

Blue Economy and P/CVE in Kilifi County

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About this Workshop Note

This workshop note draws from insights and reflections of state and non-state stakeholders who participated in the Kilifi County Prevention and Countering Extremism (PCVE) policy workshop held on 23rd 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 representatives from the national and county governments, public benefit organisations (PBOs), persons with disabilities (PWDs), community and religious leaders, academics and the private sector.

It focuses on the role of the blue economy in preventing and countering violent extremism. The Workshop note also reflects on the progress and challenges the state and civil society actors encounter in creating an enabling environment for a more coordinated Whole-of-Government (WoG) and Whole-of-Society (WoS) approach to PCVE efforts in Kilifi County. It is tailored to development actors at both state and non-state levels who have a focus on peace, P/CVE, governance, and economic empowerment; including designers, policymakers, donors, practitioners, and other actors working to influence social change.

Synopsis of the Discussions

Participants during the Kilifi County Workshop noted that while the County has not experienced active terror attacks in the recent past, radicalisation and recruitment persist and continue to evolve. This evolving nature creates a dynamic and unpredictable environment and nature of VE within the County. In reference to recruitment, it was noted that violent extremist organisations (VEOs) such as the *Al Shabaab* continue to adapt their recruitment strategies, whereby some individuals are recruited to join willingly, while others have been forced into it.

At-risk populations in Kilifi County cut across ethnicity, literacy levels, socio-economic classes, and religious affiliations. Lack of employment, idleness, drug-related violence, and low education levels were pointed out as vulnerability factors that can lead to young people being recruited to VE groups. Others include a lack of role models, peer pressure, identity crisis, and masculinity. These findings suggest the changing face of vulnerability in the county. Marginalisation was also highlighted as a vulnerability factor among the young men and women. One participant noted that the youth encounter difficulties getting

national identification cards, which restricts their movement and limits their ability to search for and obtain job opportunities. In turn, these restrictions reduce their access to integral government services, which exacerbate feelings of exclusion, frustration, and anger that can easily be exploited by VEOs preying on this perceived state failure and gap to provide inclusive service.

The blue economy was identified as a key factor in enhancing an enabling environment for WoG and WoS approaches to P/CVE in Kilifi County. The blue economy is the “sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystems.”¹ In Kenya, the *Go Blue Initiative* defines the blue economy as encompassing conventional industries such as fisheries, tourism, and maritime transport, alongside emerging activities like offshore renewable energy, aquaculture, seabed extraction, marine biotechnology, and bioprospecting. Kilifi County possesses marine resources such as fisheries, aquaculture, mangroves, corals, seagrasses, seaweeds, salt, offshore oil and gas, shipping, maritime transport, and ports.²

These blue economy resources create possible job opportunities in tourism, fishing, and maritime transport sectors through boats, boat building, and repair. Marine cargo handling, safety and security, port services, mangrove harvesting, aquaculture, and seaweed extraction sectors can also provide employment.

Opportunities also exist for technical skills related to marine mineral extraction and biotechnological industries.

The Kilifi County government has started projects in the blue economy to address the socio-economic issues young people face. A workshop participant highlighted a programme launched by the Governor to provide fishing boats to youth, women, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Another participant mentioned ongoing projects within the County’s Blue Economy Department, such as the Kenya Marine Fisheries and Socio-Economic Development project (KEMFSED), which is running across the coastal region to boost the living standards of youth. The KEMFSED project is a five-year state project implemented from 2020-2025 through the State Department for Blue Economy and Fisheries with support from the World Bank.³ The project aims to strengthen capacity in the governance and management of fishing activities, as well as support community empowerment by increasing access to supporting livelihood activities.

The project covers 30 Wards within six sub-counties in Kilifi County⁴ and targets individuals and groups directly and indirectly linked to fishing activities. Fishing is one of the most profound blue economy activities in Kilifi County, implying it is a crucial livelihood source for many community members. As of 2021, at least 7,000 people in Kilifi County rely on fishing as their primary source of livelihood, with

1 National Environment Management Authority (2024) “Waste-Free Kenya Building The Circular Economy,” NEMA, <https://www.nema.go.ke/images/Docs/Awareness/Blue%20Economy.pdf>.

2 United Nations (2024) “Strengthening the Blue Economy Platform for Sustainable Development of the Blue Spaces in Kenya,” Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development, <https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/strengthening-blue-economy-platform-sustainable-development-blue-spaces-kenya>.

3 Kenya Marine Fisheries and Socio-Economic Development Project (2024) “Project Background”, KEMFSED (blog) <https://kemfsed.org/project-background/> (Accessed on 10 August 2024).

4 Kenya Marine Fisheries and Socio-Economic Development Project, “Project Background – KEMFSED.”

3,337 being located in Kilifi North.⁵ The KEMFSED project continues to support numerous activities, including the proposed construction of the Kilifi Central County Fisheries office infrastructure, which can be leveraged to provide employment opportunities for residents.⁶

Leveraging programmes, industries and sectors within the blue economy, such as KEMFSED and *Go Blue Initiative* projects, offers an avenue for socio-economic inclusion for at-risk groups, including youths and women, economically empowering them and creating a positive impact. In addition, inclusive policies within the blue economy can help address socio-economic grievances among vulnerable populations and reduce the appeal to VEOs, making them less susceptible to radicalisation and recruitment.

Lessons Learnt

While the blue economy presents tremendous opportunities to enable a holistic approach to PCVE in Kilifi County, key lessons emerged regarding PCVE and the blue economy that could influence effective multi-collaboration and the realisation of the full benefits associated with the industry. Participants noted:

1. Heavy bureaucratic processes limit engagement: It was noted that while the existence of programmes aimed at providing the youths and women with job opportunities, such as the Governor's program to provide fishing boats to youth, women and persons with disabilities (PWDs), accessing these

existing mechanisms is highly impeded by prolonged and heavy bureaucratic processes. One participant noted that by the time these programs and resources reach the intended beneficiaries, it will take longer, and some will give up as the complex application processes become an obstacle, delaying and complicating access to resources.

2. Collaboration challenges within the blue economy sector: It was noted that insufficient collaboration and gaps existed between national and county governments. The same challenge exists between the governments, civil society organisations and community members. These gaps and inefficiencies hinder effective governance and implementation of blue economy activities, weakening PCVE efforts.

3. Policing and management of the waters adversely impacting fishing activities: A primary challenge identified was that fishing and mangrove harvesting have become highly securitised, leading some fishers to use Somalia waters, which are recognised as having easier fishing conditions. It was noted that coast guards have been deployed to maintain security along the Coastline, as the Indian Ocean is identified as a transit route for the *Al Shabaab* in Somalia. Moreover, the Beach Management Units (BMUs) have also been registering and monitoring the activities of those fishing. While workshop participants appreciated that the policing had disrupted VE activities for VEOs, it raised concerns that the adopted measures did not

⁵ See WIOMSA and UN-Habitat report https://www.wiomsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Blue-Economy_Case-Study_Kilifi-Final.pdf.

⁶ Kenya Marine Fisheries and Socio-Economic Development Project, "Project Background – KEMFSED."

address the socio-economic issues of unemployment. They pointed out the risk of some unregistered fishers adopting underground measures to circumvent the security restrictions. This practice might unintentionally create a conducive environment for recruitment among the fishers operating outside the official frameworks.

4. Need for cohesive policy frameworks to refine coordinated efforts among different actors and sectors. It was identified that gaps in policy integration within the blue economy sector existed. For instance, the National Strategic Plan 2023-2027 within the Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs identifies inadequate policies, legal, and institutional frameworks, equally weakening the governance of Kenya's fisheries, aquaculture, and blue economy.⁷ Fishery-specific policies and regulatory framework, as well as clear guidelines on the management of specific blue economy activities and operationalisation of critical institutions, are required. Secondly, while the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Policy designed to promote sustainable management of the coastal milieu is implemented at the national level, its application and role of county governments remain marginal.⁸ Finally, there was a commitment from the leadership in Kilifi County to establish a Beach Management Policy⁹ to strengthen the capacity of governance and management within the Beach Management Units.

5. Lack of coordination among key actors in the blue economy sector:

Participants identified collaboration challenges among public and private actors. The National Strategic Plan also identified uncoordinated development as a challenge in the blue economy sector.¹⁰ There was also a question on the lack of a designated individual in charge of PCVE in Kilifi County Government. One participant noted the presence of the *SKY* (*Sio Kazi Yangu*) disease within the County leadership. This lack of clarity in leadership and accountability within the Blue Economy and PCVE context demonstrates potential issues in governance, which can lead to the fragmentation and inefficiencies of relating the PCVE agenda to the Blue Economy. The lack of clarity also demonstrates more uncoordinated development as policies may not be aligned or enforced correctly to harness the extensive benefits of the blue economy. Incoordination could result in weak law enforcement, impeding effective implementation of related activities and slowing the uptake of the benefits for targeted beneficiaries.

6. Limited involvement of the private sector:

The blue economy in Kilifi County presents opportunities for the private sector to be involved. Going forward, the private sector can be adequately engaged to leverage its resources and expertise, creating job opportunities for Kilifi residents and, in turn, helping address the socio-economic vulnerability risks of PCVE in the county.

7 State Department for the Blue Economy and Fisheries (2023) "Strategic Plan 2023-2027" [https://www.mibema.go.ke/sites/default/files/17.5.2023%20REVISED%20DRAFT%20STRATEGIC%20%20%20PLAN%20SDBE%26F%20\(2023-2027\).pdf](https://www.mibema.go.ke/sites/default/files/17.5.2023%20REVISED%20DRAFT%20STRATEGIC%20%20%20PLAN%20SDBE%26F%20(2023-2027).pdf).

8 See WIOMSA and UN-Habitat report https://www.wiomsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Blue-Economy_Case-Study_Kilifi-Final.pdf.

9 Alphonse, G. (2022) "Kilifi to Establish Blue Economy Department," The Star, 18 September, <https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/coast/2022-09-18-kilifi-to-establish-blue-economy-department/>.

10 See the Strategic Plan 2023-2027 Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy, and Maritime Affairs.

7. Gender equality and social inclusion:

While the county's blue economy is described as highly male-dominated¹¹, it was noted that young girls and women actively participate in blue economy activities, such as aquaculture, seaweed farming, mangrove harvesting, and fish selling. Beyond the fishing activity itself, women and girls are small-scale traders and processors, marketing and selling fish. Nonetheless, they face extensive competition from larger traders and have lower representation and decision-making power than men in beach management units¹². These challenges suggest the potential susceptibility of girls and women to social exclusion and marginalisation. Therefore, their empowerment is crucial to reducing gender-based vulnerability risks, as they are at-risk groups for radicalisation and recruitment.

Workshop Recommendations

1. **Streamline bureaucratic processes to enhance accessibility and uptake of blue economy initiatives.** This involves simplifying application processes and ensuring funds are allocated directly to youth projects. In addition, capacity-building programmes can be implemented to educate beneficiaries on the application processes. The County Government, through the Directorate of the Blue Economy, can empower youths and women by guiding them on the required knowledge, skills, procedures, and documents for completing the application processes for funding. This way, the process becomes more

accessible to complete, increasing the uptake of the developed initiatives.

2. **Strengthen capacity building and create sustainable employment programmes within the blue economy sector.** The County Government of Kilifi can collaboratively work with CSOs, learning institutions, or the private sector to provide training in various blue economy activities for young men and women in Kilifi. This training should include vocational and equipping them with technical skills and knowledge. More sensitisation and engagement on the various blue economy sectors and activities are necessary for Kilifi County to unpack and communicate the numerous opportunities for employment and community empowerment. The blue economy is not just limited to fishing, tourism, and youths being employed in the boats, as it is highly misconstrued. Additionally, developing a sustainable system of employment programmes within the Directorate of Blue Economy can provide placement opportunities for youths and women in the industry. The private sector can also offer internship opportunities through companies in each blue economy sector.
3. **Institutionalise and mainstream the PCVE agenda into blue economy activities.** This would involve integrating socio-economic inclusion policies into the blue economy approach to acknowledge the socio-economic risk factors of exploitation among at-risk populations by VEOs. This alignment can help mainstream the PCVE agenda

11 See WIOMSA and UN-Habitat report https://www.wiomsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Blue-Economy_Case-Study_Kilifi-Final.pdf.

12 See WIOMSA and UN-Habitat report https://www.wiomsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Blue-Economy_Case-Study_Kilifi-Final.pdf.

into county government activities and policies, fostering a sustainable, coordinated approach. To integrate PCVE messages into county programmes, it is crucial to mainstream PCVE-related initiatives into blue economy-related projects rather than treating them as standalone programmes. This approach can make PCVE efforts more sustainable and embedded within community and state frameworks.

4. Strengthen policy integration within the blue economy sector. Developing policy frameworks at the county level can help align blue economy initiatives with PCVE efforts and strategies in Kilifi County. The County can consider creating a Blue Economy Act that provides a collective legal framework for blue economy-related activities. This Act can outline unified policies on capacity building and integrating learning institutions. Moreover, the Act can outline policies that guide private-public collaboration, creating an enabling environment for a multi-collaborative approach. Finally, the Act can provide strategies for efficiently integrating national policies related to PCVE and the blue economy at the county level. While there have been developments in revising existing policies at the national level, their integration and implementation at the county level still require improvement. Kilifi County can also leverage the benefits of the *Kaunti za Pwani* multi-agency approach to coordinate and ensure policy integration.¹³

5. Strengthen coordination among various actors within the blue economy sector. A more collaborative approach is essential to reduce risks of conflicting

interests and cultivate good working relationships, political will, support, and attitude. Bringing together various stakeholders—including national and county government officials, community leaders, and civil society organisations can help incorporate diverse perspectives and expertise, enabling a community-centred approach. CSOs can assist the county and national governments by creating and coordinating mechanisms for collaboration. This coordination ensures that CVE efforts are integrated and complement other ongoing blue economy-related initiatives, creating a more cohesive and comprehensive strategy. Such coordination can help address CVE issues more effectively and ensure that all plans and actions are aligned and mutually reinforcing.

6. Improve policing of the waters to balance security and economic viability of blue economy activities. Addressing the challenges faced in the policing of the fishing industry is crucial. This will help create a comprehensive and inclusive strategy for security and development that aligns with the County's socio-economic, environmental, and security goals and policies.

7. Designate clear leadership and accountability within the blue economy sector. Outlining the responsibilities of key personnel and formal coordinated mechanisms, such as joint task forces or multi-level or inter-agency committees among the blue economy sectors and stakeholders, is essential. Having a designated individual ensures consistent engagement and coordination within the forum and helps address the *sio kazi yangu* disease. This person will oversee

¹³ See WIOMSA and UN-Habitat report https://www.wiomsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Blue-Economy_Case-Study_Kilifi-Final.pdf.

PCVE-related initiatives, participate in discussions, and facilitate stakeholder communication, which is essential for effective collaboration and progress.

- 8. Support gender mainstreaming and empower women to actively participate in the blue economy and PCVE efforts in Kilifi County.** Women expressed a need for support to undertake blue economy activities, including mangrove harvesting, fish selling, seaweed extraction, and

aquaculture. They also called for more women to be represented in decision-making processes, such as when making or reviewing sector policies and regulations. Promoting and enhancing the role of women can be achieved through capacity building, developing appropriate laws and policy frameworks that encourage and increase women's participation, and the provision of meaningful representation of women, the youth and persons with disabilities.

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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.

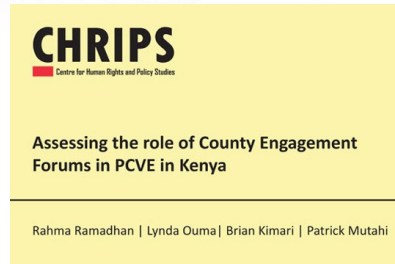
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Nyarangi, M (2024) Engaging Kwale County youth in PCVE, Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies, Workshop Note No. 4. September 2024.

Other Publications

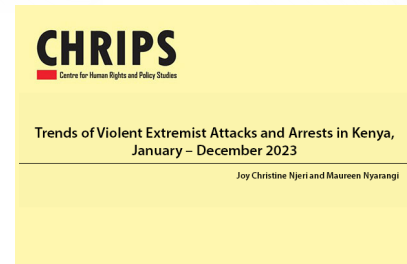


This policy brief draws from discussions during the USAID Sauti National Conference held on 12th and 13th March 2024. It examines the progress and barriers in implementing whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) in Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa, 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.

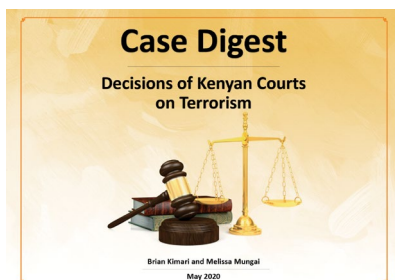


This report examines the extent of citizen engagement in countering violent extremism through County Action Plans in Kenya.

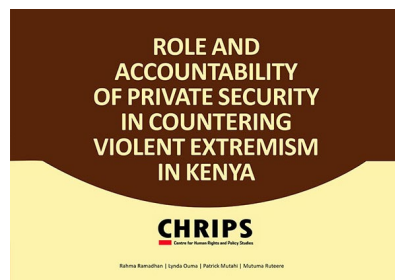
It does this by presenting a thorough analysis of County Engagement Forums focusing on three study sites in Kenya; namely Isiolo, Lamu and Kwale counties.



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.

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