

## Reporter Information

**Name: Louis Sidigu**

**Title: Social and Economic Empowerment Officer**

**Period Covered in this Report: 1<sup>st</sup> JAN 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> MAR 2019**

**Location of project: MOMBASA COUNTY**

## A compiled account surrounding the Disappearance of Philip Okoth.

*These are from notes compiled from the witnesses.*

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of Apr 2019 at Soko Huru, a group of peer educators working for PEMA Kenya under an ongoing Red Cross Project, were resting and engaged in discussion at the Learning Site. As peer educators their main role is to reach out to their peers with information and refer them to facilities to enable access to health services. Geographically, the area has two levels of reef. The Upper side is bushy and the lower level that is directly on the shoreline. On the upper side there were around 6 peers and on the lower side there were about three.

A verbal confrontation ensued between Philip Okoth, a peer educator and Washington Mike, a homeless goon. During the confrontation, Washington threatened to inform the police that the group was in possession of illegal weapons and departed from the scene.

At about 6pm on the same day, Philip Okoth and Jaffar saw two plain clothes policemen approaching them from the lower side. On the upper side, the peers were also ambushed by Plain clothes Police firing shots in the air. In a flurry of anxiety, Philip Okoth jumped into the sea in a bid to escape the raid. The policemen fired into the water and stayed around to confirm if he has surfaced. After 30 minutes, the police left the scene with peers they captured and questioned. Some were released immediately and others were detained for later release. The policemen left in a probox KCS 216F Silver Grey in colour. The raid was conducted by the police in search of the alleged illegal weapons.

A couple of days later, Philip Okoth still had not resurfaced. A small search was conducted to ascertain his whereabouts through family and friends but all was in vain. To date, the whereabouts of Philip Okoth is still unknown. Consequently, a report has been made at Likoni Police Station OB No. 50/29/4/2019 on 29<sup>th</sup> APR 2019 as a missing person case.

A couple of facts became clear.

- The last known whereabouts of Philip Okoth is the learning site where he jumped in to the water to flee from the Police.
- There was no need to Fire into the water when an alleged suspect jumped into the water. This kind of brutality was unwarranted.
- There is need to find Philip Okoth to provide closure for the Family and Friends.

Further communication following our social media campaign, has revealed that a witness on the opposite side off the Learning Site saw the Police retrieve a person that was bleeding and had severe wounds on the head, shoulder and Knee. However, the witness insists that Philip Okoth was alive. Another witness has also emerged claiming that the Philip was rescued and taken to a hospital in

Ukunda. These emerging claims are yet to be take down as a statement since our efforts to engage them are ongoing.

#### **Measures taken by PEMA Kenya to address the Incident.**

- A report of missing persons has been made and a statement issued to that effect at Likoni Police Station. The Police further issued an alert to all police stations to Notify in case, a person matching the description has been.
- A search of Philip Okoth was conducted together with the Family. A visit was done to the Coast Provincial Hospital and Morgue and all the Police Stations I Mombasa County.
- PEMA Kenya has issued a communique of Missing Person on our Social Sites and to our Partners.
- PEMA Kenya has engaged the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights KNCHR to address the human rights issues emerging from the Incident.
- PEMA Kenya has engaged IPOA to address the conduct of the Police during the alleged raid.

#### **Challenges emerging from our Engagement/Response**

- The witnesses have been able too identify the police who conducted the raid. This has hindered the process of seeking justice since the witness's fear being implicated in the case. In addition, there is lack of finance to relocate the witnesses and ensure there protection.
- There has been a challenge in conducting search and rescue around the area the incident took place.
- There is no Kitty in place to facilitate movement of witnesses and staff to follow up on the case.