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Understanding the Role of Community-Based Organisations in Radicalisation and Terror-Related Activities in Nairobi County, Kenya

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The militaristic approach otherwise known as the hard strategy involves the employment of a hard approach to countering violent extremism, which is headed by the security agencies coordinated by the Kenya National government. This hard measure ought to be supplemented by the soft strategy, which involves the main key partners at the community level who are the youth, women, and community leaders. These groups have extensive knowledge of the local dynamics, are positioned well to navigate the local terrains in getting to know the trends and drivers of violent extremism and work with marginalised groups to address their demands and grievances in order to build lasting trust between the government authorities and the communities. There is a significant increase in terror cells that target the youth both male and female operating within Nairobi and specifically in the suburbs of Mukuru, Eastleigh, California, Mathare, and Kibera. Through the community-based organisations in the country, the key stakeholders have provided impactful and lasting contributions to preventing and countering violent extremism. Young people are the main target of recruitment and mobilisation by violent groups and by implication, they are one of the most strategic sources of resilience against terrorism.

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INTRODUCTION

In Kenya, the threat posed by the Islamist Insurgency group Al-Shabaab remains the principal security challenge (Masters & Sergie, 2018). As per the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project, Al-Shabaab is currently the deadliest terror group in Africa, along with Boko Haram (Raleigh et al., 2017). The group has managed to retain control over large swathes of Somalia and demonstrated its reach and operational capability across parts of Kenya, principally within the northeast and north coastal regions. Kenya experienced more than 200 terrorist attacks from Al-Shabaab between 2008 and 2020 resulting in the deaths of over 500 people and injuring over 1000 (Ombati, 2016). The number of attacks stepped after 2011 in retaliation for operation Linda Nchi, a Kenyan military operation that deployed Kenyan troops over the border in Somalia conflict zones to engage Al-Shabaab (Asmoah, 2015).

Kenyan troops were later assimilated into the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISON) to help the Somali National Government in Mogadishu to control the growth of the insurgency Al-Shabaab and bring stability to the region. On September 21 2013, Kenya experienced a horrific terror attack in the Westgate Mall where 72 lives were lost while 201 were injured (Global Terrorism Database, 2016). In June 2014, 48 people were killed and

three injured in the Mpeketoni attack in the County of Lamu on the Kenyan coast. In the same month at least 15 were killed in an overnight attack at Majembeni and Poromoko villages near Mpeketoni for which Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility (Kimunguyi, 2011).

In April 2015, gunmen attacked the Garissa University College in North-east Kenya, killed 147 people and injured 79 staff and students. A Kenyan university law student commandeered the attackers, and this has sadly caught many Kenyans, including the security authorities by surprise (Adow, 2015). What drives a fairly good Kenyan citizen with a potentially great future doing law at the university to be radicalised, recruited, and eventually take part in acts of terror? Why are Kenyan youths being radicalised? This was a big question. Again, on January 15 in 2019, the Al-Shabaab terror group attacked the DusitD2 complex building in the heart of Nairobi's West lands area. 17 innocent lives were lost, property worth millions destroyed, and livelihoods disrupted (Bryden & Bahra, 2019). A Kenyan youth was confirmed to be behind the attack and died in the siege. In both the US Embassy attack and in the Westgate Mall attacks, the terrorists were of foreign nations, but in Garissa and DusitD2 attacks at least 2 attackers were positively identified as indigenous Kenyans. This was a wake-up call for both the Kenyan authorities and the community at large that indeed some of our own youths have been radicalised and are

now members of these terror groups (Cannon, 2017).

Initially, the security agencies were profiling foreign individuals who may be potential terrorists, but now this reality has called for a change of strategy in dealing with terrorists and violent extremism in general. This called for the redirection of policies, priorities and the development of new strategies in combating terrorism and violent extremism. It is therefore the core objective of this study to analyse the critical role that non-state actors can play in the fight against terrorism and terror-related activities. The youth in the country should be seen as assets in counterterrorism efforts and not only perpetrators. The youth have the energy and zeal to do well; hence there should be a way to redirect their energy and make them more innovativeness and creative in taking the country forward.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last 25 years, terrorism and violent extremism have become security realities and national social challenges with an increasing number of young people being recruited by Al-Shabaab and other terror groups. Violent extremism has also become a social problem for communities and families in the coastal parts of the country, where they have seen their young men and women embrace the terrorist ideology and become active members (Anderson & McKnight, 2015).

The bottom-up Countering Violent Extremism approach is oriented towards community-level action. Initiatives under this approach revolve around those that are considered 'vulnerable' and/or 'at risk' of joining violent extremist groups as active participants (Fink, 2016). Given the fast pace of change and the many uncertainties in countering violent extremism

and the security environment as a whole in the country, there is a need for a forward-looking community-based approach to mitigate this menace (Atta Asamoah, 2015).

The security agencies and the Preventing Violent Extremism organisations including CBOs have realised the importance of counter-radicalisation, sensitisation of youths on violent extremism and re-educating youths on national values and patriotism. This has called for CBOs and other grass root organisations to come up with PVE programs that counter violent extremism and radicalisation. The new strategy was to engage youths in efforts to combat violent extremism and radicalisation so that the youth do not become a target of terror recruitment. The new approach has called for collaboration between security agencies, NGOs, and CBOs. The responsibility of preventing, combating, and managing the consequences of a terrorist act and the responsibility to respect and protect human rights lie primarily with the state. However, the state needs to seek the support of civil society, the media, the private sector, and the business community to counterterrorism (Pettinger, 2017) successfully. Countering terrorism is, therefore, a collective responsibility and requires the joint involvement and cooperation of the police, other public authorities, and members of the public.

Some grievances exploited by terrorist groups lie beyond governmental reach. Therefore, the community-based approach is better placed, more credible, more knowledgeable, and experienced in working with specific groups to help identify and address the grievances that make individuals more susceptible to violent extremism and radicalisation that lead to terrorism (Global Counterterrorism Forum, 2016). Therefore, a local system-based approach that is tailored to address specific

dynamics and drivers of violent extremism in a community that is exposed and/or vulnerable to violent extremism can be effective in preventing violent extremism, especially if sustained over a period of time (Global Solutions Exchange, 2017)

The concept of countering violent extremism from the bottom-up approach involves developing technical resilience in the community. The process acknowledges the critical presence of the community as equal partners in mitigating radicalisation and terror-related activities (Romaniuk, 2015). This creates a sense of shared responsibility based on mutual support and trust between the state and the community.

The community resilience paradigm is a positive development that views the community and its members as having the ability to make informed decisions in recovery and restoration of the community in the face of adversity (Horgan, 2009). Community resilience encompasses community cohesion as a contributing factor to community and human security in terms of emergency response and infrastructural development.

State security depends on its citizens' human security (Botha, 2016). The community is better placed to bridge the gap between them and the state by consulting and involving them in taking up the responsibility as active stakeholders in countering violent extremism. In relation to community resilience in responding to disasters involves four key networked adaptive capacities: economic development, information and communication, social capital, and community competence. In economic resources, it looked at how well the communities were able to leverage their economic resources and relationships in direct response to violent groups and incidents in their

neighbourhood (Portes, 1998). For example, can the provision of security to the key economic hubs prevent or counter violent extremism?

Information is integral to collective action in relation to violence or to its threat. The existence of community spaces where community members share vital information and engage in collective understanding is important as well as how communities receive and share information on violent extremism, the credibility of the source of information, and the right use of the information. Social capital has been defined as the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks (Portes, 1998, p. 6). Social capital is also described as involving three key dimensions: a sense of community, a sense of attachment to place, and civic participation (Norris et al. 2008). Community competence is the ability to demonstrate collaborative effort in the service of identifying and achieving goals; it involves both coming together for a common goal as well as empowerment.

Kenya has a strong tradition of community mobilisation. There are more than 400,000 registered community-based organisations. The strength of this sector has contributed significantly to the successful implementation of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) programmes under both the Kenya Transition Initiative and STRIVE horn of Africa. The current programming trend in Kenya appears to be proceeding along a community-driven path. Donors are getting local organisations to approach them directly with their concepts and requests for funding which in turn will result in a program driven by local issues and needs (Van Metre & Calder, 2016). This speaks to the strength of the community efforts and has significantly contributed to the success of the implementation and evaluation of CVE

programs in the country. The Kenya Tuna Uwezo project is a USAID-funded project implemented by Global Communities that also integrated civic education. Working with local partners, PeaceNet, and Kituo Cha Sheria, the project enabled residents, especially young people, to air grievances and worked toward common solutions (Truphena, 2019).

The Kenya NiWajibu Wetu (NIWETU) activity, funded by USAID and implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), strengthens the capacity of CSOs and community influencers to lead CVE initiatives. Since 2016, NIWETU has partnered with 39 local organisations to co-design context-specific CVE activities across Kenya. NIWETU also supports 52 CVE Champions for Change (C4Cs) across five counties in Kenya through training, mentorship, and continuous technical support. The BRAVE project in Kenya mobilises religious leaders and other community members to develop a counter-narrative framework to combat violent extremist messages. Working with Islamic, Christian, and inter-faith leaders, the project provided training and toolkits to religious groups on how to counter radicalising online narratives by referencing moderate interpretations of scripture (Mwangi, 2017).

In 2015, the security council adopted UNSCR 2050, the first resolution entirely dedicated to recognising the importance of engaging young women and men in shaping and sustaining peace (Romeral, 2016). It is the first international policy framework that recognises the positive role young people play in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism, and building peace. The resolution calls on Member states to include young people in their institutions and mechanisms to prevent violent conflict and to

support the work already being done by youth in peace and security (UNSCR, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The study used a qualitative approach in its research design and data analysis. With regard to data collection, the study used both primary and secondary methods. The primary data was obtained using semi-structured interviews with Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and two focus group discussions. The semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions in order to gather information about the programs and the different strategies that the targeted CBOs used in countering terrorism. The target population, in this case, are the representatives of the Community Based Organisations (CBOs) that are involved in CVE programs in Nairobi. The semi-structured interviews were found appropriate for the study because they allowed the respondents to share their experiences freely.

The method also allowed the researcher to get detailed information and clarification on the importance of achieving the main objective of the study. These interviews were held in private safe settings so that the interviewees could speak freely and candidly about sensitive issues. Two focus group discussions comprised of the youth and women victims whose loved ones were either radicalised or involved in violent extremism terrorism in California, Mathare, Mukuru, Kibra, and Eastleigh areas. The Focus Group Discussions were conducted using interview guide questions with each session lasting for a period of 90 Minutes. The main objectives of the two Focus Group Discussions were to understand the role that the CBOs in their area has helped cope with the trauma and the heartbreak of losing loved ones and the support they have given to youths who have been radicalised or returnees from Al-

Shabaab. The FCD of the youth had 13 participants, and that of the women victims had 10 respondents.

The Secondary data was mainly an extensive literature review of research that had been done on terrorism, violent extremism, and the CBOs in radicalisation and countering violent extremisms. The target population are the CSOs that have CVE programs and are based in areas such as Eastleigh, California, Mukuru, Kibera, and Mathare. They include the Eastleigh Wood Youth Forum, Amani Kibera, Arts and Talents Kenya, New Image, and Kamukunji Women Peace Builders. The participants of the KIIs were representatives of the five CBOs in the target areas and that of FCDs; the first one comprised the youth, and the second were the women victims in the target area.

Due to the sensitive nature of this research, confidentiality and anonymity were completely guaranteed during the Key Informant Interviews and the Focus Group Discussion. Prior to the sessions, the participants were informed about the nature of the study, the expectations related to their participation, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their rights to either decline to participate or withdraw at any stage if they feel so.

This article has four sections. The first section is about the introduction of the study. The second section reviews the literature on the role of non-state agencies, such as the Community Based Organisations, as key partners in Countering Violent Extremism. The third section involves the research findings based on the research objectives retrieved from the key informant interviews and the focus group discussion. Finally, the fourth section gives the general conclusion of the research.

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are based on the analysis of the interviews with key informants, focus group discussions, and literature reviews. The findings are organised according to the issues extracted from the discussions with the FGDs and KII and the research objectives.

The Role of CBOs in the Fight Against Terrorism in Nairobi, Kenya

The broad phenomenon of terrorism usually has deep roots in radicalisation, it is the by-product of this that commits terror attacks and become terrorists. Therefore, the role of CBOs is very crucial in breaking up this chain and ensures youths do not get radicalised and easily become recruits for terrorism. Scholars have figured radicalisation as a psychosocial phenomenon that unfolds from context, thought, and finally, action (Kruglanski, 2011).

According to Kruger (2008), the stereotype of a terrorist as a foreigner from a disadvantaged or marginalised country, striking at unpopular values from abroad, is slowly fading away (Global Solutions Exchange, 2017). This is because serious security threats have now become localised and terror agents are busily radicalising and recruiting from the local communities. A very special case is the radicalisation of many indigenous Arab, Bajuni, Barawa, and Swahili youths by the Somali terror group the Al-Shabaab (Truphena, 2019)

In light of the changes in dynamics and the growing threat of domestic youths being radicalised, the fight against VE and counterterrorism initiatives have adopted two main approaches. These are

- The hard approach involves the security forces, the police and the military to collect intelligence and militarily fight terror cells wherever they are.

- The soft approach, which involves the PVE and CVE, approaches by NGOs, CBOs, and other organisations, of course, with collaboration with security authorities and the international community (Khalil & Zeuthen, 2016).

The above approaches are concurrently undertaken by the security agencies, NGOs, and CBOs supported by international donor funds and support.

There were a number of reasons given by participants interviewed in both the focus group discussions and the structured interviews concerning Nairobi. Most of these organisations have been initiated by the local communities residing in some of the most insecure slums in the city. This was majorly out of mainly a few reasons, including:

- Looking out for their own kids and youths who disappeared either joined criminal gangs or terror groups.
- Due to rampant insecurity and the inability of security agencies to provide safety and security.
- To ensure future generations of youths do not die, these poor slum kids join petty thieves and other criminal gangs and they end up killed by the police.
- To do urgently needed PVE in order to counter the infiltration by terror agents recruiting poor kids from these slums in Nairobi.

Educating the Youth on Matters of Global Security and Development

Youths' role in development and security is shaped by the capacity of the state to harness their potential and meet their needs (Ismail,

2007). The youth can take up the cause of peace hence greater prosperity to the country they live in and by implication, they can be one of the most strategic sources of resilience if their energy, activism, and innovative ideas are given due support and channelled constructively (Neumann & Rogers, 2007). Young people are the main target of recruitment and mobilisation efforts by violent extremist groups and it is the responsibility of the state to see them as active partners in CVE and utilise their potential.

The Kenya NiwaJibu Wetu and the Kenya Tuna Uwezo are both USAID-funded projects working with local partners, especially the young people to air their grievances and work towards common solutions. They also partner with a community-based organisation in order to strengthen their capacity to lead CVE initiatives. The youth respondents in the FCD acknowledged their critical role in peace and development, and their contribution needs to be recognised and appreciated.

CBOs in Nairobi are highly involved in activities that include seminars, youth retreats, youth conferences, and sporting and educational activities that focus on matters of global and local security as well as life skills development and livelihoods. The youth respondents in the FCD reported that the CBOs that are based in their areas are helping deradicalise and find meaningful alternatives. Since youth both male and female, are the main targets of this group, they involve them in finding a solution to the problem. In other words, youth are seen as potentials and actors instead of only perpetrators. One youth responded:

“They feel I am a threat, and I feel I am an asset”.

The CBOs engage in initiatives that give the youth the opportunity and support to create their own jobs by encouraging creativity and innovation. One youth responded,

“They give us financial support and help us market our products”.

They also educate the youths on global developments, innovation, digital technology advancement, and how these innovative global developments can become useful in their lives. Youth participate in violence as an economic last resort, contrary to when they are given employment and livelihood opportunities. They say an idle mind is the devil’s workshop; the programs are designed to occupy their minds and make them responsible citizens.

Sensitising Youth on Issues Like Radicalization, Violent Extremism and Terrorism

The Pathways to terrorist or violent extremist groups are extremely complex. Many young people are radicalised by sympathetic family members or are led to believe that membership helps defend their families or communities. One of the KII respondents reported that other youths that they came across were in one way or another other, radicalised and even recruited by a family member. One of the most critical roles of CBOs in Nairobi and indeed the bulk of the donor-funded programs involve youth sensitisation on issues of radicalisation, VE, and terrorism. These programs include training youth on national values and patriotism, on the effects of radicalisation and VE, on their life skills development. The programs are also aimed at strengthening the capacities to be more creative and innovative in acquiring better livelihood activities and enlightening them on issues of radicalisation and terrorism. One respondent in the youth FGD said that;

“I was taught how to make drinking glasses from empty bottles of wine, alcohol and oil. Initially, I was using a candle to cut them into shapes, but now I use a gas cylinder which was provided by my local organisation and it makes my work quicker and safer”.

The aim is to create a strong, reliable, and sustainable support system for the youth so that they do not fall into the traps of gangs and terror recruits. Youths in areas such as Mukuru, California, Mathare, Kibera, and Eastleigh have highly benefitted from these activities and programs that are implemented by CBOs within their localities.

Studying and Researching Factors (Pull and Push) that Predispose Youth to Radicalisation

Lengthy-time and immense resources are used by CBOs in carrying out studies and research to understand and document the pull and push factors of radicalisation. CBOs also carry out periodic studies and compile journals and articles on the general trends and efforts in combating radicalisation and terrorism. Sometimes CBOs form consortium research teams with other CBOs and carry out in-depth studies and research in order to widely and deeply understand the dynamics, the new emerging issues, the push and pull factors to radicalisation, global and local trends in radicalisation, VE, and terrorism. They write articles on newspapers and websites, create journals, and help policymakers with literature and materials. This plays a very important role in the fight against terrorism and radicalisation since it brings together CBOs, youths, policymakers, and the legislative arm of the government in enacting policies regarding youth, education and security depending on scientific studies made by local CBOs. This has

helped massively public policy shapers in making appropriate laws and policies.

Initiating and implementing projects, programs and activities that are aimed at P/CVE; - when CBOs draft proposals for funding, it mainly consists of projects that involve programs and activities that target the youth and are mainly designed to make youths participate in these activities and groom them to be a better citizen. Donors mostly fund inclusive, innovative, and attractive proposals that are aimed at providing the best CVE. These projects, in most cases, are aimed at implementing County Action Plans in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. CBOs in Nairobi usually initiate and implement projects, programs, and activities that are aimed at countering and preventing violent extremism, radicalisation, and terrorism within the community. All the KII respondents reported that their programs contribute immensely to the pillars of the Nairobi County Action Plans on P/CVE:

“We involve the community in the security through the community policy in order to enforce the law with the help of the security agents”.

“We give training and capacity building programs that empower the youth to have a desirable livelihood and to contribute positively to the growth of the economy”.

“Through basic civic education, the citizens gain the skills and knowledge to become change-makers in their communities”.

“We encourage the youth to be more innovative and creative in order to make a living. We give them any necessary support they may require. Later on, they can refund the money, and we give it to someone else to benefit again”.

“We try to partner with other organisations that support girl child education to give sponsor to girls from disadvantaged families to pay their fee and give them upkeep an example is FIDA and even equity bank”.

These set of activities and programs are aimed mainly at the youth in vulnerable communities and these are mainly either poorly educated or economically poor youths in the community’s most vulnerable lots in the slums. Radical agents and criminal gangs are usually known to target these youths, and these criminal gangs use attractive and manipulative methods to engage and entice naïve youths into these vices. In Nairobi, the high-risk areas are the slums and other vulnerable areas that are predominantly Muslim settlements. These by extension, include South B, South C, Nairobi West, Pangani, Parklands, and Westlands. These projects, programs, and activities initiated and implemented by local CBOs in Nairobi are vital in the counterterrorism efforts and in the larger war against radicalisation and terrorism. It is important therefore, that the international community and larger NGOs in Kenya support both in funding and capacity building of these local grassroots CBOs that are active within these vulnerable communities in the fight against radicalisation and terrorism. CBOs should also be innovative in their efforts to fight VE and even form larger consortiums with like-minded CBOs within their scope for better effective and enhance coverage and effectiveness.

Grassroots Mobilization and Working with Security Agencies and Communities in Combating Violent Extremism

One of the most critical roles of local CBOs in Nairobi is working with local authorities, security agencies, and grassroots mobilisation

of communities in upholding peace and tranquillity. They train mothers on children's behavioural changes associated with deviant behaviour as a result of radicalisation and drug abuse. One respondent in FCD for women victims said;

"I realised my son was not the same again, things were changing very fast, his dressing, behaviour and even his interactions with his former friends, he started calling them names and wanted nothing to do with them. The reason being they were not good Muslims. It was because of the training that I was able to detect those changes".

The CBOs also help identify vulnerable youths within the community and help in their rehabilitation. The Kumekucha program implemented by the Green String Network in Kenya works together with community members to build a hands-on social cohesion approach. It introduces the key concepts of trauma, coping mechanisms, forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, and dealing with the past. One respondent in the FGC for women narrated that;

"At first, I did not know what to do when my daughter went missing. I was so sad and had been crying a lot. I did not want to believe that she could have joined this group. Later on, my friend's neighbour introduced me to this organisation which helped me cope with the situation I was in. My daughter was located and brought back home, and she is undergoing some training now".

From time to time, CBOs in Nairobi conduct community peace awareness and dialogue forums between the community, youths, and security agencies in order to create a

harmonious working and existing relationship. These security dialogue forums create chances for information sharing, challenges, and problem sharing and eventually create a forum of working relationships between the community/youth and the security authorities in combating and countering radicalisation, VE, and terrorism. This is critical in terms of making youths part of solving the problem of insecurity and therefore making things easy for CBOs and security agencies in their efforts to counter and prevent radicalisation and VE. In Nairobi, CBOs have activities that involve security dialogue forums between youth and security agencies and this is very important in terms of the goal of making youths a responsible, productive part of the community.

Public participation in legislation and policy-making at both County and National levels; national and county security committee is vital organs and structures in dealing with security matters, developing policies, and making decisions. On many occasions, CBOs in Nairobi are called upon to participate and contribute to both national and county security meetings. Their experience and years of study and research work done by these CBOs on matters of youth, education, and security assistance in developing appropriate policies and legislation. They helped in the development and implementation of the Nairobi County Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. Through the training and capacity-building projects, the CBOs help implement the CAP and contribute to its pillars, especially the economic, law enforcement, and ideological pillars. CBOs have been incorporated into all activities that are done within their respective area. This is a realisation by the government that CBOs are a vital part of the larger war on terrorism and specifically in the efforts of countering and preventing

radicalisation, VE, and terrorism. In the same breath, international organisations have also realised the crucial part local CBOs play in the efforts against radicalisation, VE, and terrorism. Many of these international organisations have lately started working directly with these grassroots CBOs on the issues of C/PVE. Some international donors have also decided to fund these local CBOs in their PVE projects, and this is a good shift in policy since previously CBOs were funded by other NGOs, and in most cases, international donor funds on PVE are not utilised in the most effective way.

Providing Mentorship opportunities to the youth since one of the push factors of youth to radicalisation and VE is the lack of employment opportunities, idleness, and lack of entrepreneurial and other skills to engage in a productive and sustainable livelihood. The majority of CBOs in Nairobi are dealing with large numbers of youths that are jobless and can easily be pushed to criminal gangs or terrorism. The most important work for these CBOs is not only to ensure that youths are not radicalised but also to provide these youths with the education, skills, and training that would enable them to start and maintain a livelihood that shall sustain them for the future. Nairobi city has the highest number of both non-educated and educated youth, and this is a serious challenge for the government. The public sector cannot employ all of them or absorb them in the formal sector, thus leaving this headache to local NGOs and the private sector to help in absorbing them. This is where the CBOs in Nairobi come in and try to build up the education, skills, and training of these youths in order to make them either attractive to private employment or become entrepreneurs and use their acquired training and skills in establishing and running their own enterprises. It was

established that CBOs play a critical role in youth development for their post-youth life.

CONCLUSION

Counter- Terrorism approach focussed on hard measures to curb radicalisation and Violent Extremism, but with the introduction of the National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism, a lot has been achieved. This strategy involves all parts of the government, communities, Civil Society, the international community, and the private sector to prevent and counter radicalisation. This also includes the young men and women who are the main targets for recruitment and violent extremism and, at the same time, active stakeholders in CVE.

There are several push factors that predispose the youth in Nairobi County to this vice, and these include corruption, poverty, unemployment, migration, political ideology, and religious ideology. With the enactment of the UNSRC 2050 that recognises the contribution of the young in preventing and countering violent extremism, youth were able to see themselves as active partners rather than threats. The CBOs that are based in the target areas helped shape the narratives that the youth are the perpetrators of violence and not peacemakers, while on the other hand, there are youths who are working tirelessly in the fight against all forms of violence.

The CBOs give basic civic education that enables citizens to acknowledge their civic rights and, in the process, be able to know the proper way to address their grievances. Frustration with the government has been identified as a driver of violence; hence with this civic education, the citizen will know the mechanism to hold accountable those in power for their shortcomings. Through their program

capacity building, the CBOs help contributes to the economic pillar of the Nairobi County Action Plan in CVE, which gives the youth a livelihood and financial stability. They also help to implement the policies and strategies in the CAP through the government and donor funds.

The CBOs give adequate training to the women to empower them and the mothers who lost their loved ones by either joining Al-Shabaab or being killed by the security forces. The training enables the mothers to detect any changing behaviour in their children and give the appropriate attention and care. On the other hand, the mothers are given shoulders to lean on during the trying time of losing a loved one. It also equips them with coping mechanisms to adapt to the stress and the trauma of missing a loved one.

Homegrown radicalisation is on the rise, and Kenya has become a prime location for recruitment and radicalisation for Al-Shabaab, given its growth in neighbouring Somalia. There has been a shift in the principal terror threat Kenya faces from that posed by Somali militants to that posed by homegrown terror cells. Therefore, there is an urgent appeal to build and have confidence in the efforts of the young men and women who are being taken advantage of. In this regard, the respondents in the KII offered some policy recommendations in tackling the drivers of VE not only to economic reason rather be given a broader perspective in understanding their motives. For example, a young professional person wants to leave the comfort of his/her home and job to involve in violence and it is really puzzling to understand the motive behind such a person. They also recommended that social institutions that are supported by the government such as schools, religious centres, and markets, could be used to reach out to the vulnerable in P/CVE.

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