

Lessons for localising PCVE Interventions in Lamu County

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About the Workshop Note

This workshop note draws partly from the discussions and insights brought forward by both government and non-government stakeholders during the workshop on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) held in Lamu County on 16 July 2024. Convened by the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS) under the USAID *Sauti Yako, Amani Yako* programme, the workshop brought together civil society organisations, community-based organisations, county government, national government administration officers, community leaders, youth leaders and religious leaders from Lamu County.

This workshop note explores potential strategies to design and implement context-specific policies and programmes to comprehensively prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) in Lamu county. It is tailored to development actors at both state and non-state levels who have a focus on P/CVE, governance, and peacebuilding; including policy makers, programme designers, donors, practitioners, and other actors working to influence social change.

Synopsis of Discussions

The Lamu County workshop provided an opportunity for discussions on critical issues regarding the implementation of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE). The discussions revealed the multifaceted nature of violent extremism, encompassing a spectrum of drivers and manifestations in different environments. Participants reflected upon the need for contextual analysis to better understand the contextual factors that

contribute to radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism groups. These include governance, socio-economic and political factors that create the conditions conducive to radicalization; environmental factors that facilitate or channel recruitment of an individual to an extremist group; and factors that increase vulnerability or incentivise individual's direct involvement into violent extremist activities.

Workshop participants reflected upon the diverse factors that exacerbate the vulnerability of Lamu residents to

radicalisation and recruitment to violent extremist organisations. These include socio-economic inequality, resource-based conflicts, the presence of extremist networks and permeable borders, a gap in education and skills, limited access to income, as well as poor coordination efforts among stakeholders. Discussions from the workshop, supported by primary and secondary research findings, revealed the need for a systems-thinking approach to make sense of these complex and inter-related factors. This is crucial for better understanding of how various factors interact with each other over time, and developing context-specific solutions that address the underlying factors contributing to vulnerability in Lamu County. This workshop summarises lessons relevant for policy and programming to prevent and counter violent extremism in the context of Lamu County.

Lessons Learnt

1. Prioritise measures addressing resource scarcity and conflict

The majority of participants agreed that violent extremism in Lamu county is linked to land conflict and insecurity. Participants pointed out that *Al-Shabaab* exploit divisions situated along Lamu's faultlines of identity, land and politics to recruit residents. They highlighted that most attacks occurred in group ranches or where title deeds were not assigned, including in Witu, Pandanguo, and Hindi. The militants in these cases are referred to by some participants as "*Al-Mashamba*", arguing that some terror

attacks are political and aimed at displacing communities, acquiring land, or suppressing voting.¹ These further entrench political and ethnic polarisation, considering local perceptions and grievances that some communities, including Kikuyu, dominate local politics and enjoy better access to resources, services and opportunities. Accusations of complicity by politicians and wealthy elite in the county in attacks deepen these grievances and increase conflict.

While it was noted that the county government has put in efforts by holding land clinics across the county to educate the public on land issues, it was argued that the challenges faced could only be resolved with the assignment of land title deeds. Participants emphasised that demarcation of land must be done honestly and without prejudice. There is also a need to transition group ranches to community land to enable communities to register their parcels of land and enjoy land tenure security.² Moreover, grazing and farming corridors should be demarcated in order to address conflict over land use between communities in Lamu.

Climate change and global warming also exacerbate resource-based conflict and jeopardise the lives and livelihood of Lamu residents, considering the partial dependency on mangroves and fisheries for trade and livelihood.³ Lamu County government representatives acknowledged that the county was among the first to implement an Act that considers maritime security and climate change, including provisions on resource mobilisation, gender inclusivity,

1 See also, Praxides, C. (2022) "Shabaab attacks, loss of IDs may cause Lamu to miss voters' target," Nation, 19 January, <https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/coast/2022-01-19-shabaab-attacks-loss-of-ids-may-cause-lamu-to-miss-voters-target/>

2 National Land Commission and NAMATI (2023) "*Monitoring the Transition of Group Ranches to Community Land in Kenya.*" https://namati.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Monitoring-the-Transition-of-Group-Ranches-to-Community-Land-in-Kenya_09102023.pdf.

3 See also Njenga S, Olago D, Kituyi E (2024) 'Effects of climate change on mangrove-dependent livelihoods in Lamu County, Kenya,' Western Indian Ocean Journal of Marine Science 23(1): 27-39, doi:10.4314/wiojms.v23i1.4

community involvement and public participation. They also highlighted that support to the county government through the World Bank Group's Financing Locally-Led Climate Action (FLOCA) will help provide a platform to incorporate public views on climate change adaptation and peacebuilding in Lamu.

Logistical challenges are another resource-centred issue hindering P/CVE as well as governance and service delivery efforts in Lamu. The county faces unique logistical challenges, encompassing a vast archipelago of 65 islands and a vast mainland. This makes it difficult to carry out interventions all across Lamu. Due to its geographical nature, it proves challenging to have P/CVE programmes in areas such as Kiunga, which are far and closer to the Kenya-Somalia border and involve dangerous sea routes to get there. While government stakeholders can access these remote areas via air, civil society organisations, community-based organisations, and non-governmental organisations are mainly unable to navigate these logistical issues due to cost. Multiple panelists also expressed the need to expand multi-stakeholder programming and support to areas of Lamu East, which are often left out due to insecurity and logistical expenses. There is need to engage and strengthen networks in Lamu East to address P/CVE issues, while effectively managing safety and security risks.

2. Employ innovative solutions to address youth challenges and increase their agency

Participants emphasised the need for economic empowerment of the youth, with many agreeing that they become more vulnerable to violent extremists if they are

unable to generate income and become financially stable.

The county government noted the steps it has taken to promote education and skills development to counter and prevent violent extremism through the inclusion of discussions regarding P/CVE in schools, the creation of more educational opportunities in Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) institutions and the issuing of scholarships in collaboration with civil society organisations. The workshop was informed that the county government sponsored 139 youth into tertiary courses like plumbing, electrical, building and construction.⁴

Various state and non-state actors also promote skills development through nurturing skills and talent. For example, the Lamu Theatre Association (LATA) has a programme that engages the youth in sports and entertainment to keep them occupied and deter them from violent extremism. The county government also launched the *"Talanta Hela"* to nurture sports and talents while simultaneously ensuring they can generate income. It was noted that some young people had been signed to a professional football club through the programme.

These opportunities have been geared towards the economic empowerment of the youth through education and skills development. However, a participant emphasised that VE is not a problem of the undereducated, and as such, there is a need for a very clear action plan for networked actors to respond to these issues. There is need to be innovative in these responses, and avoid generic one-size-fits all approaches that have been typical in many youth programmes.

⁴ County Government of Lamu- For People and Progress

3. Affirmative action efforts must focus on empowering women to address their vulnerability to VE

Participants argued that women are not adequately involved in designing and implementing P/CVE interventions. Research findings from the county further pointed to male dominance in P/CVE, as well as in governance, budget and decision-making processes. Participants acknowledged attempts by the county and national government to include women and ensure gender balance in different multi-stakeholder fora. Despite the growing involvement and leadership by some women-led organisations such as Lamu Women Alliance (LAWA), majority of women who were interviewed argued that there are stigmas on their participation due to cultural norms, and that they are often tokenistically involved and have little or no influence.

To that end, Civil Society Organisations also encourage the involvement of women in P/CVE by empowering them to gain economic stability. Organisations such as LATA run economic projects such as the “Turathi women group,” which provides an opportunity for women to earn a living through making and selling baskets, sewing, and embroidery, among other income-generating skills. This deters them from encouraging their kin to join violent extremism organisations or joining them themselves, as they have economic autonomy, and the lure of better economic conditions no longer appeals to them.

4. Improve collaboration and trust within and across state and non-state stakeholders in P/CVE responses

Members of the community, as well as community leaders, community-based organisations, civil society organisations, and religious organisations, highlighted a fracture in the county government’s collaboration

and engagement with the community. While participants appreciated the presentation of county progress in PCVE, they also noted that government actors often do not share details and impact of the activities.

Participants also identified that civil society actors have not adequately engaged the existing policy and decision-making processes. The discussions alluded to poor knowledge of policy processes and poor strategy and policy influence by CSOs. Some participants argued that CSOs are unaware of the approaches available to them, and have not yet taken up the opportunities that have arisen through the devolved governance system. Others also argued that CSOs often do not have a coordinated strategy, while others take an aggressive and ‘opposition’ approach, rather than prioritising changemaking through available policy processes. On the other hand, some also argued that the county government always states its desire to collaborate with members of the community and CSOs but is rarely willing to when approached. They argued that government actors often don’t take community involvement and input seriously, and that participation in different processes hardly influences their agenda.

It was noted that better citizen engagement and trust with security actors are needed. Participants emphasised the difference in approach towards citizen collaboration between the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) and the Police. Participants alluded to the KDF’s collaborative nature including through civil-military cooperation projects and events such as sports tournaments. On the other hand, they argued that police officers often ask for bribes and engage community members in a hostile and aggressive approach, including through discriminatory profiling of communities and youth, as well as arbitrary arrest, detention and use of excessive force.

It was also noted that better coordination between the national and county governments on P/CVE issues is needed. Participants said they needed to familiarise themselves with the Lamu County Action Plan⁵, which contributes to the lack of support and engagement on P/CVE with the government. The need for more citizen engagement during design and implementation also compounds this.

Workshop Recommendations

- 1. Understand the systems, structures, and processes necessary to rectify the weak cooperation and collaboration among the different levels of actors (national and county) and other stakeholders (civil society, youth, women, private sector).** The persistence of barriers to collaboration compounds the lack of understanding between national and local actors, government and non-government actors, and law enforcement and local communities. Addressing these concerns and shortcomings are critical to leverage the advantages of involving these different stakeholders, and to ensure validity of processes and empirical evidence needed to design and implement effective community-centred P/CVE strategies. A community-centred approach to P/CVE calls for collaborative efforts and a good rapport between the community and government, which will significantly enhance initiatives that foster peace.
- 2. Government provision of responsive services and support to community needs.** The discussions highlighted the need for government to respond to structural challenges that exist across resource access, ownership, and tenure security. This includes through issuing title deeds, which also allow financial

independence by acting as collateral and facilitating access to credit or loans. Moreover, there is need to prioritise sustainable long term social protection policies and interventions to diminish citizen exposure to social and economic risks, shocks and hazards. There is also need to encourage community socio-ecological approaches that address environmental threats and harness biodiversity. This includes through protecting citizens from climate shocks, disasters, and effects of practices by increased large infrastructural development projects that threaten their environment. There is a need to create more incentives for citizens to access government grants and take up different opportunities, prioritising minority and marginalised groups. This includes working to reduce bureaucracy and discrimination, and through improved civic education and awareness strategies.

- 3. Meaningful citizen participation and influence in decision making processes.** Participants encouraged the national government and Lamu county government to set out a clear plan for efficient citizen participation in decision-making processes and demonstrate the influence of public input in their policies and action plans. This should include a clear agenda to improve communication and information sharing. In addition, the government needs a clear action plan for involving and responding to the needs of youth, women, persons with disabilities, and marginalised communities.
- 4. Increase capacity of CSOs for strategic policy influence and engagement.** CSOs need to understand policy processes better, maximise their policy influence and be strategic about their engagement. This is necessary for an integrated P/

⁵ LAMU COUNTY PLAN FOR COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM – Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE)

CVE approach that acknowledges the structural and governance changes needed for violence reduction.

5. Prioritise economic empowerment and income-generating approaches.

Empowering residents to become economically independent and financially responsible is necessary. Participants in Lamu argued that this was particularly crucial considering that owing to frequently imposed dusk to dawn curfews after terror attacks, the county largely economy revolves for nine hours a day compared to other counties. The discussions highlighted the need for strategic solutions to ensure economic progress in the county and create employment. It is also pertinent to respond to their needs, and address barriers to income generation and economic empowerment for youth, PWDs and women, and other marginalised groups.

6. Allocate more funds towards community-led programmes.

Despite developing various programmes and projects, community-based and civil society organisations do not get sufficient support from the government and rely on donor funding. Community leaders highlighted the need for sustainable financial support. Participants acknowledged progressive discussions to resource for PCVE by integrating responses in the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP), and emphasised the need for implementation.

7. Non-state actors should collaborate with the County government to develop clear, detailed guidelines for implementing the Lamu County Action Plan (LCAP) and popularising them.

These guidelines should specify roles, responsibilities, and procedures to ensure the effective

execution of P/CVE programmes at the county level.

8. Capacity building of state actors on P/CVE.

Establish a mandatory training programme for relevant county government officials, focusing on the issues and strategies of the Lamu County Action Plan. The capacity-building programme should be regularly updated to reflect current trends and challenges in the P/CVE ecosystem. State stakeholders must receive practical skills in addition to lessons on governance. Chiefs, who are said to be the first responders and immediate contact people for the community, must be involved in P/CVE. Local police must also be capacitated to collaborate better with the community on P/CVE efforts.

9. Budget and plan appropriately to address security and logistical challenges and ensure interventions reach marginalised areas and communities.

This is vital to address regional disparities and ensure communities, particularly in Lamu East, are able to fully participate in integrated social, political, and economic life and benefit from violence prevention interventions. CSOs need to work together to systematically manage security risks, and adapt to evolving challenges to ensure their resilience and continuity of operations in a changing landscape.

10. Focus on interventions that promote community well-being.

There's need for innovative strategies focused on improving community well-being. This includes through socio-economic and mental health support to those affected by attacks, including those who have been displaced, lost family members and friends, and otherwise been affected. Participants argued that there is need to address vulnerability at the family level

including through supporting networks of different actors to address individual and social issues including through counselling, trauma support, as well as interfaith, community and cultural approaches to increase individual and community resilience and well-being.

- 11. Prioritise institutional and behavioural change interventions for security actors, particularly the police, to ensure equal and non-discriminatory provision of security.** As one participant stated, “the security on our roads should be done fairly and in a humane way, ensuring that movement restrictions are not biased

and addressing community concerns of bribery and police violence.” There is also need to protect the dignity of survivors and families of victims. This includes through advocating for more citizen engagement by security actors, and coordinating emergency support and interventions by state and non-state actors. Participants in Lamu pointed to efforts by the Emergency Operation Centre by the Lamu County government, but the need for increased resources and capacity building, as well as coordination with security and citizen networks for better early warning and response to terror attacks, disasters and crises.

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From this series

Osogo, B. (2024) Chiefs and resilience to violent extremism in Mombasa County, Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies, Workshop Note No. 1. September 2024.

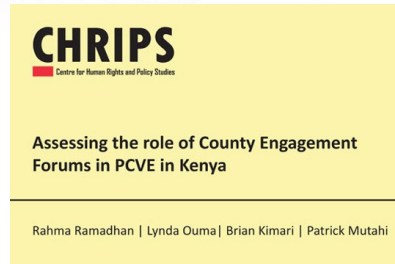
Christine, J. (2024) Blue Economy and P/CVE in Kilifi County, Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies, Workshop Note No. 2. September 2024.

Nyarangi, M (2024) Engaging Kwale County youth in PCVE, Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies, Workshop Note No. 4. September 2024.

Other Publications

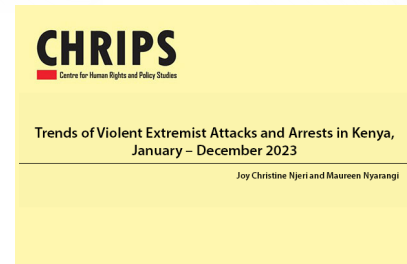


This policy brief draws from discussions during the USAID Sauti National Conference held on 12th and 13th March 2024. It examines the progress and barriers in implementing whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) in Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa, and Lamu counties. Key reflections include addressing trust deficits between communities and security agencies, co-creating intervention programs, ensuring sustainability, including gender and youth, and prioritising mental health.

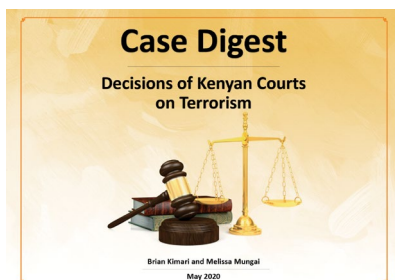


This report examines the extent of citizen engagement in countering violent extremism through County Action Plans in Kenya.

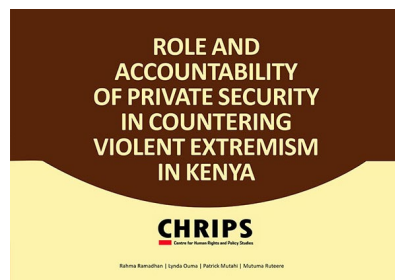
It does this by presenting a thorough analysis of County Engagement Forums focusing on three study sites in Kenya; namely Isiolo, Lamu and Kwale counties.



This report draws from the Terror Attacks and Arrests Observatory of the Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS Terrorism Observatory). It presents data collected, disaggregated, and analysed from January 1 to December 31 2023. CHRIPS uses verified traditional and new media reports and information from our CVE research hub partners to generate a database on terror-related occurrences in Kenya.



This case digest draws from the decisions of the High Court, Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court to provide summaries of various judgements from the year 2015 to 2019. Each case lays precedent on a particular question, that is, the central point of the matter before the court. This digest categorises these as follows: standard of proof in terror offences; admissibility of evidence; appropriate charges under the prevention of terrorism Act, and fair trial and sentencing.



This report discusses issues of accountability of private security companies in the context of countering violent extremism in Kenya. The data is drawn from a review of literature, interviews with key informants, and insights from five workshops that CHRIPS held in five counties: Nairobi; Kilifi; Mombasa; Kwale, and Nakuru.



This report presents the results of empirical research examining the Kenya Youth Empowerment and Opportunities Project (KYEOP) which aims at increasing youth employability through skills training, internships, as well as skills matching of youth with private sector employers. This study was done by CHRIPS in partnership with the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

About CHRIPS

The Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS) is an international institution, working principally in Africa, and committed to the generation and dissemination of policy-relevant knowledge and products, which promote effective governance and social justice. CHRIPS is engaged in knowledge generation through research; in knowledge dissemination through different media and fora; in public policy analysis and evaluation; in development of platforms for South-South learning; and in the provision of opportunities to scholars and policy innovators to develop their ideas, test them and promote them to relevant audiences.

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