

Organizing Committee of WSF 2007 Narrative Report

People's Struggles, People's Alternatives

April 2007, Nairobi, Kenya

Appreciation

We would like to thank everyone who attended the WSF event in Nairobi and those who brought their ideas and energies to make it happened. We would also like to acknowledge with appreciation, the hard work of those who volunteered with the only expectation of contributing to the construction of a better world.

It is necessary to mention the in-kind and financial contribution of the following friends and partners who made the WSF2007 possible:

<i>In-kind contribution from</i>	<i>Financial Contributions were made by:</i>
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ALIS	Alternative Interpretation Systems
ASF	African Social Forum
BABELS	Babels International Network is an association of interpreters around the world
IC	International Council of the WSF
KICC	Kenyatta International Conference Centre
KSF	Kenya Social Forum
OC	Eastern African Organizing Committee of the WSF 2007 Event.
WSF2007 Secretariat	The Secretariat Office of the OC

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INTRODUCTION

The Eastern African Organizing Committee, the Africa Social Forum Council and the Secretariat of the WSF2007 would like to proffer you, from their joint perspective, an evaluative report on the World Social Forum 2007. The report is a humble and candid effort to share with the wider constituency of the WSF the experiences, the challenges, pitfalls, shortcomings and achievements of the 7th edition of the WSF. The Nairobi event was a journey of many visions just as it was a public square of many voices and therefore many experiences; all galvanized into collective actions and expressions from global civil society and social movements. Africa, its people and social movements from all walks of life having been part of the articulation, celebration of cultures and alternatives added their voices for the first time in the greatest event ever in the history of the continent, not as the victim or simply voicing oppression, but as the expression of hope and desire for another world. From conversations and a wide array of consultations at all levels to social mobilization through street theatre, song, dance, intergenerational dialogue, exchange of ideas across the continents down to the local levels; the World Social Forum 2007 was indeed a global process held in Africa; infused with Africa's vision and in recognition of and articulation with other struggles and alternatives within the wider landscape curving new and promising political and social imaginations.

We proffer you a perspective in a simple narrative that may not capture the wide spectrum of viewpoints in respect to the event, particularly through its multidimensional expressions of survival and resistance across the world. It is, however, an attempt to document the energies and aspirations of collectives that went into making the World Social Forum 2007 possible. While the Journey may not have been smooth, there are many lessons to be learned, many experiences to share, many pitfalls to caution about and many misconceptions to admonish against.

The narrative offers an account of our experience, a constructive critique to the process and also an explication of the unique context within which the process acquired its particularly African dynamic. It does address the issues and criticisms directed to the WSF 2007 Secretariat during the last IC meeting in Nairobi; namely, the *militarization* and *commercialization* of the event, and the *logistical snafus* that were experienced before and during the event.

There are many questions to be answered, many questions that will remain unanswered. These will include such questions like: has the WSF2007 captured the imaginations of social movements in Africa, inspired their reflections and gone a long way towards decolonizing their minds so they can begin to dream of a different world? has it extended the process of disillusionment and

marginalization so as to break the spirit of resistance? has it inspired such an insurrection of energies, ideas and determination that will transform communities to believe in their cosmovisions as the basic tenets of the different world we intend to bring into existence - a world without a blue print, a world without super-designers? but a world which will be negotiated from a myriad of visions, a plethora of strategies that, at times, may chime into one harmonious melody. In short: a new and better world for the many who want change.

The World Social Forum came to Africa at a time when civil society and social movements in the region were grappling with matters of politics of trust amongst NGOs and the wider mass movements, fragmentation of old alliances and a wide range of issues related to the need for a collective approach to addressing the cycle of recurrent problems that affected the continent. The WSF at its best brought to Africa an open space that recognized, reaffirmed and valorised its vision and the continent's capacity to resist neo-liberalism and all forms of oppression. It sensitized the continent to the emerging transformative paradigm and resurgent power of revolutionary visions that have generated a wave of critique of the present world order, especially from Latin America. Africa, a continent that was synonymous with oppression, disease and apathy displayed and dispelled all manner of subjugation by showcasing grandeur of celebration, critique, alternatives and cultural diversity through a visionary outlook that echoed the spirit of *Ubuntu* and the un-dying spirit of Pan-Africanism that had inspired successive generations of resistance against imperialist subjugation. The strength in synergy and dialogue based on values of dignity, ethics, solidarity and care; imperatives that make Africa an indispensable element among the global forces that will change the world.

The World Social Forum will be remembered by the seamless convergences that emerged, the open space that was not a mere separation of theory from praxis but a problematic roadmap of realities of the event and its future. The Forum was a mirror image of the mundane realities of community life and a reminder that the space is not a utopia, but an expression of the ordinary lives, livelihoods and life-worlds by not attempting to sanitize or re-order the many layers of poverty, dissent and all manner of contradictions within and outside the community of social movements, leave alone chronic insecurity that plagues the host nation. The WSF also affirmed the reality and relationships between thematic concerns and the importance of a collective approach in dealing with neo-liberalism through adopting fundamental principles of human rights and dignity as a way of life. The process and its future having connected its life's journey with Africa and its social movements will forever be transformed. We welcome you to build on our experience, to constructively critique our vision and connect with us in an attempt to bring forth a new generation of social movements.

1 THE ROAD TO NAIROBI

With its wealth of experiences and struggles accumulated over the years, the African social movement joined the *Another World is Possible* Movement as early as 2001, to counter the liberal policies that prevail over Africa and share its quest for alternatives. From that date on, the continental movement has not ceased to consolidate and root its own momentum. After four editions in Brazil and India, Africa finally declared its interest in hosting the WSF2007. This further reinforced the demand for extending and enhancing the WSF momentum.

Rooting and expanding the movement was carried out through organizing several national, regional, continental and thematic Forums. No less than 30 national Forums have been held since 2004. At continental level, 4 editions of the African Social Forum have been held in Mali, Ethiopia, Zambia and Guinea.

The various Forums provided an auspicious opportunity to create spaces for exchange, propose alternatives and enhance struggles in the continent. They were also an opportunity to foster ownership of the *Another World is Possible* Movement by a large number of organizations and movements and a dissemination of principles and values spelt out in the WSF Charter.

The choice of Nairobi was accounted for by the long progression of the social movement in this country, since independence, and its role in resisting colonialism and political oppression over nearly 25 years. It was also dictated by the will of African movements to support the consolidation of the Kenyan movement at a time when the country was subjected to strong pressures from the United States in their attempt to control the East African region and the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, Kenya enjoys a strategic advantage in the region as a country with a strong potential for mobilization in the region.

Holding the Polycentric Social Forum in January 2006 in Bamako, gave the social movements in Africa an opportunity to mobilise on a large scale and significantly articulate with the rest of the global movements. Bamako was also an important step towards mobilizing for 2007 Nairobi. A significant part of the content and methodology for Nairobi was developed and shared with other continental actors in Bamako. Arising from the increasing need to strengthen the decision-making process within the African social movements, the African Social Forum Council was set up in 2004. It currently consists of some 40 organizations representing the various components of the African social movements from the 5 sub-regions of the continent. Since it was set up, the Council has met at least twice a year. Facilitation Committee and Thematic Commissions were set up in 2005 (in Harare) to ensure wider sharing of tasks and greater coherence in actions carried out within the movement and ahead of the World Social Forums to be held in Africa.

Expanding the movement in Africa and improving the decision making processes in the African movement have led to the need for more active involvement in the International Council and its commissions. As a result, the meetings of the Council and its commissions have recorded a larger African participation in 2005 and 2006.

1-1 *The African Process*

The Kenya Social Forum (KSF) was established in 2002, after the second edition of the WSF in Porto Alegre. The main objective was to popularize the WSF ideas and spirit at the local level and to anchor the same on the on-going anti-imperialist struggles at different levels (see Chart 1 below). The Steering Committee was made of 13 social movements and NGOs. Social Development Network (SODNET) having taken the lead in localizing the Social Forum process was affirmed as the focal point and legal anchor of the Kenya Social Forum process. As is the case nearly everywhere in the world where the WSF event has found a home, it adopted the open space approach. Thus the membership was not strictly defined and the composition of the Steering Committee kept changing from time to time – both in numbers and social movements that, at one time or another, felt attracted to the process. It all depended on commitment to the WSF agenda, familiarity with its dynamics and sharing of responsibilities among the key actors and organizations that had acquired different levels of ideological and practical opposition to neo-liberalism. Between this time and 2004, concerted efforts to establish national social forums in other East African countries were undertaken with varying degrees of consistency and success..

Members of National Social Forums in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda attended the 3rd African Social Forum (ASF) in Lusaka, Zambia, in December 2004. It was during this Forum that the idea of jointly seeking to host the World Social Forum in 2007 was mooted. An intensive discussion on the capability, readiness and challenges of undertaking such a venture was initiated and concluded during the 3 days of the Forum. The rationale for a joint hosting of the WSF as opposed to individual country bidding on its own included: observation that even though the three countries were moving towards economic and political integration, this process was driven from above with little participation of the peoples of these countries. The event would enhance closer cooperation of East Africans at the social movement level; social movements in the region were at various levels of political mobilization and political significance. The hosting of WSF, it was believed, would catalyze the politicization of social movements in the region; as participation of these countries in the WSF had hitherto been below expectations. The reasons for this can be put down to a combination of many factors including,

but not limited to, capacity for resource mobilization and lack of awareness about WSF process.

After interrogating all aspects of the intent, it was finally resolved that East Africa was capable, willing and ready to bid to host WSF 2007. Informal announcements of the intent were then made. At Lusaka, the following was agreed upon: criteria for choosing country and city to bid were to be developed based on a framework agreed upon during the Lusaka Forum; each country's SF to prepare and circulate a capacity statement that would be used to evaluate its suitability; and a list serve be created to facilitate communication. These were to be discussed and decision made during the first Tanzania Social Forum in January 2005. All the foregoing were done and after discussions in Bagamoyo, it was resolved that Nairobi be the city to bid and host the WSF 2007. This was to be taken to the ASF Council meeting in Porto Alegre for subsequent endorsement by the IC

By the time of ASF council meetings in Porto Alegre, only the East African bid was on the table. It was, therefore decided that to give others a second chance, a decision on the hosting country be deferred until the next ASF Council meeting. ASF Council meeting was held in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, in March 2005. In between, additional information was annexed to the bid document. Locally, the Kenya Social Forum (KSF) opened dialogue with the Government of Kenya for political support. The dialogue proved positive. At Las Palmas, it was announced that Mali had also submitted its bid. There followed democratic consultations to decide on the matter in keeping with the WSF Charter of Principles. The consultations culminated in a Special ASF Council meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, in June 2005 at which meeting it was agreed that Mali would host WSF Polycentric in 2006 and Nairobi be the venue for WSF 2007. The Steering Committee of KSF acted as the interim organizing committee for WSF 2007 until January 2006, when representatives from the other three countries met in Bamako during the Polycentric WSF 2006.

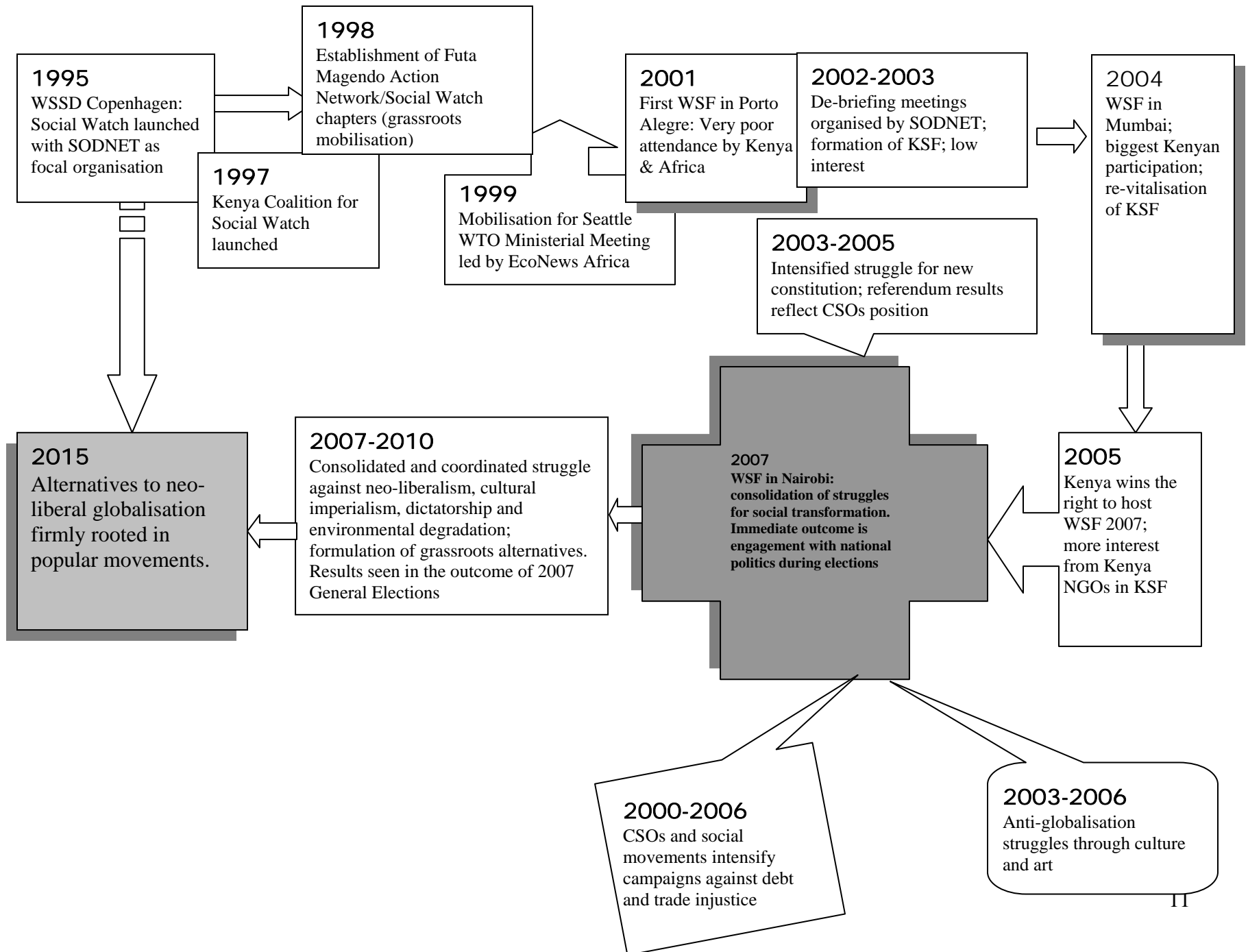
Proposals for the establishment of the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee with representatives from all the co-hosting countries were made in Bamako. Somali and Ethiopian Social Forum also offered to come on board and be co-host - a proposal that was unanimously endorsed by all the interested parties. Between January and March 2006, internet-based consultations were held to determine the nature, size and functioning of the Organizing Committee, culminating in agreement during an IC meeting in Nairobi in March 2006. It was then agreed that the first meeting of the Organizing Committee be held in Nairobi in April 2006.

The inaugural meeting of the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee was held in Nairobi during the first week of April 2006. At this meeting the earlier proposal of having a 68-member committee comprising 44 Kenyan social movement

representatives and 24 representatives (6 each from Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda) was adopted. The meeting also created 7 commissions, namely Content and Methodology; Logistics; Social Mobilization; Resources; Culture; Youth; and Media, Communication and Publicity were created as implementation organs of the OC. To rapidly respond to urgent day-to-day matters regarding the work of the commissions, a Nairobi Local Committee was constituted comprising five persons who belonged to networks. The committee and commissions worked on an “open space” principle allowing anybody who wished to attend and make a contribution to do so. For example, even though the formal membership of the OC was 68, the inaugural meeting at Sportsview Hotel, Kasarani, was attended by more than 80 people representing different movements and organizations.

While some commissions worked well, others did not measure up to the expectations and the secretariat had to intervene and deal with the challenges caused by the performance deficit of certain commissions. Some of the commissions that did not function effectively, until after the secretariat’s intervention, included: Media, Communication and Publicity and Youth. However, with the timely intervention by the Secretariat staff, these operational organs of the Organizing Committee did deliver in varying degrees of success. Eventually several sub-committees, dealing with various aspects of logistical challenges were established comprising members of the secretariat and the wider community of social movements. These complemented the work of the commission in such areas as signage, communication, website management, interpretation, procurement, transport, volunteers etc.

CHART 1: SPECTRUM OF POPULAR STRUGGLE FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: WSF IN KENYAN CONTEXT



1-2 *Connection with Global Social Movements*

The Social Forum process had a unique but expected beginning in Africa. It started off as a continental movement, replicating itself incrementally in different parts of the continent and thereby growing to reflect the rich cultural and political-economic mosaic that is the African political-economic reality. To be sure this has had a special influence on its evolution and relationship with the key organs of the global movement and other actors like the state, corporate and the spiritual sectors. The unique origin also influenced its relationship not only with the other global movements, feeding into the WSF, but more significantly with major national Social Forum processes and polycentric Social Forums across the globe.

The Nairobi process was the product of a series of uniquely structured and extensive consultations that brought on board and connected with the major actors and organs of the African social forum process. To this effect it remains and will shake down in history as an African process culminating in the Nairobi event. Nearly all the major decisions in respect to: content/methodology, venue, timing of the event, budget and structure of the forum activities were made by the respective organs of the WSF, ASF and/or in close consultations with the legitimate organs of the same. In the whole, the pattern of relationships (both local and external) that evolved in the run-up to the event was largely supportive and participatory. Whereas some were patronizing and condescending, a few remained aloof and thereby leaving the process to its own unique dynamics. Good will and appreciable support came from the Italian social movements, the Brazilian collective and the Indian Social Forum. The future of the Forum needs to constructively and heuristically build on this.

2 **EVENT PREPARATION**

2-1 *Vision*

The process of the World Social Forum 2007 was integral to the growth of African Social movements and the wider social movements around the world. The Vision of the event was carved out of the recognition of Africa's role in the emancipation of the human society from the tight and painful grip of neo-liberal capitalism, its implacable will to survive the myriad forms of imperialist subjugation and oppression through militant resistance built around alternative visions of another world. The WSF2007 subsequently placed the necessary premium on the much needed continental alliance, dialogue and convergences as the basis of laying the foundation for strategies for the eventual construction of a new world owing to the

integral connection of Africa's struggles with those of other movements and peoples across the globe.

The theme: *People's Struggles, People's Alternatives*, as the mantra and reference point, therefore, defined the actions of the wider social movements intending to participate in the WSF2007 event. The Africa Social Forum at the International Council meeting held in March 2006 proffered a concept paper outlining an African Vision for the world as it engaged with the neo-liberal forces, breaking new ground in attempting to engage in convergences of building alliances through solidarity while at the same time proposing to carve out a spaces for controversies that would enable movements to demand a halt to and reversal of neo-liberal globalization.

The content and methodology of the WSF2007 were the subject and product of a truly global process with an African signature. A methodology adopted by the Eastern Africa Organizing Committee and the Africa Social Forum was based on wider consultation and dialogue on event methodology and content. It exhaustively and democratically involved members of the International Council, trade unions, mass movements, organizing committees of previous WSF and Polycentric Events. Several consultative sessions, meetings of the Content and Methodology Commissions in Nairobi, Paris, Rome and Parma; the facilitating Committee meetings; local organizing committee meetings; the Africa Social Forum Council meetings and two international Technical Consultations in Nairobi were held throughout the year in order to articulate and define the agenda of the Event in the most inclusive way possible. The event being in Africa meant that its unique features needed to be designed with a view to integrating the many cultural symbols (art, song, dance, music, poetry, drama, and theatre), environmental concerns and cultural diversity as the practical expression of and strategic support for struggles against neo-liberal globalization.

A collective approach to determining the Consultations on actions and struggles, the definition of the nine objectives for action, registration fees, venue for the WSF2007, program outline and nature of activities (co-organized, self-organized) was adopted in an open and democratic process and in recognition of the need for collective responsibility toward the future of the World Social Forum as it connected with the cradle of humanity and a continent that had seen the greatest onslaught of neo- liberalism. Some key decision that defined the vision and methodology of the WSF2007 event were as follows:

- The opening of a consultation process on action and struggles as the basis of defining the issues to be articulated at the WSF2007;
- The construction and management of the common spaces for networking, interaction, registration, merges and participation at the WSF2007 event;

- The development of co-organized activities as the basis of Africa's connection to other peoples' struggles, problems and alternatives towards a better world;
- The fourth day for the construction of new campaigns and proposal on common actions and convergences as the basis of global solidarity and proactive engagement on pertinent issues that characterized peoples struggles and peoples alternatives around the world;
- Neighbourhood centres as an open space for building convergences. This did not work due to insurmountable logistical/spatial limitations;
- A systemization and memory process of documenting and capturing the process as it evolved.

2-1-1 *Mobilization and Consultation: Local to Global Levels*

The preparatory process for the WSF 2007 was subject to and a product of several consultations and mobilization efforts and stages. It encompassed regional, African and international level consultations. This had the effect of conferring democratic character and political legitimacy to the process. The consultations fostered consistent interaction on all aspects pertaining to social mobilization and resources mobilization.

At the International Level

In addition to the consultative meetings held by the international council and its commissions, several mobilization meetings were held. These were:

- Meetings with social movements in Scandinavian countries: Finland, Sweden, Denmark;
- Meeting with the Italian social movement, June 2006;
- Meeting with the Content and Methodology commission in Rome, in June 2006;
- Meeting with Social Movements in France, June 2006;
- Meeting with Babels in France.

Each of these meeting provided an opportunity to share with and brief the wider WSF constituency on the Nairobi Preparatory process and to seek feedback from those who were interested in the success of the Nairobi Event. These included:

- A combined delegation of the ASF council and members of the Nairobi Organizing Committee met with the European Green and Left-wing parliamentary groups in Brussels. The mission was to sensitize the groups to the preparatory challenges of the Nairobi process on the one hand and

also to bring on board the WSF 2007 the World Parliamentary Forum through linking its international actors with the local parliamentarians on the other;

- There was also the meeting with the International Councils' Resource Commission in September 2006, in The Hague, Netherlands. The agenda for the meeting included: exploration of strategies for sustainable funding arrangements for the WSF, reviewing and rationalizing of the budget for the Nairobi event, setting realistic benchmarks for registration fees, categorization and levying of entrance fees etc.;
- African participation in and meeting with the Indian social movements during the Indian Social Forum and exploring opportunities for short-term and long term collaboration along south-south relationships;
- Meeting with the Content and Methodology Committee in September 2006 in Nairobi during which time the nine objectives (hitherto known as thematic terrains) were agreed upon and the necessary spaces designed;
- Meeting with the Content and Methodology Commission, in December 2006, in Nairobi that finalized all the logistical implications of the content and methodology for the event, set the timetable and logistic benchmarks for registration of activities, allocation of stall etc.

At the African Level

Two ASF Council meetings were held: the first in Nairobi in March 2006, the main objective of which was to produce the content and format proposal for the 2007 WSF. In addition it deliberated on and presented the ASF council and its secretariat the work programme in respect to mobilization and fund raising. The ensuing proposals were later on adopted by the IC meeting in Nairobi.

The ASF council meeting was followed by three African council facilitation committee meetings in June, September and December 2006. The meetings provided an opportunity to define the implementation mechanisms for African participation as far as vision, mobilization and resources implications on the one hand were concerned and to liaise with the East African Organizing committee on the broader political implication of Nairobi process on the other.

The Second ASF council meeting was held in Dakar in December 2006. Its deliberations focused essentially on: briefing and debriefing by the E.A. Organizing Committee secretariat on the state of play in regard to the logistical preparations on the ground, state of mobilization in the rest of Africa and the level of resource mobilization. Further still, it provided an opportunity for a few but critical social movements to define and share their strategies and action plans for Nairobi with others. It also made it possible for African social movements to share

with the Eastern African Organizing Committee the challenge of putting the last touches on the content and methodology but most important, to refine the logistical as well as methodological implications of the co-organized activities during the event.

Beyond the ASF council and the facilitation committee meetings, several other mobilization and consultation events took place ahead of WSF 2007. These included but were not limited to the following:

- National forums in Senegal, Benin, Niger, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire.
- Sub-regional forums: West Africa (Nigeria), Southern Africa (Malawi), North Africa (Assemblée constitutive du forum Maghreb in Morocco)
- Forum on migration in Mali ;
- Pan- African Youth Forum in Kenya
- African Trade Union meeting in Kenya;
- Preparatory meeting for West and Central African journalists and media
- Several media briefs and Consultations in Nairobi

Regional and National Levels

The three East African countries carried out various mobilization campaigns to raise awareness in view of promoting an active participation of grassroots organizations the WSF process and the WSF events itself.

Kenya.

Mobilization of social movements, in their rich variety, was the responsibility of the Social Mobilization Commission of the WSF2007. It had, with the support of the secretariat, organized a number of regional and thematic social forums across the country. The first was held in Nairobi on the 25th of May under the theme engendering the WSF Process. This was followed by the Western Kenya Social Forum which was held in Kisumu on the 27th and 28th of July. This Forum was organized by different grass root groups working in the region. It brought together an estimated 3000 people from across the Western Kenya region, including some from Uganda. Different activities organized on the three-day event included, public lectures, cultural performances, and workshops and radio Interviews. Coast Social Forum was held in August. The focus of this event was land Use, Squatters and mineral extraction and economic empowerment for the *wananchi*, while Central Kenya Social Forum was held on 18th November 2006.

The secretariat also took advantage of the national agricultural shows to sensitize and mobilise the Kenyan public to the agenda of the forum. In the informal

settlements, a number of mobilization initiatives took place including a WSF day in Kibera (the largest slum in Africa) on 18th August 2006, at Huruma and through the Kutoka Network of Korogocho. Special attention was directed at the trade union fraternity, which it was felt, had not embraced the social forum process in a manner commensurate with its pivotal role in the liberation of the African people from the yoke of neo-liberalism. As a result, WSF 2007 had a very visible presence of trade union leadership and workers' organizations.

A collaborative relationship was extended to the spiritual sector. AACC/CARITAS WSF Ecumenical Platform which was set up in April 2006 by CARITAS, a global Catholic network and All African Conference of Churches, a continental ecumenical network of protestant churches. It conducted mobilization campaigns targeting the faith based constituents. The ecumenical coalition brought together protestant groups. The AACC/CARITAS Ecumenical Platform thus brought into the mobilization process a very powerful and entrenched community of spiritual communities with many organizations with a proven track record in fighting for social justice, participating in anti-debt and anti-poverty campaigns and with a number of sustainable community-based projects on their collective resumes.

Uganda.

The 2nd edition of Uganda Social Forum (USF 2006) was successfully held from 18th -21st September 2006 at Namboole Stadium. Under the theme *Building Uganda – Our Struggles, Our Solutions*, the highlight was the “Caravan” which moved hundreds of people from all corners of the country to participate in the event. In particular, four Caravans from Northern, Eastern, Western and South Western Uganda were organized to mobilize people and social movements especially from the sub-national level to participate. Thematic caravans particularly for teachers, nurses and labourers were also organized by the respective labour unions.

Specifically, the Caravans carried clear and distinct messages that denounced social exclusion, injustices and inequality; and announced people's alternatives, solutions and actions. Significantly, the call for peace and particularly an end to the war in Northern Uganda was echoed by all the caravans. The International Peace Day (Sept. 21st) was celebrated during the Social Forum with a Peace March that attracted over 600 people through the streets of Kampala calling for peaceful resolution of the conflict and promotion of national reconciliation.

Tanzania

The 2nd Edition of the Tanzania Social Forum (TSF) was held in March 2006, Dar es Salaam. It followed on the theme of the 1st Edition “Another Tanzania is Possible” under the countrywide campaign banner “*Ondoa Umaskini Tanzania- Mkukuta*”. It

was also used as a platform to begin mobilizing towards effective participation in the WSF 2007.

TSF, in conjunction with the sub national forums, held regional forums within Tanzania throughout 2006. The main objectives were to not only mobilize grassroots communities, but, more importantly, to ensure that the youth population was involved in the planning of the Tanzanian leg of the Southern Africa Caravans on their way to WSF 2007. Other forums were held by members of the Tanzanian Association of NGOs (TANGO), which hosts the TSF; these including the gender networks, HIV/AIDS alliances; Tanzania Youth Coalition.

Other endeavours saw members of the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee participate in the Zanzibar International Film Festival, which was also utilized as a platform to mobilize social movements for WSF 2007. In addition, TSF representatives participated in the various technical meeting that were held in Nairobi as part of the preparation process for the WSF 2007.

Youth

The organization of the Intercontinental Youth Camp and activities by youth had been planned and reviewed for many months at the level of the International Council, the Africa Social Forum and the Organizing Committee of WSF2007. There was overwhelming support at each of the meetings which facilitated an interaction between youth and other generations within the respective organs of the World Social Forum. The Africa Social Forum had at the time of its inception, recognized the important role played by youth as the custodians of future societies by enshrining within its structure, a continental youth commission. Youth mobilization was therefore articulated through an intergenerational approach and made integral to the overall mobilization strategy of the Africa Social Forum and the Eastern Africa Organizing Committee.

The EA Organizing Committee at its inaugural meeting set up an autonomous, yet integral (part of the WSF 2007 process), youth commission driven and animated by diverse youth movements alongside other commissions responsible for the event. The Youth Commission, recognizing the lack of memory and continuity within different youth camps in previous forums undertook the following actions:

- Developed key information materials and kit that facilitated a clear understanding of the process, charter of principles, history and modes of participation;
- Identified a gender-balanced team of young people as national focal points at the Africa level to facilitate communication, consultations and mobilization at the national level;

- Instituted a coordination mailing list for information sharing between the Africa Social Forum Council, the Organizing Committee and the different national focal points;
- Organized together with the Africa Social Forum and the Pan African Youth Movement, a continental preparatory process that saw the participation of a group of 30 young people from all regions of the continent, representing many issues affecting youth;
- Facilitated, together with Action-Aid International, the participation of youth from the Continent and from many regions of the host country;
- Coordinated the Caravans from Southern Africa as a strategy to facilitate mobility as well as share WSF principles and spirit with local groups where the Caravan was passing through;

Caravans

The Africa Social Forum Council had expected that the participation of African social movements would be higher than hitherto, particularly as compared to the edition previous of the global forums held in Asia and South America, due to the lower travel expenses for African groups travelling to the event in Nairobi and the availability of different possibilities of travel such as air, rail and road.

The movement of people towards the WSF 2007 venue was therefore conceived within the cultural context of the 'caravan' or more ambitiously, transitory forums that moved through different countries, making stops (oases), connecting with local social movements on issues of debt, trade, HIV/AIDS and other thematic areas of the WSF2007. The arrival of the caravans in Nairobi was timed to coincide with the opening ceremony of the WSF2007 as a symbolic connection of the event to the many movements within Africa. The Caravan having been organized from Lusaka mobilized groups in eighteen buses from South Africa, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania. Other groups that took ownership of this initiative were social movements from Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia. An initiative from West Africa was abandoned at the last minute due to resources and complication on the intended Caravan Route.

2-1-2 Media and Communication

One of the greatest challenges facing the Kenyan Organizers of the WSF2007 was the need and urgency to sensitize the broader African public in general and social movements in particular to the principles, agenda and dynamics of the WSF process. In order to realize this objective, the Media and Publicity Commission of the Organizing Committee was charged with the responsibility of

ensuring that as many people as possible were informed about and sensitized to the dynamics of the WSF process.

Before September 2006, the Convener of the Media and Publicity Commission had prepared an Action Plan focused on building Public Relations with the mainstream media in Kenya and the coordination of Publicity Materials. Within the Commission different communication networks and organizations were represented, but the implementation of all the activities proposed was always tied availability of funds.

To respond to this situation the Secretariat oriented its communication efforts in supporting the information on the two websites (event and process sites), the production of electronic newsletter and the elaboration and distribution of press releases and media advisories to the print and electronic media, highlighting the preparation and challenges toward the event .

The full potential of publicity and communication as a tool of mobilization was not fully realized. Lack of timely resources along with other logistical handicaps delayed the production of publicity material and visualization of events that the secretariat had intended to initiate.

The curious attention of the general Kenya and African public began to be drawn to the prospects of WSF 2007 when the services of a media professional was secured and thereafter a series of public relation events organized. This however came late in the day. The secretariat took advantage of all possible opportunities to create awareness among the different constituencies. It is worth noting that networks, Community Based Organizations, local social forums in and outside Kenya worked closely with the secretariat to ensure steady flow of information to sections of society where it was needed.

2-1-3 Website

The WSF2007 Secretariat, in an attempt to institute a participatory platform for interaction, visibility, convergence and transparency of the entire process, embarked on an initiative of constructing the www.wsfprocess.net that acknowledged and took advantage of media opportunities proffered by new technologies accompanying the grudging democratization of knowledge and information. The International Council together with the Africa Social Forum Council and the Organizing Committee in appreciation of the prototype portal developed by the European Social Forum introduced a more refined content management system through an online Work Space as a participatory platform for the WSF2007 event and the ensuing processes.

The Work Space was sustained through a series of consultative processes, Skype conferences and technical meetings by members of the Indian Organizing Committee, European Social Forum, The Brazilian Collective and the Africa Social Forum. The group exhaustively designed possibilities for accessing content and statistical information on themes, groups, countries, issues, organizations, activities registered for Nairobi and so on. It also enabled groups to openly access information on any organization or group and provided possibilities for open dialogue on possibilities for networking and joint actions. The Work Space further enabled groups to communicate amongst themselves, merge activities on their own and store relevant documents that were central to their activities, whether intended for the Nairobi event or simply to facilitate collaboration in their daily work. To date, the many technical challenges notwithstanding, it offers the greatest of possibilities in the way of making available tools for planning, documenting and sustaining a wide range of activities within the Social Forum Space.

As was the case in all the previous events of the WSF, an event website (www.wsf2007.org) was developed to offer content and information specifically related to the event. The site also provided possibilities for the organizing committee to issue Calls such as volunteers, interpretation and share with the wider public a calendar of events planned within the mobilization process towards the event. The site offered possibilities for local groups to proactively engage in shaping and organizing the Nairobi event. Other actions that were made possible through this site included online payments, donations, media briefs, press releases and other information based services. Both sites were developed using Plone and Zope that are of an open source technology.

2-2 Content and Methodology

2-2-1 *The Planning of the Co organized Activities*

The concept of Co-organized activities was proposed by the African Social Forum and the E.A. Organizing Committee and endorsed by the International Council of the WSF meeting in Nairobi in March 2006 and later on by the IC meeting in Parma in October 2006. The main objective and strategic challenge for the ASF and the OC, was to make visible the global problems but from an African perspective. They were discussed during all of the preparatory meetings of the IC, OC, and Methodology Commission and subsequently endorsed.

Implementing the co-organized activities turned out to be a formidable challenge since it was an innovation that required ample time for planning before execution. Estimating the number of people who would be interested in taking part in the

different thematic axes was in itself a challenge, the poor handling of which led to many huge tents remaining under-utilized. By November 2006, 14 themes had been agreed upon and Members of the ASF and OC were asked to prepare concept papers for each theme. Each concept paper was expected to address a specific issue or problem and provide some guidelines for different formats suitable for each activity. Specific organizations were asked to facilitate and coordinate particular activities according to their areas of interest and competence.

The OC, the ASF Council, and the IC were convinced that the Co-organized Activities would provide the best mechanism for African organizations to show the world the African perspective on complex issues of global implications. To that effect, they were equally convinced that these activities would attract large audiences from all over the world, especially those interested in African problems. four tents that could accommodate up to 3,000 (in addition to the Kasarani Gymnasium which had a 5,000 capacity) people each were prepared. It was also decided that these activities should not compete (for audience and thematic areas) with the self organized activities; therefore, the third session of the day (time slot) from 2:30 pm to 5 pm would be dedicated exclusively to the co-organized activities.

2-2-2 *The Planning for the Fourth Day (Proposals for Actions Day)*

The proposal to have a day of convergences was tabled during the IC meeting in March 2006 and adopted accordingly. A meeting in Rome in July 2006 discussed this in detail. It was later followed with a concept paper on the same by the Brazilian collective. The fourth day was discussed in all of the preparatory meetings except that, as opposed to co-organized activities, the methodological implications were not thoroughly discussed, leaving room for last minute tying up of the numerous loose ends..

The idea behind the innovation was to enrich the WSF format by introducing a day in which all organizations that are keen to present proposals for actions, campaigns and struggles would make them visible during the fourth day. In all previous WSF events, organizations met, networked, and formed alliances to expand or to be more effective in their work. All these would take place everyday during the event but they were not visible enough; meaning that not all the participants in the WSF event would know about them. The innovation succeeded in creating a methodology that would allow as many participants as possible at the Forum to be informed about the proposals made by other organizations.

The afternoon of the 4th day was intended to be dedicated to presentations of all the proposal or calls for action. A total of 21 rooms were designated for that purpose according to the thematic areas of the proposals (identified by the IC

Content and Methodology Commission during its December 2006 meeting in Nairobi); and two facilitators were identified and assigned to each room. The role of the facilitators was to conduct the meetings in order to ensure that proposals were made and formulated in an intelligible way. Since all the proposals were to be read or presented verbally, it was necessary to interlace the process with cultural expressions related to the topic. As a culmination of the afternoon, there would be a symbolic tree planting ceremony.

2-2-3 *The Memory Project*

Unlike in the past forums, the memory project of the WSF 2007 was unique. It was set up with modest means and skeletal human resources; yet it was aimed at addressing a broad range of concern expressed by the organizing committee and ASF. With no records to make reference to on the previous WSF memory processes, Nairobi memory building agenda was like a bush hog clearing a new path in the jungle of the Social Forum process connecting with the African social realities for the first time.

By late November 2006, the secretariat of the WSF 2007 gave responsibility to a representative of the Uganda Social Forum, seconded to the secretariat, to handle this project. A strategy developed in early December 2006 extensively covered three phases of the process: Pre-event memory and documentation, event memory, post-event follow up and documentation.

2-3 *Resources Mobilization*

Resource availability is critical to any undertaking. For an event of the magnitude of the World Social Forum, a clear cash flow plan was needed well before hand. Otherwise, planning and subsequent execution becomes a disaster in the making.

Resource mobilization was slow and, at times, a frustrating and humiliating affair. Even before we embarked on setting up structures of the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee some donors treated the organizers as if they have had a record of serial embezzlement of funds. To this extent it was a case of “guilty until proved otherwise.” Members of the organizing committee were subjected to forensic interrogation that nearly led to the abandonment of the undertaking. A Resource Commission of the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee was established in April 2006 and charged with the responsibilities, the principal among which were:

- To draw a memorandum of understanding between the E.A Organizing Committee and ASF Council Secretariat;
- To work on the budget;

- To work on a Resource Mobilization action plan;
- To develop a financial management manual and
- To consult with the main actors within the Brazilian Collective, the Indian Social Forum and the team of consultants charged with the responsibility of advising the IC on resource sustainability challenges facing the WSF..

Resource Mobilization trips were made to Finland, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and France with varying degrees of success. A number of international organizations with offices in Africa in general and Kenya in particular were also approached. In this particular regard both the secretariats of the EA Organizing Committee and the ASF Council are grateful to the Danish Association for International Cooperation (MS), Action Aid International, Oxfam GB, Heinrich Boll Foundation and ENDA-TM for coming in early enough to enable the Organizing Committee secure seed resources to meet the overhead costs of running the secretariat and to engage in social mobilization.

One of the earliest international financial supporters of the Forum was Oxfam Novib with a € 400,000 grant for the Nairobi Secretariat and € 185,000 for the ASF Secretariat in Dakar. Without this expedient support the Forum risked an embarrassing stillbirth. The rest of the resources were as per the table below:

AGENCY/SOURCE	CURRENCY	AMOUNT	KES EQUIV.	NAIROBI	DAKAR
MS Kenya	KES	12,500,000	12,500,000	12,500,000	NIL
Oxfam GB	KES	6,200,000	6,200,000	6,200,000	NIL
HBF	KES	1,800,000	1,800,000	1,800,000	NIL
Action Aid International	USD	100,000	7,200,000	USD 70,000	USD 30,000
Oxfam Novib	EUR	585,000	52,650,000	EUR 400,000	USD 185,000
Italian Government/IPS	USD	300,000	21,600,000	USD 168,000	EUR 101,000
Aide et Acion	CFA	10,000,000	1,313,200	NIL	CFA 10,000,000
Christian Aid	GBP	80,000	10560000	GBP 60,000	GBP 20,000
Tavola de la Pace	EUR	80,000	7,200,000	EUR 400,000	EUR 40,000

AGENCY/SOURCE	CURRENCY	AMOUNT	KES EQUIV.	NAIROBI	DAKAR
ACORD	USD	17,000	1,139,000	NIL	USD 17,000
CCFD	EUR	30,000	2,700,000	EUR 20,000	EUR 10,000
EED	EUR	100,000	9000000	EUR 100,000	NIL
Siemenpuu Foundation	EUR	15,000	1,350,000	EUR 15,000	NIL
HIVOS	EUR	100,000	900,000	EUR 100,000	NIL
ICCO	EUR	200,000	18,000,000	EUR 180,000	EUR 20,000
Cordaid	EUR	150,000	13,500,000	EUR 150,000	NIL
Catalan Govt	EUR	120,000	8,400,000	NIL	EUR 120,000
Sida	SEK	2,000,000	18,000,000	SEK 2,000,000	NIL
Registration	KES	28,000,000	28,000,000	KES 28,000,000	NIL
French Cooperation	EUR	120,000	1,080,000	NIL	EUR 100,000
TOTAL			223,092,200		

As can be gleaned from the table above against a total budget of US\$ 6,839,557, only US\$ 3,187,031 was realized. This amounts to only 46.59% of the projected budgetary requirements. It is a pity that due to this resource constraint, such essential items like the Solidarity Fund had to be foregone, leading to less African participation than had been envisaged. Of the US\$ 3,187,031 realized, the WSF 2007 Nairobi Secretariat realized US\$ 2,336,892 with US\$ 850,139 going to ASF Council secretariat in Dakar.

To make matters worse, most of the monies promised came late and as at the time of the Forum, only about 55% of the money pledged had been disbursed. This necessitated a risky pre-financing arrangement, particularly in respect to some logistical needs of the event that ended up compromising the quality of some services rendered to the Forum. Part of the balance of the money came after the event and as yet more than € 100,000 is yet to be disbursed.

As at the time of compiling this report, the secretariat is saddled with more than KSh 10 million (€ 110,000) deficit.

2-4 Coordination to deliver the event

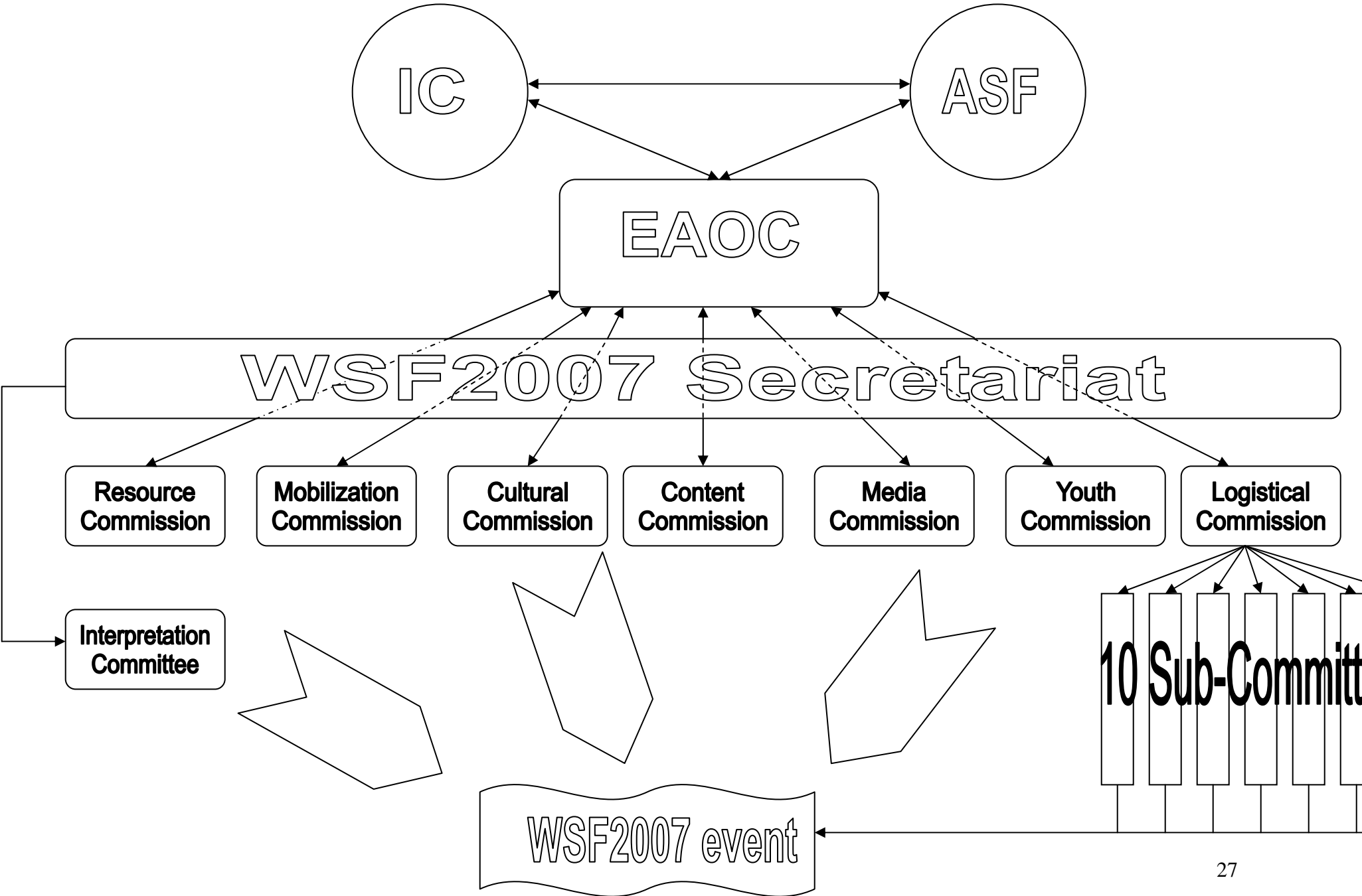
The Secretariat for the WSF 2007 was housed at the Social Development Network (SODNET), which also houses the Kenya Social Forum. The secretariat's main role was to facilitate the work of the various commissions set up by the Organizing Committee of the WSF 2007 based in Nairobi.

Members of the Secretariat included employees seconded from the following organizations:

- SEATINI
- SODNET
- MS Kenya
- African Social Forum
- Uganda social Forum
- People Against Torture

Members of the secretariat were assigned to the various commissions, depending on their interest and skills, but due to the nature of the work involved some of them would be reassigned to duties and tasks lacking in and requiring in-house competence.

The key members of the secretariat were the conveners of Resource Mobilisation and Content and methodology commissions. They ensured that information was shared with the African Social Council and the International Council among others in the WSF respectively.



Even before the formal decision by the African Council meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe that Kenya would host the 7th edition of the WSF, the Steering Committee of the Kenyan Social Forum had already sent to both the African Social Forum and the IC a proposal suggesting Uhuru Park in combination with the Kenyatta International Conference Centre – both within Nairobi Central Business District - as the appropriate venue. Part of the considerations that went into the choice of this particular space was that: the forum would connect with many ordinary Kenyans, the problem of transport would partly be alleviated as most of the accommodation facilities would be within a walking distance and that the venue would combine in one space both the opening and the closing ceremonies. Both venues were secured through down payments made as early as March 2006.

On further consultation with the relevant authorities regarding when possession would be taken of Uhuru Park in particular and when exactly the Organizing Committee could begin to construct the necessary facilities, we were left in no doubt that it was not going to be possible to occupy an open public utility for close to three months without facing formidable logistical challenges. The possibilities of moving to Nyayo Stadium, which is less than a kilometre from the original venue, were explored. The recommendation made to move to Nyayo National Stadium by the technical team that had been set up by the Organizing Committee was endorsed. Arrangements for the architectural mapping of the potential territory were then made.

It is during the Content and Methodology meeting that took place in Nairobi in September 2006 and in close consultation with the local organizing committee, that the final decision to adopt Kasarani as the venue for WSF 2007 was arrived at. The decision was immediately and widely publicized throughout the WSF fraternity. Reports to the subsequent meetings of the various organs of both the African Social Forum process and the IC of the WSF conveyed the same message.

It was, therefore, extremely strange that during and after the event and IC meeting in Nairobi, a few voices were raised taking exception to the decision, allegedly, by the E.A. Organizing Committee to hold the forum at Kasarani, perceived to be removed from ordinary Kenyans. This calls for a reminder that, in future, decisions by the IC must enjoy collective and consistent ownership by the relevant organs of the WSF.

It is worth noting that Kasarani is in a low-income neighbourhood with such informal settlements like Njiru, Githurai, Mathare, Baba Dogo, Kariobangi, Korogocho, Brukola, Ngomongo, Dandora, Mwiki etc. surrounding it. Perhaps to

most of the critics, ordinary Kenyans are only those that occupy high rise offices in the city centre.

Physical Facilities at the Venue

The initial scope of identifying, agreeing on and designing the event territory was the initiative of the Steering Committee of the Kenya Social Forum. It was later taken up by the OC. The ensuing project was derived from the 'Report of the WSF Technical Consultation in Nairobi' (Aug 2006). Given that the time left to deliver the facility was extremely short and that the uncertainty about the envisaged budget not matching the scope of the project continued to haunt the planning phase of the undertaking there was a lot of understandable hesitation in getting started with the work. The architect of WSF 2005 and his counterpart for WSF 2007, engaged in consultations that culminated in the decision as to the site and type of physical facilities needed for the event. Their recommendations were, as a matter of procedure, endorsed by the Nairobi/August meeting of the IC. Thereafter, Davinder Lamba firmly assumed the coordination role for the WSF 2007 physical facility project. His professional background as an architect put him in a good stead to coordinate the project and provide the necessary leadership in matters concerning the venue. He put together a physical facility's project team consisting of a group of professionals with the requisite expertise. The project team was vetted and formally appointed by the secretariat against a honoraria commensurate with the task at hand and resource availability. A project office was set up at Mazingira Institute. This was part of the Institute's voluntary contribution to WSF2007. A member of the secretariat was appointed to liaise between the secretariat and the physical facility project team.

The Development phase included the establishment of the project team, preparation of project management plan (objectives, scope, schedule), carrying out technical investigations and the design of the physical facility. In addition, its mandate covered such areas as: preparation of procurement documents, inviting tenders from suitable contractors or service providers, analyzing tenders, coming up with bill of quantities and presenting reports and recommendations to the Secretariat for further action. Activities during the Execution phase included: the award of contracts and the appointment of contractors or service providers by the Secretariat, and supervision of the construction of the physical facility as required. The operation phase included the use of the physical facility for the duration of WSF 2007. The closing phase included the dismantling and removal of all WSF building works and installations and handing over MISC to its administration.

2-4-2 *Volunteers*

Some of the challenges facing the task of mobilizing for effective interpretation applied, in equal measure, to the recruitment and mobilization of volunteers. The challenge had to do with the difficulties associated with the need to determine the number needed and how and where to recruit them from and how to bring them to speed on the principles and dynamics of the WSF, particularly if Africa was to be the main catchments' region. The recent effort by the previous Kenyan regimes to depoliticize the youth at both tertiary and secondary levels of schooling played havoc with our efforts to target the universities and training colleges for recruitment of volunteers. This meant that the majority of those who responded to the call for volunteers were individuals seeking short-term employment. This, of course, defined to a great extent the attitude with which the volunteers approached and performed their duties before and during the Forum event. It soon became clear that due to deep capitalist penetration of the social fabric of society, the culture of voluntarism was a grossly misconceived and, therefore, undermined spirit in the Kenyan society. Not that it does not exist. It is there in admirable quality and quantity but confined to particular areas of social solidarity rather than in areas where donor money has devalued its significance as an existential device.

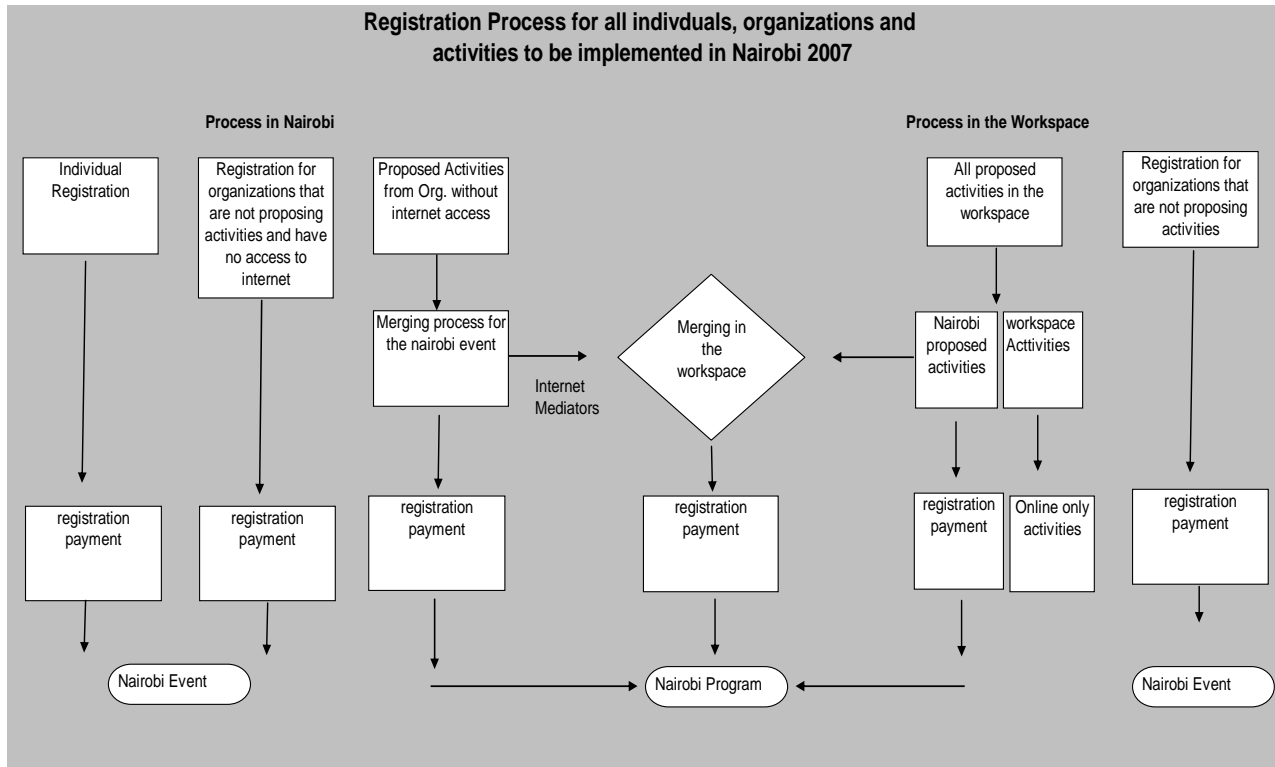
In view of all these challenges the secretariat appointed a volunteer coordinator to manage all matters pertaining to volunteers. He drafted a concept paper containing principles and guide lines expected to inform the recruitment of the volunteers, matched supply and demand sides of the challenge and distributed the volunteer skills needed for the different tasks at the Forum

More than 900 volunteers responded to the call. Of these 514 were selected from the online database and taken through the training sessions held a week before the event. The focus of the sessions was on the nature of the WSF, the spirit of voluntarism and the specific tasks the volunteers were expected to perform. Some other 500 volunteers were recruited by local organizations, like the Kutoka Network, AACCC/Caritas Ecumenical Platform and Undugu Society of Kenya to help in the organization of the march (opening ceremony) and the marathon (closing ceremony); also, these volunteers were participants during the event itself.

2-4-3 *Registration and Programming*

The WSF 2007 executed two innovative methods for registration: introduction of online registration using the Workspace which was later called the process site (www.wsfprocess.net) and a payment schedule of individual fees to attend the

Nairobi event. The following figure describes the procedure for registering individuals, organizations and activities. It is important to note that there were two aspects of the registration procedure: one for the organizations with access to internet and the other for those who did not. The latter is the case for many organizations in Africa.



Major challenges arising from the registration process were as follows:

- A four-step procedure and only one language (English) for registration of one activity created some degree of confusion among the users: first it was necessary to become a “user” of the process site www.wsfprocess.net (this was not the individual registration to attend the Nairobi event). Then, the organization promoting the activity had to register since only organizations could register activities. Once these two steps had been fulfilled, it was necessary to fill out two forms for one activity – one for the content and the other for the logistical information of the same activity.
- Some people only filled out the first form (some were disconnected by the server and others were unable to follow the procedure) which basically meant that they did not register the activity for the Nairobi event. Other people did not understand the difference between registering an activity

and a proposal. These two groups of people only realized the problem when they arrived to Nairobi and found out that their activities had not been registered.

In response to some of the above challenges the Secretariat embarked on conducting several workshops with local organizations and networks in order to explain to the wider public the registration process and familiarize the prospective participants with the new internet tool. It did not, however, maintain constant communication with the organizations using the *process.net* site due to the overwhelming load of work.

In order to build the necessary bridge for those without access to internet, a group of internet mediators was necessary to manually input into the *www.process.net* site all activities registered in Nairobi; using the e-mail (and paper) forms. More than 100 activities were registered in this manner.

A “self organized” merging process (for similar activities) was anticipated by the *process.net* internet tool developers to take place during the registration process. But only a few organizations took the initiative to look for other activities similar to the ones they were promoting.

Access to information from the *process.net* site and later on from the Ethica Bank in Italy was difficult since it would take a long time to download a file and then convert the file into a format that would be useful by the Nairobi team. The same technology – software – was used before and during the European Social Forum 2006 in Athens, and therefore its promoters must have experienced the same problems but they did not find it useful to share that experience with the Nairobi team.

Finally, the payment modules were developed and built into the registration process quite late; making it difficult for organizations to pay for their activities and for the Secretariat to analyze the payment data – resulting in difficulties associated with the need for timely and accurate verification of all sorts of payments made in respect to services expected from the Organizing Committee.

The Fee Structure Debate.

The introduction of a payment schedule for individual registration based on the origin of the participants (Africa, Rest of the South and North) generated an internal debate in the Secretariat, and, later on, the same debate was taken up by a number of local organizations. One side of the debate argued that the WSF was too dependant on external funding and that such a situation tended confer undue influence on powerful international organizations, predisposing them to act as if they owned the WSF space and process. Therefore, it was argued that it was

increasingly becoming necessary for the WSF to begin to explore the possibilities of self-funding – an eventuality that would imply more direct ownership of the process by those who appreciate the value of investing in the process. The structure of the fees was set up in such a way that the organizations and individuals from the North would subsidize the organizations and individual from the South. All the attendant decisions were not only shared with all the formal organs of both the ASF and the IC of the WSF but, most crucially, put forward for ratification by the same.

The other side of the debate argued that the structure was drawn along conventional stereotypical lines since there were also poor people in the North who could not afford such high fees. It was argued further that organizations from the North would end up paying for the “poor” people of the South and the dependence syndrome would be entrenched instead of being put paid to.

The internal debate within the Secretariat (with inputs from the ASF Council Secretariat) reached an agreement over the fees by lowering the fees, from the levels suggested by the Resources Commission of the IC, for the North, South and Africa, and adding a reduced fee for students, poor individuals from the slums around Nairobi – not to forget poor peasants and pastoralists from the countryside. Provision was made for a daily entrance fee of Ksh.50 especially for those interested in taking part in specific activities. On hindsight this particularly subsidized entrance fee should have received timely and wider publicity than was the case. It is instructive to note that the IC Resources Commission had proposed US\$ 150, US\$ 50 and US\$ 25 respectively for Northern, Southern and African participants respectively. This was lowered by the Secretariat to US\$ 100, US\$ 25 and US\$ 5 respectively.

At the same time the debate on fees for commercial and non-commercial stalls, pavilions or specific tents for participating organizations or delegations, and rooms of different capacities for self organized activities surfaced. The fee structures under debate had a direct effect on the planning of the activities: some organizations created alliances with international funding agencies and were able to negotiate with the Secretariat for reduced fees while other made direct requests to the secretariat seeking unconditional fee waiver for them. These were granted.

2-4-4 Interpretation and equipment

It had been expected that, in keeping with the WSF tradition, interpretation would be done by the Babels – a network of volunteer interpreters – as the core interpretation group. The organizers of WSF2007 in Nairobi had sent three local interpreters to the WSF2006 Polycentric in Bamako – to take an active part in the process and to learn from the experienced organizers of interpretation. This group

was meant to form the core Kenyan section of Babels – and then return to Kenya and spearhead the process of mobilizing interpreters, start training sessions of these and also organize for the actual planning of interpretation for WSF2007.

During the July-August consultations in Nairobi, the Babels, through a representative of ALIS (Alternative Interpretation Systems), gave four (4) conditionalities to be met in order for them to provide interpretation for WSF 2007 in Nairobi. These included:

- That the Secretariat provides them with US\$ 1.2 million for mobilization.
- That the Secretariat provides them with a fully functional office.
- That the Secretariat hires 3 full time Babels staff.
- That the money be made available before mid-August.

It is important to note that by the time these demands were made on the Secretariat, not a cent or penny had been received by the OC. There cannot be any doubt, therefore, that the Secretariat was ill prepared to deal with the entailed challenges. Further, this was the first time WSF event organisers were being asked to fund Babels' pre-Forum mobilisation efforts. After nearly three months of internal debate within the Babel fraternity of which neither the Organizing Committee nor the Secretariat was included in the list serve facilitating the debate, the Babels publicly announced that they were not going to provide interpretation services to the Nairobi event. The Secretariat then had to embark on exploring the alternatives to Babels esteemed services in October 2006.

In response to the above challenges the Secretariat assigned one person to coordinate matters pertaining to interpretation and allied activities. Subsequently a team – an Interpretation Committee – was set up to support the effort.

In the course of November and December a few members of the Babels network did get involved – not as an official Babels project, but rather as individual interpreters. They assisted with part of the planning process, the training of the less experienced local interpreters as well as the overall organization before and during the event.

The main challenge during the planning of the interpretation was two fold: first of all, it was important to define the number of interpreters that would be needed during the event and, second, it was important to determine how and from where to recruit them. Additional challenges touched on implications for the budget, the equipments to be used, training, and the political inclination of the prospective interpreters. The Organizing Committee made a political decision and agreed to give priority to recruit interpreters in East Africa, then the rest of Africa and finally the rest of the world.

As dictated by the budget considerations, the Secretariat purchased 150 transmitters from ALIS in Athens, Greece, to equip about 30 rooms, giving priority to co-organized activities and the rooms with larger audiences. It was planned that the equipment and a technical person be availed to the secretariat by mid December 2006, in good time to start the training of a local ALIS-Kenya team and to have sufficient time to install the equipment at the venue.

The technician did arrive in the middle of December but the equipment only arrived on January 18, two days before the event. The equipment was paid for in early November but it did not leave Athens until mid December. The late shipment of the equipment was due to delays by ALIS and subsequent long strike by port workers in Greece. Eventually, the equipment came without the promised booths, leading the Secretariat to act quickly and have booths manufactured locally.

An allowance of KSh 2,000 (US\$ 30) was set for each day of work per interpreter. In addition, each of them would get KSh 4,000 (US\$ 55) for daily accommodation and meals and KSh.1,000 (US\$ 15) for daily transport, making a total of KSh 7,000 (ca US\$ 100) for non-accommodated interpreters and KSh. 2,000 (US\$ 30) daily for those accommodated by the Secretariat. This caused some resentment as it was seen to favour locally-based interpreters over their international colleagues.

3 THE EVENT

3-1 Individual Registration

It is difficult to determine the exact number of people that attended the WSF 2007 in Nairobi; above of all, because not everyone registered. The first report from registration at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC), and the first day of the event at Kasarani, shows more than 46,000 people registered and at the same time about 10,000 name tags were given (at the registration sites) to local people who could not afford to pay the registration fee.

Beginning on the second day of the event when the gates were open, the registration team carried out a daily physical count of people without name tags (excluding children) during first two hours of the second, third and fourth days. The counting was done at the main gates. This was a very difficult process and is bound to have a high degree of inaccuracies. Having considered possibilities of double count (an error margin of $\pm 30\%$ was allowed), it is estimated that some 14,000 were able to attend without paying any fee. Also, the registration working

group estimated that some 4,000 people attended the activities carried out outside Kasarani (in the slums, at UN Office in Nairobi, Gigiri etc.). Therefore, the Secretariat estimates that a minimum of 74,309 people attended the WSF 2007 event in Nairobi.

The following tables show the distribution by region and by African countries based on a projection of the total people registered and the estimation presented above.

Table No. 2			
General Attendance -Per Region- to the WSF 2007 Event in Nairobi.			
		Attendance	Percent
Regions	Africa	43,901	59.08
	South	5,832	7.85
	North	13,662	18.39
Did not declare their region of origin		10,914	14.69
Total		74,309	100

Table No. 2				
Attendance per African Countries to the WSF 2007 Event in Nairobi				
Country	Attendance	Percent of Total	Percent of those who declared country of origin	Cumulative Percent
Kenya	30206	68.80	89.02	89.02
Tanzania	387	0.88	1.14	90.16
South Africa	365	0.83	1.08	91.24
Uganda	353	0.80	1.04	92.28
Somalia	247	0.56	0.73	93.00
Zimbabwe	237	0.54	0.70	93.70
Malawi	189	0.43	0.56	94.26
Ethiopia	189	0.43	0.56	94.82
Zambia	183	0.42	0.54	95.36
Morocco	152	0.35	0.45	95.80
Rwanda	147	0.33	0.43	96.24
Sudan	142	0.32	0.42	96.66
Nigeria	136	0.31	0.40	97.06
Burundi	87	0.20	0.26	97.31
Mozambique	83	0.19	0.24	97.56
Senegal	82	0.19	0.24	97.80
Angola	81	0.18	0.24	98.04
Western Sahara	63	0.14	0.19	98.22

Ghana	52	0.12	0.15	98.38
DRC	43	0.10	0.13	98.50
Congo	41	0.09	0.12	98.62
Swaziland	40	0.09	0.12	98.74
Madagascar	36	0.08	0.11	98.85
Cameroon	35	0.08	0.10	98.95
Sierra Leone	35	0.08	0.10	99.05
Burkina Faso	34	0.08	0.10	99.15
Egypt	33	0.08	0.10	99.25
Namibia	30	0.07	0.09	99.34
Mauritius	25	0.06	0.07	99.41
Mali	24	0.05	0.07	99.48
Chad	22	0.05	0.06	99.55
Algeria	18	0.04	0.05	99.60
Liberia	18	0.04	0.05	99.66
Tunisia	18	0.04	0.05	99.71
Benin	15	0.03	0.04	99.75
Ivory Coast	15	0.03	0.04	99.80
Togo	15	0.03	0.04	99.84
Guinea	12	0.03	0.04	99.88
Niger	12	0.03	0.04	99.91
Botswana	6	0.01	0.02	99.93
Eritrea	6	0.01	0.02	99.95
Gambia	6	0.01	0.02	99.96
Djibouti	3	0.01	0.01	99.97
Equatorial Guinea	3	0.01	0.01	99.98
Gabon	3	0.01	0.01	99.99
Mauritania	3	0.01	0.01	100
Total	33932	77.29	100	
Unknown	9969	22.71		
Total	43901	100		

3-2 *Self Organized Activities*

A total of 1,296 activities were registered between October 15th and December 19th 2006; out of those only 61 were cancelled by the organizers themselves, about 300 were allowed to be registered after the deadline and about 500 demanded changes in time, room or their names and description. What follows is a brief description of these activities.

Content

The highest number of activities, a total of 334 (25.8%), were registered under objective No. 6 which refers to human rights; followed by objective No. 9 which refers to real democracy and objective No. 8 which refers to dignity, diversity and equality. These three objectives account for 629 activities or 48.53% of the whole program and show the thematic concentration of the Nairobi event.

OBJECTIVES FOR ACTION		Number of Activities	Percent
1	Building a world of peace, justice, ethics and respect for diverse spiritualities.	112	8.6
2	Liberating the world from the domination of multinationals and financial capital	95	7.3
3	Ensuring universal and sustainable access to the common goods of humanity and nature	65	5.0
4	democratization of knowledge and information	70	5.4
5	Ensuring dignity, defending diversity, guaranteeing gender equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination.	145	11.2
6	Guaranteeing the right to food, healthcare, housing, education and decent work.	334	25.8
7	Building a world order based on sovereignty, self determination and rights of peoples	98	7.6
8	Constructing a people centered and sustainable economy	63	4.9
9	Building real democratic political structures and institutions with full people's participation on decisions and control of public affairs and resources	150	11.6
	Missing – did not choose an objective for action	164	12.7
	Total	1296	100.0

Most of the activities (724) registered were of a global nature. This category represented 55.9% of all the activities. Regional, Continental, National and Local activities accounted for 22.4%. A significant number of activities, 281 or 21.7%, did not indicate which category their activities belonged to.

The category of “workshops” accounted for highest number of activities registered, totalling 512 or 39.5%. This was followed by “conferences” and “round tables” with 15% and 12% respectively. Testimonies and Films represented 1.6% each category. The registered self organized cultural activities were 58 or 4.5%, not counting those organized on the spot during the event.

Logistics

The program working group made an important effort to try to balance the number of activities during each day and periods of the days. The third period was only used to accommodate those activities that were not registered due to a wide variety of problems that afflicted the registration process.

Date * period Cross tabulation

	Period or Time slot				Total
	1 (8:30 to 1 am)	2 (11:30 to pm)	3 (2:30 to pm)	4 (5:30 to pm)	
Date 21	109	110	36	99	354
22	113	105	87	115	420
23	110	116	59	112	397
24	34	52	0	0	86
Total	366	383	182	326	1257

In terms of room sizes, the activities programmed for rooms with a capacity for 200 people represented 26.5%; those in 100 people's rooms represented 17.1% and in 50 people rooms represented 21.5%. Only 4% of the activities were programmed for rooms with capacity for more than 400 people.

3-3 Co organized Activities

The OC meeting in Nairobi (November 2006) and the ASF Council meeting in Dakar (December 2006) brought out the fact that there had been a breakdown of communication between the Secretariat and the organizations that were expected to be involved in co-organized activities. Most of these organizations did not have a clear understanding of the general concept of the co-organized activities and how they were expected to execute their responsibilities. During the same meeting each theme was reviewed, and some of them merged into one or two new and broader thematic axes. As a result a new list of organizations and individuals was prepared to assist in the drafting of the framework concept papers and the design of the co-organized activities. Consequently it was agreed that such activities should not be limited to the traditional "conference" format but should, instead, use cultural expressions to convey the messages and the spirit of the concerns.

At the Content and Methodology meeting in Nairobi (mid December 2006), it was clear that not all the concept papers were ready and the suggested format for most of the activities was the common “conference” approach. Still, it was evident that many of the speakers were yet to be contacted and that it was necessary to provide for their travel and accommodation expenses if they were expected to play their roles effectively. It also became obvious that the cultural expression of some activities was inadequately articulated.

Therefore, one month before the event, a new list of speakers was drafted and a strategy designed to cover the expenses and different tasks assigned to organizations and individuals. In view of all these, the ASF Council at its meeting in December 2006, decided to reinforce the Secretariat team in Nairobi by sending 5 people a few weeks before the event; one of them to be dedicated to the co-organized activities. This did not quite materialize.

During the event itself, the co-organized Activities suffered from nearly all the logistical problems of the event: The signage was not in place and therefore, people could not find the venues, the interpretation equipment was installed but without proper electrical connections (particularly on the first day) and the small FM radios did not work, causing a lot of interpretation problems. Further, with all the problems that organizations faced in respect to registration of the self organized activities, it was necessary to allow their taking place within the same time slot that the co-organized activities were meant to happen, thereby compromising the privileged status they were supposed to enjoy in program of the events. As a result, the Secretariat had to make the necessary adjustments regarding speakers, interpretation system and timing with different and small degrees of success.

3-4 *The Fourth Day*

The Secretariat in Nairobi faced two main challenges in the implementation of the fourth day: communication/logistics and the controversial debate on the political implications on the day’s activities. First of all, it needed to communicate the purpose and methodology of this day to everyone interested in participating in the WSF. Some basic information about the purpose was posted both the event and process web sites. Still, the description on the methodology was not finished until the end of the meeting of the Content and Methodology commission (18th December 2006).

By the beginning of January, only 85 activities had been registered for the morning of the forth day. The main reason: participants did not know what was expected of

them in the way of outputs and how they would feed into the subsequent programs of action. This was also true for some of the facilitators themselves

During the event itself and with the help from some members of the IC, the Secretariat improvised some flyers with the basic information about the fourth day, designed the form for the proposal for actions and distributed them to as many rooms as possible and called for a meeting with most of the facilitators for the 21 meetings. It also ordered 4 big banners which described the program for the afternoon. The Memory Project team undertook most of the tasks of collecting the forms for the proposal for actions, printing of the forms, and organizing volunteers to help with the logistic of distribution and broadcasting. All of the 21 meetings for actions, campaign and struggles were held; they had participants that ranged from 50 to 150 people and some 300 proposals for action were presented by organizations and collected by the Memory Project team.

3-5 Culture

The ASF Council and the OC had, from the very beginning, acknowledged the political potency of culture of resistance in Africa and the possibility of its effective use by social movements in their struggle for change. By invoking the spirit of *Ubuntu*, the Culture commission intended to showcase a strong African cultural presence and expression as a means of affirming the continent's identity in the mosaic that is the global resistance against neo-liberalism.

The event saw a considerable presence of cultural groups from North, West, South and Eastern Africa exhibiting diverse cultural skills and performances such as music, percussions, acrobats, traditional dancers and so on. Other cultural groups came from Asia and Latin America. Besides performance arts, culture was manifested in the following ways during the event:

- 6 cultural stages and pavilions within the WSF Space were provided.
- Dedicated cinema halls and spaces at the Venue, including a slum cinema hall;
- Community film initiatives for screening documentaries etc. in non formal settlements and other venues outside Kasarani; the African night to showcase African music, culture, song, dance, poetry etc;
- The Culture commission worked closely with the media and communication team in integrating African symbols and other aspects as unique elements in the messages and materials for WSF2007.

The Culture Commission organized the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the WSF2007 event based on the significance of the two occasions as the appropriate

platforms for show-casing the continents cultural identity and its strategic compact with and connection to other regions.

Culture, it was emphasised, must be placed at the very centre of any response to the economic and political disparities that plague the world, since the justification for these imperial inequities have always been formulated within a constructed cultural domination by either western culture or the imperial powers. The culture commission of the WSF 2007 OC developed a program of cultural diversity as witnessed in both opening and closing ceremonies as part of the World Social Forum in Nairobi.

As a means of celebrating the rich cultural heritage, not only in Africa, both ceremonies featured musicians from all over Africa as well as representations from other continents. The ceremonies were also graced by prominent individuals from different parts of the world and walks of life who are known to stand for and believe in the principles of the WSF. They came from Latin America, North America, Europe and Asia, among the many from Africa.

Opening ceremony

The opening ceremony, which was held on January 20th started with a procession from Kibera (an informal settlement 5km from Uhuru Park). The key messages on that colourful day as witnessed in performances by the musician's and speeches made were of solidarity in the struggle of the people of Africa as they seek alternatives.

Closing ceremony

To start the day of January 25th, a procession and marathon flagged off from Korogocho and Kariobangi, running through Huruma, Mathare, Eastleigh and Majengo which are all informal settlements east of Nairobi, with an aim of showing solidarity with the people in those settlements. At the main ceremony in Uhuru park, highlights of activities that had taken place during the preceding four days of the Forum were brought to public attention.

The African Night

Performances during the night were a celebration of the African Culture, held at the Moi international Sports Centre Kasarani- Gymnasium, on January 23rd 2007. It was well attended, with a cross-section of the participants in the Forum taking part.

It offered a taste of the variety, complexity and extensive reach of African music; showcasing not only the distinctiveness of the music and dance as both relate to and animate every day life in Africa. But more importantly it also illustrated the fact that music in Africa is an important tool for expressing resistance to various policies or events that conspire to undermine their rights and human dignity. The genres presented included spoken word (poetry), dance, music and short skits (plays).

Generally, the overall cultural program was a success. In terms of performances there was inclusion and diversity. Participation was broad based. However, the whole cultural program was not without serious challenges. Some of the challenges ranged from: the difficulties attending the choice of cultural expressions with the desirable political content and message; the need to crowd out simplistic entertainment which detracts from the seriousness of struggles against capitalism in a neo-liberal phase; integrating the cultural agenda into the political vision(s) informing the various activities of the WSF.

3-6 *Youth Camp and Activities*

Strategy:

Unlike the previous World Social Forums, the Youth Commission, having learnt from previous experiences of the Intercontinental Youth Camp developed the following strategy for maximizing youth participation at the World Social Forum:

- Proffering a methodology of separating the youth camp accommodation space and activity space;
- Integrating youth activities within the main forum terrain as well as having a safe space (the youth zone) for youth within the traditional framework of the youth camp;
- Identifying key visibility activities organized by youth;
- Youth Activities during the WSF2007

Caravans

The Caravans were perhaps the only event with a long history of youth involvement in the African Social Forum process; from its conceptualization in Cairo at the Africa Social Forum meeting in July 2004, its preparation throughout 2006 and subsequently, its realization from the 14th to the 20th January, 2007. Weaving its way from Southern Africa, through Tanzania and finally arriving in Nairobi, young people at the level of organization and media played a key role

towards its success. As a mobilization tool it took the cake as one of the most important ways of popularizing the WSF agenda in Africa.

Self-Organized Activities

A total of 52 registered self organized activities in the form of workshops, seminars and conferences were organized by youth and youth serving organizations between 21- 23, January 2007.

Film screening at the main film hall as well as the cinemas organized at the Slum Film Festival featured footages and films showcased by youth groups from all over Africa. A number of cultural activities in the forum (both pre-registered and on the spot requests) in the form of concerts, plays and other forms of creative arts were held within the cultural stage provided at the youth camp and those around the WSF Venue.

Co-organized Activities

A youth-oriented co-organized activity - *living alternatives, living futures* in the form of an intergenerational dialogue - was held on January 23, 2007 and attended by over 500 people, mostly youth. The activity integrated an interactive panel discussion with an interlude of cultural performances from Music Mayday and Hope Raisers. The organizing committee and Action-aid through the Pan African Youth Forum supported the participation of over 100 young people from Kenya and 24 African youth from Rwanda, Senegal, Egypt, Lesotho, Tanzania, Gambia, Namibia, Guinea, Chad, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, DRC , Uganda, Burundi, Botswana and Nigeria as part of the intergenerational dialogue.

The Fourth Day

Within the methodology of the fourth day, a youth session for the presentation of proposals on actions for 2007 was held where ca. 20 proposals on various campaigns were voiced from different countries and continents.

The Youth Zone

The Youth Zone was divided into the following areas:

Youth Camp tented (fitted with washrooms and bathing area) with the capacity to accommodate 1,200 young people The Youth camp accommodated about 400 people, the majority of whom were adults. The nationalities present at the Camp were Cote d'Ivoire, France, India, Italy, Kenya, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania and USA.

Activity space based at the athletes hostel consisting of :

- a) Four solid rooms: Patrice Lumumba 2; Che Guevara 1, Che Guevara 2 which hosted self organized activities and a press conference by young hip-hop artists from Africa on 24th January, 2007;
- b) A cultural stage by the pool side which played host to 2 Concerts, 2 Open Mike sessions, 1 acrobatic session, 1 dance session and a book launch.

3-7 *Interpretation*

Organising the interpretation during the Forum faced many challenges. The biggest problem was of a technical nature – in some tents, the electrical connections were not ready in time; in some rooms, the PA systems did not work; and above all, the FM radio receivers purchased by the Secretariat to be used by the participants did not work – as they could not stay tuned on the chosen frequency; the model brought by the company was not the one ordered. The delivery was made only one day before the event.

Other problems had to do with the actual planning of the interpretation. The booth planning – scheduling where and when each interpreter was to work – was a more time consuming task than anticipated. The group organising the interpretation never managed to plan more than half a day in advance, which resulted in people not knowing well in advance when they were working.

These difficult circumstances, specifically the technical shortcomings of the equipment, resulted in a serious quality loss, as simultaneous interpretation from the booth were made very difficult. Shifting to whispering and consecutive interpretation was done in many places, and with great efforts put in by the majority of the interpreters. However, some of the less experienced volunteer interpreters did find adjusting to this improvised situation difficult and this played a central role in the almost complete collapse of the interpretation system.

In an early report from the Babels network about WSF2007 (before they withdrew from the process) the number of interpreters needed during the event was estimated at around 450 interpreters to cover 150 booths.

During the Forum, a total of 432 local interpreters were enlisted – only 129 interpreters worked on the two first days. Added to this number was a group of 59 international interpreters – the combined number of volunteers with own funding and groups that the Secretariat brought in from Europe and West Africa. Ten (10) interpreters from Mali only worked on the last two days of the Forum – and some of the volunteers from Tanzania and South Africa had to leave on the second and third day.

3-8 *Volunteers*

The work of organising the forum was both exciting and daunting. It therefore called for commitment beyond service. Regular staffing could not have delivered. The secretariat had, therefore, to rely on the commitment on many individuals locally and internationally, who chose to volunteer their services for free (local volunteers were only given a transport and food allowance of Sh 500 daily). These women and men did invaluable work and without their stamp of commitment, the event could not have materialised. Many volunteers had had to do with only a few hours' sleep or no sleep at all.

The foregoing notwithstanding, the basic training was insufficient for the volunteers. They were not fully prepared for the intensity of the work during the event. Due to widespread lack of commitment to the WSF agenda and the true spirit of voluntarism, some of the volunteers perceived themselves as part-time workers and not as stakeholders in a struggle to which everyone should contribute. This may just begin to explain their inability to improvise ways of addressing the failure of signage and thereby assist the participants in finding their way around the venue. One of the saddest events is when some registration volunteers were arrested for selling name tags and programs outside the gates of Kasarani. In the same way there were instances where other volunteers were involved in corrupt activities.

The Volunteer Coordinator worked in tandem with the secretariat staff who acted as volunteer supervisors. The allowance for the volunteers was differentiated according to the duties and responsibility and capacity of the Volunteers. This meant that Volunteers who brought in professional capacities like IT and those that too special responsibilities were given allowances slightly higher than those who offered general service. This presented a challenge according to which some volunteers complained of being discriminated against or 'underpaid'. This differentiation was however necessary to ensure that in those areas that required special attention was attended to by individuals with the required competence.

The Secretariat had made an important effort to build a truly international team of volunteers. Some of the international volunteers had a very hard time adapting to the Kenyan settings and dynamics but made an excellent personal effort to cope with challenges that come with prejudices, superiority and inferiority complexes, racism and all manner of cross-cultural incompetence.

3-9 Media

By late December, the Secretariat had set up a media team. Ideally this should have happened earlier had the necessary resources come in time. The team trained and mobilized the media at both national and international levels for effective participation in the WSF 2007. By early January, the pre-event publicity work was impressive, particularly at the local level. With minimal resources the team faced a lot of resource-scarcity-related challenges. Transport problems, lack of money for advertisement, shortage of support staff –all conspired to make the work of the team not only tedious but also resulted in not meeting all the set out objectives.

During the event, there were over 800 media representatives including 200 local journalists present covering the event. The challenge with this impressive presence of the media community was to manage the effective coverage of the event in addition to the fact that the local media from Kenya were still not very conversant with the dynamics of the WSF process. The two main Kenyan media houses, *The Standard* and *The Nation*, had a massive coverage of the event from the start to the end. All this notwithstanding, the analysis of the media coverage of the WSF 2007 points to the fact that the Nairobi event received more media coverage than any other in the past^[1].

The organizing Committee set up two media centres dedicated to media personnel and a press briefing room that acted as the information clearing house and updates on key events and issues at the forum on a day to day basis. The media centers were fully equipped with 150 desktop computers loaded with open source software although continuous power fluctuations interfered with the smooth functioning of the media centre. Wireless access points and 50 wired connection points for journalist's quick transmission of news and access to news sources were also available. A total of 10 alternative media groups were provided with dedicated news rooms and workspaces around the WSF terrain, including an audio studio and editing open space.

The media team worked tirelessly and achieved appreciable success, in spite of the "stardom nature" of the media as known the world over for tilting the essence of the real stories in favour of sensational entertainment of the public. However, the forum remained an open space such that the decentralized information system provided accessibility for journalists to receive information that would facilitate their work. Crisis communication was a pet word for the WSF2007.

^[1] This is contained in a separate document

3-10 *The Memory Project*

The implementation of the memory phase was done by an international team. The team was charged with responsibilities of collecting as much information about the forum as possible so as to prepare the event memory. The memory project was of a broad scope, reflected in the variety of documents collected: activity reports, proposal of actions, feedbacks, video, audio recording collection among others. This accounts for the distinctive feature of the memory project. In addition, the use of the process site which is an asset that was not available in earlier forums will greatly add value to the project as it is unfolding. This tool is currently acting as a depository and collection tool in the memory follow up work.

Event Output:

Current status of documents (memory)

No	Name of documents collected	Number	Description/location
1	Proposals for Action collected in a list	350	To be located on the event Downloadable as a numbered list on process site in the space of “wsf2007Memory project” group
2	Activity reports Audio reports Audio visual reports	260 20 5	In process of being located in both sites
3	Feed back reports	230	In process of being located in both sites
4	Activity Organizers contact sheets about memory	350	A basis to get back to collect more activity reports
Current status of document collection:			
5	Proposal groups initiated as a service for proposal presenters	210	Located on the process site- with their proposal number
6	Documents Reports /files	151 /73	Located on the process site in the permanent space of each organizations and groups -
7	Audio- visuals	64	Accessible at http://wikileaks.org/wsf/
8	Audio		Accessible at http://wikileaks.org/wsf/ (and also uploadable in process site)

The delay in establishing the memory team impacted on the dissemination and collection of information for the memory process.

Audio recording that was to be done at the forum by the ALIS technical team collapsed because of circumstances beyond their control (persistent power surge, no PA system and few volunteer to assist). Working with volunteers assigned to the memory team by the secretariat who were relatively ill-prepared for the tasks ahead caused a lot of constraints. At some moments volunteers became “more of participants than information bearers or representatives of the organizing committee.

The enthusiasm placed on the WSF 2007 memory after the event gives an eye opener to the meaning and importance of **the decentralized and dynamic memory attached to social forum process**. The need for a broader collaboration around the core responsibility of the Organizing Committee should be formalized by the IC so that continuity and distinct ownership of the memory is harmonized into a seamless yet appropriately striated process. This would go along way to enable effective facilitation into the connection and collaboration of post event co-operations by social movement actors. The Organizing committee could also be fully entitled to select among this decentralized and dynamic memory, the relevant contents suitable to communicate on the event site the “event story”,

3-11 *Services*

3-11-1 *Food*

The OC ensured that there would be adequate and affordable food and water for the participants within the venue. It therefore created a sub-committee to deal with Food and Drinking water, which was tasked with the following:

- To identify all the catering and drinking water needs and challenges.
- Provide a comprehensive framework for the provision of clean, healthy and affordable foods and drinking water.
- Liaise with food and drinking water providers on all matters related to the welfare of participants (e.g. hygiene, supply schedules, complimentary drinking water for participants who may not afford the cost, waste disposal etc.)

In the physical plan of the territory a provision of 2 food courts - each with capacity of 54 food tents - was made. From the outset, it was agreed that women groups and other social movement formations would be given preference. For this reason, while some fee was charged for tender processing for various services, food kiosks and snack bars attracted nil fees. The procurement committee allotted kiosks to all the 89 applicants and made a political decision that the remaining 19 kiosks would be allocated to social movements that had been part of the process, any member of the Organizing Committee or the Secretariat that could be interested. However, problems arose from allocations in that the number of kiosks available did not match those indicated in the tender documents by the Physical Facilities Team. As a result, some applicants did not get tents, occasioning procurement of additional tents. Most of the kiosks provided very cheaply priced food (ranging from KSh 100 to KSh 250). However, due to the signage problem, many participants did not discover the existence and location of the food courts until the third day. Meanwhile, Windsor Hotel, whose

tent was centrally located but priced a bit more expensively than the others, was the only one that was easily noticed and attracted many customers. With a hindsight, the organizers should have taken cognizance of Windsor's ownership in the context of local politics (Windsor is owned by the family of Kenya's Minister for Internal Security, whose political history is not clean). Eventually, it was invaded by some of the protesters on the third day and its food eaten.

3-11-2 *Water*

The issue of water was discussed at several meetings and several a number of suggestions were made. The most challenging part was to identify ways of providing free water for those who could not afford to buy drinking water.

Different options were looked into, including requesting City Council to treat the water, but most of the suggestions were not only feasible but largely unachievable.

At one stage, the coordinator of the Kenyan Social Forum reported that an Italian group was ready to help supply free water to participants. This was welcomed as long as the water would be sourced locally. After waiting for close to four weeks without a word on the offer, the Secretariat sent two of its members to talk to bottled water suppliers to further discussion. The issue of giving free water was not acceptable to most of the companies and some of them were not even willing to give discount prices. The Secretariat finally settled for two companies, Grange and Ranger who agreed to sell water at a subsidized rate and also give 50,000 litres (25,000 litres each) of water for free. In return, the two companies were given the sole right of selling water.

Due to the Secretariat's incapacity to effectively monitor the water service or to intervene some of the challenges were: under delivery of the promised quantity of free water, some volunteers sold the free water; other unauthorized water companies sneaked in their water to the venue; Food venders bringing in their water into the venue at higher prices.

3-11-3 *Communication*

The World Social Forum 2007 Organizing Committee facilitated the installation of a dedicated wireless internet infrastructure covering the entire venue of the forum. Participants of the World Social Forum with laptops or desk top computers fitted with wireless network cards were able to access the internet. Other organizations

and media houses that required their own dedicated links were also provided with possibilities of leasing bandwidth from the secretariat.

The Organizing Committee also provided several Cyber Café points that enabled participants access the internet for the duration of the forum. The secretariat and volunteers owing to a sponsorship package received free Sim cards; air-time and telephone handsets to facilitate ease of communication. Each participant was also entitled to free SIM-cards upon request at any of the Celtel booths.

Hitches: The problem of power surges, under developed communication infrastructure, internet downtime, (Nairobi, Kenya etc), Distribution of the SIM cards hampered due to lack of information and since Celtel SIM cards initially intended to be distributed with the registration kits did not happen as Celtel failed to fulfill its side of the bargain. The Issue of Safaricom versus Celtel and the apparent monopoly enjoyed by the latter has been explained time and again. The facts: both Safaricom and Celtel are corporate entities; both have foreign and local equity participation; except that the major share holder in Celtel is African (makes little difference). The truth is that in August 2005, a leading member of the logistics commission, based in the secretariat was authorized by the Kenya Social Forum Steering Committee to explore the possibility of involving any of the mobile phone companies partnering with the organizing Committee in facilitating registration and supporting the Forum in the provision of other communication facilities..

Discussions started in earnest between the secretariat and Safaricom. Half way before an agreement could be reached; a letter was received from a senior manager at Safaricom dissociating her organization from any partnership with the WSF. Political sensitivity was sited as constituting the reason for pulling out of the deal. It is at this time that, Celtel, without being approached by the secretariat, jumped on the opportunity to fill the void left by Safaricom. Safaricom, upset by the imminent loss of business, later on colluded with some NGOs which had abandoned participation in the WSF process and who had an axe to grind with individuals and organizations associated with Nairobi process to drum up bad blood against the organizing committee and throw their grievance into the mix of other long-standing conflicts within the NGO sector in the country. It is also worth noting that at the time of the WSF event in Nairobi, Safaricom was embroiled in a controversy of the ownership of 5% of its shares. To date, this mysterious off-shore company has not been revealed and the government has been unwilling to act, in spite of popular calls by the public

3-11-4 Security

When it was announced that Nairobi was applying to host WSF 2007, the first issue people raised across the board was whether or not the organizers would deal effectively with the (grossly exaggerated) matter of insecurity in Nairobi. Almost at every briefing and debriefing meeting, the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee was invariably challenged to give an account of the extent to which security arrangements had been made to address the safety need of the participants.

It was with the foregoing in mind that the organizers approached the government of Kenya as early as a year before the event and impressed upon it the need to work with the Organizing Committee, through the Security sub-committee, in order to provide adequate security during the forum. Despite the heavy presence of the national security forces at Kasarani and its environs, several instances of pick pocketing, stealing of valuables and other forms of malfeasances perpetrated against the participants were reported. This became more prevalent after opening the gates. But at the end and arising from complaints coming from some participants the Organizing Committee was left wondering as to how it were expected to deal with conflicting demands for security and that of the claim that it had committed the sin of militarizing the event!

Besides affecting other logistical arrangements the over-projection of expected participants (100,000 - 150,000) it had a special impact on the number of security personnel deployed by the Government of Kenya. The WSF members of the Security sub committee tried to argue and encourage the authorities to downsize, but were only partly successful.

The Security sub committee responded to issues and events as they came up. For instance, after the massive traffic mess on the first day (January 21st) a new traffic plan was designed and implemented with varying degrees of success.

In our honest assessment the security work at WSF 2007 was a success. It was a difficult job, and probably an impossible one given the nature of ordinary security challenges facing the Kenyan society.

3-11-5 Signage

As early as July 2006, a committee of the Logistics Commission had been established to address the signage and graphics needs of the forum. The following needs were identified: designing culturally relevant banners, sign-posts distinguishing the various workshop spaces from one another and directing participants to the specific activities of the forum and identifying particular spots

in the whole city of Nairobi where the billboards and banners would be hoisted in order to publicize the forum to the wider Nairobi population.

The plan was to flood the Nairobi streets with all manner and sizes of billboards/banners announcing the coming and taking place of the forum in Nairobi. At the venue, the sub-committee planned to have in place different sizes of signs that would direct delegates to strategic places of interest. These took into account the youth camp, workshops, solidarity tents, food courts, security points, toilets, secretariat etc. Resource incapacitation and other allied logistical challenges conspired to delay the tendering of the envisaged items.

When, in the face of the threatening prospect of not being able to mobilize resources required by the budget that had already experienced a drastic trimming by the resource commission, it was decided by the Secretariat that tendering for sign posts at the venue be cancelled and local private companies be approached to help bring down the budget deficit that was already portending inefficiency and poor performance for the forum. The logistics commission had no illusion that some vital services would be compromised by either lateness in procuring them, or lack of money to pay for them.

The company fulfilled nearly all of its commitments except the supply and display of banners along the Nairobi streets though the whole signage and graphics plans turned out to be an unmitigated fiasco, undermining the logistical quality of the event. By the time the failure was realized it was too late to do anything about it as resources were also not available.

3-11-6 *Accommodation*

Ensuring adequate accommodation for all WSF participants was identified as one of the most pressing challenges of the Forum - especially in view of its ever-increasing number of participants. Experiences from the previous editions in Porto Alegre and Mumbai - made the organizing committee look at the issue of adequate and secure accommodation as a critical aspect of the success of WSF 2007.

In response to the foregoing, a sub committee of the Logistics Commission to deal specifically with the issues related to accommodation was established. It had the following terms of reference:

- To conduct an inventory of all available credible accommodation (hotels, lodges, motels, inns, hostels, tented camps, private homes, solidarity offers etc.);

- Compile comprehensive information on available accommodation;
- Post and regularly update the information on the website;
- Liaise with providers of accommodation on all matters related to the welfare of participants residing in their facilities (e.g. security, hygiene, transport, tariffs etc.), including conducting physical inspection of such facilities;
- Identify and book appropriate accommodation for volunteers, invited guests and partner movements.

The Sub-committee prepared an inventory of all licensed accommodation and posted this on the event website. This was of capacity of between 45,000 and 50,000. It also identified a tented camp (Rowallan) with a capacity of 5,000. Those who offered home-stay accommodation mobilized 35,000 bed capacity. Most of these were subjected to security vetting.

The biggest challenge experienced with accommodation was that some unscrupulous Kenyans, having been privy to the ongoing mobilization for alternative accommodation, used undue influence to provide the same services without their facilities being vetted by both the WSF 2007 Organizing Committee and government security. The result thereof is that some participants were waylaid and taken to far flung sub standard facilities where they were overcharged and subjected to all manner of mistreatment. While the Secretariat had given strict guidelines that no facility would be charged more than US\$ 35 a day bed and breakfast, the illegitimate groups charged as much as US\$ 60 for dilapidated tiny rooms. Some participants ended up being swindled and mugged.

3-11-7 *Transport*

The decision to change the venue from Nyayo Stadium to Kasarani Sports Center came with fairly obvious challenges. These involved problematic considerations which touched precariously on transport and allied logistical challenges; particularly in regard to questions of management and traffic jams along Thika Road. In order to deal with the challenges, a committee of the logistics commission was constituted. Arising from an earlier decision of the Organizing Committee that it should not involve itself directly in matters of transport of WSF participants, the committee sought and got the mandate to: determine the transport needs of the forum, gain a comprehensive understanding of the transport system in the city of Nairobi and map out the profiles of transport companies operating in Nairobi, their capacities, clientele and routes. And the transport was left to the private sector players.

4 CHALLENGES, INNOVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

4-1 *Challenges: Nairobi after Nairobi*

Resources:

There needs to be developed a clear policy on how resources are to be raised for various aspects of the WSF process and by whom. While the Resource Commission of the IC was very helpful in providing contacts for possible support based on the history of the Forum's funding, it was the sole responsibility of the OC and ASF Council to do the resource mobilization including for aspects that should be collective responsibility like interpretation and the Forum's program. Resources mobilized, as has already been stated were not only inadequate but also came too late to be of the necessary help for timely preparation for the event. Some funding conditions were untenable; particularly where it was required that parts of the disbursements be made after accounting for the first tranche or at the end of the Forum. These challenges forced the organizers of the WSF 2007 to cut corners in various aspects in order to deliver the event within the constraints. Also, the question of future sustainability of the Forum should be debated and concluded.

Dealing with Local and international corporate sector:

There is a general understanding that corporations known to undermine the principles upon which the WSF is founded – like abuse of human rights, destruction of the environment, and oppressing local populations – should be kept away from the Forum. However, no rules have been worked out to regulate the operations of the social space, particularly in respect to national and international corporations. In our case, a lot of inaccurate stories were fabricated – distorting the real nature of the collaboration between the organizing committee and Celtel. As mentioned earlier on in the report, it is Safaricom which refused to work with the organisers and not vice versa. Therefore, WSF needs to identify the political principles to manage the present trend of many social organizations establishing working relationships with the private sector in general and corporations in particular.

Level of consultation:

Finding a proper balance between acceptable levels and breadth of consultation between the various organs of the WSF, ASF and local social movements was a real challenge for Nairobi. In the opinion of the Organizing Committee and the Secretariat there was a tendency to over-consult. This led inevitably to apparent indecision, delayed actions, not making the right decisions as a result of having to

engage in endless balancing acts of reconciling, oftentimes, mutually antagonistic demands on the decision making capacity of OC.

Participation of the Popular sector in the forum:

Attracting and sustaining of the participation of the popular sector in general, and the poor segments in particular, is not only an African challenge; it is a problem against which the past social forum events have not found lasting solution. If indeed it is a challenge – which it is, but with the necessary caveat that it is not about a mere participation like in the case of the World Bank-driven Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) – more attention needs to be directed to who to involve, how and where.

In the past and probably in the immediate future, we have not and may not see the real poor in European Social forums, the Favellas in Porto Alegre, the real poor of India in Mumbai. In the case of Nairobi, while some politically conscious sections of the population in several slums had organized their own activities (and indicated in the program of the event) in their communities, with a large number having secured free or heavily subsidized entry in the Kasarani through a special dispensation made possible by the Organizing Committee, it was hypocritical, if not malicious on the part of individuals from the North and South demanding the parading of Nairobi slum dwellers at the Kasarani venue.

Expensive Food:

Nairobi is known to be an expensive city compared to many others in the World. When we come across this reality as statistical information it makes an interesting if not ironical reading. When the putatively shallow pockets of the forum participants feel it directly at Kasarani, then some poverty-insensitive characters must be blamed for it. That said, the lack of signage to show the food courts where relatively cheap food was being sold was a very big contributory factor to the outcry of food being expensive as many people did not discover these courts in good time. There is also the question as to whether the OC should have imposed price controls on the caterers. If this is the way to go, then clear and unmistakable guidelines are required. But such guidelines will need to take account of the local dynamics and circumstances.

Local Mobilization:

The Nairobi event faced an important challenge: to fulfil the worldwide expectation that it would follow the trend of ever growing attendance to the WSF events. In fact, the Nairobi event is being evaluated in light of that expectation, and for some, it actually represents a step backwards in the political development of

the whole WSF process. That is a misleading judgment since it does not take into account all the work done by the Social Mobilization Commission in Nairobi, which this report attempts to bring to light.

The WSF needs to balance those expectations with the day to day constraints in the African continent; namely, particular political conditions (visas, violence and even wars), financial resources, communication, infrastructure and differences on how to outreach social movements.

Media and communications:

With the need to cover the event at a global level, it is evident that a commensurate publicity budget would have been quite strategic. Media and Communication should therefore be more a collective responsibility as a tool for publicity and mobilization by all partners and people who agree to the principles of the WSF right from the members of the IC.

The dynamics of working in and within the commission as a sub-structure of the Organizing Committee of the forum left a lot to be desired. With less commitment of commission members who left all the work to the small secretariat team, the challenge was poignantly evident. The commission approach therefore didn't work effectively.

4-2 Innovation

Nairobi was characterized by a few innovations the future of which will need concerted and open-minded reflections if they are either to shake down as part and parcel of the future offerings of the WSF, be modified on the basis of a reflective evaluation or be abandoned altogether. Following are some of the innovations that need the above considerations:

- The fourth day of proposals for action and campaigns
- The youth camp within the area of the main event and their activities as organized within the nine set "Objectivizing " of the Thematic terrain as a basis of delimiting thematic concerns for future WSFs.
- The co-organized activities, particularly in respect to the long term planning needed, ownership, leadership/responsibility in determining who the speakers should be, who should take care of the resource implications of their involvement
- The organization and mobilization for the forum as done at the national, sub regional, regional, African and at the continental level.

- Use of new technologies (workspace) and establishing fees structure for registration for WSF events.
- Registration via SMS services. Over 3,700 participants registered via short message service on their mobile phones.
- The diversity of an international team that worked at the secretariat; despite the challenges it posed in regard to cross-cultural relations and other allied constraints.

4-3 *Lessons Learnt*

Nairobi was a great learning opportunity. With all its problems it presented the WSF fraternity with new challenges that will necessitate a lot of reflection. The reflections will take different form. But whatever forms they take the future of the World Social Forum must build on candid and open-minded reflections on the good or bad experiences from the Nairobi event.

The dynamics of each Social Forum event are different from one another. No social forum should be made to appear as if it meant to be a replication of any of the previous ones. First, it is next to impossible to achieve this, but more importantly it is not desirable to do so. The WSF is not a uni-linear and successive process through which an unbroken experience threads its way into a future shared and owned by all the stakeholders, if there are any. It takes the social and historical dynamics of the country of the country, the region and the continent which hosts it. In spite of all these, there should be mutual and consecutive learning.

On the issue of strategic partnerships that may benefit the advancement of the WSF agenda and particularly in respect to how to deal with the state sector of the hosting country. Not having specific rules regulating the relationship between the OCs and the host government has proven to be harmful to the WSF process. It is, therefore, to reach a consensus on whether to leave it to the hosting OCs to determine the character of such relationship or come up with general rules that will apply to all WSF events and process. It is time a candid deliberation is held on the issue.

In the case of Africa, it was learnt that it is necessary to push the progressive members of parliament and local governments to engage, in their own way, with the WSF process.

The Nairobi event taught that social movements around the world need to build bridges to learn to work together on specific tasks (like the WSF event) as a basis for utilizing the skills and resourcefulness of volunteers. An aspect of these bridges

is the collective responsibility to manage and cultivate long term political and strategic relationships. The WSF process will benefit from more committed activists at all levels.

Our experience with the use of commissions as the main drivers of the WSF process produced more challenges than it facilitated an efficient management of the process. With the low level of volunteer spirit and lack of political commitment among those who have time and energy to spare for the WSF work, the Secretariat had difficulties attracting the necessary dedication from nearly all the members of the various commissions without remuneration. The problem became even more acute when the secretariat was unable to convince some of the members of the various commissions that there was no money to pay them. Whereas this may be more of an African challenge than anywhere else, the African social movements affiliated to the WSF will soon need to deal with the effects of this particular challenge.

The WSF charter of principles is clearly opposed to “any” form of violence. While this can still be a subject of debate, depending on the strategic challenges facing individual social movements under different circumstances, the issue of inciting or provoking violence at the Forum itself as a means of expressing legitimate or illegitimate grievances must be placed on the table for a candid discussion. Nairobi would have been a site of serious disruption of activities had the Organizing Committee not restrained the security forces when they were severally provoked by some participants who had not come to Nairobi to be part of the debates and deliberations but to find fault and to mobilize violent dissent within the Forum. The WSF needs to ask itself the question: Who benefits from the effects of such violence?

Finally, we have learnt that in future the WSF will need to understand and appreciate the importance of security, in its larger meaning - to include traffic control, to access, to accreditation, etc, and plan accordingly; plan early and involve a wide spectrum of security related actors in society public, private and community based; communications - walkie-talkies for easy, inexpensive, and accessible communication; communicate decisions, change of plans, security problems or concerns to the security team and key organizing staff.