

Towards Strengthening Crime Reporting and Mitigation of Challenges of Insecurity in Kilifi County, Kenya

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Abstract: *Insecurity is emerging as a critical challenge of development in the coast of Kenya. The problem is affecting all the six counties in different manifestations and magnitude. In fact, the socioeconomics of the coast region have suffered immensely. Importantly, the region's main economic mainstay is tourism, which has been brought down by insecurity. The challenges of insecurity in the region range from the traditional petty crimes, Gender Based Violence, violence caused by a strong belief in witchcraft pitying the elderly to emergent criminal gangs, radicalization and recruitment into Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs). However, security is a broad concept that requires a multi-stakeholder approach in its mitigation. It is this realization that a study was mooted to investigate crime reporting, challenges facing the police in maintaining law and order in the region, the role of the youth/community in ensuring security thrives in the region, especially in Kilifi County. To achieve this objective, the study adopted survey research design. Purposive sampling was adopted to select Kilifi County based on expert knowledge on the insecurity dynamics in the region, with the county representing some semblance of security normalcy in the region. The study selected 120 at-risk youth stratified in layers of 30 in a disproportionate way, with 30 youth selected from Malindi, 30 Magarini, and 30 from Kilifi North. The study included an additional 30 youth from Kilifi South as a control group. Moreover, purposive and convenient sampling techniques were also employed to select frontline security officers. The officers were identified and formed three Focus Group Discussions, one in each Sub-county. Further, three (3) Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) with senior National Government security representatives were conducted to supplement primary data collected by way of interview schedules. The collected data was analyzed appropriately, with quantitative data handled by the use of the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), while qualitative data analyzed by classifying information into thematic areas based on the objectives of the study.*

Keywords: *Crime reporting, Challenges of Insecurity, Mitigation of Insecurity, Kilifi County, Radicalization, Violent Extremism*

1. INTRODUCTION

Attention and interest is growing on the role of the youth in crime, radicalization and recruitment into Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs) in Kenya, especially in the coastal region. Kenya like any other country in the world has had its share of insecurity challenges within and without its borders (Botha 2013). Within the country, apart from the traditional crimes, there has been growing awareness on historical injustices, marginalization, exclusion and social injustices, unemployment that have led to the emergency of Violent Extremism (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014, Kempe 2012).

While research has been conducted on the general phenomenon, especially on the push and pull factors, many of the previous pieces of research have targeted the at risk groups, while little effort has been directed to the response channels, especially the police officers. Accordingly, the gap on studies about the reporting, challenges and mitigation mechanisms by the police have remained unexplored. Accordingly, this study attempted to observe crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms of mitigating insecurity in Kilifi County.

Attention need to shift from using the country's security machinery to deal with the problem of insecurity to trying and understand the reporting, challenges and mitigation mechanism of insecurity in the prevention of crime and Countering Violent Extremism. This observation justified the need for the survey based on the realization that crime, radicalization and Violent Extremism (VE) affects the different sectors of the society requiring a multi-sectorial approach to intervene (National Strategy for CVE 2017).

Various strategies have been mooted to resolve the challenges and come up with mechanisms to mitigate crime, radicalization and recruitment into VE. From awareness and education to disengagement, rehabilitation and social reintegration. Various stakeholders have cut a niche in terms of the role they can play in the search for

solutions. Accordingly, there was need to document the crime reporting experiences of the community and the challenges frontline police officers face in ensuring security prevails in the county. The study also attempted to find out the mechanisms used by the police to mitigate crime, radicalization and VE in the county.

2. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Kenya has in the recent past experienced an upsurge of incidents of crime, criminal gangs, and radicalization and VE activities (Shauri and Obeka, 2017, Shauri, 2018). The response to this situation has often been associated with strife between the police and the community members with resultant allegations of disappearances, abductions and extra-judicial killings, especially in the coast of Kenya. Research demonstrates that push and pull factors (Botha 2013, Ranstorp, 2016) have aggravated the situation making youth gravitate towards crime, radicalization, and recruitment into VE, putting them on collision course with the police (Ranstorp 2016, Jacobsen 2017). Moreover, little effort has been directed to the reporting, challenges police face in instituting security in the county and solutions to mitigate the problem.

Thus, there exist gaps in knowledge on crime reporting, challenges police face in mitigation of crime and the mechanism used to deal with criminal activities in the county. Lack of understanding of these components may in some degree explain the escalating incidences of crime, especially violent activities with a special focus on the role of youth and frontline police officers in Kenya. The coastal region has been synonymous with such incidences and as such, several violent conflict hotspots have already been identified (see P/CVE Action plans). The region is also experiencing an upsurge of criminal organized gangs by the youth such as *Wakali Wao, Wakali Kwanza, Wajukuu Wa Bibi, Wajukuu Wa Mtume, Nguruwe Boys, Kapenguria Six among others*. The need to understand crime reporting, challenges of insecurity and mechanisms of mitigation used by the police underscores the need for the study.

3. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following objectives, to:

1. Establish the reporting mechanisms for crime, radicalization and VE in Kilifi County in Kenya
2. Find out the challenges police face in ensuring security in Kilifi County
3. Find out the mechanisms police use to mitigate insecurity in the county

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Crime, radicalization and recruitment into VE are sensitive topics and in most cases treated as special research projects. Owing to the special nature of the research, the approach to study such issues requires skills, tact and experience. Accordingly, a mixed methods approach was used that included:

1. Interviews with 120 youth (30 in Malindi, 30 in Magarini, 30 in Kilifi North and 30 others in Kilifi South Sub County – acting as a control group).
2. Three Focus Group Discussions with frontline security officers identified in the three sub counties (1 in Malindi, 1 in Kilifi North and 1 in Magarini) were conducted.
3. Three (3) Key Informants Interviews (KIIs) with senior security National Government representatives were done to complement primary data collected by way of interviews.

Diverse sampling strategies were adopted also to select the site and participants of the study. First, Kilifi County was selected purposively based on expert judgment of the researcher with regard to insecurity issues in the area and the state of the relation between the police and the community. Second, the 120 youth were selected using disproportionate stratified sampling, while participants for the KIIs and FGDs were conveniently sampled into the study.

5. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Findings are presented, interpreted and discussed based on the objectives of the study and are thematically categorized to ensure flow of information. Accordingly, the section begins with a presentation and discussion of information on the background characteristics of the participants of the study before venturing into crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms of mitigating insecurity by the police. Background characteristics of

participants of the study are presented as a precursor for understanding the patterns and trends of responses and their relation to the study key variables.

Personal Characteristics of the Respondents

This section presents demographic characteristics of the respondents. Demographic variables are critical in understanding the patterns, trends and composition of the primary sample of a study and their implication on the dependent variables. Where sampling is representative, demographic variables can approximate the characteristics of the population from which the sample was drawn. There are several demographic characteristics that were considered in the survey and some are presented next depending on their relevance to the study.

1). Gender of the Participants

Gender is an important aspect of the society because it offers the foundation of understanding the relations amongst its members and role assignment. More importantly, gender is understood to represent the maleness or femaleness of an individual and sociologically the roles each is expected to play. This variable was considered imperative for the study because it would form the basis of explaining the variation in the distribution and patterns of crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms of mitigation of insecurity in the area. Figure 1 carries the results of the study.

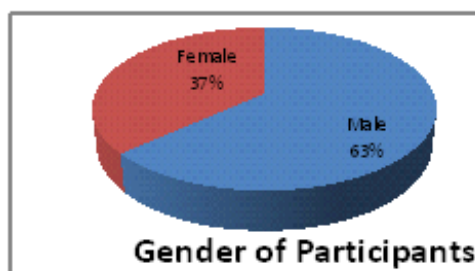


Figure 1: Gender of Participants

Figure 1 shows that over three fifths (63%) of the study participants were male, while over one third (37%) were female. The differential gender, with higher (63%) proportion of males than female (37%) is a mirror of the situation in the county and Kenya, where more males participate in community activities than females. This situation obtains and is borne out by the patriarchy nature of the Kenyan society. Imperatively, the gender variations ensures inclusivity of the experiences and perceptions of the community with regard to crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms of mitigating insecurity in Kilifi County.

2). Age of the Participants

Age represents the number of years that someone has lived since their first birth day. People of different age brackets tend to differ in many aspects such as legal and social responsibilities, outlook in life and self-perception. More so, it is appreciated that people with differential age brackets may have varied perception with regard to crime reporting, challenges police face in enhancing security and mechanisms of mitigating insecurity. Figure 2 offer a summary of the survey findings.

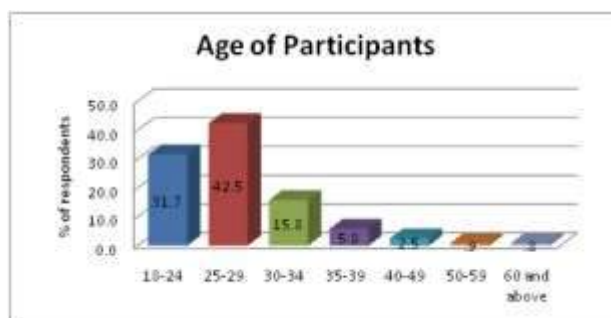


Figure 2: Age of Participants

In Figure 2 it is shown that most (90%) of the respondents were aged between 18-34 years, while the rest (10%) were aged 35 years and above. The inclusion of one tenth (10%) in the study of those aged 35 years and above (Control group), was critical in capturing the views of this age group with regard to crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms of the police in mitigating insecurity in Kilifi county.

3). Marital Status of Participants

Marital status is an important sociocultural aspect that defines and marks the involvement of individuals in different societal processes and decision making mechanisms. The world over, and more so, in African societies, the place of family is not substitutable given the fact that families often form the primary unit of socialization (Nagel, 2011), which to a greater extent forms the bedrock of behavioral adaptation. The study aimed at establishing the marital status of the respondents, especially with regard to its implication on understanding crime reporting, challenges police face in enhancing security and mechanisms of mitigating insecurity in Kilifi. Figure 3 shows the findings of the study with regard to the marital status of the respondents.

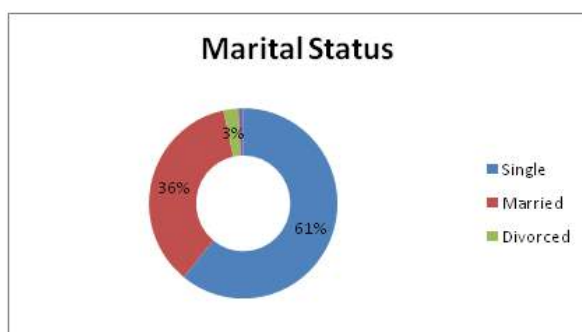


Figure 3: Marital Status of Participants

It is clear in Figure 3 that over three fifths (61%) of the respondents said that they were single, over one third (36%) were married, while less than one tenth (3%) were divorced/separated. The higher (61%) percentage of the respondents reporting to be single is a mirror of the marital status of many community members, especially the youth in the country. This is probably because many of them are still in college or are still looking for livelihood strategies to be able to fend for themselves and prepare for marriage and family life.

4). Level of Education of Participants

Level of education is an important aspect of the society because it offers the foundation of grasping and understanding knowledge, which guides human life. An individual's level of education may also enhance participation in community activities. More significantly, the level of education of the respondents was considered imperative because it represents the level of awareness of that individual with regard to social issues, including insecurity, crime reporting, challenges facing the police in enhancing security and mechanisms they use to mitigate insecurity in the study area. As such it is expected that individuals who have attained a certain level of education may be able to comprehend and articulate many procedures including crime reporting and issues such as the challenges of the police in enhancing insecurity or mechanisms they employ to mitigate insecurity. Results of the survey are carried in Figure 4.

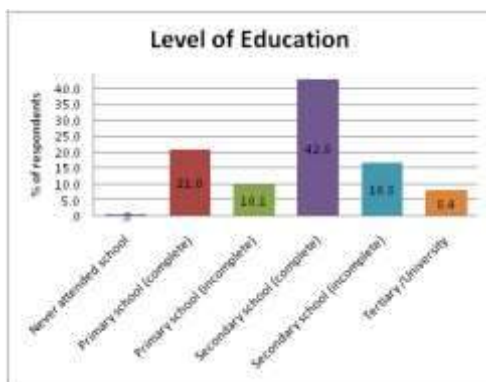


Figure 4: Level of Education of Participants

Findings in Figure 4 reveal that almost three fifths (59.7%) of the respondents had attained some secondary level of education, over one quarter (31.1%) had attained some primary level, and less than one tenth (8.4%) had attained tertiary and university level of education, while less than one tenth (0.8%) had never attended school. In sum, most (91.6%) of the respondents had some secondary and below level of education, with only less than one tenth (8.4%) having college or university education. The implication of this finding is that many of the respondents had low levels of education threatening their level of understanding and knowledge on crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms to mitigate insecurity.

Youth Awareness and Knowledge on the Insecurity Situation in Kilifi County

Since knowledge about causes of general crime such as theft, domestic violence, Gender Based Violence (GBV) is usually common among populations, the study focused on nuanced triggers of insecurity. In this regard, the study attempted to draw attention of the participants to the fact that for quite a while now, the coastal region of Kenya has been synonymous with the ideology of radicalization and recruitment of youth into VE. Different regions have their own share of the impacts of these two security challenges. Accordingly, the respondents were asked whether they had heard about radicalization leading to VE. Their feedback is captured in Figure 5.

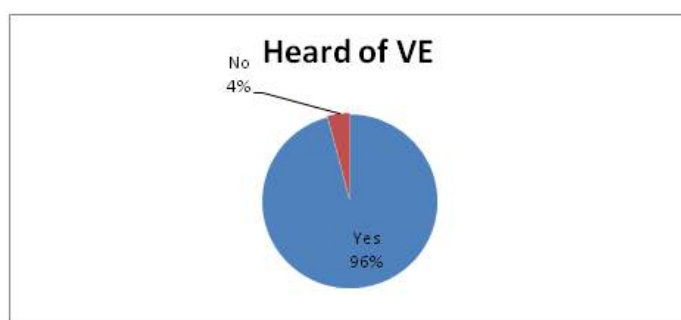


Figure 5: Heard about VE

From Figure 5 it is clear that most (96%) of the respondents had heard about VE, with way less than one tenth (4%) saying they had not heard about it. Further, it was established during the study that information regarding VE is communicated using different means and modes. Accordingly, those who had heard about it reported that they had received the information from different places that included bus stages, at the mosque, among family members, conversation at the community *baraza*, friends, from the mainstream media, internet, rallies, and in workshops where issues concerning VE were discussed.

However, from our observation during the study, it was apparent that there is yet to be a consensus on a universal definition of VE. The study reveals that the concept of VE is ambiguous in meaning and highly dependent on the environment and circumstances of use by the respondents. Nevertheless, some respondents of FGDs and KIIs saw VE to harbor a strong system of beliefs and actions of people who support or use extreme value system through violence to achieve radical ideological, religious or political goals. In this case therefore, it was said during our interviews with the various respondents that violent extremist views can be exhibited along a spectrum of issues, including politics, religion and gender relations.

Notably, from the sites surveyed, the respondents demonstrated a deeper understanding of the concept of VE and it was indeed observed that VE occurred in different forms. Some of the manifestations of VE were reported by the respondents as captured in Table 1:

Table 1: Forms of Violence Extremism Mentioned by Participants

- A conflict among/between youth or people participating in destructive activities for political or religious gains that eventually leads to death and loss of property.
- Different forms of harassment meted upon women including rape.
- The youth joining violent groups/gangs and killing innocent people.
- Strong religious difference causing trouble and the youth being recruited to some unlawful groups resulting in violent conflicts.

- Al-Shabaab coming to Kenya and convincing the youth to go to Somalia for easy money to fight *Jihad* and
- Excess use of violence in upholding particular values and motivated violence to achieve radical religious, ideological or political view.
- Use of violence to deal with traditional belief in witchcraft leading to killings of the elderly.

Unruly behavior of *bodabodariders* leading to deaths and arson of property, especially vehicles involved in accidents with the riders

Interestingly, despite this level of understanding police officers during the FGDs and KIIs reported that there are very minimal cases of VE in Kilifi County. This finding is in line with the Kilifi County Action Plan for Countering Violent Extremism (KCAPCVE 2017), where the county is seen to be more of a recruitment and hideout for Al-shabaab returnees than a field of VE action.

Youth Vulnerability to Joining Criminal/VE Groups

There are differentials among individuals or groups in relation to their vulnerability to joining groups that perpetrate violence and extremist dispositions. On the basis of motivating factors ranging from personal to systemic inhibitions, different people in the society may adopt different mechanisms to VE. This therefore warranted this survey to establish the vulnerability of the community members, especially the youth in joining criminal and VEOs in Kilifi County. The study results are captured in Figure 6.

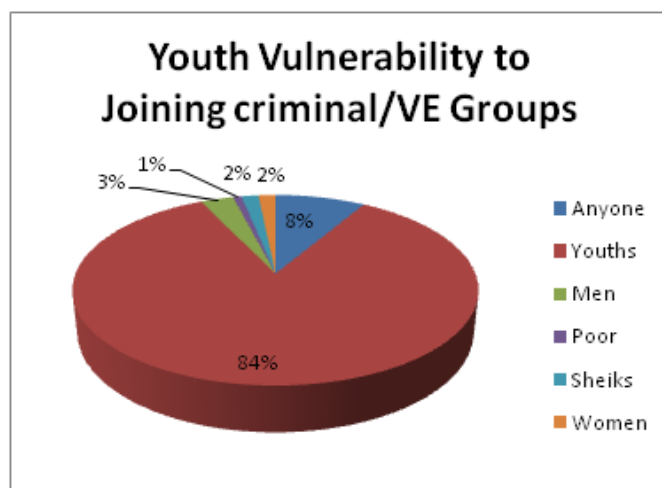


Figure 6: Vulnerability to Joining Criminal/VE Groups

Results in Figure 6 are showing interesting pattern where over four fifths (84%) of the respondents reported themselves to be more vulnerable to joining criminal gangs or VEOs, while less than one tenth (8%) and (3%) were of the view that anyone, (whether a male or female, youth or old) had equal chances of being a target of criminal gang or VEO recruitment. The respondents also expressed the view that men are more vulnerable to joining VE groups than females. Indeed, the chance of women (2%) and the poor (1%) and Sheikhs (2%) joining VE groups was reported to be very low. The higher (84%) percentage of respondents reporting vulnerability is a clear signal of the youth own recognition that they are at-risk of recruitment into criminal gangs or VEOs because majority of the respondents were youthful (Figure 2: 90% between 18-34 years). This implies that consorted efforts should be sought to institute mitigation measures against youth vulnerability to recruitment into criminal and VE Organizations.

Reasons for Youth Vulnerability to Recruitment into Criminal or VE Groups

Statistics show that on average, 40% (UNDP 2017) of the youths are mostly jobless making them an easy prey for recruitment into criminal gangs and VEOs. Moreover, contrary to the popular belief, findings from FGDs and KIIs revealed that low level of knowledge and information combined with the distorted religious teachings, as well as, wrong interpretation of the Quran based on false and luring religious promises contributed more to the vulnerability of the youth.

Others reasons for vulnerability of the youth to recruitment into criminal and VE Organizations were cited to include conflict with the police and administration, which spur hatred towards the police putting the youth at-risk of recruitment into criminal or VE groups to take revenge of harassment by police officers. This finding has direct implication to the relationship between the vulnerable youth and the police. Frequent clashes between the police and the youth means heightened tension and hatred, a recipe for recruitment into VEOs.

In other cases, the study was told that the youth are high into drugs hindering their reasoning and capacity, which affects them into accepting any offer, as long as they get money to support their drug habits, falling into the hands of recruiters into crime and VEOs. Significant to note is that, drug abuse means a continuous confrontation with the police possibly souring the relation between the drug users (youth) and the police. Such damaged relationship has repercussions on the part of the youth in enhancing vulnerability to recruitment into VEOs.

It also emerged in one FGD with the police that youth join VEOs due to influence from peers and because they are arrogant and lack respect for elders to the extent of not listening to whatever the elders tell them, especially advice to shun bad friends or joining VEOs. Where the relation within the community is already stale, such as that of the youth and the elders, there is likelihood that such strained relation spills over to other agencies, including the police. The strained relation becomes a fertile ground for recruitment of the youth into criminal gangs and violent extremists groups.

Further, in an FGD with the police, it was revealed that poor upbringing of children in families was largely to blame for the surge in cases of crime and youth joining VEOs. Poor upbringing it was revealed does not provide room for the youth to express a sense of independence in thought and critical mind in social, religious, political and economic well-being, increasing their vulnerability to recruitment into VEOs. Significant for this research is that where there is poor upbringing there is a challenge of successful socialization (Nagel 2011), which may impact on youth vulnerability to recruitment into criminal gangs and VEOs.

Reporting Crime/VE to the Police

One of the objective of the study was to establish crime reporting mechanisms in Kilifi County. Focus here was more on the nuanced crime of radicalization and VE than reporting traditional crimes. Findings of the study with regard to this variable are capture in Figure 7.

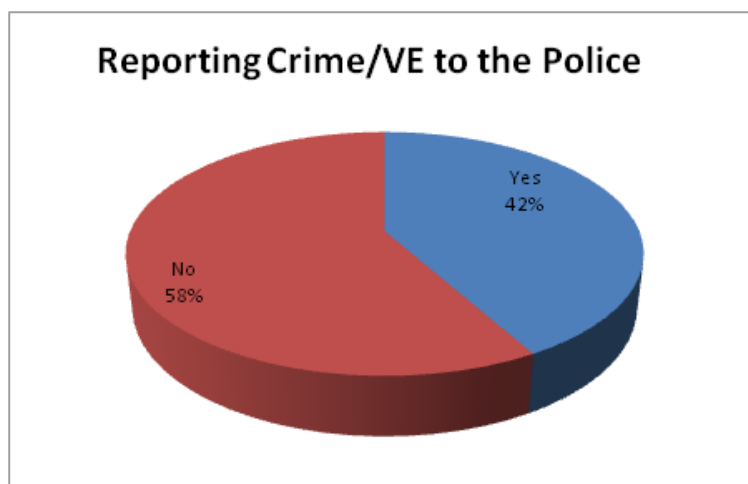


Figure7: Reporting crime/ VE to the police

Results in Figure 7 depict that over half (58%) of the respondents indicated that they would not report to the police if they heard anything in relation to VE, while over two fifths (42%) were affirmative. The reason for the state of affairs as advanced by the study subjects was that this was as a result of the threat of insecurity and fear that they will be treated like suspects themselves by the police. In fact, one respondents put it well

“...reporting to the police is like putting yourself into the jaws of a shark...you will be harassed and treated as a prime suspect yourself.”

The implication of this finding is that the police are uncooperative and cannot be trusted with crime/VE reports in Kilifi County.

However, in an FGD with the police it was clear that the local community is not aware of the police procedures in reporting and dealing with a crime to term. It also emerged that the police are aware of this gap but seems their capacity or probably their mandate does not lend itself to spreading awareness and education on crime reporting procedures to the public. There was even a suggestion:

“...that police have an open day for the public to visit the police station and learn (Community FGD).....but when this was raised in a police FGD,“...participants were even surprised that this can happen in a police station”.

This finding has implications for civic education on crime reporting procedures, especially for VE related crimes. Interestingly, in another FGD with the police in Malindi and Magarini areas we were told by the police that they were not even aware of how to handle VE suspects themselves as evidenced in this voice:

“...we don't know how to deal with VE suspects...such cases are handled by our bosses and even them just refer such cases to the Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU)...we have not been trained on what to do or how to handle VE suspects which are a big threat to security”.

Furthermore, it was also reported in the interviews with the participants that the police can easily be bribed by the culprits whom they may report to the police station turning the tables on them and instead being victimized. Surprisingly, the study was also made privy of the allegations that in some cases, those who report crimes have ended up being arrested and due to this

“.....the community doesn't trust the police and wouldn't want anything to do with the police”.

As a result, the community members even fear befriending or being interrogated by the police as this may be misconstrued by their fellow community members to mean a police collaborator, sympathizer or that they are government spies.

These findings were corroborated by those from FGDs by the police themselves. Indeed, far and wide, the police acknowledged themselves and alleged that may be only 10% of the cases were reported to them. Implying that many (90%) of the cases are not reported to the police. This they themselves attributed it to:

“...the general fear harbored by the community towards the police,the fear of being stigmatized, victimized or being viewed as community spies for the police”.

More so, the study was told that there is a serious problem of confidentiality between the police and the community with regard to reports of crime, including VE issues. There were allegations that police can blow the cover of the ones who report crime/VE to them to the alleged perpetrators of such crime/VE, which the participants said:

“...lack of confidentiality is a major threat to their personal security”.

Accordingly, there was a general perception among the study subject that going to the police means that you should be a criminal, greatly hindering people from reporting cases of VE to the police. Nevertheless, it was further noted that the community does not have confidence with the police because they don't want to involve them in their activities. Thus, when criminal or VE issues arise the community would rather, the study was told by the police in an FGD in Magarini, solve their own problem using alternative dispute resolutions than involve the police:

“...in any case the culprit is one of their own...they don't want to risk reporting one of their own.”

However, in a FGDs with the police we deliberately brought up the issue of lack of confidentiality in keeping crime reports. As expected the issue of lack of confidentiality was thrown back to the community. The police were at pains explaining that it is the community which breaches the confidentiality and not them.

They analogized a case where a community member can tell a friend or relative that they have reported a case on some issue to the police but they should not tell anyone. It is from such sources that the information leaks and they blame the police. Nevertheless, some of the police officers agreed that *there may also be some rogue officers who might leak such information for their own personal reasons or benefit.*

The latter being the moot point between the community and the police, it is apparent that the findings have implications for strengthening confidentiality in crime reporting for both the community and the police.

6. CHANNELS FOR REPORTING CRIME/VEIN KILIFI COUNTY

The survey also wanted to establish the channels through which the community use to report crime and cases of VE to the police. The idea was to cross check whether there are other channels of reporting crime and VE issues which the community uses. This was conceived to be an opportune finding to corroborate or negate the findings on community fear to visit a police station to report a crime or VE. From the study the following channels were reported:

- Provincial administration: Village elders, Sub-chiefs, Chiefs, Sub-county administrators and the County Commissioner
- Administration police
- Kenya police
- Community policing
- *NyumbaKumi*
- Religious leaders
- Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)-especially for GBV

The plethora of crime/VE reporting channels meant that there were adequate channels of reporting crime or VE to the authorities. However, the study heard from the FGDs with the police that the community preferred reporting to the village elders or local administrators (Sub-chief and the chief) than any other channel. The explanation given was that the community members' fear reporting each other probably because of close ties or fear of retaliation.

However, the preference for reporting crime cases by the community to local elders does not auger well with the crime of violence, including GBV or VE. In fact, the latter is a highly fragile and technical form of crime that the local elder, sub-chief or chief has no knowledge or capacity about. If the police themselves admitted in a FGD with the researcher acknowledging their inadequate capacity to handle VE cases, the question would be whether these local leaders possess the capacity to effectively handle VE issues. The reporting to the local leadership may therefore be one of the reason why the community and even the police were not aware of the extent of radicalization and VE in the county. In fact, the lack of knowledge to handle VE cases by the youth and the police prompted the research team to find out the ways police use to resolve issues of VE in the county next.

7. POLICE MECHANISMS FOR RESOLVING INSECURITY ISSUES

From the FGDs with the police, a question on knowledge of VE and presence of returnees or defectors was posed. Initially, the police FGD participants were hesitant to speak and in denial that Kilifi County has a problem of VE. After some probing and assurances of confidentiality, the participants opened up to speak about the issue. However, after long deliberations, what came out is that the regular police have inadequate knowledge on violent extremism and how CVE works. They reiterated that their role is to keep low and order and anti-terror issues are not their mandate but that of the Anti-Terror Police Unit, whom they say "**.....have the capacity to handle VE issues**". When they were probed further on their mechanisms to Prevention and CVE (P/CVE), the following responses were captured during the deliberations:

- Education to the community that aims to sensitize members of the public on the need for the community to cooperate with the police in the improvement of security (this includes CVE).
- Good communication with police and involvement of village elders in security operations. This enhance community -police relations that can be beneficial to crime control and CVE.
- Strengthen and enhance community policing. This has ramifications for feeding into security benefits including P/CVE.

- Sensitize Chiefs to have good relation with community and the police to foster cooperation not to solve the cases within the community because it's through this that VE groups keeps on emerging.
- Village elders and *wazeewanyumbakumi* need to be capacity built, salaried because they take those village meeting as a source of their livelihood. This makes them to hold as many cases as possible because every gathering involves some payment for the services rendered. This has implication for GBV and CVE.
- Sensitize village elders to be accountable to all those cases they handle and this will be possible if government employs them so that when they get paid by the community it is counted as bribe to ensure proper reports of cases.
- Meeting the community outside police official duty through
 - 'Chamas' mostly table banking
 - Being part of community activities such as cultural events, burials and weddings
 - Participate in sporting activities
 - In worship areas

8. CHALLENGES FACING THE RELATION BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE

The researcher recognizes that any social engagement has its own challenges that need to be mitigated for efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Accordingly, the efforts to mitigate crime, including P/CVE by the police has also its share of challenges. This study asked the police to share their challenges in their efforts to enhance security in Kilifi County. Findings of the study are consolidated next:

- Weak community cooperation and involvement in security matters, including the P/CVE.
- Need for exchange of money or goodies for information because many community members have information but you need to create a rapport with them, which needs resources to bond with the client, which we don't have. Thus, limited resources to motivate those who report dangerous cases such as GBV or VE to the police, leads to reporter fatigue and low morale.
- Taking care of witnesses because they want to be taken care of, at times we support upkeep or even fare to and from court for witnesses from our personal pockets.
- Fear of being a witness in a court of law thus many cases lack witnesses seen to provide evidence and the suspects are released posing threat to the society at large.
- Community members volunteering to being witness and in turn being jailed, becoming victims themselves in some instances. This is possible due to ignorance of police procedures.
- Limited capacity and knowledge by the police to handle VE suspects and returnees
- Weak weapons given to the police compared to those of extremists

9. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study three conclusions can be adduced, first, Kilifi community has diverse channels of reporting crime and VE issues. Second, the police have a plethora of challenges in their quest to ensure peace and security in the county. Third, the police are employing diverse mechanisms for mitigating insecurity in the county.

Strengthening Crime/VE Reporting and Mitigation of Challenges of Insecurity

From the results of the study a number of suggestion can be arrived at to enhance crime reporting and mitigation of challenges of insecurity in Kilifi County. The presentation of strategies can be done in three parts.

(i) Consideration for Policy Reforms

Through advocacy and lobbying, Civil Society Organizations and security stakeholders and experts should push for:

- ✚ The need to change the training policy of the police to include soft skills such as public relations, participatory policing, communication and social relations among others. This will help in the on-going transformation of the police from a force into a police service with consequent effects on the strengthening crime reporting and mitigation of challenges of insecurity.
- ✚ Reforms in the policy and procedures of police operations to allow the police use other skills they have to enhance law and order in society. It was noted that some police have trainings in other professional areas such as administration, counseling, and community development but are not allowed to use them simply because they are police and mandated only to do police work. Use of such skills may enhance crime reporting and mitigation of challenges of insecurity in the county.
- ✚ Government to review its policy to include motivation for those who report crimes, especially those related to VE.

(ii) Considerations for Strengthening Practice

- ✚ **Community-Community Dialogue (CCDs):** Dialogue should take place periodically (probably quarterly) to bringing the community together and allow members to dialogue amongst themselves. The problems of the community are known and felt by the community and it is the community itself that has to own and solve their crime and VE related issues through dialogue.
- ✚ **Community-Police Dialogues (CPDs):** Dialogue between the community and the police on peace and security issues, crime reporting, challenges and mechanisms for mitigating insecurity should be shared in an open and critical manner to strengthen the community-police relation through trust building and mitigation of fear of parties involved.
- ✚ **Community-Police Inclusive Activities (CPIAs):** Security can be strengthened by a strong community-police relation that can foster joint activities such as sports, culture and music for trust building and demystifying the police to the community, helping it to deal with the “fear of police” and police “fear of the community”.
- ✚ **Community Awareness, Communication and Education (CACE)** on insecurity and P/CVE through community and police participation in security awareness and sensitization campaigns. The community and police should be exposed to the mutual benefits of the importance of security in the county through seminars, *barazas* by village elders, get together and open forums to discuss such issues freely without fear of victimization.
- ✚ **Establishment of a CVE desk** at the police station, where there is confidentiality in the reporting and communicating VE issues. The personnel manning such desks should at all times exhibit professional conduct and be well versed in customer relations, ethical issues, especially privacy and confidentiality of clients and issues disclosed to the office.
- ✚ **Socialization of the importance of peace and security.** The public and the police themselves should be socialized into embracing peace and security as the most basic of the basic human needs and wants in the family, school, by peers, in religious institutions and the mass media. They should also be socialized on the importance of community (youth)-police relations in crime management and P/CVE.

(iii) Concerns for Further Research

- ✚ More research is needed to assess the effectiveness and document all the efforts geared towards enhancing crime reporting and mitigation of challenges of insecurity in Kilifi County.
- ✚ More studies are needed to establish how best the community can report crime and VE issues without fear and breach of ethical considerations such as confidentiality
- ✚ Comparative studies are needed across counties, regions and even countries to document lessons learnt, success stories and best practices of crime and VE reporting and mitigation of challenges of insecurity.

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