

## **Violence and Hunger**

In the last few weeks we have experienced unprecedented levels of violence. It started in June when the rain disappeared and people started looking for those responsible for stopping the rain! One poor family was identified as the ones responsible and the agitated community members who were now acting as a lynch mob pounced on them with all rage. Their homes were destroyed and their few valuable belongings taken away.

Fortunately, the security people were quick to save their lives. As a coincidence, the rains started soon after the violence, as if to vindicate the mob. At the same time there was a new kind of violence emerging which was causing a lot of worry and fear. People were being murdered or wounded by knife in their homes or in the road, day and night. When the rain started we thought that the people would relax once more and continue with their garden work.

Unfortunately, little did we know that we had yet to see more violence. A little-known criminal gang emerged, killing people with knives and wounding so many. Many people have been killed and many more have been wounded. The security people are working hard to restore order. Sadly, some young men have now taken matters into their own hands. They are constantly looking for suspects and killing them immediately. The criminal gang is slowing down but the young men are getting out of hand.

Perhaps the violence is indicative of the desperation and hopelessness that is facing many people here. The elders are fast losing their traditional authority. The former armed warriors are now redundant and hopeless. The cattle that were once the source of their pride are now very few. The young ladies are the source of cheap labour that cannot even sustain them. The only viable source of livelihood for these people is agriculture. If the crops are threatened by drought the whole community becomes very agitated.

The situation still remains bad. The level of starvation is very high. Many people are hardly able to afford a meal a day. For the elderly people, the sick, the child-headed families, and the lactating mothers, things are even worse. We are very grateful that with your help we have been able to support these highly vulnerable members of the community.

With the last donation we were able to help one thousand two hundred people with approximately twenty five kilograms of maize and five kilograms of beans.

On the positive note, the costs of food have started going down. We hope it will still go down further.

Fr Sylvester, MHM  
July 21, 2017