change processes cannot be generalised. As many peace and conflict scholars have discerned, peace processes unfold differently in different contexts. Thus, the mechanisms are context specific. So, in the context of Kenya, awareness creation, amplification of marginalised voices, and democratisation of information through the new media provides a valid background for local peace processes to thrive.

John Githongo sees Ushahidi's efforts during the 2008 PEV differently. Although he credits Ushahidi's work, the human touch of knowing where people he cares about were became more urgent and Ushahidi seemed less capable to deal with it. He explains:

> I know about the Ushahidi platform and Ushahidi was showing where the problems are, which was important for the big picture. But you can imagine when the problems are happening, I don't want to know there is a problem in *Uasin Gishu*, I want to know about my aunty, who is on a farm in *Uasin Gishu*, how is she what is she saying, what has she done, how can I send her MPESA. So, people interact with these things differently.

Githongo's allusion to getting personal information about relatives in the hotbed of violence is relevant to the broader expectation of the new media covered in the previous chapter. Although Ushahidi did not provide information that Githongo would have found useful, the post-conflict impact of Ushahidi cannot be dismissed. First, the platform led those who had not become entrapped by the violence away from the hotbed and provided humanitarian responses to those in need of them. The text messages that Githongo saw as drivers of information during the 2008 PEV were at the same time the major sources of information for the Ushahidi team. Equally, Patrick Gathara admires Ushahidi's 2008 PEV contribution. He however believes that the commercialisation of the Ushahidi platform has jeopardised its people-focused role. He explains:

> I won't say I know too much about Ushahidi, the thing that I like about them was this ability to collate, to crowdsource reports about what was happening and
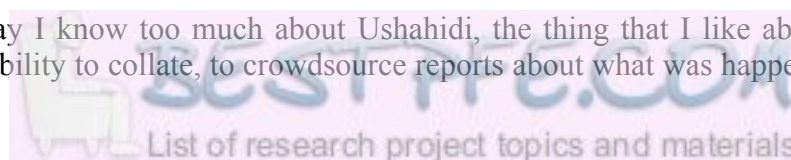
using that to direct responses. I think that was copied when you had the earthquake in Haiti, you see. So, NGOs and staff could quickly find out where those in need were without having to go through central lines, government system, you know, that people on the ground could express what they are seeing. I think it has been of limited utility since as far as Kenya is concerned and it has become sadly and unfortunately sort of this disasters mapping thing. So, you have to wait for disasters to happen for it to be useful. I thought the idea behind it was people on the ground you normally would not hear from being able to articulate their reality and that then mattering enough to drive a response. That you could crowdsource you know, reports about drainage, the state of Kenya drainage without waiting for the government to tell you this is what we've built and this is what we haven't built. Or for some guy to actually go and to some huge report about it that you could actually get, the reality from the people who are living it, who will explain what their problems are. I thought that was the real power of it. Sadly it became a commercial product. I mean I understand people have to make money. But as a model of how reporting can work and of how we can better understand our country not just in disaster time but all through, where we can give voices to ordinary people, I think it would have been brilliant if they had gone that far.

This valid feedback from Gathara shows that the work of peace that is commercialised has eroded the purpose upon which it is built. While Gathara's fears reflect the failure on the technocratic nature of many peace processes, it highlights the worry that the CSOs's agenda will be hijacked by donor organisations. Ushahidi has since registered as a not-for-profit technology organisation, which is close to home to Gathara's concerns. However, as elaborated upon in the subsequent sections, Ushahidi and some other platforms that secure funding from donor organisations are using it to advance their existing work. That is not to dismiss the nuances of donors' influences. Ushahidi's role of monitoring the Kenyan 2010 referendum and the 2013 general elections through Uchaguzi reinstate some continuity of local engagement. Ultimately, from the point of view of Gathara and Githongo, there is ground level work that needs to be done that Ushahidi has failed to notice.

Tony Mochama thinks "sensitised Kenyans" and not the average Kenyans are the users of the Ushahidi platform. He elaborates by pointing to the fact that educated middle-class Kenyans who seem more aware are using the platform, which leads to a critical question of who the prominent actors on the new media scene are. The information gathered indicates a robust middle class, meaning educated Kenyans. However, Kepha Ngito redefines educated Kenyans from limited to those in possession of mainstream

education to include those with literacy in any language. Ngito, who has no university education but is fluent in English language, is a Kibera hero. As presented in the subsequent sections, Ngito's online work, especially on Map Kibera, is of great value. Thus, the new media has provided unrestricted access to all spectrums of classes to have a voice, from the educated elites to the marginalised and educated and uneducated underclass. The staggering reality of Nairobi's urban slums in comparison to Nairobi city, which are interlaced, reflect the struggle of the political society who might be middle classist in terms of education but poor in status. Also, despite the urbanisation of this research in terms of data collection and Ushahidi's physical office situated in Nairobi, reality indicates that the urban citizen journalists also have strong links to the rural areas where information is collected.

Thus, it can be inferred from evidence gathered, therefore, that the new media is partially bridging the urban-rural divide in terms of collective socio-political struggles with divergent needs. This does not mean that a certain category of people might not still be accidentally disenfranchised from online participation if they are not literate. Without knowing how to read and write, the core grassroots citizens are disenfranchised. The "aunties" and "uncles" in the villages might not participate fully online because they are not literate in any language. Though several initiatives make the use of SMS simple for people of all backgrounds, to partake and blog and post your thoughts, concerns, aspirations and expectations on social media is but a dream. Yet, this has not prevented those who are not literate from verbalising their concerns with video recordings, podcasts, and taking pictures; they just need to have a smart phone and a little knowledge of how the Internet works. Thus, the new media enjoys a broader system of inclusivity. This means formal education is not necessarily a correct indicator of who occupies the online platform.

However, Zuckerman (2008) warns that people should be aware of the tendency of netizens towards homophily, which is to align with people of the same thoughts and beliefs to the exclusion of those with diverse thinking and lifestyles as an unintended exclusivity. Nevertheless, he also points to serendipity (happenings by chance) and xenophilia (affection for foreigners) that are driving inclusion. Beyond Zuckerman's

warnings is to acknowledge partly the shared suffering of the human race with the rising disasters and crises that are influencing empathy and collective actions. The Ushahidi initiatives for instance have been able to expand online activism and actions in this regard.

Reflecting on the contribution of Ushahidi in responding to the 2008 PEV, Kui Kihoro Mackay views the amplification of people's voices to draw attention to the atrocities as distinctive. To her, Ushahidi was very organic, participatory and grassroots in its emergence and operation in the 2008 PEV, turning the state of uncertainty into an information crowdsourcing platform. Having Ushahidi provide the opportunity through its crisis mapping to investigate further into the atrocities is another significant contribution of the platform in responding to the 2008 PEV. The meaningful step of Ushahidi's emergence automatically shifted the focus of the negative use of the NMT to a solution-oriented one, according to Mackay. Daudi Were and Juliana Rotich state that because of the crisis mapping, help was deployed, including security agencies sent to the necessary areas. Boniface Mwangi believes however that Ushahidi is doing more ground-breaking work outside than in the country where its seed was planted. He expands on this by stating that "It was a very innovative pioneer idea, and it played a role as well but I think Ushahidi has become more effective post-Kenyan election violence; it has been used in other countries from Syria to Haiti that is more effective. I think in Kenya it was like the testing ground, which has now grown into a big octopus over time."

The above concern has only reflected one aspect of Ushahidi; online spread. It is no less useful at home with several other initiatives such as Uwiano, Uchaguzi and Umati. In the subsequent sections of this chapter, more light will be shed on some of these initiatives and their relevance in Kenya's political clime. It is equally noted that the vast online space is making it a bit difficult for people to be abreast of all Ushahidi's activities.

Inversely, Yvonne Owuor highlights Ushahidi's response to the 2008 PEV as a tremendous contribution in the sense that it has now transformed the way people

manage crises in the world. Also, Ushahidi was underestimated in how it would disrupt the way society deals with emergencies with their open-source software. For example, according to Daudi Were, the revolutionary engagement of Ushahidi during the 2008 PEV brought global technology to Kenya, to learn more about the deployment of open-source software. Where the Kenyan media failed to revolutionise information and reporting in 2008, Ushahidi succeeded. Thus, Ushahidi has added value to peace processes in documenting evidence of violence, amplifying the unheard voices, and in making open-source software available to other countries to document their issues for solution oriented actions. Spoilers and troublemakers according to Bock (2012) can create pandemonium online with the manipulative way they might choose to engage with the Ushahidi open-source software; however, the field data reveals no problem of the sort beyond the scholarly speculative trepidation of Bock.

Furthermore, the overall concern of Peter Mwamachi synchronises with the study's central focus, which is on the value that Kenyan citizen journalists are adding to peace processes. He dissects the idea of the new media as transformational and revolutionary by itself and asserts that it is the way people are engaging with it. Mwamachi's reflection serves as the sounding board for the next section of this chapter, which explores Ushahidi's evaluation of its own interventions. Peter Mwamachi challenges the notion of the new media's peace value as he asks:

> For me in my personal capacity what I would say, the issue is not about having these platforms and getting this media whatever. The question is what is their value addition to a peaceful society? What is it that they are contributing to? Are they contributing to a peaceful coexistence or are they actually a source of conflict? Because again when you deal with early warning it is very sensitive. So, if you unleashed information out there, which is unverified, you find there is a possibility you have created some confusion and conflict. So, for me it is all about their value addition and what their objective is.

6.3   Ushahidi's Self-Evaluation of Impact during the 2008 PEV

When Ushahidi emerged out of the concern of a few Kenyan bloggers "to do something" about the violence ravaging Kenya in 2008, it stood out among the polarising voices on the Internet. Muthoni Wanyeki, Regional Director of Amnesty

International East Africa, illustrates the positive efforts of Ushahidi as she highlights the two trends of Kenyan netizens during the 2008 PEV. She calls the first one the panicky diaspora, with distorted interpretations of occurrences, and the citizens that leaned towards a particular political orientation with a disruptive agenda. These were the polarised Kenyans who are 'ethnicised' in orientation, while the second trend consists of the progressive voices that were out to help fellow Kenyans and make a difference through humanitarian response and reflective thoughts on why the violent conflict was raging. Ushahidi, she says, was part of the second group.

Ushahidi is unique due to the fact that five of its key members were already involved with election monitoring and socio-political events documentation via their blogs, namely mentalacrobatics.com, kenyanpundit.com, whiteafrican.com, afromusing.com, julia.na, mashada.co). These bloggers were already active and the call by Ory Okolloh joined their efforts into one solid platform. Even though it was established that the strong Kenyan CSOs, through the traditional approach of face-to-face meetings, provided a strong domestic base that pressurised the government to dialogue in the 2008 PEV and succeeded in their efforts by bringing the Kofi Annan team to mediate, there were other gaps that the Ushahidi platform filled. The first important gap was being there for the violent-ridden community in a way no expert or influential NGOs could be, by relating with the reality of the people and presenting their stories in the context in which they were happening. Thus, Ushahidi has changed peace narratives and efforts in Kenya since 2008 in a couple of ways, as Daudi Were illustrates:

> One-way is, we have helped broadened the definition of who can be considered an expert. So, if conflict breaks out in the South Rift of Kenya or the North Rift of Kenya or if conflict breaks out in Burundi, traditionally the experts are the people with PhDs in peace studies or people who are working for larger NGOs. And yes, they are experts and that expertise you get through learning. But there are also the expertise you get through the experience of being a member of that community or being a part of that community. Most of our communities have in-built peace mechanisms that are sometimes overlooked by the other kind of experts. So what Ushahidi has done is found a way to use the 21st century technology to tap into centuries-old traditions around issues such as peace and allow an individual voice to be able to communicate that expertise to the peace process in a way that can have a disproportionately port of impact. The second way is just by increasing the number of ways so that people can participate in peace conversations, leveraging the power of technology for peace process.

Then the third thing that Ushahidi specifically does is focus attention on places where there may not be a lot of attention. Who else is building technology to monitor elections in Sudan? Who else is building technology for human rights defenders in Burundi? Who else is building technology for peace advisers in Central African Republic?

The Ushahidi platform catered for the need for building technology that is central to elevating human conditions within a local context which other kinds of experts might have missed or ignored. Where violent conflict was brewing, not only did the people find new media useful, but they also used it in a way that counted. Among the five pioneers of Ushahidi, only two were from the social sciences and the law; the remaining three worked in the field of technology. These five well-known bloggers in Kenya turned their blogging and technology experiences into blending citizen journalism with high-tech geospatial information, promptly democratising evidence and amplifying unheard and ignored voices. David Kobia shares his experience on this note:

I think what made the Ushahidi possible in 2008 was that technology has become more accessible (e.g. Google API map Mashup, text messaging and Twitter). It is not that Ushahidi did anything complicated. It is just the fact that we were one of the first groups of people to put all these things together in one platform and turn it into a way for the citizens to speak out, to kind of increase transparency and democratise information.

The second important role of Ushahidi was in demobilising the monopolisation of information and dispelling misconceptions about the magnitude of the conflict. Erik Hersman, the only Caucasian on the team, a senior TED fellow, and a co-founder of the Ushahidi platform who grew up both in Kenya and Sudan, is heavily invested in a place he calls home. He sees the Ushahidi's role as revolutionary in the age of the ubiquitous NMT. Not only was Ushahidi's role during the 2008 PEV revolutionary, but also, it is disruptive to the monopolisers of information and humanitarian interventions. He asserts: "If there was anything that the 2008 usage of Ushahidi in Kenya represented, it was this understanding that there is a new way to handle information around crisis and disasters that hasn't been done before."

The Ushahidi platform, according to Hersman, was able to dispel the misconception that all of Kenya was burning down and pinpoint the actual hotspots of violence. Ushahidi was also seen as a disruptive force to the "humanitarian industrial complex". The

documentation of evidence by Ushahidi enhanced the job of some organisations seeking help for the victims of the PEV. In the eventual email reply by the Executive Director of the Independent Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU), Peter Kiama, he confirmed using the Ushahidi crowdsourced maps in his work. IMLU (a non-profit organisation) is steadfast in securing 'a just world free of torture, violence and discrimination', most especially for the victimised members of the Republic. After the 2008 PEV, in a bid to seek justice, medical and psychosocial rehabilitations for the victims of the violence, Kiama affirms that the IMLU found the Ushahidi mapping useful for his organisation's work. Later on, according to Hersman, Ushahidi managed to surpass the UN humanitarian assistance/actions in the Haiti earthquake of 2010. The open-source crowdsourcing that took Ushahidi's team two hours to set up, giving the Red Cross and other humanitarian or non-governmental organisations the opportunity to intervene at a swift speed, took the UN three days to achieve. The Ushahidi platform did two critical things, reiterating Hersman's position in changing the power-dominant narratives, (a) by changing the information flow, and (b) by changing the humanitarian face in a way that cannot be stopped or toppled.

Juliana Rotich, who later became the Executive Director of Ushahidi, spells out why she felt keenly connected to the idea of Ushahidi and why she participated in it wholeheartedly. She elucidates on why her passion for Ushahidi was so great:

> The answers are multifaceted, looking back; it is just this idea that in a small way, I was trying to hold on to the idea of Kenya being the Kenya that I know. Being the multi-ethnic permissive space that it was. You know, and I was thinking of a positive view of our country and I didn't want to let go and degenerate to some polarisation, ethnicisation, you know that was dirty to me and I didn't want any part of that. And I wanted to work with people who saw things differently. We organised food drops, with other tech entrepreneurs, one of them is now working for BRCK, his name Segeni Ng'ethe. He started Mama Mikes [Mama Mikes is a Kenya Gifting service that helps Africans living in the diaspora to send remittances back home in the form of gifts]. We took donations from around the world, we bought supplies and took them to refugees who were out in Jamhuri Stadium and that gave me hope that we could emerge out of this dark period. So, I wanted to be part of the light, not of the darkness, you know to simplify. So, the why is, I don't want to let go of the idea that we can be better and technology and the Internet afforded me that opportunity and it afforded me connections and links to other people...

From her home in Eldoret where Rotich had been trapped while she was unable to catch her flight back to Chicago where she worked as a data analyst, she crowdsourced for Ushahidi. Rotich had crowdsourced information for the mashup maps and fed it to the Ushahidi team in Nairobi. Right from her Eldoret home, with the difficulty of moving around and getting online, which was expensive, Rotich was able to collate information and share it with Ushahidi and correspondingly report on her blog. Rotich reported the conflict from Eldoret as well as handled data entry into the Ushahidi platform, including verification of information that was coming in from the citizens, and publicised the gathered reports. Information gathered was labelled for easy identification through title, location, date and description. The location tagging was part of how the team was able to work with several organisations, especially Media Focus for Africa, the Red Cross and IMLU. The location tag indicated the map dot of the flash point of violence, which facilitates quick deployment of assistance. Irungu Houghton was concerned that crisis mapping could have the unintended consequence of furthering victimisation of Kenyans by security personnel who might still want to wreak havoc. It was however proved that this never occurred. As an example of another success story, Rotich states that Media Focus Africa used the Ushahidi mapping to identify and locate where peace heroes were to celebrate their efforts.

Furthermore, various criticisms have resounded around verification of information, which has been categorised as the shortcomings of citizen journalism, a notion that Rotich corrected. Despite the difficulty of collating and transferring gathered information to a useful mashup bunch, Ushahidi engaged on some level of verification. Rotich was carrying out the verification exercise by confirming information from those on the ground as much as she could in the little time available to her as the violence transpired. Essentially, Ushahidi classified the crowdsourced reports as 'verified' and 'unverified' on the webpage so as not to confuse the public about the authenticity of the information coming from the platform in 2008. More so, the local dynamic of Ushahidi's effort is such that people who are affected by the disorder are the sources that tapped into the Ushahidi platform. Hersman explains that "the Ushahidi platform was more about actually gathering all that information that was coming from the people, from their blogs, from text messages, from emails, and even from news guys who could

not report or were not allowed to send their reports in. That was a way for us to centralise it and virtualise it."

The third significant role of Ushahidi was in creating a platform that amassed vast amounts of information about the conflict and mashed it up into a readable map that helped the banned media to keep updated, and also saved it for posterity. David Kobia could not believe that the little effort by the Ushahidi team would become so relevant in the aftermath of the 2008 PEV. He speaks to the achievement of Ushahidi by reflecting on what the platform was able to do.

> Initially, I didn't think Ushahidi would have that big an impact. I was happy we made something and we could record this information but it was quite shocking to see how much impact it had. Almost immediately we were contacted by guys in South Africa, saying the needed a way to record xenophobic violence that was breaking out. So, what did we achieve? I felt like we went far, above and beyond what we had hoped to do. We actually created a platform that we shared with other people that allow them to create similar communities. We made it easy for people to do what we did. They multiplied that effort. And on 2008 PEV, the immediate impact was having this data informing the Kenyan media and the world what was really going on and how bad the situation was at the time. Again Ushahidi had set out to have this information recorded for posterity, so there was a reference point. So obviously, after the dust had settled, people have a mechanism, a way of looking back to timeline event: a way to perform a post-mortem. Not just policy makers but the average person had finally had a way of looking into how things had played out and why they happened.

Although Kobia could not provide concrete evidence that Kenyan policy makers utilised the Ushahidi maps, anecdotal evidence suggest so. Moreover, Rotich sees Ushahidi serving as the fifth estate when the fourth estate (the mass media) fell through the crack of bias and compromise. Thus Rotich sees Ushahidi as the fifth estate that carried out online reporting, documentation, coordination and information finding from the public. In the academic circle, a few scholars such Cooper (2006) and Dutton (2009) have referred to the online community that has been audacious in holding the first to the fourth estates accountable as the fifth estate. According to these scholars, the netizens have dismantled the conventional structures of who can report, who can critique, who have evidence to bear and who can transform the socio-political landscape. Thus Rotich considers Ushahidi an informational and revolutionary bridge that served the local and international audience during the 2008 PEV. She expounds:

Tools like Ushahidi showed that there is this possibility of having a bridge, because with something that is based on the Internet, people locally and people internationally can still access the same data. Or at the very least act as an information platform for anybody who wants information about a specific event, a specific location and then more so to get data about where are the flashpoints what is going on where in an almost near real-time basis. At first, we didn't think it was a novel idea but one of our friends; Ethan Zuckerman who at the time was a researcher at Berkman Centre in Harvard, I had known him through Global Voices said 'look, you people are doing something unique, keep at it'. And February of 2008 he invited us—Erik and I made it to Istanbul for a conference on digital activism—and we presented our case on what we were able to do in Kenya.

Significantly, Ushahidi began to build a reputation at home and abroad on the effect of the new media revolution. Since the 2008 PEV, Ushahidi has not stopped to think outside the box of Internet revolution for political and governance transformation. While in the heartland of Kenya, Rotich reflects on why Ushahidi's intervention was relevant:

Information flow could change, and that it is no longer just about unidirectional mode of information flow, where information flows from quote and unquote traditional media all the way down to you as a consumer. That you as a person, as a citizen on the ground can also participate in raising your voice and saying this is what I am seeing and for that information to be available in a platform and can inform someone else. So, I think the significance is that it changed or at least it showed that information flow can change from bottom-up, it doesn't always have to be one directional, it can be bi-directional.

With the advent of the new media, an incomparable channel of documentation was created and the power of public participation was increased. This culminates in diversity of voices and experiences, which reduces the pitfall of one narrative that may obscure other voices. New media in the hands of Ushahidi helped present a fuller picture of occurrences and events as were reported. These reports from the citizens climaxed into aggregated maps by the Ushahidi platform. Thus, the Internet has changed the unidirectional mode of information to bi/multi-direction switch.

The data reflects a multiplication of roles and efforts of Ushahidi platform both in and outside of Kenya. Ushahidi's three strongest institutional participations within the
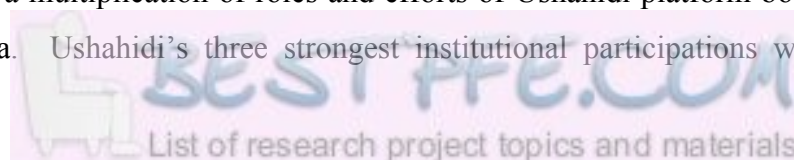
Kenya political landscape were during the 2008 PEV, the 2010 Constitution referendum and the 2013 elections. Since 2008 up to 2013, the Ushahidi platform has gone ahead to either initiate or participate in projects that have a transformational value. One of these collaborative efforts, Umati, the hate-speech monitoring project, was mentioned in the previous chapter. Another project, Making All Voices Count; a distinguished global initiative added to the contribution of Ushahidi in amplifying the voices of the people in public services. The project aimed at creating open and effective participatory governance through the launching of a "Global Innovation Competition" to support innovations that would improve governments' accountability and responsiveness to the citizens. The winners of the competition in 2013 and 2014 include a South African and Indonesian initiative aimed at using SMS services to improve students' civic engagement and eradicate maternal mortality. The Ushahidi team considers this initiative radical and the platform is planning to extend this project to healthcare and public utilities services. Ushahidi partnered with the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex and Hivos International in this four years' innovation worth 55 million dollars in grant money.

Also, in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation, Ushahidi has begun a Resilience Network Initiative to support and train community-based organisations in effectively engaging with their local government using the open-source software. Additionally, Ushahidi has ventured into an ecosystem project designed to cater for the planet. One of the projects launched in this regard is called Vital Sign, aiming at collecting large amounts of data and designing a monitoring system that assists the agricultural decision-makers to protect the ecosystem and increase food production. Among all Ushahidi's innovations, the Uwiano mechanism and the Uchaguzi project deserve to be elaborated upon because they are home-based endeavours.

6.3.1   Ushahidi in the Centre of the Uwiano Early Warning Consortium

What came out of the 2008 PEV, from disjointed efforts of stakeholders, i.e. civil society, government organisations and citizen journalists' platforms, was the need to synergize conflict prevention efforts. Thus, a multi-stakeholder platform was birthed for a consortium that responds to imminent conflict through an early warning mechanism.

This mechanism was formed in 2009 and was referred to as Uwiano. Funded by the UNDP, the platform includes the Ushahidi platform, National Cohesion and Integration Committee (NCIC), National Steering Committee (NSE) on conflict management and peacebuilding, Independent Electoral and Boundaries Committee (IEBC) and PeaceNet.

The information collected from Daudi Were, Sellah Kingoro, Peter Mwamachi and Absalom Shalakha elaborated on the Uwiano strategy. Uwiano, they echoed, synergizes stakeholders working on conflict-related programmes so that it can be better coordinated. From 2010 to date, the Uwiano platform has been effectively used for conflict resolution, human security, advocacy, early warning and early response mechanisms. Through the locals, the Uwiano platform is able to facilitate information gathering before there is an uncontrollable outbreak of conflict in Kenya's 47 counties, a feat the consortium intends to replicate during the 2017 elections to avoid another unparalleled bloodbath in the presidential elections involving Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, who is contesting the presidential seat for the third time. At the grassroots level, the Uwiano platform collaborates with local organisations, as well as individuals, whose roles are dubbed "peace actors". The peace actors consist of the community members (i.e. the district committee members, the police, local NGOs and inter-religion councils) of each county where the consortium operates. Data collection as well as real-time reportage of brewing disputes or violent conflict is part of the "peace actors" mandates. PeaceNet, in which the Ushahidi open-source software is used, mitigates unrest when it is reported to the online alert system through the organisation's peace actors. This method assists in notifying the police and dispatches a swift response.

Though the Uwiano platform became fully operational two years after the PEV, it is still a timely early warning initiative that stands to mitigate conflict before it erupts into violence. Bock (2012:9) says that "…early warning and early response are important in curtailing a deterioration of a peace process already set in motion", which assigned some significance to the Uwiano consortium in which Ushahidi is involved. Within this platform are multi-levels of stakeholders from government, NGOs, international organisations and the citizen journalism platform. Within PeaceNet, an early warning system has been established since 2006 where citizens send in their concerns via SMS.

The consortium was solidified with the spread of NMT with a plethora of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp to gather conflict reports. The Uwiano platform ensures that the crowdsourced conflict reporting attracts immediate responses that can quell the unrest. Concretely, the multi-agent peace architecture formulated to coordinate peacebuilding and conflict management efforts of several organisations and individuals has tapped significantly into the power of the new media.

Peter Mwamachi, a peace practitioner with the National Steering Committee (NSE) on Peace Building and Conflict Management, finds the Uwiano platform the answer to disruptive and unprecedented violence. NSE is a governmental organisation existing since 2001 to synergize with policy makers and peace builders to form a cohesive and well-coordinated multiagency consortium. NSE work includes conflict analysis and an early warning system, national peace coordination, media and communication and capacity building and training. NSE credits its commitment as robustly inter-state – not limited to governmental and non-governmental stakeholders but also with a regional reach. Thus, NSE taps into and contributes to CEWARN of IGAD (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development) continuum where Kenya is a member state. The NSE contribution to CEWARN is called Sewero. NSE, in Partnership with NCIC, PeaceNet, Ushahidi and a few other organisations have made the Uwiano platform a vital digital revolutionary joint initiative to prevent and address conflicts before they turn violent. The UNDP only serves as a development partner and a resource mobiliser for the Uwiano mechanism; the operationalization of the platform is locally coordinated. This strategic partnership fosters more collaborative efforts to prevent further violent conflict and promote peace within Kenya.

Mwamachi considers information gathering and sharing one of the key values that citizen journalists are adding to peace processes in Kenya, especially with the Ushahidi open-source software in use in the consortium. He further states that local peace processes have become enhanced through NMT. From the outset, Mwamachi affirms, the NSE formulation had at the epicentre of its objective to work with civil society and multilevel stakeholders through "a viable institutional policy framework to mobilise, coordinate and consolidate" various peacebuilding and conflict management initiatives

into one cohesive and productive consortium. Thus, embracing the NMT platform is one of the necessary and progressive ways in which NSE is carrying out its activities.

The Uwiano mechanism, according to Mwamachi, has expanded since 2010 to include an election-monitoring exercise. The consortium has also attracted more partnership with IEBC, UN Women, Interreligious Council of Kenya and the Kenyan Private Sector Alliance (KPSA). The Ushahidi open-source software and CEWARN modalities are both incorporated in how the Uwiano project is run, although in 2013 the efforts to bring several NGOs to combine early warning efforts under the Uwiano mechanism to be carried out by the Ushahidi platform did not pan out. Mwamachi sees the failure to unify as a result of the NGOs' disorganisation and prior commitment to their funding organisations. Nonetheless, the Uwiano mechanism still has more to give with more organisations on board. NSE also considers Sisi Ni Amani's (more on this platform in the subsequent sections) work relevant in peace mapping and has likewise worked with this platform.

Sellah Kingoro, on why NCIC is a member of the Uwiano consortium, considers the mechanism "a high-level interface and a perfect way of responding to conflict real-time". She evaluates Uwiano as the most effective collaboration used optimally in the 2013 elections to respond swiftly to conflict, i.e. the integration of information coming in from the public and the response coming from the government apparatus as unparalleled. The reports and deployments were both well coordinated in some counties in 2013. Thus, come 2017, a plan is underway to run Uwiano to generate maximum early warning efforts, and the Uchaguzi project as an effective election monitoring exercise.

6.3.2 Uchaguzi: Election Mapping and Reporting

In the 2013 general elections, Ushahidi had built up enough credibility to have more public engagement, thus creating Uchaguzi. The Uchaguzi platform was initiated to monitor the 2013 election for transparency, fairness and tranquillity. The members of the public used the platform to report on voting and any suspicious activities. This was in response to the 2007 elections and the violence that occurred. Therefore, no chances

were taken, especially where accurate and timely information could save the day. As reported on the Uchaguzi platform, according to Daudi Were, of the 4964 reports published on the Ushahidi website during deployment, 2699 were swiftly verified. Ushahidi has continued to improve its performance regarding verification and real information to the public. This exercise was Ushahidi's way of contributing further to Kenya's political transformation by giving an accurate account of what was witnessed during the subsequent elections that succeeded the turbulent 2007 voting. Ushahidi collaborated with the Hivos Foundation, the Constitution & Reform Education Consortium (CRECO), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and SODNET on the 2013 Uchaguzi initiative.

The Ushahidi platform's maturity showed in the 2013 general election. With many partners and volunteers and effective preparation, multilevel coordination propelled information to be relayed in time to the IEBC and for police deployment to be coordinated speedily. On the outcome of Ushahidi's contribution in 2008 and 2013, Juliana Rotich states that the strategies and activities of Ushahidi platform "enabled information flow that led to action on emerging issues on the ground." Some of Ushahidi's global electoral monitoring activities have included Nigeria and the USA elections. Recently, Ushahidi is globally boasting of 120,000 deployments of their software with 25 million people whom their platform has reached in critical situations.

6.4   Ushahidi Platform and Organisation

Ushahidi has since become a technology organisation, blurring the line between citizen journalism and technology. The Ushahidi platform was the genesis of Ushahidi the organisation. According to Juliana Rotich, the Ushahidi platform was the fifth estate in the 2008 PEV, with the temporary lack of live broadcasts due to the government ban. Ushahidi was able to gather and share information related to the conflict, bringing about bidirectional change in information flow whereby citizens were participating in their own reality. Therefore, Ushahidi decided to consolidate the 2008 PEV efforts into something bigger. The Ushahidi citizen journalism platform has morphed into a human-centred new media technology provider distributing its own open-source software

products for crisis and disaster mapping. The Ushahidi organisation that was born out of the sweat of the Ushahidi platform (the crowdsourcing programme) assists other organisations in using the open-source software for crisis and disaster mapping. The organisation goes further to provide electoral monitoring services to different countries within and outside the global North and South. According to Rotich, the Ushahidi organisation serves as a catalytic anchored organisation to the start-up of other initiatives of its members such as the iHub, Gearbox and BRCK. She says:

> Ushahidi was the anchor organisation that led to the setting up of iHub, and then that led to the spinout of BRCK, Ushahidi supported even GearBox. So Ushahidi acted as a catalytic organisation that led to all of these other companies and initiatives. So, you could say Ushahidi is the core, like the anchor organisation that led to the creation of all these other things.

Rotich sees the work of the Ushahidi platform and organisation as vital in bridging the information gap, representing the voices of the people and providing digital sources for crisis and disaster mapping and management. According to Rotich, both human capital and technology are vital for transformation and Ushahidi has decided to invest in human capital. Rotich defines Ushahidi the platform as the product, the open-source software, free and downloadable, while the Ushahidi organisation is the legal entity, the business model with the board of directors. iHub, GearBox and BRCK are tied in with expanding Ushahidi's activities. Ushahidi is the scaffolding for other organisations and people to build their solutions. With Rotich's intense passion to restore the multicultural and multi-ethnic glory of the Kenyan community, she sees Ushahidi and its sister organisations as the bridging avenues. Therefore, Ushahidi and its spin-off organisations do not only consider these avenues to transform crises and disasters, but also to create job opportunities for the Kenyan youth.

Erik Hersman co-leads two of the spin-off organisations from Ushahidi, namely iHub and BRCK. Erik Hersman is deeply invested in Kenya in terms of technological development. First, he co-founded iHub, a technology innovation community that provides an open space for technologists, innovators, and hackers, in 2010. Second, in 2013 he co-founded BRCK, a technology innovation for affordable, rugged, made-for-Africa backup Internet modems and generators, especially for the grassroots, that also

provides digital education for young students with Kio Kit. These are the two spin-off organisations from Ushahidi aiming to embark on more benevolent services for the Kenyan community. On the one hand, iHub exists to accelerate Kenya's technology community in a way that enhances its growth by supporting start-ups, surfacing information and connecting people. One of the key programmes co-facilitated by iHub in 2010 is the Umati protect to monitor hate speech among Kenyans. On the other hand, BRCK raised $172,000 through crowdsourcing upon its launch in 2013 (Aglionby 2015) to deploy technology education and extend Internet connectivity with portable modems/generators in marginalised places in Kenya. Several of the Ushahidi innovations, such as iHub and BRCK, have been awarded financial support by the MacArthur Foundation and the Omidyar Network.

The Ushahidi founders are being acknowledged for their services to humanity. For instance, the president of Kenya, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, recognised Juliana Rotich in 2016 as one of the Kenya Heroes on technology innovation on Mashujaa Day (Heroes' day, an annual national celebration that takes place on October 20th). Also, on HapaKenya online news, Vanessa Mwangi (2017) presented the list of 19 inspirational Kenyan women and Juliana Rotich and Ory Okolloh, both co-founders of Ushahidi, made #4 and #7. Lastly, at the global entrepreneurship summit in 2015, former United States president Barack Obama acknowledged Ushahidi's efforts in monitoring elections in Panama and Zambia.

6.5   Beyond Ushahidi: Other Influencing Platforms

The lessons learnt from the 2008 PEV on division, partisan ethno-nationalist stands, and hate speech instigation has led to various projects among the citizens of Kenya to prevent recurrence of violence in the future. The following initiatives are presented during the interview processes on the several ways in which the Kenyan communities are utilising new media to effect change. By and large, some of these initiatives are to amplify the voices of the marginalised and/or promote inter-communal peace. Some efforts rest upon the pillars of educating society towards progressive mind-sets. These non-state actors who are operating in this arena are partly a political society, partly a

civil society or a consortium of both or with the hybridisation of the government, as in the case of Uwiano.

6.5.1 Map Kibera and the Kibera Networks

One of the notorious slums in Nairobi is Kibera. It has been reported for its unprecedented crimes rate, unemployment, and extreme poverty. It has been said that Kibera, a slum in the midst the cosmopolitan essence of Nairobi, houses over 1 million Kenyans. However, citizen journalist Kepha Ngito, who grew up in Kibera, started a mapping project called Map Kibera to ascertain the real number of people residing in Kibera. He came up with 600,000. The information that Kibera was over-populated had led to the government under-focusing on infrastructural development and job opportunities for the people of Kibera. With Map Kibera, Kepha Ngito brought to the fore the real population figure that could assist in facilitating the necessary amenities and employment opportunities for the Kibera populace. Map Kibera is a creative digital tool to represent the voices of the marginalised community of Kibera. This initiative that started in 2007 and was launched in 2009 has extended to other slums such as Mathare and Mukuru in Kenya for creative mapping for better representation of these communities to the government. The Ushahidi platform open-source software was used in extending the work of Ngito and his team.

Though during the 2008 PEV, according to Ngito, the use of NMT was not as widespread, especially in Kibera or in evenly distributing his findings within Kenya, he continued relentlessly. Ngito's work was recognised and in 2008 he was invited by Citizen TV to share his views about why the youth of Kenya were angry. He provided the information he gathered about the pervasive state of inequality and marginalisation bequeathed on the youth. Since then, the new media has become a channel of participation for the youth of Kenya with Kibera's population in the mix. The uncontrolled youth bulge has not been left unattended and the once unskilled youth now have training on the use of the Internet for entrepreneurship.

Ngito identifies the reason why many Kenyan youth are angry as the innate need to be recognised as a part of the development. For instance, the unemployed and unskilled

youth who were angry and volatile are easily manipulated by the politicians due to the lack of opportunity to be viewed as respectable members of their community. The loss of their pride with no opportunity, no education and no incentive to propel their ambition towards a greater height is becoming an inducement of rebellion. But the change that the new media has brought forth is the opportunity to participate, make your voice heard and create meaning out of a once meaningless situation. The digital platforms have therefore facilitated recognition of the marginalised society and made visible their plights as well as restored their dignity through amplification of their own stories. For example, the Kibera youth who are artists and singers often move out of the neighbourhood once they are known. But with the 21st century new media, some are willing to stay in the same community in which they grew up because of a few changes that are taking place. To some extent, the 2008 PEV and Internet revolution has facilitated some level of accountability and transparency among the political leaders because the youth are talking on social media.

Kibera, which stands as a scar in the conscience of Kenyan leaders with its glaring inequality, is no longer a negligible place as a result of the participation of the youth through the new media to speak to their reality. So, the advent of the new media has amplified the voices of the youth through its different platforms. Nevertheless, the online engagements, according to Ngito, accounts for 30 per cent of innovations while the remaining 70 per cent are offline. The significance of these 30 per cent online actions is that the government cannot pretend not to hear and not to care. Despite a lot of work that is still pending in achieving the desired socio-political and economic development in Kenya, the voices of the youth on social media and the new media platform have caused an explosion that is rocking Kenya. Since the 2008 PEV and with the Map Kibera project on the government's tail, a few developments have occurred in terms of the provision of amenities such as water and electricity in Kibera.

Aside from Map Kibera, Ngito also runs Kibera News Network and Voice of Kibera (an online radio station) to inform the community about current affairs and for the community to participate in their own reality. Though funding to continue effective functioning of these platforms has recently dried up, some youth who have been trained

in news reporting are still involved in certain activities of these platforms. Ngito explains his personal reasons for using the digital platforms as a citizen journalist:

> I grew up in a slum, Kibera, and it is one of the most unique places in terms of demographics, in terms of economics. Of course, slum means it's poverty. It is a quite marginalised section of the country; there is also concentration of poor people. It is considered the largest slum in Africa. I don't know if it is true…but there are a lot of people there. As a child, I wanted to know why it is a slum. Is it an act of God or an act of man? It made me curious, and why is everyone just praying about it, why is my father praying and saying we have to pray harder and not to question things. So, the more I study the more I realised it was man made and not an act of God. So, I began to ask what could work and what can be done differently; there are a lot of NGOs but no so much happening. What is not right? A lot of stories have been told by others not from within, people are not telling their own story; people are spoken about, people are decided for, project are designed by other people for people in Kibera and other slums but not with them in the planning, they don't listen to their side of the story. Of course, when projects are designed like that, they do not work successfully. So, my first question is, could it be because the story of these people have not been heard that things are not working and could it also be that there is a conspiracy to keep them silent or to ignore when they speak or to push down their ambitions and desires?

These troubling questions led to Ngito's decision to tell his people's stories and to let them give their first-hand account to the world using the new media to share their experiences. He reckoned that it was time that the mainstream media as the sole means of communication in Kibera that is vested in telling only sensationalised stories of death, violence and poverty be countered with the real human conditions in the slum. Thus, what propels Ngito further is the need to present the holistic picture of Kibera and not only from the poverty-stricken rhetoric that has been the usual representation of his community in the media. He sees the people of Kibera as citizens with integrity, hope, beauty, perseverance, resilience and humanity and feels strongly that those courageous stories should be shared too. Ngito did not rest there; he took his online engagement further to question government policies around basic amenities and why Kibera is not benefiting from these.

> There also, we took a policy and political dimension when we now wanted to ask vital questions about development: Why is it that there is no public school in a population of almost 600,000 people, why is it that there is no water or security? What is informing this planning is that they do not have statistics? Is it
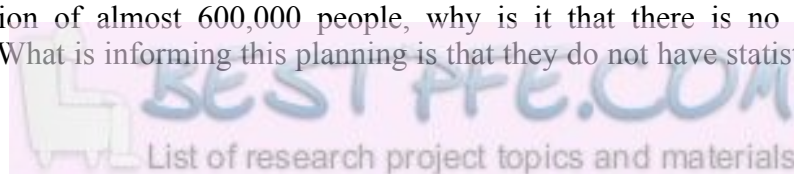
that they do not have the numbers? We also want to provide this support to the decision makers, here are the numbers, here are the statistics, here are the demographics, and here is the scientific map of this place. It is not wilderness, it is organised, can be developed like this. So, I also did a map of Kibera, the first one. It was initially a blank spot on the Kenya map; it was actually depicted as a forest, which I thought was outrageous, how can you depict a population of close to 600,000 people as a forest on the map? I thought that was clueless.

In order to bring the plight of Kibera forward in a way that all the missing information about this community is combined and presented, Ngito saw the need to map his community. He concludes:

So, the Kibera mapping was the first act of protest that we are tired and we want to affirm that these are people first of all. Then we want to affirm that they are countable, they are quantifiable, and their needs can be quantified and prioritised. You don't have an excuse not to provide services for them. We got an opportunity through ICT and the latest digital innovation to synchronise the map and citizen journalism aspect, so that when people told their stories, you could virtually see where they are speaking from. When there was an incident, you could actually locate where the incident was happening. So we realise this was a very powerful tool. It opened up the area; it created a lot of transparency and visibility and it also promoted a lot of community confidence and solidarity, which was really successful. So the story begins from a point of growing up there and asking myself why are we stuck, why is it like this, can things be different and can we start telling our own stories from that level?

This has culminated into a three-in-one project led by Ngito (with the idea that started in 2007 but expanded in 2009); they are Map Kibera, Voice of Kibera and Kibera News Network. The Kibera News Network is an e-TV YouTube platform that gave the people of Kibera who could not access the "luxurious" Internet a platform for airing their concerns. This helps in cutting back the over-reliance on the mainstream media in taking an undue lead in sensationalising the Kibera stories.

6.5.2   Bunge La Mwananchi: The People's Parliament and The New Media

Happy Olal, another research participant who is a grassroots activist in the informal Nairobi settlements such as Kawangware, Kythira, Dandora, Mathare, Kangemi, and Korogocho, has been utilising the new media for advocacy on provision of services, eradication of gender-based violence and protection of human rights, especially from police brutality. The government's neglect in the provision of services to these

grassroots communities as well as other impunities has influenced a gathering called Bunge La Mwananchi, the people's parliament. This platform has been around since the 1990s and it is becoming even more relevant in the age of the new media.

Bunge La Mwananchi supports grassroots concerns to be tabled and discussed for necessary actions involving reaching out to the parliamentarians through discussions, protests and/or petitions. Bunge La Mwananchi coordinates and shares its programmes on social media and meet physically to synergize and arrive at pertinent solutions. For instance, petitions and protests on water shortages and restoration in the affected neighbourhoods have unavoidably received the attention of the government in the past. Also, a mass protest dubbed Unga Revolution on the absurd rise of prices of food items such as maize flour (which accounts for 80 per cent of staple food in Kenya) and petrol in 2011 was successfully carried out to get the government to act. Olal states that the 21st century Internet reality has enhanced voices and participation, thus the people's parliament is where the public has alternative stages and voices to address overarching issues. Even though Olal was not active online in the 2008 PEV, he was a source of succour for the people in the informal settlement of Kawangware during the outbreak and heightened of violence. His Luo ethnicity was not as important to the people of the settlement as his human rights defence activities. That earned Olal the mantle to rescue at least seventeen people from attacks. Onward since the end of the 2008 PEV, Olal has utilised the new media to blog, tweet, and document and find new international alliances that support his solution-finding quest to his community's plights.

6.5.3 <u>Mzalendo: The Peoples' and Parliamentarians' Interactivity</u>

Another online platform, Mzalendo, exists to reach out to Kenyan parliamentarians to hear the peoples' concerns and act. According to the platform's website, the purpose of Mzalendo is to "keep an eye on the Kenyan parliament" and "promote greater public voice and enhance public participation in politics by providing relevant information about the National Assembly and Senate's activities." Mzalendo (meaning 'Patriot' in Swahili) is a non-partisan project that began in 2005 and was revamped in 2012.

Renowned activist, blogger and lawyer, Ory Okolloh, who was also instrumental to the

formation of the Ushahidi platform in 2008, started Mzalendo alongside Conrad Akunga, an experienced software architect, engineer and tech-entrepreneur. Mzalendo became a more effective parliament-monitoring platform after it was re-launched in 2012. According to the current Executive Director of Mzalendo, Jessica Musila, this site has been replicated in a few African countries, namely Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. When the political environment was different in 2005 with the Official Secrets Act, information was only leaked to Mzalendo about the deeds and misdeeds of the parliament. But with the 2010 referendum and a new constitution in place, public participation is emphasised and access to information is guaranteed. This in a sense allows for free flow of information between the citizens and the parliament. Article 1 of the 2010 constitution, according to Jessica Musila, states that power belongs to the people, which have made it easy to call on the political leaders to share their programme and to hear the concern of the populace. On the Mzalendo site, all the parliamentarians' information, including biography, contact details and the committees on which they sit, are made public. This way, the people are able to reach out to their leaders directly. When a parliamentarian is unreachable, Mzalendo is alerted and if an issue is controversial, Mzalendo takes up the matter and try to reach out to the concerned parliamentarian. This is to ensure that the job in which a parliamentarian is voted in to do is prioritised. Soft copies of parliament proceedings are also made available on the Mzalendo site.

The Mzalendo blog regularly informs the general public on parliament activities and what is new. A newsletter is also available on parliament business and occasional tweeting of serious discussions is done by Mzalendo to keep the people abreast of things. For instance, Mzalendo facilitates calls for memoranda, a parliamentary process requiring the public opinion, where deadlines and timelines are taking into consideration. As an online site that serves as a bridge between the people and the parliament, Mzalendo considers the new media a catalyst for inclusive governance through an avenue that fosters cohesive information and feedback. Though Mzalendo became active and efficient since its re-launch in 2012, it has been focusing on effective flow of information between the Kenyan citizens and their parliamentarians as a way to bridge communication gaps and facilitate a peaceful environment where another

eruption of violence is preventable. Musila reiterates that information is power. With the arrival of the new media, Mzalendo now tweet-chats with Kenyan MPs when a critical issue is trending, especially on controversial issues such as land.

6.5.4 Mindset Education: Afroes Haki 2 Online Peace Game

In the age of online games, some violent, some educative, a group of people led by Kenyan-South African Anne Githuku-Shongwe decided to start to unlock the potential of young Africans and transform their entrenched belief system and mental model through play, games and digital interactive media. In 2013, Afroes (short for African Heroes and Heroines), a non-governmental organization that runs different transformational programmes both in South Africa and Kenya, decided to develop an online peace game. According to Gathoni Mwai, the Kenya Programme Manager of Afroes, local research was conducted, especially in the hotbed of the 2008 PEV, the Kenyan Rift Valley region, to understand where the community needs help in facilitating and nurturing a unified society. The research outcome led to the development of a mobile game called Haki Chaguo Ni Lako (aka Haki 2), which is designed to educate the players about peace and tolerance in a way that can influence their commitment to choosing peace.

Although it is has not been an easy task to measure the impact of the game, several youths in the targeted communities have acquired information and awareness about the importance of the game as well as its overarching effect in promoting peace during and beyond election times. Among the games that Afroes platforms have developed for online civic education are Jobhunt (a game that educates players about online jobs), Moraba (used in South Africa to educate the youth audience on sexual health and prevention of gender-based violence), Haki to educate on the danger of depletion of ecosystem (in honour of the late internationally renowned Kenyan environmental activist and Nobel laureate Wangari Maathai), and Chamchase to educate the audience on child abuse, safety, protection and rights.

To support entrepreneurs who provide local digital content to relevant Kenya consumers, the ICT Authority through the Kenyan Ministry of Information,

Communications and Technology awarded Tandaa grants of $50,000 to Afroes in 2012. Presently, Afroes, in partnership with the Tuvuke Initiative, is forging ahead to conduct several civic educations across Kenya and most especially in violent-prone and conflict hotspots during the 2017 elections. The Tuvuke Initiative consists of a consortium of 15 organizations working to promote peace and democracy in Kenya through free and fair elections, participation of women, inclusion and empowerment of youth and ensuring responsible media practices. Lastly, with the help of the UNDP, Afroes is hoping to extend its programmes further to reach many counties in Kenya in the near future.

6.5.5   Peace in Our Pockets: the work of Sisi Ni Amani

While Ushahidi's crisis mapping focused on hotspots of violence to make a difference, Sisi Ni Amani Kenya (SNA-K), a local NGO in Kenya, decided to take it a step further by mapping peace. This is to make several peace initiatives by Kenyans more coordinative and collaborative. Sisi Ni Amani, meaning "We are Peace' in Kiswahili, was conceived by undergraduate students at Tufts University, Rachel Brown and Cody Valdes (Parker 2011). Brown, who had worked in some of Ushahidi's activities, leads a team of Kenyans that concentrate on peace-mapping endeavours through SNA-K. SNA-K uses "SMS-based programming for civic engagement and peace; mitigating land conflict through dialogue and education; and civic engagement through forums and debates." The SNA-K programme started out in 2010 standing at a vantage point of consolidating the lessons learnt from the 2008 PEV to make a difference while working with local peace leaders and activists in the 2013 general elections.

Brown, an American citizen, accidentally stumbled on the idea of SNA-K when she was in Kenya to study power structures and peace work for her dissertation. Brown explains her driving force in an interview with Parker (2011): "I realised that everybody knows what the problem on the ground is, and yet, that these people, despite the established power structures, were standing up and risking their lives to promote peace. I began thinking to myself, how can I play a role in supporting them?" Brown later saw the opportunity to map out the peace builders in Kenya and connect them to harness their work, and also to facilitate a cohesive platform where more programmes can be planned and executed through a synergized platform and collaborative efforts. Brown quickly

recognises that the people in the community where she works have tremendous ideas of peace, they just need to work together more to achieve better results.

SNA-K uses text messaging to further educate members of several Kenyan communities where its work is located, including Baba Dogo, Mathare, Dandora in Nairobi and the Rift Valley. Through a USSD code, *762#, (a Safaricom subscription donated to the SNA-K project), the SMS-based programming for peace-mapping and civil education for violence prevention is operated. In the interview granted to Priya Parker (2011), Brown states that with so much effort put into violent activities as witnessed in the 2008 PEV, with the use of mobile phones to spread hate and organise violent attacks, that same effort put into peace promotions would have a desirable effect. Brown sees the use of mobile phones as vital in educating the communities about nonviolent means to achieve a free and fair 2013 election. Thus, Kenya peace activists were armed with mobile tools to intercept provocative messages that could incite violence in the 2013 general elections. In addition, mapping peace initiatives by Kenyan citizens is another way of showcasing the positive use of the NMT mobile phones.

Using similar crowdsourcing technology like Ushahidi, SNA-K provides a leverage networking platform for Kenyan peace leaders who are members of different communities to better collaborate. Face-to-face peace workshops are organised for experiences sharing, synergy and skill building. One critical way that SNA-K text messaging had worked was in stopping the land dispute in Mulot, Narok County, where the violent actors received text messages urging them to consider peace. Heeding this advice, the warring faction met with a local religious leader to mediate (Brown on PopTech Talk 2012). To this effect, inspired by the SNA-K, SMS-based peace mapping and civic education projects, Groove Productions made a documentary titled *Peace in Our Pockets* in 2012. The documentary showcases the power of the effective use of mobile devices by Kenyan citizens and peace activists to broker peace. Giving the background to *Peace in Our Pockets* documentary the film website states:

> We produced *Peace in Our Pockets* to be used as a catalyst for change and a tool for peacebuilding. By capturing the passion and commitment of local activists working at a critical moment in Kenyan history, the film shares invaluable lessons about the very meaning of peace and democracy. How can cutting-edge

SMS technology transform civic participation? What role does people-to-people organizing and social engagement play in the peacebuilding process? How can people improve their communities using the tools they have at hand, such as the mobile phone?

Peace in Our Pockets filmed the story of several peace actors/builders/activists facilitating training in different counties, educating other local peace leaders/actors how to use mobile phones to promote peace before, during and after the 2013 elections. Through subscriptions to USSD code *762#, community members can access SNA-K's database and send information out to others. The messages were sent out in numerous languages, including English, Kiswahili, and Sheng. With a donation of over 50 million free text messages received from Safaricom to SNA-K activities, peace actors were able to send messages such as "let us resist from violence and always embrace peace", "we are brothers and sisters let's stay in peace", "let's build our nation by voting peacefully" to members of their communities. By 2013, over 30,000 members of the targeted communities had subscribed to SNA-K text messaging services and several influential leaders and peace actors had converged to promote peace.

SNA-K runs a blog that documents the organisation's activities with the communities in which its work is relevant. What SNA-K tries to ensure is a collective front and the synchronisation of otherwise scattered peace efforts in the targeted communities. SNA-K has partnered with NSE, IEBC and the Inuka Trust in some of its community outreach programmes. The partnership with IEBC was around the 2013 elections while the Inuka Trust partnership was to have fundamental dialogues (*Sauti Yetu*) on what the communities expected from their leaders and to hold their leaders accountable, to be able to question their leaders as opposed to having leaders talk down to the communities. The deployment of bulk text messaging that is able to reach wider audiences shows the increased interaction by the citizens of Kenya with the new media. Even power outages or phone tariffs have neither dissuaded the growth of this technology nor been considered as big a problem as it was a few years back. Nonetheless, these are still problematic factors in some rural areas according to stories that were gathered, but they are becoming manageable as several initiatives like SupaBRCK are providing alternatives to electricity. SupaBRCK is a product of BRCK, a spin-off organization of Ushahidi that is currently investing in an affordable and

portable "waterproof, solar-powered Wi-Fi box that operates as a 3G hotspot and off-grid server" (Bright 2017).

6.5.6   The Twitter Chief Magic

Chief Francis Kariuki, popularly known in the Rift Valley, Nakuru County, specifically Lanet sub-county as the "Twitter Chief", is a government administrator handling education, health, and security. Chief Kariuki utilises Twitter effectively among and within his county. He currently has over 63,000 Twitter followers. When asked why he uses Twitter and the effectiveness of this digital platform in his work, Chief Kariuki states:

> Twitter, I think is the best communication tool among the communities. They have two platforms, one is through the Internet and the other one is through the SMS without having to activate their Internet bundles to be able to communicate. Every service provider works by assigning short and long codes that help convert Twitter messages to SMS messages and vice versa without being charged to receive the text messages. This becomes an effective mode of communication especially since not everybody has a smart phone. That's what I have been using in the community to communicate. So, whenever anything happens say may be an outbreak of a disease like polio, I use the platform to mobilise for immunisation…. Even when there is any kind of danger for example like people stealing or breaking into someone's house, what the community does is to text me on the phone about the incident, and I send the alert out via the phone for all the people to come out and assist. This is before the police come, which is not very practical for them to respond to all personal calls. The neighbourhood watch works as their brother's keepers in this case.

On the wider reach of Chief Kariuki's digital method of communication, he explains that there is nobody in his community that cannot read at some minimal level. If they can't read in English, they read messages sent in Kiswahili. Also, Chief Kariuki avoids the use of technical language for easier understanding of his messages by the community members. In terms of collaboration with citizen journalists and other platforms, Chief Kariuki elaborates on his concentration being mainly on helping his community without so much involvement with other digital platforms or the mass media. Chief Kariuki's tweets however do catch the attention of both professional journalists and citizen journalists. He has made a rapid integration into digital technology post-conflict construction. Before then, he was a teacher in 2008 and he was not yet engaged with the online platforms, which was still in their nascent development

at the time of the PEV. The Chief was not that engaged with the occurrences and the engagement of the other citizens in the 2008. But from 2013, when he became a Chief and was conversant with online platforms, his main focus was on safety, peaceful co-existence and cohesion among his communities. He considers Ushahidi a civil society organisation and he is a governance-focused administrator who sees civil society as often anti-government. Thus, despite acknowledging these other progressive platforms, he is an island on his own when it comes to utilising the new media via social media to get his work done. Conversely, wherever Chief Kariuki needs to assist Ushahidi or other platform, which he considers "high level" operation with information, he does not hesitate.

Chief Kariuki describes his modus operandi as highly effective in making sure public service is accessible and his community desists from killing each other. Through efficient communication with his county, he sees less violence and more cohesion. Furthermore, a project called Nbakumu – "citizen participation for security" – is a community policing initiative in Nakuru County and in the sub-county of Lanet where everyone in the community participates in vigilante duty to keep their homes safe. The use of SMS and Twitter according to the Chief has been very resourceful in sharing information on this front. Training on the use of social media, most especially on the use of Twitter and Facebook for coordination, sensitisation and sharing of the information, is part of Chief Kariuki's regular engagement across Kenya.

Chief Kariuki's work and online engagement with his community, social media –which is ever expanding with the inclusion of Instagram, and Snapchat– is utilised for business updates, emergency health and security needs as well as general networking among the people. The Chief leaves no stone unturned. However, he recognises the danger of this vast platform in spreading lies and manipulative messages that can result in a violent conflict if instantaneous and thorough investigation is not carried out. He also acknowledges how the digital platform is powerful in consuming people's time, but used effectively towards a goal like the Chief has embarked on is very profitable for information sharing, community policing and cohesive existence among the community. The Chief approaches the issue of hate speech in his community directly

before he involves the police, which rarely happen.

6.6   Kenyan Netizens' Contributions to Conflict Transformation

Since the 2008 PEV, the Kenyan digital technology landscape has grown in relevance. As presented above from the Ushahidi platform to several other prime initiatives of Kenyan citizen journalists and netizens, many transformative contributions have been made. Clearly, relating this explosion to the understanding of peacemaking and conflict transformation, Kenyan society is not lacking in bottom-up peace influences. This has become more noticeable since the advent of the new media. Although the roles of the Kenyan netizens and citizen journalists can be located in three paradigms of peace processes, which are peacebuilding, peacemaking and conflict transformation, what is more traceable is its constructive change processes.

Bock (2012), for example, speaks of the Uwiano platform's ability to make use of a nonviolent technology approach to early warning systems, which he considers a strategic peacebuilding tool that combines open-source software with crowdsourcing methods to prevent recurrence of violent conflict. Taking this assessment further, it can be inferred that Ushahidi, as part of the Uwiano consortium, facilitates a space for constructive change processes where strategic peacebuilding can materialise.

Constructive change processes as a key element of conflict transformation encompass the necessity of a people-centred approach to peace processes and people's participation in their own socio-political affairs. As has been discussed throughout this study, peace is possible if people genuinely participate in their own socio-political transformation, and this has been made possible, and further enhanced, through the new media by the citizen journalists and netizens. With all NMT's flaws and limitations, it nevertheless, by and large, allows people to participate in their own peace processes. These have played out in several ways the Kenyan citizens are engaging with the new media.

According to Lederach (2003: 12), conflict transformation is a peacemaking mechanism that is focused on creating a more holistic framework of addressing the content, context and structure of a given conflict. Looking at the utilisation of new media by the people,

it has not only allowed the amplification of their voices to discuss the content, context and structure of a given conflict, but it has also allowed for conflict addressing innovations. For instance, through the Uwiano platform, a consortium is organised to see to the prevention of future violent conflict and through the Sisi Ni Amani project, it is facilitating a constructive change process whereby relational coexistence is preached via text messaging. In addition, Mzalendo, Bunge La Mwananchi, Inuka Trust and the Kibera Networks are not only intensifying the voices of the marginalised, but they are also providing evidence on the perennial socio-political and economic inequalities and injustices yet to be addressed.

At the time of Lederach's conceptualisation of conflict transformation, the new media was not very active yet, but the principle, in which the postulation is set, is nonetheless applicable to the 21st century reality. Lederach (2003:14) sees conflict as "life-giving opportunities" to create "constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships". What has been seen in the numerous endeavours of Kenyan netizens and citizen journalists are the bottom-up approaches of constructive change processes where citizens are constantly finding avenues to reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. This further encapsulates the breaking down of constructive change processes' dimensions tabled in chapter two of this thesis, which is based on personal, relational, structural and cultural frameworks as foundational goals for conflict transformation (Lederach 2003:27).

Having a voice to lead daring conversations, sharing significant information, and developing innovations to prevent violent conflicts, is in direct response to real-life problems geared to addressing structural, cultural and relational injustices that affect personal and collective growth of the people. It has been seen in the narratives presented in chapters five and six that leadership can no longer undermine the power that the citizens exert through the new media. Also, constructive change processes as Lederach (2003) posits is a long-term venture, which means the continual voicing of concerns and innovations of the public through the new media is a long-term avenue for lasting

change. Not only has citizen journalism platforms become visible in changing the status quo of world affairs, but they have also gripped the attention of scholars such as Stuart Allan and Einer Thorsen (2009) and Glimor (2004).

Galtung (1996) and Lederach (2003) perceive conflict as inevitable in human relationships embedded in unjust socio-political and economic dynamics. In the current reality of Kenya, with the 2017 election approaching, several research participants are not optimistic that it will be free of violence, Especially in the light of IEBC ICT manager, Chris Msando, and a female friend being murdered in cold blood on the 28th of July (Misiko 2017). It resonates with their anxiety that Kenya is flying on the wings of borrowed peace. Even though the case is still under investigation, the uproar on social media points to a political attack. While this unfortunate incident has heightened tensions, as observed, it has also intensified the peace messages across the country.

The reflections of a few research participants hinge on the fact that the root cause of violence has not been resolved and it needs attending to by the leaders. As the element of conflict transformation in constructive change processes indicates, building sustainable peace requires addressing the root cause of conflict. Direct violence may have been stopped after the 2008 PEV, thus a negative peace was achieved, but positive peace is still absent. Furthermore, research participants have doubted the institutional capacities of the elected leaders to address structural injustices and historical inequalities. Many of them felt that the current situation is hinging on artificial peace devoid of justice and lasting conciliation. Since the multiparty system of 1991, John Githongo explains, violent conflict has been evident. Many research participants expressed observing an undercurrent of tensions among Kenyans, which is making it difficult for them to be optimistic in the 2017 election. Rasna Warah concisely expresses this concern:

> …There is a potential for conflict to erupt again because you have not resolved the original problem. And so the fear of violence which was what happened in 2013, they said it was a peaceful election but a lot of people argue, it was the fear of violence that kept people quiet in their homes because they fear that there will be another post-election violence and the country will erupt. But was it peaceful? I will say no. It was a

fearful, fear-filled election. People just fear. So people didn't even question the election results. They didn't ask too many question because they fear that if we ask too many questions, then we will have another violent outbreak. So it is how you define peace.

Outside the new media terrain, Warah sees a more fearful Kenya where fear masquerades as peace. She thinks many Kenyans that lost their homes or were raped in the 2008 PEV without justice have merely kept quiet. This is the Kenya that Warah sees every day. The president of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, never endorsed all the recommendations that the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission made for instance, compensation for victims of the violence and memorials to be put up to honour those who had been killed. This she views as the side effect of Uhuru Kenyatta father's being implicated in some of these atrocities and "he didn't want to go too close to home". Warah fears that the past conflicts in Kenya that were often in the Rift Valley have escalated nationally since 2008. She thinks all the rebuilding and reconciliation that needed to be done face-to-face and not through technology has been ignored. The foreboding is that if all these issues are not truly addressed, Kenya might witness another violent conflict again in the nearest future.

Warah received hate letters for writing a piece that highlights Kenyan problems as shrouded in inequality and not ethnicity. That inequality manifests itself through ethnicity. She highlighted historical injustices and elites' manipulation as part of the intractable problems that the Republic is confronted with but was vilified for her stance. To her, the kind of leadership that did not step aside when indicted by the ICC shows that people can get away with impunity. As a result, the threat of violence is higher in Kenya after the 2008 PEV. All these observations have overwhelmed Warah with the impression that Kenya is tiptoeing on the brink of another spate of violence. She considers the continued impunity as the one of the main reasons why structural injustices are yet to be addressed effectively. Dipesh Pabari is equally not optimistic that violence will not break out again in Kenya because to him there is still a lot of anger out there. He has continued to witness Kenyans showcasing their discontent even via road rage. He states that while billboard advertisements give the sense of Kenyanness in a colourful way, day-to-day affairs show otherwise.

Similarly, Marceline Nyambala thinks that 2017 might still erupt in violence if all the interventions do not continue and if the leaders do not implement the Kofi Annan mediation recommendations. Part of the unimplemented recommendations, she reckons, are the provision of employment for the youth, redress of the violated women during the 2008 PEV, the ignored Agenda 4 on the settlement of the IDPs and the stolen women's funds. Nyambala is concerned that these unresolved issues might still bring to the fore complications in the 2017 elections. The gain made has not been effectively consolidated, which is why her organisation, AMWIK, still works with the youth to use their agency to demand change and not resort to violence. She uses the combination of online and offline peace activities to educate the restless youth on the value of nonviolent demands through the existing platforms or initiation of new ones.

Kepha Ngito blames the inherited inequality left by the British colonisers on distribution of land, which was endorsed by the Kenyan leaders, as one of the main reasons for the Kenya's unprecedented violence and the intractable conflicts. The intricacies of the 2008 PEV violence according to him is a result of glaring inequality and the fact that the British facilitated an oligarchical system that allowed a certain tribe to dominate the political sphere. These individuals are seen as the wealthy Kenyans as well and the endless inequality led to the hot water of disparity boiling over and engulfing the country in an abyss of despair. As expressed by him, this is an age-old structural inequality that needs proactive commitment of the Kenyan leaders to address, which is still not the case. Yvonne Owuor, Tony Mochama and Wambui Mwangi, who are now ex-members of CKW, which has become polarised and divisive through ethnic alliances and misogynistic feedback, echo Ngito's concerns.

Yvvone Owuor sees no lasting positive transformation on the horizon of the Kenyan political landscape. The lessons learnt from the 2008 solution-finding engagement, which are the boldness to come out and really attack the heart of the crisis, to truly address the historical injustice and name and shame all involved, has dwindled. This effort has become elusive, as some of the leaders that plunged Kenya into its calamity are hero-worshipped and elevated. She believes the ghosts and demons of past are still-

hunting the country and no one is confronting this dilemma. To dismantle the illusion that has been used to sustain the myth of Kenya as a peaceful country means families and parents of Kenyans, including the CKW members, will be held accountable. This became a very hard truth for many to handle and so they backtracked. For instance, she expatiates that people started backing down when the need arose to address the atrocities committed by the first president, Jomo Kenyatta, on the systematic disintegration of the country that his regime created. No one wants to touch this truth. Thus, she concludes that no true peace has been found as many issues are swept under the rug and artificial peace is restored. She also fears that the 2017 elections might not be as peaceful. Reflecting further from her capacity as a citizen, Sellah Kingoro of NCIC agrees with the scepticism of other research participants about the likelihood of violence erupting in 2017. She reiterates that the root causes of historical injustice have not yet been addressed as recommended by the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. The symptoms, she reckons, are being treated and if 2017 elections are peaceful, then there will be more time to tackle the root causes of the historical injustice yet to be addressed. She concludes with the hope that Kenya will move from negative peace to positive peace beyond 2017.

Conversely, Peter Mwamachi predicts peaceful 2017 elections, contrary to the opinion of other research participants that Kenya is not yet ready to have the tough conversations that are needed for transformation. He believes that a lot of work has been done through various platforms, including the local early warning mechanisms such as Uwiano, to ensure peaceful 2017 elections, while he agrees that the positive peace desired by all Kenyans is yet to appear on the horizon. On early warning efforts, Mwamachi considers the role of the citizen journalists and professional media as relevant to a peaceful 2017 elections if they all wield their powers to promote nonviolent resolutions. Thus, the impact of the new media in the hands of the citizen journalists and Kenyan netizens, in Mwamachi's opinion, has been positive. He celebrates the peace values in the engagement of Kenyan people that converge on the Internet as augmenting Kenya's socio-political transformation. He explains this further by citing the Twitter Chief, Ushahidi and SNA-K to be improving the needed peace interventions on local levels. He mentions the visual documentations of robberies and

sexual assaults in Kenyan Matatus that have assisted in bringing the perpetrators to justice as part of what online engagement can continue to produce.

While all these complications are acknowledged, and the Kenyan netizens and citizen journalists remain steadfast to see a truly peaceful Kenya alongside the CSOs, a troubling question remains. Will the Kenyan community continue to prevent another devastating spate of violence while a common understanding that could work for the populace is reached, or will they succumb to the pressure of the troubled political terrain? The just concluded 2017 elections that resulted in mixed feelings of fairness, questionable transparency and an alleged civilian coup by the Jubilee party to return the incumbent president has reinstated the uneasiness expressed by many research participants. Raila Odinga, through his political coalition party, the National Super Alliance (NASA), had alleged throughout the tallying of the votes that the IEBC system was hacked and manipulated by the Jubilee party in favour of Uhuru Kenyatta (Mukoya 2017). These allegations were not proven, as other sources including the international observers declared the elections fair (Lewis 2017). Nonetheless, Kenyans are factionalised on the axis of those belonging to the camps that felt the election was fair and the camps that questioned the transparency of the electoral body. The chaotic dance has thus continued as NASA took the matter to court.

Consequently, security was heightened to prevent brewing tensions from getting extreme after a few people were reported dead in a violent clash in Nairobi (Burke 2017). Instead of quelling tensions, Kenyan CSOs have accused the Kenyan police of killing 24 opposition protesters after Odinga complained of election fraud (Dixon 2017). Several organisations have however condemned the use of excessive force by the police (Halakhe 2017). The citizen journalism effort nonetheless was visible during the elections. Through the Uchaguzi project, Ushahidi monitored the 2017 elections and reported swiftly on Twitter. Over 70,000 eyewitness reports of election incidents showed orderliness, but the aftermath indicates worries over irregularities and threats of violent mobilisation (Ushahidi 2017). The Uwiano platform was also effective in security alerts in a few places such as Kisumu and Nairobi slums where violence was purportedly breaking out. Bunge La Mwananchi and several other human rights

defender coalitions circulated an online appeal through the KPTJ mailing list to the Kenya security forces to desist from using extreme force to suppress protests, reminding the state of citizens' constitutional rights to engage in peaceful picketing and for the police to secure the processions as opposed to dispersing protests forcefully. All these occurrences reaffirm some of the fears formerly expressed by many research participants.

As it is generally observed, despite the unfortunate tensions in the atmosphere, many Kenyans are optimistic that beyond the 2017 elections is a turning point waiting to happen in Kenya's perennially troubled political space. This is because they expect the gripping hands of political dynasties of the two rival families of Odinga and Kenyatta to end for good, as both Raila Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta have used up their chances to take part in any future elections, as stipulated by the constitution based on age and number of times that a candidate could occupy a political post. Although in all the times that Raila Odinga had contested the presidency, counting 2007, he has been unsuccessful. He no less believes he was cheated from victory in these three consecutive elections. The question remains whether the anticipated watershed will materialise when the Kenyattas and the Odingas leave the political scene, or rather whether these families really will leave the political scene or whether their presence will at some point be ineffective to halt the change that Kenyans want. As the answers to these questions lie in the future, in the meantime, the Supreme Court has ruled that the just concluded elections were not carried out in accordance to the constitutional provisions, thus nullifying the presidential election (BBC News 2017b). A new election is to be conducted within 60 days.

6.7   Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the local dynamic and context of peace processes hinges on the power of the citizens using the new media to have a voice to challenge the socio-political status quo and invest in nonviolent mechanisms to demand change. Although there are fears about the sustainability of Kenya's peace, what has emerged from the above findings is a community of those trying to move Kenya from negative peace to positive peace. From Ushahidi, to SNA-K or Kibera Networks, the Kenyan citizen

journalists and netizens have continued to converge as peace actors or as 'town criers' who long for 'true' peace. Several of the initiatives of these platforms, including Ushahidi –the platform and the organisation –have become proactive in creating a bidirectional if not multidirectional flow of information. The increased access to information gathering and sharing have continued to empower Kenyans and amplified the concerns of the marginalised communities. Not only that, the availability of open-source software to crowdsource reports of crises and disasters are bringing about immediate responses that are altering devastating outcomes. In the same vein, the Uwiano, Umati and Uchaguzi projects offer a watchful eye over imminent dangers in several counties, which are the significant ways in which Ushahidi has contributed to transforming Kenya beyond the 2008 PEV. It ought to be reiterated that the multi-flow of information has made it difficult for the leaders not to be aware of what the citizens are facing and where they want lasting change.

In the same way that peace and conflict scholars have suggested, the data has shown that only people themselves can deliver their own peace. Seemingly, the new media has provided a platform to engage in constructive peace processes that need adequate consolidation on the ground. Linking this with the grassroots and the disadvantaged urban populations, the way several people and youth-led online initiatives are expanding (whether temporarily or long-term) assures a more cohesive outcome in the long run. Ushahidi has set the pace for the untapped potential of the NMT, including in challenging the monopolisation of information and dispelling misconceptions about the magnitude of the 2008 PEV to changing the traditional notion of humanitarianism. These people-centred digital platforms are bridging the divide between the leaders and the led, albeit slowly. However, their engagement is having a tangible effect on the constructive change processes, which Kenya is ostensibly moving towards, amidst the fears that still permeate the climate.

Broadly, the composite elements of conflict transformation encompass relationship-building, construction of effective social structures, justice, respect for human rights and nonviolent forms of resistance. Therefore, what the data unearthed through several activities of Kenyan netizens and citizen journalists are the bottom-up approaches of

constructive change processes where citizens are finding avenues to reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. With the combined effect of online and offline undertakings, Kenyan netizens including the citizen journalists have continued to carve out irrepressible means to table their issues in a way that can facilitate a change instrumental for positive peace. The thesis is by no means placing the new media platform above all other existing human-centred mechanisms. But it is stating that the contribution of the general public who have found potential in digital technology to witness, act and respond constructively is no less revolutionary and significant.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND FINAL REFLECTIONS

7.1   Introduction

This chapter concludes the thesis by presenting the overall analytical summary of the research in relation to its question, research puzzle and findings. This chapter presents the limitations of the research and offers suggestions for further research. Primarily, this study set out to explore the extent to which the Ushahidi platform contributed to conflict transformation since its emergence during Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV). Situated in the theoretical background of a people-centred approach to peace processes, the thesis extended the work of scholars such as the father of peace and conflict studies Johan Galtung (1995; 2007), and the proponent of conflict transformation John Paul Lederach (1995; 2003; 2010) in recapitulating the importance of people's participation in their own peace processes. By embarking on the contextualisation of peace mechanisms in the technocratic and often failed peace interventions by the United Nations (UN), the thesis premised the human security paradigm as an important framework to understand why peace processes need to be recast to include people's participation in their own peace. The gap in the literature that the thesis fills in this regard is the unexplored area of what citizen journalism is contributing to peace processes with the advent of the 21st century new media.

The murky nature of governance in several countries in the post-Cold War era exposes the glaring inadequacies of the state-centric model of governance. The post-Cold War realities that have led development economists such as Mahbub ul-Haq (1999) and Amartya Sen (2000) to argue for human security as opposed to state security as an appropriate roadmap to lasting peace serve as influencing factors in the scholarly work of Picciotto, Olonisakin & Clarke (2010) and Bock (2012) to emphasise a human-centred approach to peace processes. It is in the light of this development that this thesis explored the participation of the general public in peace processes with the use of new media technology (NMT). The research puzzle focused on looking at the contribution of citizen journalism platforms in responding to violent conflict in Africa by investigating Ushahidi's role in the 2008 PEV in Kenya.

Through the examination of several scholars in the field of journalism, including Gilmor (2004), Atton (2009), Jewitt (2009) Banda (2010), Moyo (2011), Mutsvairo and Columbus (2012), Thorsen and Allan (2014) and many others, the values of citizen journalism in socio-political and economic landscapes and its potential to intervene in conflict was explored. The thesis presented why citizen journalism platforms are a force of change in the 21st century public affairs in the sense that they are revolutionary and human-centred. This includes the power of citizen journalism to disrupt the monopolistic nature of the mass/mainstream media. However, some research participants considered the line between what is mainstream news and what is not to be blurred. Citizen journalism is infiltrating the accepted notion of mainstream media, as in itself it has come to be seen as 'mainstream', in the sense that it is significantly widespread.

Furthermore, through the work of the aforementioned scholars on journalism and several other extant literatures, the thesis delved into delimiting the divergent and convergent roles of citizen journalists and professional journalism. The dual functions of citizen journalists and other netizens in using the new media to instigate conflict or to deescalate and find solutions to conflict were also delineated. Beyond the understanding of the new media as a double edged-sword are the opportunities inherent in its strategic usage to advance inclusive governance and transform conflict. In transforming conflict, it has been depicted through the Ushahidi platform and several other online engagements of Kenyan netizens that constructive change processes from negative peace to positive peace appeared fundamental to these platforms. Not only has citizen journalism globalised information, it has also begun to globalise interventions unprecedentedly through novel initiatives of the general public that occupy this space. Lastly, political leaders are getting scrutinised by their citizens via the new media technology by bringing forth overarching discourses aim at advancing human security and peace.

7.2   The Ushahidi platform in Kenya's 2008 PEV

To understand the phenomenon that the thesis puzzle focused on, the role of Ushahidi

platform in Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV) is central. As a citizen journalism platform that emerged to respond to conflict in the context of dwindling information from the banned live broadcasts, Ushahidi's work was explored. Thus, through an explorative qualitative research approach using inductive reasoning and an interpretivist method, unstructured in-depth interviews of 28 research participants were conducted in Nairobi for three and half months. As a result of the field research, data of mixed nature were collected. On the one hand, the findings revealed that the new media has been used in Kenya to propagate hate and create more division, and on the other hand, it has continued to be used strategically by several citizens for peace initiatives. The latter role, towards advancing positive peace through constructive change processes in the local context of Kenyan's netizens' engagement, is more prominent than the former. This is based on the evidence that the virtual interventions by most netizens' in Kenya indicate the awakening of collective consciousness to eradicate corruption and partisan politics in a way that promotes effective people-centred governance.

According to Lederach (2003:45-47), constructive change processes offer a "scaffold-trampoline", meaning "a base to stand on and jump from" upon which the epicentre of a given conflict is tabled for solutions. In this sense, his conceptualisation of a transformational platform includes the understanding of various episodes and levels of conflicts to engage in both short-term responsive actions and long-term strategic plans. The goals of these responsive actions and strategic plans aim at constructively addressing dysfunctionality in governmental systems and human relationships. Constructive change processes encompass personal, relational, cultural and structural approaches to addressing the conflict that affects people. With this understanding and willingness to address the prevailing conflict, the society moves towards transforming itself through the constructive efforts of seeing the conflict as an opportunity for growth. In essence, what the new media has provided is a 21st century platform to fully participate in transforming a conflict from destructive to constructive, as the evidence from Ushahidi and other Kenyan netizens' platforms have shown.

Conflict transformation starts with creating a conflict map to understand the tenacious root causes of conflict, which assists in moving the strategic interventions in the right

direction. This is not in any way the same as Ushahidi's crisis mapping, but what is relevant to Lederarch's (2003) notion of conflict mapping is in the documentation of Kenya's 2008 PEV for justice and conciliation. By collecting information from the heart of the conflict, Ushahidi was able to contribute to understanding the conflict as it happened, and offered an archive of the conflict events for others to analyse and scrutinize after the mayhem for post-conflict reconstruction.

As Lederach (2003) posits, one of the applications of conflict transformation for constructive change is through the creation of a forum that enables conversations to take place to comprehend the nature of human relationships. Citizen journalism as a platform of reporting and documenting evidence, and initiating solutions, is such a forum. The other way is through the initiation of channels for regular exchange and feedback among the people, such as is offered by the Mzalendo platform, which facilitates dialogue between Kenyans and their parliamentarians. Many other ways have been described, especially in chapter six, of using social media to organise community dialogue, such as in the case of the Inuka Trust, Bunge La Mwananchi, and Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK). Not only has Ushahidi used the citizen journalism platform to crowdsource violent information for justice and conciliation, it has also mapped hate speech in Kenya and engaged in non-governmental interventions to unite the community where hate speech is predominant. Ushahidi has also initiated participatory governance programmes where the community decides what is paramount to their peace processes and receive seed funding from the Ushahidi platform to pursue the idea.

These platforms, especially Ushahidi, demonstrate the continuous determination to advance their society towards positive peace and reveal a commitment that is thriving. For instance, the consolidation of the immediate impact of citizen journalism centering on awareness creation, information sharing and the freedom to participate and tell one's stories, offer substantial values. These values lie in the creation of a platform for national dialogue and inclusivity that can assist Kenya in moving resolutely into positive peace and transformative governance.

The background to Kenya's political problems that placed in clearer context the 2008 PEV has shown structural ethno-nationalism and despotic leadership that are hard to tackle. From the historical failure of Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Arap Moi and Mwai Kibaki to address structural injustices and ethno-national inequalities, to the Uhuru Kenyatta government's crimes against humanity, as charged by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the 2008 PEV, Kenya has continued to struggle for better governance. In spite of the political tumults and the colonial legacy of divide and rule that have consumed the soul of Kenyan politics, the evidence points to a citizenry that seems to find the new media useful in demanding change. As it stands today in Kenya, citizen journalism has become a recognisable platform by the major stakeholders in the Kenyan civil society upon which the citizens participate in their human security and peace discourses. The CSOs that facilitated the mediation team of Kofi Annan to intervene in 2008 PEV are no longer oblivious to the values of citizen journalism, especially the Ushahidi platform as assured by Irungu Houghton, the SID Director and George Kegoro, the Executive Director of KHRC. Also, this platform's significance is reinforced in that it is becoming a roadmap for conflict transformation as visible in the several initiatives of Ushahidi and other Kenyan netizens such as the Uwiano mechanism, the Map Kibera project and the Mzalendo programme.

Generally, Ushahidi has become a resource for swift responses to conflict with the use of its open-source software in Kenya through Uwiano, the early warning multiagency consortium, as was discussed in chapter six. The inclusion of this mechanism has shown that Kenya is not entirely reliant in sourcing responses from outside its borders. Ushahidi has helped move early warning to effective response– from short-term intervention to long-time solution building –with the inclusion of the community that contribute to data generation. Also, devoid of institutional recognition or inclusion, in the scheme of political reality among the populace, these platforms have helped to shape discourses and create unprecedented awareness. For instance, the multidirectional flow of information, documentation of evidence and outcry of injustice by the people are vital contributions by citizen journalists/other netizens to political transformation. In addition to this, the citizen journalists' creation of solutions to crowdsource and crowdfund for relief and humanitarian assistance from within the local context are other

examples of interventions towards conflict transformation. More so, it has challenged the mainstream media and the government culminating in what this research considers not only a tangible contribution to negative peace but also a substantial contribution towards positive peace; tangible because the call from citizen journalists has been unending when it comes to advocating for local peace through various initiatives embarked upon. Finally, as a result, the Kenyan government can no longer pretend to be oblivious to its citizens' sufferings.

7.3.   The Contribution of New Media Technology in Conflict Transformation

The change that conflict transformation seeks is in line with creating "a framework to address the content, the context, and the structure of relationships" (Lederach 2003:12). This framework takes cognizance of the personal, relational, structural and cultural dynamic of human relationships by advancing short-term interventions and long-term constructive change processes that have the capacity to offer lasting peace. Positive peace is thereby sought through the conflict transformation element, known as constructive change processes. This is achieved by recognising conflict as an opportunity for redress, innovation and change by seeking first to reduce the violence, and second, by investing in rebuilding the damaged relationship between the communities. Through commitments to finding concrete solutions, the community is able to advance peace. One of these commitments plays out through dialogue or in this age of technology by speaking out or by devising programmes tailored towards restoring peace. As such, all levels of society, from top to the middle and the grassroots are included, making conflict transformation concepts a well thought-out holistic framework. In this regard, through citizen journalism, constructive change processes materialised in several innovations such as the Ushahidi's in promoting nonviolent technological inventions and interventions that are strategically designed to reduce violence and advance peace.

From a human-centred perspective, through arts, music, dance, digital and mobile games, crisis mapping, peace mapping, online early warning systems, and people's parliament, among others, the Kenyan community is striving to rebuild its peace. These are initiatives that NMT has spread globally within which the Kenyan netizens,

including the citizen journalists, are choosing to work for peace as indicated in chapter six. What is remarkable about this endeavour is how the general public play different roles as writers, technologists, artists, dancers, and peace actors via citizen journalism and other platforms for transforming their realities and narratives through a human-centred approach. No doubt the new media is assisting in globalising overarching issues, most especially in the way citizen journalism online engagement is globalising human security, peace and governance matters that call for collective actions in finding lasting solutions. Although the Kenyan situation is hardly global, the global awareness created by the Ushahidi platform has led to several local and international organisations using the platform's open-source software. It has also enhanced several other new media initiatives within the Kenyan local context as tabled in chapter six.

Some research participants, such as Irungu Houghton, director of SID, refer to citizen journalism as "third leadership" and Juliana Rotich, one of the founders of the Ushahidi platform, describes it as "the fifth estate". Many research participants see the new media as all-encompassing platform where anyone or everyone can participate, regardless of formal education, status or gender. The tendency of individuals to associate with those similar to themselves, as mentioned by Zuckerman, is a concern. However, research participants such as Hamzal Egal, a blogger and human rights lawyer, sees the new media as enabling widespread networking without barriers. Even in the heartland of Nairobi's slums, activists and citizen journalists such as Kepha Ngito and Happy Olal have continued to use the new media for socio-political and solution-oriented activism. Thus, through NMT the citizen journalists' creativity has exhibited the capacity to constructively intervene in their community's complex socio-political quagmire. The efforts of Inuka Trust, PAWA 254 and AMWIK in creating platforms for conversations on socio-political advancement is another gain of the 21st century media in Kenya's public sphere.

Notably, in measuring NMT's accomplishments, when it comes to qualitative research on the people's usage of the new media in peace processes, a retrospective research study can hardly offer adequate depth of achievements, impacts or outcomes. Rather, what it can show and has presented is how the citizen journalism platform is positively

contributing to peace processes. It is however not a dead end to determine the impact of the NMT in the long run. What is required is a longitudinal qualitative research to further unearth the long-term impacts of the new media platform in peace processes, most especially by tracing where its constructive change processes are headed. Longitudinal research, which would assist in uncovering the long-term transformative effects of the new media, is a longstanding endeavour that requires a lot time. This means, as espoused by John Paul Lederach (2003), constructive change processes, which is a long-term route, has a chance of adequate measurements in a longitudinal research. As it is, this thesis has traced the presence of constructive change processes in the past engagement of Ushahidi's platform since its emergence in 2008 till 2013.

7.4   Conclusion

This research has explored what the contribution of Ushahidi means to peace processes in relation to the Kenya's 2008 PEV as a citizen journalism platform through the lens of conflict transformation. The gap in the peace, conflict and journalism literatures that this thesis has attempted to fill is on the role of the citizen journalism platform in peace processes through new media. This thesis has therefore fulfilled its two specific objectives by exploring the role of a people-centred approach to peace processes with the use of the new media through the lens of conflict transformation and by investigating how citizen journalism has contributed to conflict transformation in Africa between 2008 and 2013 in the Kenyan context. The results as presented throughout the thesis, especially in chapter five and six, are the traceable effects of constructive change processes in the numerous endeavours of Kenyan netizens and the Ushahidi platform, such that, despite the new media being considered a "double edged-sword" that could cut both ways for peace or for disruption, its "God sent" values are no less visible. The human-centred innovations that are constantly generated by the Kenyan citizen journalists and netizens are investing in constructively moving Kenya from negative peace to positive peace.

APPENDIX I: In-depth Interview Guide

General introduction and samples of questions

My name is Toyin Ajao. I am a doctoral student of the Political Sciences Department, University of Pretoria. This research explores ways in which the public is responding to violent conflicts through citizen journalism platform using Ushahidi as a case study. The Ushahidi platform is chosen as a result of its unprecedented crowdsourcing crisis mapping in responding to the Kenya's 2008 post-election violence (PEV). I am interested in investigating the *extent in which the Ushahidi platform has contributed to peace in Kenya since its emergence in responding to the 2008 post-election violence.* I will be delighted if you can interact with me to explore this curiosity. This interview is unstructured, but I will ask a few questions to prompt conversations and we proceed from there. Your insights into the case study will indicate how to proceed with the interview. Thank you.

The Ushahidi Platform:
- ➢ Will you be so kind as to tell me about yourself and your work?
- ➢ How do you and your organisation engage with the new media?
- ➢ What do you see as the benefits or otherwise of the new media in Kenya?
- ➢ What did you see as the role of the new media technology in the 2008 PEV?
- ➢ What motivated the emergence of the Ushahidi platform?
- ➢ What do you see as Ushahidi's role since the 2008 PEV?
- ➢ What do you consider the outcome of Ushahidi's responses to the 2008 PEV?
- ➢ Have you noticed any difference in the political clime since the 2008 PEV especially with the presence of the new media technology? What are these differences?
- ➢ What has been the contribution of the mass media to the changing political terrain in Kenya? Can you tell me your views on this?
- ➢ How is Ushahidi collaborating with other platforms and what are the results of this collaboration?
- ➢ Do you think the voices of the people and their initiatives count for something in addressing peace and conflict issues in Africa?

Other Platforms:

➢ Will you be kind to tell me about yourself and your work?

➢ Are you a blogger or how do you use the new media?

➢ How do you and your organisation engage with the new media?

➢ What do you see as the benefit or otherwise of the new media in Kenya?

➢ What did you see as the role of the new media technology in the 2008 PEV?

➢ What do you see as Ushahidi's role in the 2008 PEV?

➢ What do you consider the outcome of Ushahidi's responses to the 2008 PEV?

➢ What do you think of the citizen journalism platform in Kenya?

➢ What has been the contribution of the mass media to the changing political terrain in Kenya? Can you tell me your views on this?

➢ If you had to compare the citizen journalism platform with the mass media platform in the realities of action taken in Kenya's 2008 PEV, what would be your reflections?

➢ Have you noticed any difference in the political clime since the 2008 PEV especially with the presence of the new media technology? What are these differences?

➢ Do you think the voices of the people and their initiatives count for something in addressing peace and conflict issues in Africa?

➢ Have you ever collaborated with Ushahidi or other citizen journalists? If yes, on what issue and what was the outcome of the collaboration?

➢ Do you know of any specific action that took place in relation to other citizen journalists' platform in Kenya? What action, who took this action and what were the results?

APPENDIX II: List of Research Participants for In-depth Interviews

1. Daudi Were, male. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: Luhya. Profession: Political Scientist.

2. Dennis Owino, male. Age: 25-30. Ethnicity: Luo. Profession: Communication Consultant.

3. Kepha Ngito, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Luo. Profession: Researcher.

4. Happy Olal, male. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: Luo. Profession: Activism/Activist.

5. Ben Mulwa, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Kamba. Profession: Consultant/Politician.

6. Irungu Houghton, male. Age: 50-55. Ethnicity: African. Profession: Public Interest Advocate.

7. Hamzal Egal, male. Age: 30-35. African. Profession: Lawyer.

8. Muthoni Wanyeki, female. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: African-Canadian. Profession: Human Rights Activist.

9. Erik Hersman, male. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: Caucasian. Profession: Technologist/ICT.

10. Jessica Musila, female. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: Kamba. Profession: Policy Analyst.

11. George Kegoro, male. Age: 45-50. Ethnicity: Kisii. Profession: lawyer.

12. Yvonne Owuor, female. Age: 45-50. Ethnicity: Kenyan. Profession: lawyer.

13. Wambui Mwangi, female. Age: 45-50. Ethnicity: Kikuyu. Profession: Intellectual.

14. Patrick Gathara, male. Age: 45-50. Ethnicity: Kikuyu. Profession: Political Cartoonist/Commentator.

15. David Kobia, male. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: African-American. Profession: Software Engineer.

16. Kui Kihoro, female. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: Black African. Profession: PhD Student.

17. Boniface Mwangi, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Kenyan. Profession: Photographer/activist.

18. John Githongo, male. Age: 50-55. Ethnicity: Kenyan. Profession: Economist/Activist.

19. Tony Mochama, male. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: Kissi. Profession: Writer/Poet/Journalist.

20. James Smart, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Luhya/Toro. Profession: Journalist.

21. Juliana Rotich, female. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: Nandi. Profession: Tech Entrepreneur.

22. Absolom Shalakha, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Luhya. Profession: Peacebuilder.

23. Rasna Warah, female. Age: 50-55. Ethnicity: Indian. Profession: Writer.

24. Peter Mwamachi, male. Age: 30-35. Ethnicity: Taita. Profession: Peace Practitioner.

25. Marceline Nyambala, female. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: Luo. Profession: Media Project Manager.

26. Sellah Kingoro, female. Age: 35-40. Ethnicity: Luhya. Profession: Researcher

27. Francis Kariuki, male. Age: 50-55. Ethnicity: Kikuyu. Profession: Civil Servant.

28. Dipesh Pabari, male. Age: 40-45. Ethnicity: Indian. Profession: Tourism manager.

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