Kenya held the fourth multiparty general elections on 27th December, 2007. A dispute arose following the results of the presidential results on 30th December 2007 by the electoral Commission of Kenya(ECK) which quickly degenerated into an unprecedented spiral of violence in various parts of Kenya.
LOSSES

- displacement of over 500,000 persons
- loss of homes/familiar environment,
- loss of family/relationships
- food/security,
- basic services such as a school and medical care,
- destruction of property
- heightened ethnic hatred and general disruption of social and economic way of life.
EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

- Immediate reactions among the affected population, nearly all the Kenyans that may have suffered severe violence and forced displacement will initially display reactions of (Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms PTSS).
- In the acute phase, these may include:
  - disbelief
  - numbness
  - restlessness
- intrusive thoughts
- grief reactions
- intrusive flashbacks
- social withdrawal
- uncontrollable crying.
Among the children, there may be additional reactions, such as regression to an earlier development stage such as bedwetting, clinging to a parent(s) or/and become mute.

As a result of this destructive phase, many children, adolescents, and adults were severely affected psychologically.
TRAUMATIC RESPONSE

- The severity of the event
- The individual history
- The meaning the event represents
- Coping skill, values, beliefs
- Reactions & support from family friends and professionals
POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA

- Substance abuse
- Compulsive behaviour patterns
- Inability to make healthy professional/or lifestyle choices
- Dissociative symptoms
- Feelings of ineffectiveness, shame, despair, hopelessness
- Loss of personhood
- Feeling permanently damaged
- Loss of previously sustained beliefs
the victim can be silenced by the deafness of others

Self destructive and impulsive behaviour
EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Inability to maintain close relationships or choose appropriate friends
- Hostility
- Social withdrawal
- Feeling constantly threatened
- Sexual problems
ETHICAL TRAUMA COUNSELLING

- can be engaged in when the following factors are present
- Safety has been restored and there is no chance of threat to life or other danger, when basic survival needs are met
- If done by professionally trained counsellors
- If ongoing regular follow up counselling can be guaranteed
- If a person indicates that they wish to be counselled
WAY FORWARD

- Recognise the need to have professionally trained counsellors, that cater for specific groups
- Educate our communities on the importance of professional counselling in relation to traumatic events in our lives