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IDPs receive power deal with mixed reactions

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By Jane Akinyi

Displaced people at various camps in Kisumu town have received the power sharing agreement between President Kibaki and Mr Raila Odinga with mixed reactions.

Some have great hope that peace will prevail and they will go back home.

Some are still too traumatised by what they went through, and believe things will never be the same again, even after reconciliation.

Mr Kenneth Odhiambo from Naivasha, who has been camping at St Stephens ACK Cathedral, had followed the talks with bated breath, hoping they would yield fruit.

"The talks were like wooing a woman, not knowing whether she will say 'yes', but hoping that she will accept your proposal," he said.

He was happy a deal had finally been struck, a sign that things would be normal again. He hopes to return to Nakuru where he had lived as a mason for 14 years.

"*Jadwaro ok kun* (The needy do not grumble). I will go back to Nakuru because that is where I earn a living to support my family," he said.

Mr Duncan Omondi, however, feels the PM was a raw deal.

"The Presidency is what we voted for. We have been denied our democratic right," he said.

He says he will not return to Limuru, preferring instead to settle in his ancestral home and farm or start a small business.

"After what I saw in Limuru, I cannot return even if the leaders have reconciled. I will stay with my people," he said.

Mr Samuel Omondi also vows not to return to Limuru, where he had practiced carpentry since 1985.

"I will never work there again. I saw people being hacked to death, houses torched and infants burnt alive. I am still traumatised," he said.

Ms Dorothy Akinyi said even though a peace agreement had been reached, bad blood would always exist between some communities.

"It will take time before people forgive each other and co-exist peacefully because a lot of harm has been done," she said.

She added: "I can now go back, but only because I have to work. If there were job opportunities in Kombewa, I would certainly remain here because I won't feel safe in that foreign land," she said.

Akinyi had been living at Kisumu Ndogo in Nakuru before she was displaced and forced to camp at Afraha Stadium.

Meanwhile, an NGO, Uhuru Community Development Project, has set up a children's desk at St Stephen ACK Cathedral camp to help re-unite displaced children with their families.

The project director, Mr Davies Okombo, said they would help monitor the children to prevent cases of child theft that had been witnessed at the camp.

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