REINVENT
Ubunifu. Usalama. Uthabiti

UKaid
from the British people

Kenya's New Violent Extremism Hotspots

An assessment of risk and vulnerability in Marsabit, the Rift Valley and Western Kenya

Dr. Ngala Chome,
Lead Researcher
June 2021

TETRA TECH

RUSI
www.rusi.org

REINVENT
Ubunifu. Usalama. Uthabiti

About REINVENT Programme

Reducing Insecurity and Violent Extremism in the Northern and Coastal Regions of Kenya (REINVENT) is a 5-year programme that aims to enhance Kenyan capacity and capability to address inter-communal conflict, weak community-police relations, violence against women and girls (VAWG), violent extremism and election related violence. We support the continued advancement of police reforms to improve the management, oversight and accountability of the police force. Our programme is led by Tetra Tech International Development and delivered in partnership with the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies (RUSI) and the Danish Demining Group (DDG). We build on the experience of delivering the Jamii Thabiti Programme (2014-19), also known as the Kenya Improving Community Security Programme (ICS), and expand FCDO support across more counties. We support new areas of work including conflict sensitivity, pastoral livelihoods and combating violent extremism.

The impact of the REINVENT programme will be "improved community safety and security as measured by effect on inclusive and equitable development, investment and service delivery in Kenya." The outcome will be "improved state and non-state actors' collaboration in a mutually accountable and inclusive manner to respond effectively to root causes of violence".

The outputs are:

1. Accountable and effective police (and other security agencies) addressing community security, violent extremism and election security.
2. Strengthened agency of women and girls in peace, safety and security.
3. Intra and inter institutional commitment to address the root causes and drivers of conflict.
4. Knowledge and evidence generated and utilised to enhance community and institutional learning and adaptation.

About the author

DR. NGALA CHOME holds a PhD from Durham University in the United Kingdom. He is an independent researcher and has published extensively on politics, conflict and religious extremism in Kenya.

© REIVENT Programme Copyright [Kenya's 'New' Violent Extremism Areas - June 2021]
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication free of charge in any format or medium provided you correctly reference the copyright to REINVENT Programme. You may reproduce the material accurately and not in a misleading context. Where any links or additional information is acknowledged as external, please reference the publisher accordingly. We shall also be grateful if you can share with us a copy of where this publication is cited. For any inquiries concerning this publication, please email us using: reinventkenya@tetratech.com

TETRA TECH

RUSI
www.rusi.org

UKaid
from the British people

PHOTOS: Istock/Courtesy

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements **5**

Executive Summary **6**

1.0 INTRODUCTION **10**

1.1 Research Questions 11
1.2 Research Objectives 12
1.3 Research Methodology 12

2.0 UNDERSTANDING THE VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREAT IN KENYA **14**

2.1 The externalisation narrative 15
2.2 A Nairobi, Kenya coast and North-East network? 16
2.3 'New' areas of radicalisation and recruitment 16

3.0 CASE-STUDY FINDINGS **18**

3.1 Marsabit 19
3.2 Nakuru 22
3.3 Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County 25
3.4 Western Kenya (Mumias, Busia, Bungoma, Siaya) 27

4.0 ASSESEMENT OF RISK AND VULNERABILITY FOR CASE-STUDY LOCATIONS **30**

4.1 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Marsabit 31
4.2 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Nakuru 32
4.3 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County 32
4.4 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Western Kenya (Kakamega and environs) 33

5.0 CONCLUSION **34**

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS **35**

References **36**

Annex **38**

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMYC: Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre

ATPU: Anti-Terrorist Police Unit

AP: Administration Police

CAPs: County Action Plans

CC: County Commissioner

CJPC: Catholic Justice and Peace Commission

CTC: Combating Terrorism Centre

CT: Counter-Terrorism

EU: European Union

FGD: Focussed Group Discussion

GoK: Government of Kenya

IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons

IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development

KWS: Kenya Wildlife Service

LBDA: Lake Basin Development Authority

NCTC: National Counter-Terrorism Centre

REINVENT: Reducing Insecurity and Violent Extremism in the Northern and Coastal regions of Kenya

RUSI: Royal United Services Institute

RI: Risk Index

SEMG: United Nations Monitoring Group for Somalia and Eritrea

SNA: Somalia National Army

P/CVE: Prevention and/or Countering Violent Extremism

PPI: Pastoral Preaching Initiative

VAWG: Violence Against Women and Girls

VE: Violent Extremism

VEO: Violent Extremist Organisation

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

The author would like to thank members of the REINVENT Programme in particular the CVE Workstream technical leads Martine Zeuthen, Galgallo Abagaro, Christopher Hockey, and the Director of RUSI-Nairobi, Luniya Msuku, for their support, helpful feedback and revisions of earlier drafts of this report. The author would also like to thank Violet Sang, Michael Oyugi, Rukkiya Ahmed and Dale Abraham for their excellent research assistance. Last but not least, thanks and much appreciation go to the project's partners Tetra Tech International Development, and the UKAid for the funding extended to the REINVENT Programme.

Any mistakes or omissions are the author's own.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a study into violent extremist (VE) activity in areas of Kenya not historically associated with extremist radicalisation and recruitment. Is VE recruitment taking place in areas outside of the Kenyan coast, Nairobi and the North-East? If so, why is this the case, and how is VE recruitment taking place in these 'new' areas? The selection of locations for the study was based on an extensive desk-review of reported cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment. Marsabit, the Rift Valley region (Nakuru, Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu County); and Western Kenya (Kakamega and environs) were selected and a total of 40 field-based interviews conducted. Field-based interviews were used to gather more information on individuals suspected to be involved in VE activities within the study locations, with a view to shedding light on the vulnerabilities that VE actors and operators exploit to gain a foothold in those communities. Due to the sensitivity and relative paucity of information regarding VE activities, the report does not offer precise figures on the extent of VE activities in the study locations, but offers details on the nature of communal vulnerabilities, and the levels of risk of extremist radicalisation and recruitment in these communities. These insights were subsequently triangulated with a synthesis of open-source media reports and secondary literature.

The study's main findings are as follows:

- **VE actors and operators have long sought to expand their activities outside of the Kenyan coast, parts of Nairobi and North-East Kenya:** despite frequent media headlines declaring 'new hotspots', VE activities in these areas can be traced to as early as 2009. According to informants, this took place mainly through organised travels for Islamic study to the coast, where individuals from areas such as Marsabit, Eldoret and Mumias would enrol in qur'anic schools associated with VE operators and actors. While this has continued to take place, the recent targeting of areas not traditionally associated with VE is nonetheless part of a broader trend that followed increased surveillance of VE activities (especially between 2012-2015) which led to a degree of atomization as VE networks sub-divided, operatives dispersed, and new cells emerged – some directly linked to Al-Shabaab, and others inspired by the movement. [1] Other studies have indicated that to avoid scrutiny, there was an increased expansion of VE activities outside of the areas usually associated with VE, and of the radicalisation and recruitment of women and young girls.[2] In the absence of existing local grievances specifically affecting Muslims in these non-traditional areas of VE radicalisation and recruitment, narratives emphasising religious kinship with Muslims in other parts of Kenya and elsewhere in the Muslim world, within a wider narrative of global Muslim victimisation, are common in radicalisation strategies.
- **Islamist radicalisation and recruitment in 'new' areas of VE is primarily taking place in mosques, madrassas and schools:** despite the suggestion that recent changes in radicalisation and recruitment have coincided with an apparent increase in the use of the internet, this study established that radicalisation and recruitment activities in 'new' areas of VE are largely taking place face-to-face in mosques, madrassas and schools. These institutions normally provide VE operators and actors with the necessary platforms for radicalisation (in particular, dissemination of newsletters, the issuance of radical/extremist sermons, and the broadcasting of DVDs featuring speeches of radical and extremist preachers); and provide the networks and resources required for travel to Somalia and beyond for military training. While some informants, especially in areas hosting large institutions of higher learning such as Nakuru and Eldoret, mentioned the significance of the internet in radicalisation and recruitment, such claims were not supported by empirical

[1] Evidence for these tactical changes are presented in Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab as a transnational security threat (IGAD, Addis Ababa, 2016).

[2] For details on the increased use of the internet, see Zahed Amanullah and Anisa Harrasy, Between two extremes: Responding to Islamist and Tribalist Messaging Online in Kenya during the 2017 Elections (Institute of Strategic Dialogue, London, 2017). For details on the emphasis on recruitment of girls and young women, see News, 'New Compendium of research on gender and violent extremism in Kenya', 4 June 2018 < https://rusi.org/rusi-news/new-compendium-research-gender-and-violent-extremism-kenya> 26 May 2020; Irene Ndung'u, Romi Sigsworth, and Uyo Yenwong-Fai, Violent Extremism in Kenya: Why women are a priority (Institute for Security Studies, 2017).

evidence. In addition, open-source intelligence and a scraping of online sources was unable to ascertain location precision and user information.

- **The absence of communal vulnerabilities is essential but, alone, is not sufficient to prevent and counter the emergence and spread of the VE threat:** for this study, we seek to establish a 'risk' score, where risk is considered a function of the VE threat exploiting vulnerabilities to spread a violent extremist ideology, recruit and eventually cause violence. The score is not an assessment of the potential for a VE attack to occur in each of the case-study areas. For the purposes of this study, risk is limited to the potential for radicalisation and recruitment. For radicalisation and recruitment to take place, propagators of VE in Kenya have been known to gain a foothold in communities by exploiting existing sectarian fissures, and manipulating religious factions over doctrinal issues.[3] In this way, the matrix used to develop the Risk Index includes the nature of factors known to influence the spread of VE in a community. These include the presence or lack thereof of social capital or community cohesion, information sharing, economic resources and place attachment. The presence or lack of these factors in a community reduces and increases the potential for radicalisation and recruitment in a given location, respectively. This research found, however, that communities that do not possess vulnerabilities (and are thus assessed to be of lower risk) can nonetheless host individuals involved in VE activities. In other words, respondents in communities that possess features that are assumed to influence the community's capacity and action against VE (the factors listed above), reported that they were not able to reign in on active and potential VE cells, as radicalised individuals would often withdraw from society when challenged or rejected by the wider community. These individuals subsequently went underground and established covert infrastructures for recruitment, fundraising and communication as a result.
- **Areas that demonstrate high levels of risk and vulnerability are not necessarily the worst affected by the VE threat:** for instance, a location such as Nakuru, with no significant history of cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment, nonetheless possesses significant vulnerabilities that could be exploited by VE actors in the future; whilst locations such as Eldoret, Marsabit and Mumias continue to be active zones of VE radicalisation and recruitment, despite relatively low communal vulnerabilities;
- **VE and the drivers of violence and conflict are misconceived in several of the study areas:** in discussing VE, some respondents conflated VE with other forms of violence and conflict in their communities, in particular, violent regular crime and the threat of ethnic conflict. Such misconceptions of VE were also common in locations where VE is viewed primarily as a security issue, ignoring its social, political and religious dimensions. These misconceptions were coupled with the general lack of a "P/CVE conversation" amongst all relevant stakeholders within the community and government. In a majority of the counties where this study was conducted, County Action Plans (CAPs) against VE were either rounding off their first year in operation or were yet to be implemented at all.

[3] See, Lauren Van Metre, Community resilience to violent extremism in Kenya (Peaceworks, United States Institute of Peace, 2016); Ngala Chome, We don't trust anyone: Strengthening relationships as the key to reducing violent extremism in Kenya (International Alert, London, 2016).

Recommendations

This report's main recommendation is tailored towards the adoption of P/CVE strategies that are not only informed by knowledge on the evolution of Kenya's VE networks, but that are also attuned to local contexts. A full description of the recommendations is provided below:

For the National Government:

- Counter-Terrorism (CT) programmes should not only be context-specific, they should work in tandem with P/CVE and other developmental efforts: to effectively prevent and counter VE and its networks, P/CVE interventions – which often include community debates on sensitive topics, media messaging, interfaith dialogue, training of administration and security officials, vocational training and mentorship programmes for individuals deemed to be 'at risk' of VE radicalisation and recruitment – need to be supplemented by effective and context-specific CT operations – that is, the detection, disruption and interdiction of imminent VE activities. This is because the promotion of variables that influence community and individual capacity and action against VE (a preoccupation of P/CVE interventions) is essential but, alone, not sufficient to demobilise VE and its networks. Identifying actual VE actors and holders of extremist views through effective intelligence-gathering, in addition to successful apprehension, prosecution and/or rehabilitation, is also important.

For civil society, county governments and donor institutions.

- P/CVE strategies should be driven by knowledge of Kenya's VE networks. An understanding of the origins, nature and evolution of Kenya's VE networks is crucial for the design of effective P/CVE measures. While much of this knowledge is understandably under the preserve of law enforcement and intelligence officers, an accurate understanding of discernible trends – rather than actual intelligence – can help to design more effective programmes and County Action Plans (CAPs) against VE.

For all stakeholders.

- Appropriate strategies are required for each location. There is need for CAPs that are more attuned to the specific nature of risk and vulnerability within their jurisdictions, as opposed to the production of largely vague and generic plans. In Nakuru, a location that was determined to have multiple vulnerabilities but no serious existing VE threat to exploit them, this study recommends more P/CVE interventions as opposed to CT action. In Marsabit, Uasin-Gishu and Kakamega, locations of low communal vulnerabilities but with existing VE threats, this study recommends a combination of P/CVE and CT interventions.
- Law enforcers, administrative officials and members of the public should be educated on the complex nature of VE. There is a general conflation of VE with other forms of violence, especially in locations where VE is viewed purely as a security issue. This could be due to the limited nature of VE in such locations, combined with its relative 'newness' compared to the Kenyan coast, parts of Nairobi and Northeast Kenya. Sensitization programmes should be conducted targeting law enforcers, policy makers and members of the public on the complex nature of VE in these locations. This is because VE usually includes a host of other political, cultural, societal and religious factors, and is not purely driven by strict criminal motivations, or other instrumental and financial factors. Related to this, P/CVE interventions in these locations should be incorporated into wider peacebuilding initiatives.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study is the first research project carried out under the P/CVE work stream of the Reducing Insecurity and Violent Extremism in the Northern and Coastal regions of Kenya (RE-INVENT) programme, a UK-funded £20m five-year programme that aims to enhance Kenyan capacity and capability to address inter-communal conflict, weak community-police relations, violence against women and girls (VAWG), violent extremism and election related violence. The present research seeks to explore the frequently made assertion that Al-Shabaab has been increasingly active in areas of Kenya not historically associated with Islamist radicalisation and recruitment.[4] It is hoped that the study will serve to inform future programming against VE in Kenya and the selection of target locations for interventions. For programmes to be effective, a determination of the nature of local risk and latent vulnerabilities is crucial.

In Kenya, the threat of VE continues to drive CT action as well as P/CVE interventions at national, communal and individual levels. After the 15th January 2019 Al-Shabaab attack on the 14 Riverside business complex housing the DusitD2 Hotel in the Westlands district of Nairobi – an attack that was led by Ali Salim Gichunge who was partially brought up at a military camp in Isiolo by a military officer – public and policy discussions focussed on the 'changing face' of Kenya's VE network.[5] Having previously assumed that recruits came solely from Kenya's Muslim-majority regions – the Kenyan coast, Northeast and parts of Nairobi – the media began to release reports suggesting that Kenya's VE networks were changing tact, and were recruiting from 'new' areas.[6]

In order to provide some perspective to such claims, REINVENT designed a research study looking at the empirical evidence of radicalisation and recruitment in some of the areas discussed in the reports. Based on an extensive desk-review of reported cases of radicalisation and recruitment outside of the areas usually associated with VE in Kenya, it was decided that the study be conducted in Marsabit; the Rift Valley region (Nakuru, Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu County); and Western Kenya (Kakamega, Bungoma, Busia and Siaya). Firstly, the study sought to determine whether VE radicalisation and recruitment is actually taking place in the 'new' areas, that is, areas outside of the Kenyan coast, some parts of Nairobi and North-East Kenya. Secondly, if there is evidence of such activity, then why is it happening in these areas? Thirdly, the study examined how VE is taking place there.

1.1 Research questions

Following the above, this study's research questions were driven by the assumption that Kenya's VE networks had expanded their operations into "new" areas, that is, Western Kenya, Marsabit and the Rift Valley region:

1. Is VE radicalisation and recruitment taking place in Marsabit, the Rift Valley region (Nakuru, Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu County); and Western Kenya (Kakamega and environs)?
2. Why is VE radicalisation and recruitment taking place in these 'new' areas of VE activity?
3. How is VE radicalisation and recruitment taking place in these 'new' areas of VE activity?

[4] Islamism, otherwise known as political Islam, refers the instrumentalization of Islam by individuals, groups and organisations in pursuit of political objectives. Islamists design political responses through the appropriation of Islamic concepts. Important to consider is that Islamism is not Islam. Islam is a religion and Islamism is a political ideology, a form of 'religionised politics', that aims to establish a political order based on Sharia Law. In addition, not all Islamists use violent means to achieve their aims, but all (both violent and non-violent) Islamists seek to revive Islam's political legacy.

[5] Fred Oluoch, 'The Changing face of terrorism in East Africa', The East African, 19 January 2019 < https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/the-changing-face-of-terrorism-in-east-africa-the-horn-1410704> 2 October 2020.

[6] Cyrus Ombati, 'The dynamic monster: Changing face of terrorism and Counter-Terrorism, The Standard, 8 February 2019 < http://citizentv.co.ke> 2 October 2020.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to provide policymakers and implementers of P/CVE programmes in Kenya with an understanding of the emergence, evolution and operation of Kenya's VE networks, with a specific focus on their expansion into 'new' areas. Related to this objective is the development of a Risk Index (RI) so as to assess the specific levels of risk and vulnerability in each study location. The RI will assist in the design and development of strategies that are more attuned to local needs and contexts. To answer these questions, a number of methodological steps were taken.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research methodology was qualitative. First, reports of VE activities in Marsabit, the Rift Valley region (Nakuru, Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu County) and Western Kenya (Kakamega, Bungoma, Busia and Siaya) were explored through a desk-review, and a table of reported cases from these areas (see Appendix 1 below) was prepared. The reported VE activities were henceforth confirmed, or triangulated with information collected through field-based, face-to-face interviews in the locations under study (see Appendix 2 for Interview Guide). Insights from interviews were later again corroborated and verified via a review of newspaper reports and secondary literature.

This qualitative approach was adopted as the most appropriate strategy given the sensitivity and complexity of VE, and the paucity of information regarding VE activities. The latter often makes it difficult to achieve the mathematical precision required for quantitative methods.

Sampling

Respondents with an experience in VE and P/CVE issues were selected both purposively and via snow-balling techniques. These included individuals who interacted or knew suspected VE operators that have since been arrested and/or charged, are on the run from the law, or have been killed. Generally, field-based interviews were used to gather more information on these individuals, with a view to shedding light on vulnerabilities that they exploited so as to gain a foothold in those communities. To better understand the nature of communal vulnerabilities, community elders, administration officials, opinion leaders, youth and women activists, religious leaders and clerics, and local politicians were interviewed. The locations (see annex for study-locations list) were selected based on an extensive desk-based review of reports of VE-related incidents and CT operations (see Table 1 below).

Study limitations

Conducting research on VE, especially in 'new' areas of VE radicalisation and recruitment was challenging, not only due to the sensitivity of the subject, but also the prevalence of misunderstandings regarding the complex nature of VE. To gain community access and local trust, the researcher relied on the local networks and the expertise of residents from the study locations, who were recruited as Research Assistants. The main challenge was the common perception that VE is purely a security issue (in fact, many, including administration officials, referred to the problem simply as 'terrorism' or 'Al-Shabaab') which served to create added sensitivity around the study and, in some instances, led to a lack of co-operation on the part of potential respondents.

To mitigate these limitations, the researcher avoided direct questions about ongoing investigations involving VE suspects and incidents, as the main objective was to ascertain local levels of VE risk and vulnerability. The researcher also engaged in an interview protocol that was open-ended and conversational, allowing questions to be asked in a culturally appropriate discursive style and respondents to explain, in their own words, the nature of VE in their respective home locations.

The rest of the report is organised as follows. The next part presents a background to the study and a review of existing literature, presenting, in essence, common understandings of the VE threat in Kenya. This is followed by a presentation of the study's findings in each of the areas selected, and then a discussion of the RI. The final section contains conclusions and recommendations.

2.0 UNDERSTANDING THE VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREAT IN KENYA

An investigation into the spread of VE ideas and activities into 'new' areas first requires a re-evaluation of common assumptions regarding the VE threat in Kenya. This includes the long-held perception that the problem of VE continues to be exogenous to Kenya; and that it is a predominantly Nairobi, North-Eastern and Coastal problem. Put simply, we must ask which areas have been identified in media reporting as areas of concern. This review is equally important for the accurate assessment of local risk and vulnerability, and the development of improved, targeted P/CVE interventions.

2.1 The externalisation narrative

For a considerable period of time, and for largely political reasons, policy makers in Kenya have presented the threat of VE as exogenous, as opposed to a problem that is driven by local risks and vulnerabilities.[7] This "externalization" narrative has been well discussed by Dr. Anneli Botha, in one of the earliest reports on the VE network in Kenya.[8] In the report, the author describes a publicized narrative that externalized the drivers of VE in Kenya after two suicide bombings by a local Al-Qaeda cell (in 1998 and 2002, targeting the U.S Embassy in Nairobi and Paradise Hotel on the Kenya coast, respectively) that led to destruction of property at locally unprecedented levels, and the loss of over 200 lives.[9] An "externalization" narrative dismissing local drivers of VE was deployed by senior government officials, the report documents, despite evidence that an East African cell of Al-Qaeda had inserted itself amongst local communities in Kenya as early as 1993.[10]

The historian, Jeremy Prestholdt, has associated this "externalisation" narrative with a carefully-scripted political strategy driven by national politics within Kenya, and with commonly-held perceptions of Kenya's predominantly Muslim communities as outsiders.[11] Prestholdt mentioned an influential U.S Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Centre (CTC) report whose recommendations would come to bear a significant influence on the design and implementation of CT policies in Kenya. The report maintained the themes of "external" and/or "outside" influences, but it also singled out Kenya's Somali and Arab/Swahili minorities concentrated on the Kenya coast and North-East Kenya as the primary players, due to their closer ties to actors outside Kenya: particularly in Somalia and the Middle-East.[12] The problem, according to the American – and later, Kenyan perspective – was Kenya's lax security, open borders, and proximity to Somalia, factors that were considered to have primarily made Kenya attractive for Al-Qaeda.[13]

These policy positions also mirrored dominant scholarly perspectives as well. For instance, a number of studies published between 11 September 2001 (the day Al-Qaeda attacked the World Trade Centre in New York in the United States) and 2011 (the year Kenya sent its troops to Somalia to fight Al-Shabaab) dedicated their analysis to examining the possibility of Kenya and the wider Horn of Africa region becoming a new springboard for VE directed from elsewhere.[14] Influenced by a dominant view that the region merely constituted what Alex de Waal referred to as 'a laboratory for political Islam',[15] this perspective aligned with Roy Olivier's idea of "exporting jihad" from a centre/core (the Middle-East and South Asia) to a periphery.[16] For this group of analysts, the

[7]See for example, Anneli Botha, Assessing the vulnerability of Kenyan youths to radicalization and extremism (Report, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2013).
[8]Botha, Assessing the vulnerability.
[9]Ibid.
[10]Ibid.
[11]Jeremy Prestholdt, 'Kenya, the United States, and Counterterrorism', Africa Today 57, 4 (2011): 3-27.
[12]Ibid.
[13]Ibid.
[14]See for example, Rudiger Seesemann, 'East Africa Muslims after 9/11', Bayreuth African Studies, Working Papers, 3, (2005), pp. 1-17; William Rosenau, 'Al-Qaeda recruitment trends in Kenya and Tanzania', Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 28, 1, (2005), pp. 1-10; David Shinn, 'Al-Qaeda in East Africa and the Horn', Journal of Conflict Studies, 27, 1, (2007), pp. 47-75; Jeffrey Haynes, 'Islamic militancy in East Africa', Third World Quarterly, 26, 8, (2005), pp. 1321-1339; Jeffrey Haynes, 'Islam and democracy in East Africa', Democratization, 13, 3, (2006), pp. 490-507; Isaac Kfir, 'Islamic radicalism in East Africa: Is there a cause for concern?' Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 31, (2008), pp. 829-855.
[15]Alex de Waal (Ed.), Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa, (Hurst, London, 2004).
[16]Roy Olivier, Globalised Islam: The search for a new Ummah (Hurst, London, 2004).

general conclusion was that Al-Qaeda – by far the most influential Violent Extremist Organisation (VEO) in the world at the time – had achieved minimal success in attracting the largely Sufi-orientated Muslim community of the region to its agenda.[17] The "cause for concern", these authors again cautioned, was the region's porous borders, pervasive corruption, and low policing capacities that may allow 'international terrorists' to find a safe haven and establish logistical hubs.[18]

As has been shown by Jeremy Lind, Patrick Mutahi and Marjoke Oosterom, these perspectives influenced CT measures in Kenya for a period of time,[19] but would be difficult to sustain in the face of growing evidence that Kenyan nationals were organising themselves to not only insert a VE ideology within Kenya's public discourse – by combining local Muslim experiences and a global narrative of "Muslim victimisation" – but to also establish local networks of VE recruitment. [20]

2.2 A Nairobi, Coast and North-East network?

Studies that established that a local Kenyan VE network existed and was driven by a "glocalisation" narrative have improved local understandings of the VE threat, however, these studies emphasized the significance of parts of Nairobi, the Coast, and the North-East, at the expense of areas outside of these regions. Work by the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (SEMG) that was published in 2011 revealed a robust Al-Shabaab support network in Kenya that had been in place since at least 2007.[21] The UN SEMG report demonstrated that the problem was not a Kenyan Somali, Swahili/Arab phenomenon, and that Kenyans from predominantly Christian ethnic communities were also involved. However, it also – perhaps unduly – focussed on parts of Nairobi, the Coast, and the North-East. Moreover, despite these findings being a decade ago, it took many years before they were acknowledged by the authorities.

According to SEMG and other analysts such as Stig Jarle Hansen and Frederick Nzes, a different and distinctly Kenyan VE network (known in intelligence circles historically as Al-Hijra) emerged after 2008 centred around key mosques in the North East, Mombasa, Nairobi, and in "up-country" towns such as Nyeri and Eldoret.[22] Despite listing towns such as Nyeri and Eldoret, analysts emphasised that the Al-Hijra network had concentrated its activities in parts of Nairobi, the Coast and the North East, indicating that the network's ideologues were the late Sheikh Aboud Mohamed Rogo (1967-2012) and Samir Khan (1971-2012), both of whom preached in Mombasa. The others were Sheikh Hassaan Hussein Adam (1979-present) who continues to preach in the Eastleigh neighbourhood of Nairobi, and Sheikh Ahmed Iman Ali who preached at the Pumwani Riyadha Mosque neighbouring Eastleigh before later moving to Somalia. [23]

[17] Seesemann, 'East Africa Muslims', pp. 5.
[18] Isaac Kfir, 'Islamic radicalism'.
[19] Jeremy Lind, Patrick Mutahi and Marjoke Oosterom, 'Killing a mosquito with a hammer: Al-Shabaab violence and state security responses in Kenya', Peacebuilding 5, 2 (2017), pp. 118-135.
[20] Such evidence was first reported under work supported by the United Nations and which was conducted by and documented in Matt Bryden, et al, 'Report of the Monitoring Group to Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council Resolution (2002) (2011)', "United Nations Security Council" (s/2012/544), pp. 135-179
[21] Ibid.
[22] Frederick Nzes, 'Al-Hijra: Al-Shabaab's Affiliate in Kenya,' CTC Sentinel, 7, 5 (2014): 24-6; Stig Jarle Hansen, Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The history and ideology of a militant Islamist group (Hurst, London, U.K, 2013).
[23] Bryden, et al, Report of the Monitoring Group, pp. 143.

2.3 'New' areas of radicalisation and recruitment

To better understand, monitor and counter the operations of Kenya's VE network, the Government of Kenya (GoK), in conjunction with the Ethiopian government, commissioned a study under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in 2013. The report, published in 2016 and titled Al-Shabaab as a transnational security threat, detailed major operational changes in the network in Kenya that had largely been necessitated by increased security surveillance of the extremist's activities.[24] This process coincided with the implementation of key changes by Al-Shabaab's core-leadership in Somalia between 2013-2014. This included a reorganization of Al-Shabaab's military wing (Jaysh al-Usra) as part of a strategy to expand the group's so called "Jihad" beyond Somalia's borders.[25] As part of the 2013-14 changes, a number of Al-Hijra associates who had travelled (or escaped) to Somalia, the report notes, were absorbed into a new military unit called Jeysh Ayman, whose main base of operations continues to be the Boni Forest, situated on the Lamu-Garissa county border.

The Kenyan VE network, which could also be subdivided into a number of smaller networks, was evolving and adapting to a new environment. Media reports detailing police arrests from 2014 onwards also reveal that cells who had trained with Al-Shabaab in Somalia had learnt to either remain dormant, become thinner and atomized, or to spread themselves around 'non-traditional' zones of VE radicalisation and recruitment so as to escape scrutiny.[26] In their newly-settled areas, some individuals took on new roles, in business and religious teaching, while well-known Al-Hijra operatives who had been arrested and convicted became active within Kenya's prison system, allegedly targeting vulnerable young men for radicalisation.[27] After establishing that radicalisation and recruitment has been taking place in areas not traditionally associated with VE (see Table in Appendix 1 for more details), and that such a change was necessitated by increased surveillance of VE activities, the next section details how radicalisation and recruitment actually took place in Marsabit, the Rift Valley region and Western Kenya.

[24] Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

3.0 CASE-STUDY FINDINGS

3.1 Marsabit

The VE threat in Marsabit County has been associated with members and followers of the defunct Marsabit Da'wah Group, which expanded its influence in Marsabit town between 2009 and 2012, principally via the Pastoral Preaching Initiative (commonly known as PPI), and through the publication of pamphlets that were distributed in the town expressing support for militant jihad and for Al-Shabaab.[28] The PPI programme organised visitations by religious clerics to schools, mosques and madrassas where they offered religious classes and seminars. The following were the main individuals associated with the Marsabit Da'wah Group:

1. Badar Omar Abdallah – Chairman.
2. Abdullahi Ali – Vice-Chairman.
3. Hassan Jarso Kotola, also known as Sora – Member.
4. Gorsa Guyo Boru – Member.
5. Mohamed Jillo – Member.[29]

The most influential individuals in the Da'wah group, according to respondents, were Hassan Jarso Kotola, whose sister married Badar Omar Abdallah (also considered an influential member of the group). The other is Guyo Gorsa Boru, who was allegedly radicalized by Hassan Kotola.[30] All three individuals studied on the Kenyan coast. Badar Omar enrolled at the Technical University of Mombasa (formerly Mombasa Polytechnic) for an Information Technology course, but reportedly dropped-out after experiencing personal financial difficulties.[31] It was during his time in Mombasa that Badar ventured out to the Majengo neighborhood, attending mosque sermons at Masjid Musa, where Sheikh Aboud Rogo preached. [32]

According to respondents who knew both Hassan Jarso Kotola and Guyo Gorsa Boru, the two reportedly attended Islamic study at Masjid Tawheed in Maganyakulo, Kwale County, an institution that has been associated with VE activities in the past.[33] It was at Masjid Tawheed that some members of the Tanga-based Ansaar Muslim Youth Centre (AMYC), which has also been associated with Al-Shabaab, were radicalized, including well-known VE recruiter and commander with Al-Shabaab's Jeysh Ayman unit, Ramadhan Kufungwa. [34]

Badar has since 'disappeared', and hasn't been seen since 17 March 2020.[35] Hassan Jarso Kotola, whom respondents said joined Al-Shabaab in December 2011, is reportedly under police custody in Ethiopia.[36] Guyo Gorsa Boru was arrested in the late morning of 13 January 2018 at Madrassa Taqwa in Marsabit Town and – at the time of writing this report – remains in police custody.[37] Abdullahi Ali, who opposed the group's support for Al-Shabaab, was kicked out, and is now a preacher in Marsabit Town. Mohamed Jillo, mentioned by several respondents as a key member of the group, reportedly works for the Kenyan government as a Children's Officer.[38]

---

[28]Int.003. 6.08.2020. Marsabit Town; Int. 012. 8.08.2020. Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town; Int. 007. 7.08.2020. Marsabit Town.
[29]This information was provided by a former member of the group on Int. 011. 8.08.2020. Marsabit Town, whose name has been withheld.
[30]Int.003. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 005. 6.08.2020. Marsabit Town; Int. 007. 7.08.2020. Marsabit Town; Int. 011, 8.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[31]Int. 005. 6.08.2020. Marsabit Town.
[32]Ibid.
[33] Claims that Hassan Kotola and Guyo Gorsa attended Masjid Tawheed are made in Int.003. 6.08.2020. Marsabit Town; Int. 011. 08.08.2020.
[34]COn the AMYC, see, United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 11 July 2012 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council', pp. 177. On details about Ramadhan Kufungwa, see Nyambesa Gisesa and Vincent Achuka, 'The Kwale hamlet where dreaded terror squad commanders were raised', Daily Nation, 20 August 2020, pp. 10-11.
[35] Badar's disappearance was confirmed by a family member who was interviewed on Int. 005. 6.08.2020. Marsabit Town. This was also reported on the media at NTV Kenya, 'Familia moja yamtafuta Badar Omar Abdallah aliyetoweka Machi 17 @HarithSalim_81' < https://twitter.com/ntvkenya/status/724630944943095808?lang=en> 4 October 2020.
[36] On media mentions of Hassan Jarso Kotola, see Shmuel Yosef Agnon, 'Police list six most wanted terror suspects linked to recruitment in Kenya,' Strategic Intelligence, 12 July 2017 < https://intelligencebriefs.com/police-list-six-most-wanted-terror-suspects-linked-to-recruitment-in-kenya/> 4 October 2020; For claims that Kotola left for Somalia to join Al-Shabaab in 2011, and subsequently arrested in Ethiopia, Int. 001.5.08.2020. Matarba, Marsabit; Int. 011.8.08.2020. Marsabit Town.
[37] Alphonse Mung'ahu, 'DPP opposes Sheikh Guyo Gorsa's bail in Al-Shabaab case', The Star, 22 February 2018 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-02-22-dpp-opposes-sheikh-guyo-gorsas-bail-in-al-shabaab-case/> 4 October 2020.
[38] Mohamed Jillo was independently mentioned by two respondents as a key member of the Marsabit Da'wah group. One is a former member of the Da'wah group, and the other is related to a member of the Da'wah group, in Int. 011.8.08.2020. Marsabit Town and Int. 002.6.08.2020. Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town.

According to a former member of the Da'wah group, it was at Masjids Toba and Daru Salaam, and at Madrassa Taqwa, all located within the Shauri Yako neighbourhood of Marsabit Town – and where both Guyo and Kotola taught and preached – that the Da'wah group began distributing documents about militant Jihad.[39] Some of the documents were reportedly sent from Somalia by Kotola, after he travelled there in December 2011 with others from the group to join Al-Shabaab.[40] While Badar – the Chair of the group – did not travel to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab, it was confirmed during field-research that he was in communication with those who had left.[41]

The following were amongst those who were allegedly radicalized through the Marsabit Da'wah group and left for Somalia to join Al-Shabaab. The majority of them, according to the respondents, left in December 2011. They include:

1. Abdullahi Jarso Kotola, also known as Seyfdeen – brother to Hassan Jarso Kotola and reportedly a senior commander with the Jeysh Ayman unit;[42]
2. Mbarak Abdi Huka, also known as Sa'ad – killed during an exchange of fire with the police at Merti, Isiolo in 2018;[43]
3. Halima Adan Ali – a teacher by profession, she allegedly recruited three girls from Marsabit into Al-Shabaab, before leaving with them for Somalia in 2011. Two of the girls were her own children, and the other, named in interviews only as Fahima, her sister-in-law. Reports indicate that Halima was arrested in August 2018 by Kenyan police, alongside an associate named Waleed Ahmed Zain.[45]

Three other individuals, all of whom were associated with the Marsabit Da'wah group, reportedly travelled to Somalia with the intention of joining Al-Shabaab but grew concerned on reaching the Kenya-Somalia border at Mandera and returned to Marsabit. These are:

4. Zarqo Sole Galabu – a taxi driver who was arrested and later released.
5. Badre Baraqo, who was arrested in Nairobi where he was allegedly attending driving school.
6. Gufu Tari Gufu.[46]

Through their Islamic propagation activities – they reportedly were adherents of the puritanical Salafist doctrine – members of the Da'wah group visited mosques, schools and madrassas in Marsabit Town where they preached against a variety of local Islamic practises they termed as bid'a (heretical Islamic innovation) such as excessive celebrations of Maulid, the Prophet's birthday.[47] A relative of Badar Omar Abdallah stated that Badar made videos on Islam, which would be shown at Madrassa Taqwa and Masjid Toba through a projector that Badar had provided to the institutions.[48] The videos, according to Badar's relative, taught against a number of social vices, especially witchcraft.[49] But according to a former member of the Da'wah group, together with a relative of Halima Adan, some of the videos also featured Osama bin Laden and the late Sheikh Aboud Rogo.[50] According to respondents, the Da'wah group also attempted to take control of the main mosque in Marsabit,

---

[39] Int. 011. 8.08.2020. Marsabit Town.
[40] Int. 011. 8.08.2020. Marsabit Town.
[41] Int. 005. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[42] Shmuel Yosef Agnon, 'Police list six most wanted terror suspects linked to recruitment in Kenya,' Strategic Intelligence, 12 July 2017 < https://intelligencebriefs.com/police-list-six-most-wanted-terror-suspects-linked-to-recruitment-in-kenya/> 4 October 2020.
[43] Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 007. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[44] This information was provided by a relative of Halima Adan, Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town, whose name has been withheld.
[45] Cyrus Ombati, 'The dynamic monster: Changing face of terrorism and Counter-Terrorism,' The Standard, 8 February 2019 <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nairobi/article/2001312354/the-dynamic-monster-changing-face-of-terrorism-and-counter-terrorism> 5 October 2020; Andrew Kasuku, 'Dusit attack "financiers" accounts among nine frozen over terrorism links,' The Star, 2 September 2020 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2020-09-02-dusit-attack-financiers-accounts-among-nine-frozen-over-terrorism-links/> 5 October 2020.
[46] This information was provided by a relative of Badar Omar Abdallah, Int. 005. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town, whose name has been withheld.
[47] Int. 007. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[48] Int. 005. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town; Int. 011. 8.08.2020, Marsabit Town.

Masjid Jamia, after the group's ideological leaders returned from Islamic study, or some form of sojourn, in Mombasa and elsewhere on the Kenyan coast.[51] According to an imam at Masjid Jamia, there was a struggle by the Da'wah group to take over the mosque from what he called the "old-guard."[52] This struggle, he said, involved religious debates regarding what should be deemed as proper religious practice, including the role that Kenyan Muslims should play in the global war on terror. He also related that government officials were not involved in this debate, which at the outset, seemed like a debate mainly concerned with religious matters.

It was through the PPI platform that the Da'wah group was able to take over Masjids Toba and Daru Salaam. According to those familiar with ongoings at Masjid Jamia, the town's main mosque, the Da'wah group was successfully expelled from that mosque[53]. Information from respondents and field observations made in Marsabit during this study confirm that Masjid Toba, where Guyo preached is – at the time of writing – undergoing a major facelift supported by funds raised, purportedly, by members of the town's business community.[54]

The case of the Marsabit Da'wah group presents the most compelling evidence for past and ongoing VE activities in Marsabit County. While most associates of the group implicated in VE activities are either under police custody or have been killed, some, like Abdullahi Jarso Kotola, and other recruits of Halima Adan are still at large. While the activities of these individuals are now the subject of ongoing police investigations, the potential for future (clandestine) recruitment exists, as was suggested by respondents.[55]

However, there are indications that community resilience levels are relatively high. It was established across interviews that Marsabit County possesses significant levels of social capital (especially due to the county's religious fluidity) and place attachment (built to counter against the county's past of ethnic antagonism); Muslim bonding (as was the case when the community's Muslims successfully ejected propagators of extremist views from the county's main mosque); as well as strong Christian-Muslim association (as was said of the Marsabit Inter-Faith Council).[56]

Despite these features, and the fact that all leading members of the Marsabit Da'wah group were well known by the local community, respondents conceded that the community was unable to prevent and counter VE radicalisation and recruitment in the area. After Hassan Kotola and Guyo Gorsa were prevented from taking control of Masjid Jamia (Marsabit's main mosque), they established their own clandestine networks of communication, radicalisation and recruitment. According to one respondent who knows Sheikh Guyo, 'someone will just come at someone's house and gather the youth and preach.'[57] The same respondent also added that Sheikh Guyo would conduct classes at Madrassa Taqwa during early morning hours, evading detection and monitoring of his lessons in the process.[58] According to a relative of Halima Adan, associates of the Marsabit Da'wah group would also meet, especially in the homes of Halima Adan and Hassan Jarso Kotola within the Shauri Yako neighbourhood, where they would discuss militant jihad and watch videos featuring the late Sheikh Aboud Rogo and Osama bin Laden.[59]

This case of VE radicalisation and recruitment took place in a community where there were multiple community-led and focussed security networks working together and with the government; mechanisms to manage youth-elder tensions and hostility (as was explained by the County Commissioner, CC, in relation to the Kazi Mtaani

[51] Int. 005. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 011. 08.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[52] Int. 003. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 001. 5.08.2020, Matarba, Marsabit.
[53] The unsuccessful attempt by the Da'wah group to take over Marsabit's Masjid Jamia, and the consequent take-over of other mosques, namely Toba and Daru Salaam, was independently confirmed by other respondents in Int. 004. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 001. 5.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[54] Allegations that members of Marsabit's business community are in support of Masjid Toba and Guyo Gorsa are made in Int. 004, 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 003, 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town;
[55] For example, Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town.
[56] See, Int. 001. 5.08.2020, Matarba, Marsabit, 2020; Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town; Int. 003. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 006. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 010. 8.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[57] Int. 001. 5.08.2020, Matarba, Marsabit, 2020.
[58] Int. 002. 6.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town.
[59] Ibid.

programme, a national government programme); and the ability to discuss VE openly so as to correctly diagnose the threat. Speaking of the Marsabit Inter-Faith Council, the CC said that 'it was very "strong"', and that by working with the Inter-Faith Council, they (the administration) were able to "remotely monitor any news of radicalisation and recruitment."[60] A local chief stated that members of the Marsabit Da'wah group and the wider Muslim public had, at a time, engaged in a debate regarding the conflict in Somalia, and that after most of them were either arrested, killed or travelled to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab, he continued to hold public debates (known in Swahili as barazas) outside his office with the objective of openly discussing the problem of recruitment into Al-Shabaab.[61]

Marsabit presents a case, therefore, where respondents felt that their community possesses features that are often assumed to influence a community's capacity and action against VE, but reported that they were not able to reign in on active and potential VE cells. Radicalised individuals, as was stated in interviews, were said to withdraw from the rest of society after being challenged and rejected, and as a result established their own covert infrastructures for recruitment, fundraising and communication.

3.2 Nakuru

A number of isolated cases of arrests of individuals suspected of being involved in VE activities, and who are thought to have come from Nakuru, have recently brought the county under the attention of P/CVE practitioners. Examples include the arrest of 17 individuals in a two-room house in the Samburu area of Kwale County, on 18 January 2019, some of whose identification documents indicated that they were from Nakuru County;[62] and the arrest of Mohamed Nurrow Mohamed, who was arrested in Moyale on 22 February 2019, and charged with responsibility for an explosion on Latema Road in Nairobi on 26 January 2019, days after the attack on the 14 Riverside business complex housing the DusitD2 Hotel in the Westlands district of Nairobi.[63] According to the CC of Nakuru, who was interviewed during this study, Mr. Mohamed hailed from Nakuru County[64]

Despite these incidents, the most concerning indications that VE radicalisation and recruitment is a problem in Nakuru was that of Javan Morton Murai, alias Jamal, who actually hailed from Vihiga County in Western Kenya.[65] Javan was arrested on 11 June 2016 by Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) rangers and Administration Police (AP) at a borehole in the Jaldesa Community Conversancy in Marsabit County, on suspicion that he was on his way to Somalia to join his colleagues who had been recruited by Al-Shabaab.[66] Javan, then a final year Law student at Kabarak University and a rugby player with Nakuru RFC had converted to Islam in Nakuru where he lived with his brother while attending university.[67]

The other is the arrests in February 2019 of a cell of alleged Al-Shabaab members that was reportedly plotting to kidnap foreign nationals in the town of Naivasha.[68] The investigations revealed that the local cell leaders of the alleged Naivasha kidnaping plot had been in communication with the same Al-Shabaab coordinators, based in

[60] Int. 006. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[61] Int. 012. 8.08.2020, Shauri Yako, Marsabit Town.
[62] Chari Suche, 'Kwale court gives ATPU week to detain 17 terror suspects', The Star, 29 January 2019 < https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2019-01-29-kwale-court-gives-atpu-week-to-detain-17-terror-suspects/> 5 October 2020.
[63] Cyrus Ombati, 'Suspect held over Latema road blast' The Standard, 26 February 2019 < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nairobi/article/2001314469/suspect-arrested-over-latema-road-blast> 5 October 2020.
[64] Int. 014. 18.08.2020. Nakuru Town.
[65] Lucas Barasa, 'Nakuru Ruby Player Arrested on His Way to Join al-Shabaab' 15 June 2016, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/marsabit/rugby-player-Shabaab-link/3444778-3250526-b1sdb1z/index.html> 5 May 2020.
[66] John Lawrence, 'Kenyan rugby player linked to al-Shabaab' SDE < https://www.sde.co.ke/thenairobian/article/2000205697/kenyan-rugby-player-linked-to-al-shabaab> 5 May 2020.
[67] John Lawrence, 'Kenyan rugby player linked to al-Shabaab' SDE < https://www.sde.co.ke/thenairobian/article/2000205697/kenyan-rugby-player-linked-to-al-shabaab> 5 May 2020.
[68] Reports of these arrests are made in United Nations Panel of Experts on Somalia, Letter dated 1st November 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (UN Security Council, New York, 2019), p. 16.
[69] Ibid.

the Al-Shabaab stronghold of Jilib in Somalia, that had been in contact with the DusitD2 attackers.[69] In addition, investigations revealed that members of the Naivasha cell had also been allowed wide discretion and autonomy by their facilitators in Somalia in planning and operations, including the recruitment of one more member – a former criminal associate of one of the cell leaders – amongst their ranks.[70]

This study was not able to independently confirm the reports regarding the Naivasha arrests, but information from respondents revealed a number of vulnerabilities to VE, and actual cases of VE radicalisation in parts of Nakuru town that may require the attention of both security services and the wider P/CVE community. First, is the ideological leanings and growing influence of a local Tablighi chapter, that is, the Tabligh Aklu-Sunna, that was highlighted during field research. Secondly, the reported arrest and successful conviction in 2019 of two individuals named by informants as followers of the Tabligh Aklu-Sunna. Thirdly, respondents repeatedly emphasized the significance for wider public security of the operations of local criminal networks and gangs, and of unresolved historical injustices commonly associated with ethnic conflict. It was clear, however, that when it comes to discussion over other forms of violence in Nakuru, some respondents were conflating VE with regular crime and political conflict. [71]

This study paid particular attention to what some respondents felt was the rise in Nakuru of puritanical ideological leanings amongst a group of local Muslims associated with the local Tabligh Aklu-Sunna.[72] Individuals associated with this Tablighi chapter – or those professing its Salafist doctrine – have reportedly become executive members of the Muslim Association of Nakuru. They have also sponsored the building of new mosques, such as Nakuru's Al-Rahma mosque, and promoted a more aggressive Islamic propagation programme, including installing their preferred imams, especially Imam Ahmed Rashid, to preach at the town's main mosque, Masjid Jamia.[73]

The Muslim Association of Nakuru is, at the time of writing, chaired by Faezz Ahmed Nasher, but according to respondents who are familiar with the politics of the town's Muslim leadership, members of the Association are divided along ideological lines, that is, between those leaning to Sufist-Tariqa forms of Islamic belief and practice, and those who have recently come to profess reformist-Salafist doctrines.[74] Respondents identified Bashir Abdillahi as the ideological leader of the latter group, which is spearheaded by the local Tabligh Aklu-Sunna.[75] Bashir Abdillahi and a group of like-minded Muslim leaders in Nakuru town, according to information rendered during this study, are also amongst the town's most successful businessmen, and due to this, they have been able to sponsor a number of community projects as well.

The following are the individuals associated with the Tablighi leadership in Nakuru, listed in relative order of influence:

- Bashir Abdullahi.
- Ibrahim Jamia – a member of the Muslim Association of Nakuru.
- Adan Jamia – an imam at the town's Jamia mosque.
- Sheikh Salim Rashid – reportedly sponsored by Bashir Abdullahi to study in Saudi Arabia, and returned rebuking non-Muslims in his sermons and took to broadcasting videos featuring the late Sheikh Aboud Rogo;
- Imam Ahmed Rashid – brother to Sheikh Salim Rashid, and an imam at the town's Jamia mosque. [76]

[70] Ibid.
[71] Int. 014. 18.08.2020. Nakuru Town; Int. 016. 19.08.2020. Nakuru Town.
[72] Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town; Int. 015. 18.08. 2020, Bondeni, Nakuru Town.
[73] Ibid.
[74] See Francis Mureithi, 'Nakuru Muslims vow to protect their land from grabbers,' Daily Nation, 7 December 2019 < https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/nakuru/nakuru-muslims-vow-to-protect-their-land-from-grabbers-230104> 5 October 2020.
[75] Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[76] This information was provided in Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town, and corroborated with a monitoring of the social media pages of the Muslim Association of Nakuru, <https://web.facebook.com/Muslim-Association-of-Nakuru-2036862136421739/>

There was no evidence in this study to suggest that these individuals were engaging in VE activities. However, it was evident that the promotion of a more puritanical Salafist doctrine – in addition to reports regarding the broadcasting of the late Sheikh Aboud Rogo's videos, who in life was a well-known supporter of Al-Shabaab – is encouraging the rise of intolerant attitudes within some sections of the Muslim community of Nakuru. For instance, respondents mentioned the attempted removal of an Imam at the mosque in Bondeni (Nakuru's oldest settlement and which is considered the town's locus of the Muslim community), that reportedly involved violent intimidation, including the drawing of knives during a mosque session.[77]

According to informants, the group of individuals leading the charge against the Imam at Bondeni were adherents of the Tabligh Aklu-Sunna. In addition, a circular had also been reportedly distributed within the Jamia mosque before the confrontation at Bondeni took place, that called for the removal of the Imam at the Bondeni mosque.[78] In 2019, those involved in the Bondeni mosque confrontation were arrested inside the Nakuru National Park where they claimed they had congregated for prayers. The leaders of the group, Khalil Awan Mahir and Hamisi Harun, were arrested, arraigned in court and sentenced. According to a respondent who knew them, the two individuals have since been released.[79]

Interviews with respondents in Nakuru suggested that the town is facing an acute rise in criminal activity, which respondents would often conflate with VE, or at times attempted to link to VE, without giving any evidence for such a link.[80] Others were more circumspect, directly stating that 'Al-Shabaab [VE] is not a problem here [Nakuru County].' [81]

The crime hotspots identified by respondents, however, included the wards of Kivumbini, Flamingo, Biashara (which includes the predominantly Muslim neighbourhood of Bondeni), Kaptembwo and Rhonda.[82] The rise of criminal gangs in Nakuru suggests the prominence of problems driven by a youth bulge in a town that is quickly urbanising. According to a local journalist, Nakuru had remained a 'small and peaceful town' before the 2007-08 post-election violence, after which, according to him, 'things started to change' when 'new people came in,' especially Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).[83] Indeed, Nakuru and its environs was considered the epicentre of the 2007-08 Kenyan post-election violence.[84] It was after that time, according to the local journalist, that there were increases in cases of burglary, alongside town expansion and increased urbanization: 'Nakuru is [now] slowly becoming a city with city problems," he concluded. [85]

Important to note is the fact that regular crime persists in Nakuru despite the existence of multiple community-led and focussed security networks working together and with the government.[86] The latter could also suggest, as was explained in a Focussed Group Discussion (FGD) with respondents who were in their twenties, a general lack of mechanisms to manage youth-elder tensions and hostility.[87] While there are positive inter-religious relationships (coinciding with years of work by civil society and grassroots organisations against the county's past of ethnic antagonism), the case of the rising influence of a more puritanical ideological bent within Nakuru town's Muslim community is the most concerning vulnerability for VE. This has created a closely bounded and exclusionist group that threatens to erode the social capital that produces inter and intra-religious harmony.

---

[76] This information was provided in Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town, and corroborated with a monitoring of the social media pages of the Muslim Association of Nakuru, <https://web.facebook.com/Muslim-Association-of-Nakuru-2036862136421739/>
[77] Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town; Int. 015. 18.08. 2020, Bondeni, Nakuru Town.
[78] Int. 022. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[79] Ibid.
[80] The CC, for instance, argued that criminal behaviour could graduate into VE, see, Int. 014, 18.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[81] Int. 020, 19.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[82] Int. 021. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[83] Int. 024. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[84] David Anderson and Emma Lochery, 'Violence and exodus in Kenya's Rift Valley, 2008: Predictable and Preventable? Journal of Eastern African Studies, 2, 2 (2008): 328-343.
[85] Int. 024. 20.08.2020, Nakuru Town.
[86] Details are given in Int. 017, 19.08.2020, Kaptembwo Ward, Nakuru Town; Int. 018, 19.08.2020, Kaptembwo Ward, Nakuru Town.
[87] Int. 015, 18.08.2020, Bondeni, Nakuru Town.

The conflation of VE with regular crime also means that the community may not correctly diagnose this potential threat. Combined with the inability of local state-citizen security structures to address or prevent regular crime, the slow emergence of an ideological rift amongst Nakuru's Muslim community (with older versions of Muslim belief clashing with reformist and fundamental ideas) may serve to tilt sections of local Muslims towards more extreme views and actions in the future. If not properly detected and promptly addressed, an infrastructure of radicalisation and recruitment may emerge that local community, and community-state structures, will not be able to demobilise.

3.3 Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County

Similar to Marsabit, VE actors and holders of extremist views in Eldoret Town and other parts of Uasin Gishu County were often found to have alienated themselves from wider society. What is different, however, is that VE actors in Eldoret Town and other parts of Uasin Gishu have not attempted to stake a claim in local politics, or to control the town's existing Islamic institutions. The nature of VE radicalisation and recruitment in Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County suggest that VE actors in this location have either established their own places of worship (without attempting to take over existing ones), or are working through other covert infrastructures of recruitment, fundraising and communication, perhaps involving the use of online platforms.[88] According to a Sub-County Commissioner in Uasin Gishu, 'this [Uasin Gishu] could just be a hideout.'[89]

This could also mean, as was suggested by other respondents, that VE actors operating out of Eldoret Town and other parts of Uasin Gishu County can come from far and wide (and that individuals born in Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu can be radicalised and recruited elsewhere); are not committed to local struggles; and are driven by more national ambitions and notions of international Jihad. Many, as respondents also stated, are often recent converts to Islam.[90]

Such was the case with the radicalisation and recruitment into Al-Shabaab of Jared Mokaya Omambia, alias Abdulaziz, who joined Al-Shabaab in 2014 and was killed by the group in Somalia in June 2016 on suspicion that he was spying on behalf of the Kenyan security agencies.[91] Jared was born in Cheptiret in the Kapseret Sub-County of Uasin-Gishu, and is believed to have converted to Islam in 2013 in Isebania, Migori County, where he had gone to look for work after graduating with an Information Technology degree from Moi University, which is located near Eldoret town.[92] It was while he was in Isebania that he was arrested, after he was reported to the police for referring to a group of non-Muslims as "Kafir", a derogatory term for non-Muslims (or non-believers)[93]. He was released on a Ksh. 10,000 (USD 100) cash bail, after which he travelled to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab.

Despite the fact that Jared converted and was radicalised in Isebania, away from his parent's home in Uasin Gishu, the Cheptiret and nearby Kesses areas were repeatedly mentioned by respondents as areas of concern for VE radicalisation and recruitment activities, due to their proximity, respondents stated, to Moi University.[94] A month after Jared's killing in Somalia, the then CC for Uasin Gishu County, Mr. Abdi Hassan, stated that up to 20 individuals from the area had disappeared since 2013, a year after Jared reportedly joined Al-Shabaab.[95] While the CC did not clarify where exactly these individuals were from, a local Imam said that a 'majority of the individuals in the group came from Kesses near Cheptiret.' [96]

[88] Int. 028. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town; Int. 025. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[89] Int. 029. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[90] Int. 027. 23.09.2020. Eldoret Town; Int. 028. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[91] Fred Mukinda, 'Al-Shabaab beheads Kenyans "for spying"', Daily Nation, 19 June 2016 < https://nation.africa/kenya/news/al-shabaab-beheads-kenyans-for-spying--1209690> 5 October 2020.
[92] As reported in the news media by Silah Koskei, 'How boy ditched big dreams in IT to join Al-Shabaab in Somalia,' The Standard, 22 June 2016 < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nyanza/article/2000206131/how-boy-ditched-big-dreams-in-it-to-join-al-shabaab-in-somalia> 5 October 2020; and confirmed during this study by a family friend in Int. 027. 23.09.2020. Eldoret Town.
[93] Fred Mukinda, 'Al-Shabaab beheads Kenyans "for spying"', Daily Nation, 19 June 2016 < https://nation.africa/kenya/news/al-shabaab-beheads-kenyans-for-spying--1209690> 5 October 2020.
[94] Int. 025. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town; Int. 027. 23.09.2020. Eldoret Town.
[95] Titus Too and Fred Kibor, 'Security officers on high alert after Kapenguria attack, 15 July 2016, Standard Digital < http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000208670/security-officers-on-high-alert-after-kapenguria-attack> 5 May 2020.
[96] Int. 027. 23.09.2020. Eldoret Town.

The identification of Moi and Eldoret universities as VE hotspots suggests the prominence of the influence of outsiders in Eldoret and the wider Uasin Gishu county in VE radicalisation and recruitment. Both institutions host individuals from all over Kenya. A respondent working on peace and P/CVE issues in the area stated that the individuals involved, most of whom are students and some of whom live in the Cheptiret neighbourhood surrounding the university, come from across the country.[97] "It is a network, some come from far, some are from here," the respondent said.[98] External influences, according to respondents, are also prominent in suspected radicalisation and recruitment cases that occur within Eldoret Town but outside of the universities, as was revealed in the case of Nixon Kipkoech Ruto, alias Salim, himself a 3rd year biochemistry university drop-out, who was arrested in early 2015.[99]

According to Nixon, who converted to Islam in February 2014, his decision to convert was influenced by a local Imam. Through the imam, Nixon was offered a scholarship to study Islam in Mombasa and Kikambala on Kenya's coast, which he accepted. However, Nixon refused to join his classmates on their subsequent journey to Somalia to train and fight with Al-Shabaab, and instead – by his own admission – went back to Eldoret and began radicalising youths in a local madrassa.[100] Nixon was released but was later rearrested on May 2017, this time on charges that he was the ringleader of a gang that robbed M-Pesa shops, or mobile money transfer kiosks across Machakos, Nakuru, Kakamega and Kitale counties.[101]

At the time of his second arrest, Nixon lived in Mwanzo estate in the Turbo Sub-County of Uasin-Gishu, an area that was identified by a Deputy CC as experiencing an influx of migrants (Somalis, a predominantly Muslim community) from North-East Kenya: to him, a vulnerability to VE.[102] In fact, it was Maili Nne, a neighborhood within the Turbo Sub-County, that variously came up in a number of interviews as a neighborhood with a significant Somali population. [103]

While Somali businesspeople have been resident in Eldoret for a significant period of time, respondents suggested that the local Somali population increased dramatically after the 2007-08 post-election violence, and according to a local priest, 'they came into Eldoret to take up on the business gaps that had been left by Kikuyu businessmen who were targeted during the 2007-08 violence.'[104] This recently-settled Somali population was described by some respondents as a strongly bounded and exclusionist group, but it was also clear that there were levels of anti-Somali/Muslim rhetoric and suspicion in the town, leading a respondent to state that 'their [Somalis/Muslims] lifestyle is unique; they bring their own people, engage in their own businesses, and are very difficult to engage.' [105]
While a Deputy CC described the Somali population as 'very unpredictable,' it was the remarks of a local priest and member of the reputable Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) that helped to put the anti-Muslim and anti-Somali theme heard across other interviews into perspective. He stated, 'when issues of terrorism

[97] Int. 028. 23.09.2020. Eldoret Town.
[98] Ibid.
[99] For a full description of Nixon's case – and that of others recruited like him – see, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab, p. 29.
[100] Ibid.
[101] See, Juliet Wambui, 'University student Nixon Kipkoech linked to M-Pesa robberies in Machakos, Nakuru, Kakamega and Kitale,' 23 May 2017, Kenyans.co.ke < https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/19301-university-student-nixon-kipkoech-linked-m-pesa-robberies-machakos-nakuru-kakamega-and?page=4> 5 May 2020; Evelyne Musambi, 'Police arrest university drop-out behind M-pesa fraud gang,' 23 May 2017, Nairobi News < https://nairobinews.nation.co.ke/news/police-arrest-university-dropout-behind-m-pesa-fraud-gang-video> 3 November 2020.
[102] Int. 029, 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[103] See, Int. 025. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town; Int. 026. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town; Int. 028. 23. 09.2020, Eldoret Town; Int. 029, 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[104] Int. 026. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[105] Int. 025. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.

happened in other parts of the country, people [in Eldoret] were not able to differentiate between terrorists, Muslims and Somalis.'[106] Another respondent added that there were many people in Eldoret from Mandera, Wajir and Marsabit, saying that this had not only made it easy for people to travel to Somalia to join Al-Shabaab, but had also brought to Uasin Gishu county "pieces of politics from [these] areas."[107] According to the local priest who was interviewed, the CJPC organised a series of inter-faith dialogue forums to quell inter-religious tensions, and a reputable bishop from the area was invited to speak at the local Jamia mosque as a result, finding, according to the priest, that 'there was nothing violent about Muslims.'[108] He added that many had suspected that mosques were harbouring terrorists, mentioning that this thinking has 'gone down', but that it was also 'still there' amongst the wider Christian public in Eldoret.[109]

Perhaps as a result of these suspicions, respondents mentioned that there has been a highly vigilant public when it comes to VE in Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu county. Encouraged by largely positive government-citizen relations, members of the public have made a number of reports to the security services regarding possible VE activities.[110] 'People in town would usually make reports and phone calls when they see people they don't know alighting from a bus in the market centres and being chaperoned to a mosque,' one respondent stated. [111] This, according to the respondent, has not only corresponded with local perceptions of VE as a purely security problem (as opposed to a social, political and religious issue as well), but it was also suggested that 'there is no conversation at the communal level regarding P/CVE issues in Uasin-Gishu.'[112] The existing government-citizen security structures, that is Nyumba Kumi, usually reports suspects to law enforcers, after which the regional Anti-Terrorist Police Unit (ATPU) takes action and "the [wider] community is left out."[113] While the latter may work to disrupt VE activities, it may only poorly address the drivers of VE radicalisation, as the underlying factors are left unaddressed.

The case of Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu county, therefore, suggests that positive government-community relations can work to disrupt VE activities, as useful intelligence can easily be handed to security agencies by members of the public, but poor inter-religious relations, lack of open discussions regarding the threat of VE, and misconceptions regarding VE itself, can lead to a situation in which the drivers of VE are not adequately addressed. A failure to openly discuss VE and address its drivers partly explains the continuing cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment in Eldoret town and other parts of Uasin-Gishu county, despite the existence of cooperative government-community security structures, or positive state-citizen relations.

3.4 Western Kenya (Kakamega and environs)

The Western Kenya case represents a combination of trends of VE radicalisation and recruitment found in Marsabit and Nakuru, as well as patterns noted in Eldoret and other parts of Uasin-Gishu. In other words, there are examples of a covert infrastructure of recruitment, fundraising and communication, especially across Busia, Bungoma and Siaya, and attempts by VE operators to stake a claim in local Muslim politics, that is by attempting to take over a number of local mosques, especially in Mumias.

The Busia-Siaya-Bungoma geographical nexus has provided an area of operation for a covert VE network spread around a number of small mosques that have alienated themselves from the wider Muslim population, and

[106] Int. 026. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town. For the comment by the Deputy County Commissioner, see, Int. 029, 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[107] Int. 028. 23. 09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[108] Int. 026. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Int. 025. 23.09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[111] Int. 028. 23. 09.2020, Eldoret Town.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.

seemingly with direct networks of communication and recruitment with Al-Shabaab figures based on the Kenya coast and/or in Somalia.[114] This network has been the subject of reported arrests directed and/or made by the ATPU in Western Kenya, with headquarters at Busia, in recent years (see Table in Appendix 1).

In particular, two unnamed individuals, one based in Busia town and another in Nyadorera market, a small market centre on the border between Siaya and Busia counties, have since been arrested on allegations of radicalizing two teenage boys and shuttling them to Somalia – via Tanzania – to join Al-Shabaab in 2018.[115] On 13 December 2019, five more teenagers associated with the two individuals were suspected to be en-route to Tanzania, but after they feared that the police were trailing them, returned to Nyadorera.[116] Subsequently, the teenagers were reportedly placed under a youth and women empowerment programme for Kisumu and Siaya counties, a joint National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) and Lake Basin Development Authority (LBDA) project funded by the European Union (EU).

According to respondents, Mumias represents a rather different trend, however, where VE operators and individuals holding extremist views have long attempted to make their presence felt in local Muslim politics. Of particular note is Masjid Fulqan at Lukoye in Mumias.[117] In nearby Koyonzo location, at the time of field research there was also an active case involving an individual – who is currently under police custody – who was arrested in 2018; and the recruitment into Al-Shabaab of another individual who – at the time of writing – remains at large.[118] But it is at Lukoye that a larger base for VE radicalisation and recruitment was reported.

According to a local imam, the first known individual (identified only as 'Shabaan') from Lukoye to join Al-Shabaab travelled to Somalia in 2009 after attending Islamic study at Masjid Tawheed[119] in Maganyakulo, Kwale County, the same madrassa reportedly attended by Marsabit's Hassan Jarso Kotola and Guyo Gorsa Boru, as well as Ramadhan Kufungwa. Such travels for Islamic study to the coast in order to enrol in qur'anic schools associated with VE actors and operators were reportedly the main means of radicalisation and recruitment in all the 'non-traditional' zones of VE activity identified under this study.

In Mumias, Ustadh Ali Rasow, alias Twahar, came to exercise a significant ideological influence on what would later be suspected to be a VE cell in the area. Rasow is originally from Kwale County, and according to respondents who know him, organised travels for Islamic study to Masjid Tawheed. After attempting to take over Masjid Khalifa, the main mosque in Lukoye, where he issued radical sermons, he and his group were ejected by the mosque committee, after which they established Masjid Fulqan a few metres behind Masjid Khalifa.[120] It was from this group that an actual Al-Shabaab recruitment ring allegedly emerged, led by Musa Mabwege, who became the Amir (leader) of the cell.[121]

On 22 November 2019, Idris Wesonga and Juma Odhiambo were arrested between Bula Hawa and Baidoa in Somalia by Somalia National Army (SNA) officers, who handed them over to Kenyan authorities, after which they were charged in a Mandera court.[122] Wesonga and Odhiambo were linked to Masjid Fulqan in Mumias, led by

[114] Int. 036. 25.09.2020, Kakamega Town.
[115] Olivia Odhiambo, 'Five teens rescued from going to Somalia to join Shabaab,' 14 December 2019, Standard Digital < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001353196/five-teens-rescued-from-going-into-somalia-to-join-shabaab> 6 May 2020.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Int. 035. 24.09.2020, Lukoye, Mumias; Int. 036. 25.09.2020, Kakamega Town. See also media coverage on Masjid Fulqan in Paul Mwangi, 'Al-Shabaab Mumias cell unmasked as recruits jailed for 25 years,' Citizen Weekly, 21-27 September, 2020.
[118] Int. 034. 24. 09.2020, Koyonzo, Mumias.
[119] Int. 035. 24.09.2020, Lukoye, Mumias.
[120] Ibid.
[121] See evidence given in court by an ATPU officer covered in Manase Otsialo, 'The terror suspects from Mumias,' Daily Nation, 17 September 2020 <https://allafrica.com/stories/202009170802.html> 6 October 2020.
[122] Manase Otsialo, '2 charged over travelling to Somalia to "join Al-Shabaab"', Daily Nation, 11 December 2019 < https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/mandera/2-charged-over-travelling-to-somalia-to-join-al-shabaab--231422> 6 October 2020.

Ali Rasow and Musa Mabwege, and in September 2020, were convicted in court, where they were handed a total of 25 years' sentence.[123] During the time of field research, Masjid Fulqan was reportedly dormant, and Ali Rasow was said to have retracted from his extremist views.[124]

According to respondents who knew the extremist fringe that was formerly based at Masjid Fulqan in Lukoye, it is possible that some associates of the group have spread themselves around other areas of Mumias and have established smaller mosques so as to evade the scrutiny of security agencies.[125] For instance, children attending darsas [madrassa lectures] at a mosque in Ekero in Mumias, relayed the extremist teachings they were receiving to their parents, after which many were discouraged not to return, leading to the mosque's closure.[126]

A government chief suggested that Mumias appeared to be an active zone of VE radicalisation and recruitment, which has also attracted the attention of the regional ATPU headquarters.[127] However, according to the chief, the 'issue of terrorism is the preserve of senior security officials above [his] paygrade'.[128] In addition, the chief emphasized that there were no communal vulnerabilities that the location's VE actors could exploit. This also suggests that after the disruption of the extremist fringe at Masjid Fulqan, the VE networks in the area went underground, establishing covert channels of communication, radicalisation and recruitment, and the local community came to perceive of VE as purely a security problem.

In addition, the policy discussion on VE within the wider Kakamega County has been domiciled within Kakamega Town, to the exclusion of Mumias Sub-County. According to a participant of a recently concluded series of workshops held in Kakamega town in preparation for the Kakamega CAP against VE, 'the only problem is that the matter is discussed as a security issue,' adding that 'the discussion is supposed to be brought down to the grassroots level.'[129] In short, there are two main criticisms of the CAP in Kakamega County, that is, the tendency to overly securitise VE, and second, the failure to include areas beyond Kakamega town itself. It was also apparent in the perspective of local administrators that the most important security challenge for the area was the rise of criminal gangs, especially in Matungu in Mumias Sub-County.[130]

According to a former Assistant CC stationed in Matungu, the management problems that afflicted Mumias Sugar Company in the last decade have negatively affected the livelihoods of the area's residents. 'You know people used to just sit and wait to be paid for their sugarcane in that area,' he said, but afterwards, many were forced to shift to maize cultivation, which is not as lucrative as sugarcane farming had been.[131] The administrator added that it was during that time (when sugar processing plants faced managerial problems) that criminal gang violence in Matungu and Mumias began to rise. These gangs were involved in various crimes, including the violent robbery of motor vehicles.[132] In any case, unlike in Nakuru, Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu, respondents in Kakamega county did not conflate regular crime with VE, perhaps due to Islam's longer history in Mumias, and the wider spread of Islamism there. This was true in spite of the apparent lack of a "P/CVE conversation".

[123] Paul Mwangi, 'Al-Shabaab Mumias cell'. While imams in Mumias who were interviewed for this study insist that Wesonga and Odhiambo had been recruited into Al-Shabaab, the wife of Idris Wesonga, Jackline Bakola, has maintained that her husband is innocent, and had gone to Somalia in search of construction work. For Wesonga's wife's statements, see Manase Otsialo, 'The dollar lured my husband to Somalia,' Daily Nation, 14 December 2019 <https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/mandera/-the-dollar-lured-my-husband-to-somalia--232338> 6 October 2020.
[124] Int. 035. 24.09.2020, Lukoye, Mumias.
[125] Int. 36. 25.09.2020, Kakamega Town.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Int. 034. 24. 09.2020, Koyonzo, Mumias.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Int. 032. 24.09.2020, Kakamega Town.
[130] Int. 031. 24.09.2020, Kakamega Town.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.

4.0 ASSESEMENT OF RISK AND VULNERABILITY FOR CASE-STUDY LOCATIONS

As the study's findings have shown, the case-study locations possess varying levels of risk for potential VE radicalisation and recruitment, due to different levels of vulnerability. By 'risk' and 'Risk Score', the author is referring to the risk of radicalisation and recruitment, not the risk of a VE attack. Despite the differences in levels of risk, the most common outcome in all cases is that VE actors and holders of extremist views often withdraw from society when challenged or rejected by the wider community, establishing covert infrastructures for recruitment, fundraising and communication. Given the differing types of risk and the varying levels of vulnerability in the case-study locations, however, an RI is useful as a practical tool that enables the determination of levels of risk and vulnerability for each location, so as to recommend specific, targeted interventions.

The framework or matrix used to develop the Risk Index includes the operation of factors known to influence the spread of VE in a community. These include the presence or lack thereof of social capital or community cohesion, information sharing, economic resources and place attachment. The presence or lack of these factors in a community reduces and increases the potential for radicalisation and recruitment that community, respectively. The Risk Index, therefore, is both an analytical and programmatic tool, that is informed by levels of analysis that measure a community's capacity and action to regulate VE activities, and compare these with actual levels of existing VE activities in that area, as described in the case-study findings section of this report.

VE activities in this study refers to the presence in a case-study location of a VE recruitment base, VE harassment and VE ideology. The Risk Index, therefore, will provide a tool that will enable the identification of communal risk factors and recommend specific, targeted interventions, if the beneficiary communities are to be empowered to deal with any existing or potential VE threat.

Table 1: Framework for the Risk Index

Variables influencing community capacity against or community vulnerability for VE	Presence of VE activities
Social capital.	VE harassment.
Information sharing.	VE ideology.
Economic resources.	VE recruiters/recruitment base
Place attachment.	

Compiled by author.

While levels of existing VE activities in the case-study locations were determined through field-based interviews and an examination of online and offline data, the community's capacity and action to respond to VE was determined mainly via field-based interviews.

4.1 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Marsabit

As already mentioned, Marsabit represents a case of strong communal capacity to act against VE (or a lack of communal vulnerabilities), but an actual VE threat has been established for several years. In other words, inter and intra-religious relationships in Marsabit (that is communal cohesion or social capital), according to respondents, are largely positive due to the religious fluidity found in the county, where conversions are common, and multiple examples of family members professing different religions (Christianity and Islam) exist.[133] Muslim bonding was also put to use when the wider Muslim community successfully ejected holders of extremist views from the town's main mosque.[134] Marsabit County possesses significant levels of place attachment (built to

[133] Int. 007. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 009. 7.08.2020, Marsabit Town.
[134] Int. 001. 5.08.2020, Marsabit Town; Int. 003. 6.08.2020, Marsabit Town.

counter against the county's past of ethnic antagonism), in addition to multiple community-led and focussed security networks working together and with the government. Furthermore, the mediation work done by the Marsabit Inter-Faith Council was celebrated by several informants.

Despite reduced communal vulnerability given the presence in the local community in Marsabit of features that have been assumed to enable a community to act against VE, Marsabit continues to face a VE threat. This is because VE actors and holders of extremist views in the county have constructed covert channels of communication, radicalisation and recruitment. In addition, the fact that some of those who have been associated with the county's VE network are still at large has concerned some respondents who are fearful of the possibility of continued radicalisation and recruitment activities in the area.

Table 4: Risk Score for Marsabit

Risk	Vulnerability	Threat
Moderate	**Low**	**High**

4.2 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Nakuru

Nakuru, with no historically significant cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment, nonetheless possesses significant vulnerabilities that could conceivably be exploited by VE actors. The conflation of VE with regular crime and the drivers of ethnic violence suggests that misconceptions of VE in Nakuru are common. This lack of understanding is coupled with a lack of conversation around P/CVE, or moderated debates on sensitive topics in the area. The latter could be the result of the fact that there is minimal record of VE activity in Nakuru, but the reported fractious nature of some sections of the Muslim community (which lowers the community's level of social capital), and where cases of violent intimidation have been reported, could lead to more inflexible ideological positions, pushing some further onto the path of extremism in the future.

In addition, the fact that the location's community-led and focussed security networks that work together and with the government have not been able to reign in on the town's concerning cases of regular violent crime (meaning that place attachment, for a vast majority of the town's residents, is low), suggests that the local community may not be able to prevent and counter the emergence of a local and covert VE network. According to respondents, it is the emergence in recent years of the influence of the Salafist-leaning Tabligh Aklu-Sunna, in particular, that could serve to tilt the balance in favour of more violent extremist action.

Table 5: Risk Score for Nakuru

Risk	Vulnerability	Threat
Moderate	**High**	**Low**

4.3 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County

Eldoret and the wider Uasin Gishu County represents a case of strong communal capacity to disrupt VE networks. However, poor inter-religious relations, lack of open discussions regarding the threat of VE, and misconceptions regarding VE itself (all this are major factors that influence the community's level of social capital and information sharing), have led to a situation where the drivers of VE are not adequately addressed. It is this failure to openly discuss VE and address its drivers that partly explains the continuing, reported cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment in Eldoret town and other parts of Uasin-Gishu County, despite the existence of cooperative state-community security structures.

The perception in this location is that VE radicalisation and recruitment is mainly the result of the influence of "outsiders", especially migrants to Eldoret town with no significant place attachment, in particular, students enrolled in the area's multiple higher-learning institutions, and recent migrants from Northeast Kenya. Through these "hotspot" zones, a local network of VE radicalisation and recruitment is reported to have emerged, but has also alienated itself from local politics and pre-existing Islamic institutions. While positive state-citizen relations have meant that information sharing between members of the public and security agencies can work to disrupt VE activities, this has also occurred in the context of poor inter-religious relationships. Stereotypes of "Muslims/ Somalis as terrorists", coupled with misconceptions regarding the nature of VE, erode the social capital needed to combat communal problems and address the drivers of VE.

Table 6: Risk Score for Eldoret and other parts of Uasin Gishu County

Risk	Vulnerability	Threat
Moderate	**Moderate**	**Moderate**

Recommended response: Combination of P/CVE and CT measures.

4.4 Assessment of risk and vulnerability for Western Kenya, (Kakamega and environs)

Western Kenya represents a case of both covert VE radicalisation and recruitment in some areas (Bungoma, Busia and Siaya), and of VE operators and actors who have attempted to stake a claim on pre-existing Islamic institutions in other areas (Mumias). After the disruption of some VE cells in the region, most VE operators and actors – at the time of field research – appeared to have gone underground and to have established covert infrastructures for radicalisation and recruitment. This has also meant that the response to VE in the region has largely been led by the security services, and that there is a general lack of a "P/CVE conversation".

Inter and intra-religious relationships, including state-citizen relationships (major factors influencing the community's level of social capital and information sharing), were described by respondents as being generally positive. These, however, have not precluded the emergence of VE radicalisation and recruitment in the area. Cases of regular criminality were mentioned by respondents, but these were not conflated with VE, rather, they were seen as the result of the recent collapse of the sugar industry that has traditionally supported households, especially in Mumias Sub-County.

Table 7: Risk Score for Western Kenya, (Kakamega and environs)

Risk	Vulnerability	Threat
Moderate	**Moderate**	**Moderate**

Recommended response: Combination of P/CVE and CT measures

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study has established that VE radicalisation and recruitment has been taking place in areas outside of the Kenyan coast, Northeast Kenya and parts of Nairobi for over a decade. While this trend began as early as 2009, in recent years it has been part of an adaptation strategy by Kenya's VE networks to escape increased scrutiny of their activities by security agencies.[135] The study also found that different case-study locations possess varying levels of risk and vulnerability, which necessitate context-specific and targeted interventions for each location. For instance, while Nakuru, with no significant cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment, was found to possess significant vulnerabilities that could be exploited by VE actors; locations such as Eldoret, Marsabit and Mumias were found to be active zones of VE radicalisation and recruitment, despite showing low communal vulnerabilities.

In areas where extremist ideas are limited, or is of fairly recent origin, especially in Nakuru and to an extent Eldoret, the study also found common misconceptions of VE, which, in addition to being perceived purely as a security problem, was conflated with other forms of violence such as regular crime and ethnic violence. These misconceptions were coupled with the general lack of a "P/CVE conversation" amongst all relevant stakeholders within the community and government. In a majority of the counties where this study was conducted, CAPs against VE were either rounding off their first year in operation, or had not yet been implemented.

The study found that there is no simple, or direct causal link between threat and vulnerability to VE. Rather, communities that are assessed to possess low vulnerabilities for VE can nonetheless host individuals involved in VE activities, and those that have been assessed to have high levels of vulnerability may not be facing any serious VE threat. The study found that a location such as Nakuru, with no significant history of cases of VE radicalisation and recruitment, nonetheless possesses significant vulnerabilities that could be exploited by VE actors in future. Following this finding, the study suggests that locations such as Marsabit, Uasin-Gishu and Kakamega, locations of low vulnerabilities with existing VE threats, a combination of P/CVE and CT interventions is required, whilst Nakuru requires more P/CVE interventions as opposed to CT action. For Nakuru in particular, it is better to begin P/CVE work before it is too late.

[135] Evidence has been provided in IGAD, Al-Shabaab, pp. 20.

6.0 Recommendations

This report's main recommendation is tailored towards the adoption of P/CVE strategies that are not only informed by knowledge on the evolution of Kenya's VE networks, but that are also attuned to local contexts. A full description of the recommendations is provided below:

For the National Government:

1. Counter-Terrorism (CT) programmes should not only be context-specific, they should work in tandem with P/CVE and other developmental efforts: to effectively prevent and counter VE and its networks, P/CVE interventions – which often include community debates on sensitive topics, media messaging, interfaith dialogue, training of administration and security officials, vocational training and mentorship programmes for individuals deemed to be 'at risk' of VE radicalisation and recruitment – need to be supplemented by effective and context-specific CT operations – that is, the detection, disruption and interdiction of imminent VE activities. This is because the promotion of variables that influence community and individual capacity and action against VE (a preoccupation of P/CVE interventions) is essential but, alone, not sufficient to demobilise VE and its networks. Identifying actual VE actors and holders of extremist views through effective intelligence-gathering, in addition to successful apprehension, prosecution and/or rehabilitation, is also important.

For civil society, county governments and donor institutions:

- P/CVE strategies should be driven by knowledge of Kenya's VE networks. An understanding of the origins, nature and evolution of Kenya's VE networks is crucial for the design of effective P/CVE measures. While much of this knowledge is understandably under the preserve of law enforcement and intelligence officers, an accurate understanding of discernible trends – rather than actual intelligence – can help to design more effective programmes and County Action Plans (CAPs) against VE.

For all stakeholders:

- Appropriate strategies are required for each location. There is need for CAPs that are more attuned to the specific nature of risk and vulnerability within their jurisdictions, as opposed to the production of largely vague and generic plans. In Nakuru, a location that was determined to have multiple vulnerabilities but no serious existing VE threat to exploit them, this study recommends more P/CVE interventions as opposed to CT action. In Marsabit, Uasin-Gishu and Kakamega, locations of low communal vulnerabilities but with existing VE threats, this study recommends a combination of P/CVE and CT interventions.
- Law enforcers, administrative officials and members of the public should be educated on the complex nature of VE. There is a general conflation of VE with other forms of violence, especially in locations where VE is viewed purely as a security issue. This could be due to the limited nature of VE in such locations, combined with its relative 'newness' compared to the Kenyan coast, parts of Nairobi and Northeast Kenya. Sensitization programmes should be conducted targeting law enforcers, policy makers and members of the public on the complex nature of VE in these locations. This is because VE usually includes a host of other political, cultural, societal and religious factors, and is not purely driven by strict criminal motivations, or other instrumental and financial factors. Related to this, P/CVE interventions in these locations should be incorporated into wider peacebuilding initiatives.

References

- Anneli Botha, Assessing the vulnerability of Kenyan youths to radicalization and extremism (Report, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, 2013).
- Alex de Waal (Ed.), Islamism and its enemies in the Horn of Africa, (Hurst, London, 2004).
- Ami C. Carpenter, Community resilience to secretarian violence in Baghdad (New York, NY: Springer, 2014).
- Ashutosh Varshney, Ethnic conflict and civic life: Hindus and Muslims in India (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).
- Alejandra Bujones, Katrin Jaskiewiscz, Lauren Linakis, and Michael McGirr, A framework for analysing resilience in fragile and conflict-affected situations (Washington DC, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, 2014).
- Alphonse Mung'ahu, 'DPP opposes Sheikh Guyo Gorsa's bail in Al-Shabaab case', The Star, 22 February 2018 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018-02-22-dpp-opposes-sheikh-guyo-gorsas-bail-in-al-shabaab-case/> 4 October 2020.
- Andrew Kasuku, 'Dusit attack "financiers" accounts among nine frozen over terrorism links,' The Star, 2 September 2020 <https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2020-09-02-dusit-attack-financiers-accounts-among-nine-frozen-over-terrorism-links/> 5 October 2020.
- Cyrus Ombati, 'The dynamic monster: Changing face of terrorism and Counter-Terrorism, The Standard, 8 February 2019 < http://citizentv.co.ke> 2 October 2020.
- Cyrus Ombati, 'The dynamic monster: Changing face of terrorism and Counter-Terrorism,' The Standard, 8 February 2019 <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nairobi/article/2001312354/the-dynamic-monster-changing-face-of-terrorism-and-counter-terrorism> 5 October 2020.
- Chari Suche, 'Kwale court gives ATPU week to detain 17 terror suspects', The Star, 29 January 2019 < https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2019-01-29-kwale-court-gives-atpu-week-to-detain-17-terror-suspects/> 5 October 2020.
- Cyrus Ombati, 'Suspect held over Latema road blast' The Standard, 26 February 2019 < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nairobi/article/2001314469/suspect-arrested-over-latema-road-blast> 5 October 2020.
- David Anderson and Emma Lochery, 'Violence and exodus in Kenya's Rift Valley, 2008: Predictable and Preventable? Journal of Eastern African Studies, 2, 2 (2008): 328-343.
- David Shinn, 'Al-Qaeda in East Africa and the Horn', Journal of Conflict Studies, 27, 1, (2007), pp. 47-75.
- Evelyne Musambi, 'Police arrest university drop-out behind M-pesa fraud gang,' 23 May 2017, Nairobi News < https://nairobinews.nation.co.ke/news/police-arrest-university-dropout-behind-m-pesa-fraud-gang-video> 3 November 2020.
- Fred Oluoch, 'The Changing face of terrorism in East Africa', The East African, 19 January 2019 < https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/the-changing-face-of-terrorism-in-east-africa-the-horn-1410704> 2 October 2020.
- Frederick Nzes, 'Al-Hijra: Al-Shabaab's Affiliate in Kenya,' CTC Sentinel, 7, 5 (2014):24-6.
- Francis Mureithi, 'Nakuru Muslims vow to protect their land from grabbers,' Daily Nation, 7 December 2019 < https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/nakuru/nakuru-muslims-vow-to-protect-their-land-from-grabbers-230104> 5 October 2020.
- Fred Mukinda, 'Al-Shabaab beheads Kenyans "for spying"', Daily Nation, 19 June 2016 < https://nation.africa/kenya/news/al-shabaab-beheads-kenyans-for-spying--1209690> 5 October 2020.
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab as a transnational security threat (IGAD, Addis Ababa, 2016).
- Isaac Kfir, 'Islamic radicalism in East Africa: Is there a cause for concern?' Studies in Conflict and Terrorism,

31, (2008), pp. 829-855.

- Jeremy Prestholdt, 'Kenya, the United States, and Counterterrorism', Africa Today 57, 4 (2011): 3-27
- Jeffrey Haynes, 'Islamic militancy in East Africa', Third World Quarterly, 26, 8, (2005), pp. 1321-1339.
- Jeffrey Haynes, 'Islam and democracy in East Africa', Democratization, 13, 3, (2006), pp. 490-507.
- Jeremy Lind, Patrick Mutahi and Marjoke Oosterom, 'Killing a mosquito with a hammer: Al-Shabaab violence and state security responses in Kenya', Peacebuilding 5, 2 (2017), pp. 118-135.
- John Lawrence, 'Kenyan rugby player linked to al-Shabaab' SDE < https://www.sde.co.ke/thenairobian/article/2000205697/kenyan-rugby-player-linked-to-al-shabaab> 5 May 2020.
- Juliet Wambui, 'University student Nixon Kipkoech linked to M-Pesa robberies in Machakos, Nakuru, Kakamega and Kitale,' 23 May 2017, Kenyans.co.ke < https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/19301-university-student-nixon-kipkoech-linked-m-pesa-robberies-machakos-nakuru-kakamega-and?page=4> 5 May 2020.
- Lucas Barasa, 'Nakuru Ruby Player Arrested on His Way to Join al-Shabaab' 15 June 2016, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/marsabit/rugby-player-Shabaab-link/3444778-3250526-b1sdb1z/index.html> 5 May 2020.
- Lauren Van Metre, Community resilience to violent extremism in Kenya (Peaceworks, United States Institute of Peace, 2016).
- Manase Otsialo, 'The terror suspects from Mumias,' Daily Nation, 17 September 2020 <https://allafrica.com/stories/202009170802.html> 6 October 2020.
- Manase Otsialo, '2 charged over travelling to Somalia to "join Al-Shabaab"', Daily Nation, 11 December 2019 < https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/mandera/2-charged-over-travelling-to-somalia-to-join-al-shabaab--231422> 6 October 2020.
- Manase Otsialo, 'The dollar lured my husband to Somalia,' Daily Nation, 14 December 2019 < https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/mandera/-the-dollar-lured-my-husband-to-somalia--232338> 6 October 2020.
- Matt Bryden, et al, 'Report of the Monitoring Group to Somalia and Eritrea pursuant to Security Council Resolution (2002) (2011)', "United Nations Security Council" (s/2012/544), pp. 135-179.
- Ngala Chome, We don't trust anyone: Strengthening relationships as the key to reducing violent extremism in Kenya (International Alert, London, 2016).
- Nyambesa Gisesa and Vincent Achuka, 'The Kwale hamlet where dreaded terror squad commanders were raised', Daily Nation, 20 August 2020, pp. 10-11.
- NTV Kenya, 'Familia moja yamtafuta Badar Omar Abdallah aliyetoweka Machi 17 @HarithSalim_81' < https://twitter.com/ntvkenya/status/724630944943095808?lang=en> 4 October 2020.
- Paul Mwangi, 'Al-Shabaab Mumias cell unmasked as recruits jailed for 25 years,' Citizen Weekly, 21-27 September, 2020.
- Rudiger Seesemann, 'East Africa Muslims after 9/11', Bayreuth African Studies, Working Papers, 3, (2005), pp. 1-17
- Roy Olivier, Globalised Islam: The search for a new Ummah (Hurst, London, 2004).
- Silah Koskei, 'How boy ditched big dreams in IT to join Al-Shabaab in Somalia,' The Standard, 22 June 2016 < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/nyanza/article/2000206131/how-boy-ditched-big-dreams-in-it-to-join-al-shabaab-in-somalia> 5 October 2020.
- Stig Jarle Hansen, Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The history and ideology of a militant Islamist group (Hurst, London, U.K, 2013).
- Shmuel Yosef Agnon, 'Police list six most wanted terror suspects linked to recruitment in Kenya,' Strategic Intelligence, 12 July 2017 < https://intelligencebriefs.com/police-list-six-most-wanted-terror-suspects-linked-to-recruitment-in-kenya/> 4 October 2020.
- Titus Too and Fred Kibor, 'Security officers on high alert after Kapenguria attack, 15 July 2016, Standard Digital < http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000208670/security-officers-on-high-alert-after-kapenguria-attack> 5 May 2020.

- United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 11 July 2012 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council'.
- United Nations Panel of Experts on Somalia, Letter dated 1st November 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (UN Security Council, New York, 2019).
- Olivia Odhiambo, 'Five teens rescued from going to Somalia to join Shabaab,' 14 December 2019, Standard Digital < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001353196/five-teens-rescued-from-going-into-somalia-to-join-shabaab> 6 May 2020.
- William Rosenau, 'Al-Qaeda recruitment trends in Kenya and Tanzania', Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, 28, 1, (2005), pp. 1-10

Annex 1: Table of reported cases

Region	Date	Case	Source
Rift-Valley region (Eldoret, Nakuru and Naivasha Towns)	2011-2014	Eldoret Town, Uasin Gishu County, appeared in reports regarding radicalisation and recruitment efforts as early as 2011.	This was reported by the SEMG team in 2011 (report cited above), and again by Frederick Nzes, 'Al-Hijra: Al-Shabaab's Affiliate in Kenya', CTC Sentinel < https://www.ctc.usma.edu/al-hijra-al-shababs-affiliate-in-kenya/> 25 May 2020.
	2015	Nixon Kipkoech Ruto is arrested in Eldoret Town and admits to have been radicalised by a local imam, and to have continued radicalisation efforts in the town. The exact date of Nixon's arrest couldn't be independently established from open-source research.	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab as a transnational security threat, p. 29
	19/05/2015	The County Commissioner, Mr. Mohamed Birik, states that 5 individuals from Bahati, Pipeline and Nakuru Town, all in Nakuru County, have been recruited by al Shabaab and are in training with the armed group in Somalia.	Osteen Njenga, 'Al Shabaab actively recruiting in Nakuru, Government warns' 19 May 2015, HiviSasa < https://hivisasa.com/posts/al-shabaab-actively-recruiting-in-nakuru-government-warns> 25 May 2020.
	11/06/2016	Javan Morton Murai, alias Jamal, is arrested in Marsabit County on suspicions that he was on his way to Somalia to join al Shabaab. During his arrest, Javan is a final year Law student at Kabarak University and a rugby player with the Nakuru RFC. Reports state that Javan hailed from Vihiga County in Western Kenya, and that he had converted to Islam in Nakuru where he lived with his brother while attending university.	John Lawrence, 'Kenyan rugby player linked to al-Shabaab' SDE < https://www.sde.co.ke/thenairobian/article/2000205697/kenyan-rugby-player-linked-to-al-shabaab> 5 May 2020.
	15/07/2016	Uasin Gishu County Commissioner, Mr. Abdi Hassan, states that up to 20 individuals from the North-Rift region, including his own county, had disappeared and had possibly joined al Shabaab.	Titus Too and Fred Kibor, 'Security officers on high alert after Kapenguria attack, 15 July 2016, Standard Digital < http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000208670/security-officers-on-high-alert-after-kapenguria-attack> 5 May 2020.
	17/04/2017	Bodies of Ms. Fatuma Mohamed Masou, the wife of the late Kassim Omondi (a suspected al Hijra operative), and that of Farid Omar Awadh, are found in Kedong, near Naivasha town. Both Fatuma and Farid had been arrested and released in Mombasa, and consequently placed on the terror list. However, it is not clear whether Fatuma and Awadh were in hiding in Naivasha before they died, or whether they had been killed elsewhere and their bodies dumped there.	Nation Team, 'Most wanted terror suspect Fatuma Mohamed found dead,' 17 April 2017, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/news/terror-suspect-Fatuma-Mohamed-dead/1056-3892262-cnunuv/index.html> 5 May 2020.
	29/07/2017	Mohamed Ibrahim Mohammud breaks into the house of Deputy President, William Ruto, in Sugoi, Uasin Gishu county, and accesses the armoury, leading to a twenty-hour siege and gun-fight with the police that ends in his death.	Jeremiah Kiplang'at and Fred Mukinda, 'Hard questions over daring raid on William Ruto's home' 29 July 2017, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Gunmen-attack-DP-Ruto-s-Sugoi-home/1056-4037082-t0ycchz/index.html> 6 May 2020.
	February 2019	Members of an al Shabaab cell are arrested in Naivasha shortly after the DusitD2 attack in Nairobi. According to the ATPU, the cell leaders were planning a number of kidnappings of foreign nationals in the town, and that they had been allowed wide-discretion by plot leaders in Somalia, recruiting more members into the cell.	United Nations Panel of Experts on Somalia, Letter dated 1st November 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (UN Security Council, New York, 2019), p. 16.

Upper-Eastern (Marsabit and Moyale Towns)	13/01/2018	Sheikh Guyo Gorsa Boru is arrested in Marsabit Town and accused of radicalisation and recruitment of youth in Marsabit into al Shabaab. His arrest leads to days of riots in Marsabit Town.	Irene Mwendwa, 'Tension lingers in Marsabit town over Sheikh Guyo Gorsa's arrest' 14 January 2018, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/marsabit/Tension-lingers-in-Marsabit-Town-over-Sheikh-Guyo-Gorsa-arrest/3444778-4263700-12hb3xi/index.html> 6 May 2020.
	8/02/2018	More details emerge in court over Sheikh Guyo's arrest. In particular, the police accuse him of being part of a radicalisation network of clerics and preachers based in Marsabit County that conducted Islamic lectures in local schools, including in Quranic schools.	Hunja Macharia, 'Marsabit parents decry radicalisation of youth by clerics' 8 February 2018, KBC News < https://www.kbc.co.ke/marsabit-parents-decry-radicalization-youth-clerics/#> 6 May 2020.
	14/02/2018	The Ant-Terrorist Police Unit lists schools in Marsabit it believes are involved in radicalisation activities. These include Jamia Secondary School; Sasura Girls Secondary School; Marsabit Boys Secondary School. The school's head teachers refute the allegations.	Nation Team, 'Schools in police radicalisation list dismiss claims as unfounded' 14 February 2018, Daily Nation < https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/marsabit/Schools-dismiss-ATPU-radicalisation-claims/3444778-4303338-7uh6lxz/index.html> 25 May 2020.
	15/02/2018	Mbarak Abdi Huka, aka Sa'ad – who appears in a list of suspected al Shabaab recruiters together with Sheikh Gorsa Boru – is arrested at Merti in neighbouring Isiolo County during a mission (referred by the SEMG as the "Merti plot") to attack Nairobi.	For details on the "Merti Plot", see UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, Letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (UN Security Council, New York, 2018), p. 78-89. For the list including Huka and Sheikh Gorsa, see, Hunja Macharia, 'Marsabit parents decry radicalisation of youth by clerics' 8 February 2018, KBC News < https://www.kbc.co.ke/marsabit-parents-decry-radicalization-youth-clerics/#> 6 May 2020.
	15/03/2018	The police mention that the "Merti Plot" was part of a mission to free Sheikh Gorsa from police remand.	Xinhua, 'Kenyan police vow to enhance fight against terrorism' 15 March 2018 < http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-03/15/c_137039336.htm> 6 May 2020.
Western Kenya (Kakamega, Busia, Bungoma and Siaya Towns)	6/12/2014	Kakamega's County Commissioner, Arthur Isiya, states that the police have arrested 5 terror suspects in the county, who have also been charged in court.	Hilton Otenyo, 'Terrorism a challenge in Kakamega, says County Commissioner' 6 December 2014, The Star < https://allafrica.com/stories/201412080672.html> 25 May 2020.
	29/06/2015	Six Somali individuals are arrested in Kakamega for lack of identification documents, at the height of increased terrorist attacks elsewhere in the country.	Alex Wakhisi, 'Alert as 6 terror suspects held in Kakamega' 29 June 2015, The Standard, < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000167348/n-a> 25 May 2020.
	10/12/2015	Police issue a terror alert, regarding possible attacks in the Western Kenya towns of Kakamega, Busia, Vihiga and Bungoma during the festive season of 2015. Operations in Kakamega lead to the arrest of 5 individuals suspected of terrorist activities at a mosque in Shianda, Mumias East sub-county, some of whom are Tanzanian nationals, a Muslim cleric, and a teenager. Other terror suspects are also arrested in Nambale, Busia County, for allegedly plotting to attack Kakamega town.	Shmuel Yosef Agnon, 'Terror alert issued in Kakamega and major Western towns during festive season' 10 December 2015, Strategic intelligence, < https://intelligencebriefs.com/terror-alert-issued-in-kakamega-major-western-towns-during-festive-season/> 25 May 2020.
	20/08/2016	Ishmael Wafula, a 21-year old imam at Bukembe area in Bungoma South, is arrested at the Bungoma Bus terminus, on suspicions of being a terrorist. According to the police, Wafula was in possession of CDs of teachings by Aboud Rogo and other religious leaders, and that he was also an imam at a mosque in Eastleigh, Nairobi.	Brian Ojama, 'Terror suspect Ishmael Wafula arrested in Bungoma' 20 August 2016, The Star < https://www.thestar.co.ke/news/2016-08-20-terror-suspect-ishmael-wafula-arrested-in-bungoma/> 25 May 2020.
	14/12/2019	2 unnamed individuals, one based in Busia town and another in Nyadorera market, a small market centre on the border of Siaya and Busia counties, are accused of radicalizing two teenage boys and shuttling them to Somalia – through Tanzania – to join al Shabaab in 2018. 5 more teenagers associated with the 2 individuals were suspected to be en-route to Tanzania on 13 December 2019, but after they feared that the police were trailing them, returned to Nyadorera.	Olivia Odhiambo, 'Five teens rescued from going to Somalia to join Shabaab,' 14 December 2019, Standard Digital < https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001353196/five-teens-rescued-from-going-into-somalia-to-join-shabaab> 6 May 2020.

Annex 2: Interview Guide

Interview No:	
Date	
Time	
Interview Location	
Location	
Interviewees	
Interviewee (s) bio	
Interviewers	
Key points raised, regarding especially, levels of existing VE activities; nature of communal variables (social capital, leadership, information sharing, economic resources and place attachment); and nature of inter-religious, inter-generational, and state-citizen relations.	
Record of Conversation	

REINVENT
Ubunifu. Usalama. Uthabiti

TETRA TECH

RUSI
www.rusi.org

UKaid
from the British peopl