KENYA'S APPROACH IN COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

BY

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA

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DECLARATION

I, undersigned, declare, that this is my original work and has not been submitted by any other college, or university other than the United States International University-Africa for academic credit.

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This thesis has been presented for examination with approval as the appointed Supervisor.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Kenya's approach of Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) in achieving the intended objectives of preventing radicalization and recruitment of individuals into active participation in violent extremist activities. The study found out that broadening CVE approaches in Kenya could work beyond state-centric interventions that allow a broader space for myriads of actors. The role of the Kenyan government needs to adapt a collective vision and engage community actors to lead positive and appropriate interventions.

With effective exploration and profiling of both the Top-Down and Bottom-Up CVE approaches in Kenya, the intrinsic nuances in the field can be revealed and adequately responded to in the interest of achieving the intended objectives of CVE in the country. Therefore this thesis disclosed that the current existing limitations of both the Top-down and Bottom-Up CVE approaches in Kenya are based on the respective community reception, perception and the complementary elements of both approaches.

The methodology applied in this research was qualitative, relying on a descriptive research design being used in preliminary and exploratory study. This approach gave room for effective and functional information gathering, summarization, presentation and objective interpretation of gathered data. The proceeding theories used help understand and identify the process of radicalization that leads to violent extremism to predict the cycle in order to prevent or counter it, and understand the fluctuating trends of radicalization.

This thesis concluded that, CVE in Kenya can no longer be handled in isolation by the state alone, and this reality should be fully embraced, and its ends pursued.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU   -   African Union

CBO   -   Community Based Organization

CSO   -   Civil Society Organization

CVE   -   Counter Violent Extremism

HoA   -   Horn of Africa

FTFs   -   Foreign Terrorist Fighters

MENA   -   Middle East and Northern Africa

PVE   -   Preventing Violent Extremism

VE   -   Violent Extremism

VERLT   -   Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism

USAID   -   United Stated Agency for International Development

UN   -   United Nations

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The evolving and growing threat of violent extremist groups in the East and Horn of African region has seen the emergence of a wide range of security, political and development responses to the threats posed, under the banner of Countering Violent Extremism – A soft approach version of Counter-Terrorism (Buchanan-Clarke, 2016). The importance and relevance of Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) at this time cannot be overstressed as violent extremism poses a great threat to both human and national security, creating a complex web of security concerns in addition to the already 'existing' runaway crimes such as robbery, criminal gangs amongst others which tend to be mutually reinforcing.

The appealing factor and expectation of CVE is that, if correctly led by the government and/or civil societies, its net effect is to build confidence with the local grassroots communities they so target in such interventions (Buchanan-Clarke, 2016). Of note however, a purview of the available literature on CVE in Kenya reveals a widespread stance of distrust and resentment towards the government, operating through the security forces. It remains essential to improve and strengthen the relationship between the government and the grassroots communities if the effectiveness of the CVE interventions and/or initiatives are to be felt/actualized (Al Jazeera, 2011).

The general 'agreement' is that the CVE interventions and efforts in Kenya have taken a downhill and focused target of the Kenyan Muslims, which in effect, has only led to further unintended consequences backtracking the CVE endeavors in the country (Buchanan-Clarke 2016). The main VE threat to Kenya largely remains the Somali-based

Al-Shabaab (Botha, 2015), which at home level has effectively undermined the operational capacity and capability of the Somali Federal Government to control and govern Somalia (Buzan & Waever 2008). It is also the case that Al-Shabaab has a history of executing extremely bold military attacks against government and armed forces personnel (Cilliers, 2015). This had led the Kenya government to execute border patrol and migration screening when Operational Linda Nchi was seen as not sufficient enough, an approach.

However, Al-Shabaab is not the only threat Kenya is facing on violent extremism (Botha, 2015). Separatist organization Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), has advocated for the city of Mombasa's secession from Kenya. Police have accused the group of planning various attacks in the coast region. Tragic events in Nairobi, Mombasa, Mpeketoni, Mandera, Garissa, and beyond over the past twenty years have highlighted that it is very difficult to stop radicalized individuals armed with resources and determination from carrying out acts of violence against civilian and government targets (Botha, 2015).

The diverse pathways that individuals may follow to join violent extremist organizations in Kenya pose considerable challenges to the design and implementation of CVE programming. Additional research on locally specific recruitment methods would serve to inform the design and implementation of more nuanced CVE initiatives, which may currently overemphasize interventions to address structural push factors while failing to address some of the more practical reasons why individuals may join Al-Shabaab or other armed groups. This analytical study aims to break down the approach the government agencies in Kenya use to tackle CVE and help these agencies employ the best approaches, as well as serve as voice for communities most affected by violent extremism.

Anzalone (2016) notes that Al-Shabaab has been concerted in recruiting Swahili speaking foreign fighters, and that after 2013, the number of Swahili speaking East Africans featured in its media operations campaigns dramatically increased. He writes that, "This recruitment effort includes media operations messaging that highlights discrimination and claims that Kenyan Muslims are being persecuted by their own government, such as extrajudicial killings allegedly carried out by Kenya's anti-terrorism police. Al-Shabaab, despite its claim that it places its 'Islamic' identity over any other form of identity, has even made appeals in some of its media releases to Somali nationalism and pride, for example by highlighting the persecution of ethnic Somalis inside Kenya and the inclusion of the British colonial rulers largely, in historically Somali regions" (Anzalone, 2016).

In the past, counterterrorism officials and experts showed some awareness of the importance of measures to prevent terrorism, and they deployed a limited range of strategies and tactics in this regard. An example is the process of police reform and the shift to more community-oriented approaches in Kenya. Analysts previously defined "counterterrorism" broadly to include "psychological, communicational and educational" initiatives but generally argued that governments paid little attention to addressing terrorist propaganda and to the communicative aspects of counterterrorism itself. Importantly over this period of 2015-2017, CVE has gone from a rhetorical commitment to an increasingly prominent subfield of counterterrorism policy and practice (Frazer, 2015).

The term "CVE" itself is of relatively recent origin, but it has become institutionalized quickly, for example, through the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) ,CVE working group, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, and Hedayah, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, and within many

national bureaucracies. In 2014 the UN Security Council adopted the language of CVE for the first time in a resolution as part of its response to the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) volunteering to join the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Syria and Iraq. From the "war on terror" in the Bush administration days to Obama CVE, the developed nations have rarely changed tactics. Their tactic has always been use of force and destruction of violent extremists funding and where they are. As a developing nation, handling violent extremism may need different tactics, and that is why Kenya adopted the use of community policing and border patrols (Botha, 2015)

1.1.1   The Complexity of Defining CVE

There is always an attempt to define 'violent extremism', 'radicalization' 'terrorism' or 'CVE'. This is because there is no universally accepted definition for radicalization, violent extremism or terrorism (Fink, 2014). This is despite the disparate and large amount of data and research in the field on the phenomenon, which, implicitly, points to a conflict of interventions, conventional and non-conventional. 'Violent Extremism' is sometimes used inaccurately as a semantic alternative to the term 'terrorism', which also lacks a standard definition. Defining 'Violent extremism' is context specific often based on subjective views with divergent views on whether acts of violence undertaken without an ideological backing and/or inspiration can be qualified as violent extremism, whether such acts of violence are only perpetrated by non-state actors and the question of who between the perceived victim and the perpetrator should label an act of violence as 'violent extremism' amongst other issues (Frazer, 2015).

The other controversy in defining 'CVE', both globally and in Kenya, is deciding what exactly is to be considered 'Extreme' or 'Extremism'? Is it accepted for an individual or a group of individuals to hold certain ideological and/or religious beliefs that are perceived

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to be opposing to the 'majority others'? And at what point is it harmful to human and national security to hold opposing ideological and/or religious beliefs that are opposing to the 'majority others'? These go right to the core of democracy and freedom to hold divergent views/positions but co-exist in a society hence opens up to another set of controversy in reaching to a standard definition of 'Violent Extremism', and CVE (Frazer, 2015).

1.1.2   The Complexity of who CVE is meant for

There is currently no reliable indicator on vulnerability of populations to violent extremism other than being male Muslim, a petty criminal, or having mental health problems .There's however a different approach that can be taken to understand the dynamic of VE radicalization and recruitment − that which links VE vulnerability to susceptibility of individuals to joining criminal gangs. By this analogy of linking criminal gangs and Violent Extremism, what characterizes and differentiates 'vulnerability' amongst Kenyan youths from other East African countries is the fact that Kenyan marginalized youths are, by profile, unemployed university graduates, angry and entitled, living on the margins of the society with the frustrations of not being able to attain full "adulthood" (stuck between childhood and adulthood). This is particularly evident by the profiles of the composition of criminal gangs in Kenya (Sommers, 2006).

Profile findings show the following. First, there is no extremist group that argues for 'injustice over justice'; all extremist groups in the world argue for 'justice over injustice' (Lind, 2015) and that is the basic step of capturing their audience. Violent Extremism thrives in 'ungoverned' spaces. Secondly, the realities of violent extremism, radicalization and recruitment to VE groups change based on time, space, context, culture or realities in order to have their arguments 'effectively' reach the hearts and minds of

their target groups. From this it follows that we should objectively question why the extremist ideologies attract only one side of the target population and not the 'resilient' others, and whether this is a reflection of an inadequacy of the extremist ideologies, or an inefficient and ineffective interrogation of the same by CVE practitioners and researchers.

The 'Justice over Injustice' extremist ideologies rely heavily on human 'suffering' and/or desperation of 'inability to change the situation'. Such 'suffering' and/or desperation could be primary or secondary but perceived to be aimed towards a group that an individual continuously identifies with. Given the diversity of the radicalization and recruitment pools targeted by the VE groups, the biggest target group remains youths (Odhiambo, 2014).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

With that background, the persistent question in measuring and evaluating CVE efforts in Kenya is how do we effectively and/or accurately measure and evaluate a phenomenon whose definitions are so diverse and context driven? Furthermore, research findings reveal the lack of a single consensus pathway to violent extremism, which in turn has proven complex especially in designing best practices in Countering Violent Extremism in Kenya. While groups like Al-Shabaab clearly exploit perceived historical, social and political grievances and draw on extreme interpretations of Islam to craft propaganda narratives, Kenya on the other hand embraced softer, community-driven approaches of countering violent extremism to complement the hard-core security measures that characterize Counter-Terrorism. These softer, community-driven approaches are targeted to respond to structural marginalization, the breakdown of family and community structures, the proliferation of criminal gangs, youth unemployment and corruption, human rights abuses, individual and collective trauma, among other factors that merge in

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different ways to create environments conducive to the spread of extreme ideologies, especially among vulnerable youth (Romaniuk, 2015). The objective measuring, monitoring and evaluation of CVE approaches in Kenya have for a long time adjusted to keep track of how the community involvement actually help in countering violent extremism as compared to the counter-terrorism measures in the strict sense such as border patrol and/or immigration screening.

The research problem, or rather the gap that this study therefore sought to respond to, is the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of the current counter terrorism strategies in Kenya, in achieving their intended objectives of deterring not only the spread but also the influence of violent extremist ideologies towards terrorist activities. The focus for this study is the Top-Down approaches characteristic of the state through its ministries and agencies, and the Bottom-Up approaches characteristic of the civil society organizations.

1.3 General Objective

The general objective of this study will be to assess Kenya's approach in countering violent extremism.

1.4 Specific Objectives

1.4.1 To determine the effectiveness and efficiency of community engagement in countering violent extremism (Bottom – Up Approach);

1.4.2 To explore the effectiveness and efficiency of immigration screening in countering violent extremism (Top-Down Approach); and

1.4.3 To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of border patrol in countering violent extremism (Top-Down Approach).

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 How does community involvement help in countering violent extremism?

1.5.2 How does immigration screening help in countering violent extremism?

1.5.3 To what extent does increase in border patrol help in countering violent extremism?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Countering Violent Extremism is an emerging sphere of human and national security programmatic intervention. Its research agenda is complex for civil society, academics, and policy-makers and implementers. As CVE is gaining international attention as new dynamic of addressing violent extremism, it is also gaining support and appreciation across the world, including the Horn of Africa. This calls for prudence and critical monitoring of the effectiveness of the strategies and approaches used to match its proportional growth as a field with tangible achievements.

1.7   Scope of the Study

This study was limited to violent extremism and Kenya's approach, it did not factor in the element of other governments approaches on violent extremism. The research study covered the period from 2016-2017. This is mainly due to the fact that most policies and CVE strategies emerged after what happed in the Westgate Mall attack and Garissa University attack just to mention a few, between 2013-2015.

1.7.1 Limitation of the Study

The data collection method was through secondary data, the greatest limitation of this was the agencies the data were collected from, as this entailed government and NGO's; the issue of CVE in Kenya is still a sensitive matter. To mitigate the difficulties of getting

information from government agencies, the relevant research materials used in this research were sought through online library repositories, online search engines, library search, and majorly by evaluating the available references used in the reviewed research literature on the subject. Data collection procedure was restricted to the use of secondary data such as statistical records of violent extremist acts from NGO's and government agencies, thereby locking out other vital data collection tools like directly engaging affected communities who may have an important say on immigration, border security or how CVE is effective or ineffective. The use of secondary qualitative research allowed for an outreach to various diverse factors connected, directly and indirectly, to Kenya's approach in countering violent extremism to be included, giving a rich and in-depth portrayal of the factors herein. This approach was the best fit considering the intention of the thesis was not to derive new theory, but challenge and broaden the understanding of the already existing concepts on countering violent extremism in Kenya.

1.8   Chapter Outline

This thesis is structured as follows: The foregoing chapter one provides the research background, research objectives, and significance of the study, theoretical framework, methodology, and the limitations encountered in the course of the study. Chapter two presents, literature review on the Kenyan approach in countering violent extremism, while Chapter three describes the research design and the sampling methods, Chapter four discusses the research study findings and finally, chapter five gives the recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review in this chapter is going to take a thematic approach, first looking at the government-led CT/CVE efforts, the Top-Down Approaches, then secondly looking at the civil society-led CVE efforts, the Bottom-Up Approaches. Taking a thematic approach on this subject gives room to have a chronological capture of the progress of CVE in Kenya, while maintaining a deductive review of the literature.

The policy and practice of Preventing and Counter Violent Extremism in Kenya have made progress in conceptualizing, developing and designing practical and informed interventions that have thus far fed into the county and national level intervention strategies (Al Jazeera, 2011). Kenya has evolved to recognize that Counter Violent Extremism requires responses and interventions that are wide-ranging yet highly focused and the need to create a series of partnerships that draws on the knowledge and expertise of diverse stakeholders identified as important to the process out of which the country has created a more effective response to this virulent threat (IPI, 2016).

Kenya has however struggled to establish clear and compelling definitions of what is to be considered strictly P/CVE or not, which also points to the problematic assumptions as to the real drivers of violent extremism, to whom the interventions are meant for, and drawing clear distinction of P/CVE programs against other fields such as development, education, poverty reduction civic awareness and governance (IPI, 2016). This confusion of interventions which has riddled the Kenyan counter violent extremism space with each faction, practitioner or agency claiming empirical credibility as a currency to maintain their relevance has in effect slowed down the progress that could have otherwise been

made if the existing nuances were recognized, acknowledged and a collective/common intervention determination made. Regardless though, certain features characterize the Kenyan counter violent extremism process:

- Recognition of youths as partners and currency of VERLT and the intervention efforts (USAID, 2011);

- Recognition of gender authority and the role of women in the counter violent extremism process (Buchanan-Clarke S, 2016);

- The government national agency (National Counter-Terrorism Center - Kenya) taking center-stage of government partnerships on the country's counter violent extremism process (USAID, 2011); and

- Recognition (and/or over emphasis) of corruption and marginalization as contributing factor to VERLT. This in effect has changed the face of counter violent extremism process to seem like developmental-based work (Transparency International - Kenya, 2014).

The CVE process in Kenya has therefore made actual their recognition of a whole community approach as being essential and important to achieve progress. This recognition and acknowledgement of the community as collaborative resource to enhance resilience and the security of the country is a step towards the right direction, even as we still grapple with the best mechanisms and framework(s) of actualizing the same.

This chapter also delves into the discourses of the existing popular theories on radicalization, as even though not formally acknowledged, or having a particular lean, the Kenyan counter violent extremism efforts are directly responding to this set of theories, which further feeds into the clash of opinions on the best and effective approaches and

methods that should be used in the field. The two opposing theories explored in this chapter are drawn from the global front each putting forth practical hypotheses on the direction, motivation and platforms from which VERLT operates from.

2.2 Literature Review

Counter-Violent Extremism (CVE) is a field of policy and practice that has in the recent years emerged rapidly, both in Kenya and beyond, due to the threat presented to human and national security by violent extremists. Kenya uniquely faces low volume but high consequence violent extremist/terrorist attacks making CVE a significant counter-terrorism component. With such significance, we take a brief view of the main VE group undertaking attacks on Kenyan grounds, the Al Shabaab.

2.2.1 The Al-Shabaab: A brief background, propaganda and reasons behind their terrorist activities in Kenya

The Horn of Africa region has been dealing with issues of security and development (Shetret,Schwarts and Cotter, 2013). The threat of violent extremism is not a new phenomenon in the region (Aronson, 2014).The History of Somalia violent conflict has provided an enabling environment for domestic and international violent extremist groups which have engaged in terrorist acts throughout the region. Since 2007, the emergence of Al Qaeda affiliate, Al shabaab has carried out 1,700 attacks, while the number of the attacks continues to rapidly increase over the years (START, 2015).

Al-Shabaab has its origins in the militant extremist group, al-Itihad al-Islami, AIAI, who emerged when Somalia had no central government in 1991. The AIAI joined forces with the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a militia group, soon after their emergence (Counter

Extremism Project 2016: 2). In 2006, the ICU took control of Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia (Agbiboa 2014: 7). Ethiopian forces in the capital city soon thereafter overthrew the AIAI and ICU and the Al-Shabaab emerged from the AIAI and ICU losing their influence (Counter Extremism Project 2016: 2). Al-Shabaab, now a violent extremist group, originated as a youth movement to bring stability to Somalia after the civil war (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 4). Al-Shabaab is a Somali group, however, they do not recognize state boundaries and thus their terror is evident in neighboring states (International Crisis Group 2014: 6). Al-Shabaab means "Harakat Al-Shabab al-Mujahedeen" – "the youth" (Odhiambo 2014: 76) and the main target for recruits for the Al-Shabaab is the youth, as their name states (Counter Extremism Project 2016: 4).

Their ideology is based on the direct and literal interpretation of Islam, Wahhabism (Odhiambo 2013: 127), with aims to create an Islamic State which is guided by Sharia Law in Somalia, the north-eastern region of Kenya, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and in Djibouti (Odhiambo 2013: 126-127). Their propaganda appeals to their supporters as that of wisdom, responsibility, morality and that of being righteous. It also creates a sense of belonging and importance (Odhiambo 2013: 127). The Al-Shabaab put in force their propaganda through creating trust through reporting unfavorable news, repetitions of catchy slogans, by simplifying messages, by portraying symbols and negative images of the target, and by deceiving through obscuring certain facts (Odhiambo 2013: 127). The Al-Shabaab, through their propaganda, makes supporters believe that martyrdom is something all true Muslims should aspire to (Counter Extremism Project 2016: 3).

There are several factors behind Al-Shabaab's strong presence in Kenya. The violent extremism group has recruited radicalized youths from Kenya to fight for its cause in Somalia and also to gain economic support from the northeast Kenyan coast (Glazzard &

Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 7). Since 2008, the Al-Shabaab has been responsible for the deaths of 609 people across Kenya and its terror intensified after 2011 (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 4).

The Kenya Defense Force (KDF) entered southern Somalia under operation "Linda Nchi" in order to create a buffer zone to eliminate Al-Shabaab militants (Buchanan-Clarke & Lekalake 2015: 2). The KDF formed part of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISON) in July 2012 and was able to force the Al-Shabaab to lose the Kismayu territory, a strategic port of Al-Shabaab (Agbiboa 2014: 3). This port is the strategic location of charcoal, bananas, sheep, and goat exports, thus, an income lifeline for the Al-Shabaab (Odhiambo 2014: 79). It is believed that the Al-Shabaab has been responsible for more than 50 attacks in Kenya due to retaliation against Operation Linda Nchi (Aronson 2013: 29).

Al-Shabaab shuddered Kenya on the 21st of September 2013 when they attacked the Westgate Mall in Nairobi where 67 people lost their lives (Odhiambo 2014). Al-Shabaab attackers stormed the mall and stated that all Muslims were allowed to leave whilst non-Muslims will be subjected to bloodshed (Agbiboa, 2014). The attack on the mall is perceived to be due to the KDF's invasion in Somalia (Agbiboa 2014).Al-Shabaab also attacked quarry workers in December 2014 in Koromei, north of Kenya. The group killed 36 Christian workers after separating them from the Muslim workers. After the attack, they sent a message that attacks will continue as long as Kenya continues to occupy Somalian lands (Osamba 2015: 14). The group is also attacking Kenya because of Kenya's support of the United States' (US) counter-terrorism initiatives (Agbiboa 2014: 3), and also views Kenya as being a Christian state which oppresses Muslims (Agbiboa 2014: 3). The group supposedly aims to liberate all Muslim lands under Kenyan

occupation, such as the north-eastern province and the coast (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 7). The leadership of the Al-Shabaab purports to protect its members in Kenya against discrimination and being treated ill (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 8).

Al-Shabaab has claimed the responsibility for several terror attacks in Kenya. Although Al-Shabaab's activities only accounts for 9% of Kenya's insecurity, the groups' activities have grown with 134% per year which affects Kenya's political and social-economic spheres (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 4). The political and social environment, has less opportunities for the youth, whilst the security sector has been stated to violate the rule of law, religious ideology, Kenya's military presence in Somalia (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 10-20), police harassment, unemployment, ethnic profiling and social media can contribute to the youth joining extremist groups (Brett et al 2015: 34).

There are two distinct CVE approaches in the CVE field in Kenya presented both in policy and interpreted into practice:

• Top-Down CVE Approach (Also known as First wave CVE); and

• Bottom-up CVE Approach (Also known as Second wave CVE)

2.2.2 Top-Down CVE Approach

The 'Top-Down' approach is mainly implemented by the government and/or international/intergovernmental bodies through the relevant agencies as a public diplomacy tool cushioning on the traditional counter-terrorism tools and methods. The approach leans more on policy formulation, review and improvement, and forming of strategic partnerships to make more effective the government(s)'s position and performance on CVE (USIP, 2014).

The approach is therefore less popular with the communities at grassroots level and often viewed as "ceremonial", "out-of-touch with reality" on the ground and "hypocritical" of trying to solve "problems they are guilty of creating themselves". Civil society organizations trying to find space and engage with this approach are often handled with suspicion and a 'gate-keeping mentality' hence do not find enough room to effectively perform (Finn, 2016).

This approach has often been criticized for being a too selective boardroom engagement on a community level problem, hence out of sync with the targeted context(s). This is often in line with the criticisms leveled against the government(s) on their counterterrorism methods that are in violation of fundamental human rights, high levels of corruption, unemployment and marginalization of certain communities based on religion, tribe of region. These, are seen to form the foundation of the Push factors to radicalization leading to terrorism. Through the approach therefore, the government is viewed as the enemy doing damage control through a public relations exercise (Shannon, 2013).

On the other hand, however, the 'Top-Down' approach herewith is the main means of advancing policy review and improvement towards effective and more-results oriented CVE policy and practice in Kenya. Without such advancements, it would be impossible to even operate and navigate in the CVE policy and practice field. The approach is further advancing itself, waking up to the reality of the need to collaborate more openly and in a predictable manner with the communities at grassroots level. This approach is further merited for keeping the practitioners and stakeholders in check in maintaining professionalism in the field, reduce overcrowding, and push the advancements towards objective, coherent monitoring and evaluation of CVE practice in the field. This

importance cannot be downplayed considering this is a human and national security issue at hand (Shannon, 2013)..

There are two main examples of Top-Down approach in action, with attempts to be in touch and sync with the community, being the Kenyan government's reintroduction of the Nyumba Kumi Initiative, and the Operation Usalama Watch.

2.2.2.1 Community policing for CVE: The 'Nyumba Kumi' Initiative

Community collaboration with the state police to effect secure neighborhoods has been an existing concept since the 1970s, with its challenges withstanding. It has sometimes bordered on organized vigilante with criminal activities such as break-ins and neighborhood extortions (Mutahi, 2011). What differs Community policing security mechanisms from vigilantes or militia is that they start off symbiotically on voluntary basis, enjoying real local legitimacy due to their respectability, performance and accountability to the community (Daily Nation, 2016). They make every effort to act within the provisions of law in non-coercive, non-adversarial interventions to crime and violence without imposing themselves on residents and by promoting democratic ethos through elections, broader inclusion of community diversity and adherence to participatory rules in decision-making (Mutahi, 2011).

They gain further legitimacy and buy-in from the community through their genuine concern and consideration of the social aspects, correction and rehabilitation of criminals beyond crime and violence. The 'Nyumba Kumi' initiative is a Kenyan community policing initiative found in the post-colonial period and revived back in the wake of the 2014 and 2015 terrorist attacks in Kenya is based on its goal to prevent crime and

promote better police-community partnerships. It was envisioned that the 'Nyumba Kumi' revival would have greater results in neighborhood acquaintance to note suspicious individuals and/or activities that could be aimed towards committing terrorist attacks against civilians (Masese, 2007). The reception was however divided with the realities of multiculturalism, urbanization (hence metropolitan setting) which meant individuals and/or families could be unfairly profiled as terrorists based on their diversity from the 'rest of the community' (Masese, 2007). Largely criticized as being another attempt by the government to excuse itself in profiling Ethnic Somalis, Kenyan Somalis and Muslims in the county, the initiative remained high in the public debate and rhetoric but not actually taking root (Masese, 2007).

The imminent failure of the 'Nyumba Kumi' initiative to take root as both a Counter-Terrorism and a Counter-Violent Extremism initiative went on to show that community policing requires an investment and special attention to problem analysis and problem solving, facilitation, community organization; communication, mediation and conflict resolution, resource identification and use, networking and linkages, and cross-cultural competency. Despite the implementation problems there continues to be a commitment to community policing initiatives around the country both as a CVE measure (UNDP, 2015) and in a bid to control run-away crimes, and continuing reports of positive impacts, however modest. Therefore, a more useful approach to understanding the possibilities of reviving a better 'Nyumba Kumi' initiative model would better come from those communities around the country who have identified the normative conditions for community policing that are likely to positively impact the CVE and run-away crimes in the neighborhoods (Mutahi, 2011).

2.2.2.2 Migration Screening and Border Patrol: Issue approaches of the 'Operation Usalama Watch'

The 'Operation Usalama Watch', initially named 'Operation Rudisha Usalama' and widely known as 'Usalama Watch' commenced in the third quarter of 2014 following a March 23rd attack in Mombasa and explosions in the Eastleigh area in Nairobi on 31st March 2014 (USAID, 2012), which killed an estimated ten people while injuring scores of others. As of April 4th, security forces put patrol operations in the Eastleigh area of Nairobi, a predominantly Somali area of Nairobi, in which they indiscriminately rounded up and arrested thousands of Somalis in the area. Even though it was claimed otherwise, the operation was widely criticized for its particular focus on the Somali community, disproportionately impacting the Somali community, including refugees and asylum-seekers. In addition to Somali nationals, the operation brought in a wave of arrests of refugees of other nationalities, NGO workers, Kenyan nationals and foreign nationals without proper or valid documentation (IPOA, 2015).

Even with the undeniable legitimate security concerns Kenya has, the operation was mainly criticized as a pretext for unfair profiling and targeting of the Somali community in the country (Amnesty International, 2014), with complete and blatant disregard of the international refugee laws and human rights.

> "On 26 March 2014, Joseph Ole Lenku, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government issued a press statement ordering all refugees to the camps, citing 'security challenges' as the key reason. On 13 December 2012, Kenya's Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) announced a similar intention to implement a forced encampment policy, stating that "due to this unbearable and uncontrollable threat to national security,

the government has decided to put in place a structure [d] encampment policy."
This was later cited by the government as a first step towards the repatriation of
all urban refugees 'after the necessary arrangements are put in place' The
December 2012 directive was quashed in July 2013 following a High Court ruling
that the order was unconstitutional and in violation of numerous rights of
refugees, and that the Kenyan government had not demonstrated that refugee
presence in urban areas resulted in an increased national security threat."
(Amnesty International, 2014)

Even though the 'Operation Usalama Watch' was a Counter-Terrorism (CT) initiative by
the Kenyan government, with a highly hardcore approach to the subject issue, it had overt
effects on the growth and progress of Counter-Violent Extremism (CVE) in the country
(IPOA, 2015), which take a soft-core approach to the subject issue. The operation
particularly targeted Somalis, Kenyans of Somali ethnicity and Somali refugees, and
furthered the discourse that Somalis in Kenya have been and continue to be scapegoated
for the acts of terror carried out by Al Shabaab (Menkhaus, 2015). This, including the
blatant violation of the human rights obligations upon the Kenyan government of non-
discrimination, equality before the law and equal protection of the laws as provided for
under Article 27 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 and Articles 2 and 3 of the African
Charter.

In the wake of this operation, as expected, even though CVE had made positive
developments globally, the term 'extremism' in Kenya denoted an unpleasantness
(Buchanan-Clarke S, 2015) and discriminately labeled Somalis and Muslims in Kenya in
a manner that triggered negativity towards CVE efforts (Nordic Africa Institute, 2016). It

further caused a great dissociation with organizations that promoted CVE efforts in the country at that time (International Alert, 2016). The Al Shabaab on the other hand, ironically, would go on to use this operation's tactics and negative publicity as narrative to drive their radicalization and recruitment drive, feeding off the binary conflict between the government forces and the general public (Menkhaus, Al-Shabaab and Social Media: A Double-Edged Sword, 2015).

2.2.2.3 Socio-economic factors: Education, Infrastructures, Health Services, and Unemployment

Kenya is ranked 17th on the Failed State Index, with neighboring Somalia ranking 1st on the Index (Ombaka 2015: 12). Kenya's failed state status does not overtly indicate that poverty leads the youth joining the Al-Shabaab. Recruits join terrorist organizations despite their material status. The poorest countries in Africa, Burkina Faso, the Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone hardly have to deal with the upsurge of violent extremism. This was also evident in the Garissa university attack where educated and wealthy students, male and female, were part of the attack (Hellsten 2016: 3). However, issues such as social exclusion, violence, marginalization, unemployment, a lack of education and poor governance certainly work in violent extremist groups' favor and push people towards joining radical groups more often than not as these groups become part of a possible solution for the youth (Briscoe and Van Ginkel 2013: 4).Al-Shabaab made has use of the youth's socio-economic vulnerabilities to recruit them (Hellsten 2016: 3)

The insecurity in Kenya has continuously affected education because teachers have been targeted in high risks areas of Northern Kenya (Ombaka 2015: 15). The violent extremism group, Al-Shabaab executed 27 non-Muslim passengers on a bus in Mandera County and 24 teachers were among the victims of the Al-Shabaab bus execution

(Ombaka 2015: 16). The public blamed the government lack of response and addressing the insecurity. The bus of the Mandera County execution was forced to take a road near the Somalia border because of the poor condition the main road, B9 Mandera-Garissa, was in. This massacre could have been countered if the road infrastructure was in a proper condition (Ombaka 2015: 16).

Over the year the government has marginalized certain regions in Kenya. 80% of health services in Kenya are provided by Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) (Ombaka 2015: 16). The Kenyan government published the Public Benefits Organization Bill on the 30th of May, 2014. This bill stated that only 15% of foreign funding would be allocated to NGOs. This is problematic because 91% of NGO funding comes from foreign donor assistance in order to provide basic services to Kenyans whilst the Kenyan government only provides 1% and local organizations has provided 8% (Ombaka 2015: 17).

Alshabaab have taken advantage of the socio-economic challenges in Kenya. There is increased unemployment while vulnerable youths have opted to join violent extremist groups such as the Al-Shabaab as a form of employment. It has been reported that salaries of $50-$150 are paid monthly for an "easy job" of carrying guns and patrolling for the Al-Shabaab (Hassan 2012: 18). To the youth, this group is a means of providing for themselves and their families (Hassan 2012: 18).

Kenya has a severe problem with unemployed youth. More than 70% of the working-class youth is unemployed, thus favoring the Al-Shabaab (Al Jazeera 2015). The Al-Shabaab makes joining its cause attractive by using the circumstances of the youth as leverage for joining. Each recruit is rewarded with a cell phone and 50$ a month when joining this group, making joining this group financially attractive (Counter Extremism

Project 2016: 4). Messages such as "Instead of sitting in the slum and doing nothing, it's better to go to Somalia and fight for your religion, you'll go straight to Heaven" (Counter Extremism Project 2016: 4) and "become a hero for defending your country and religion" are used to recruit the youth (Hassan 2012: 18).

According to the Journey to Extremism report, it stated that 70% of youth joined Al shabaab because of government repression. The main reasons come from previously mentioned challenges. These failures have led to an easier pathway to join violent extremist groups such as the Al-Shabaab who might appear to them as an "only hope" option (UNDP, 2017).

2.2.2.4 The Security Forces and anti-terror initiatives

According to the Constitution of Kenya ,Chapter 14, the Kenya Police Service (KPS) is responsible for internal security while the Kenya Defense Force (KDF) is responsible for external security (Ombaka 2015: 18). These two security sectors have more often than not failed Kenyans, especially Muslim Kenyans, and have made themselves guilty of human rights violations, bribery and corruption, thus aiding the Al-Shabaab indirectly to recruit Kenyans who have been victims at the hands of these forces.

It has been stated that, KPS has been responsible for more than a 1000 deaths between 2008 and 2012. The police have been accused of unwarranted shootings, assault, falsification of evidence and for threatening citizens with imprisonment (Buchanan-Clarke & Lekalake 2015: 7). While it is important to note that, the KPS is paid poorly and therefore corruption has become a predominant activity by the Service. A predominant feature of the Service is that of arresting suspects and releasing them on a bribe and later being informed that the suspect was in fact a terrorist. The Kenyan activist group, Inform

Action, released a You Tube video showing a female terrorist suspected of the Westgate Mall attack bribing a police officer to be released (Ombaka 2015: 19).

According to the IPOA, reports the KPS security response is retrogressive in maintaining security within communities (IPOA, 2015). Several reports from human rights organizations have documented that the KPS have used aggressive means in their operations. For instance in May 2013 more than 400 households were forcibly evicted from their homes in City Carton by armed men with sledgehammers and machetes whilst 170 police officers surrounded the area and used teargas and live ammunition against anyone who resisted the eviction (Amnesty International 2015: 4). In 2015, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) issued a gazette notice, which listed businesses, individuals and organizations as entities that are associated with terrorism (KNCHR 2015: 4). Among these names were human rights organizations such as Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) and HAKI Africa, who sought accountability from security forces for human rights violations (KNCHR 2015: 4). Their bank accounts were frozen by the state without any trails (KNCHR 2015: 4). The Prevention of Terrorism Act no 30 of 2012 section 1 and 2 clearly states that the IGP must provide reasonable notice and hearings before declaring organizations as being associated with terrorist groups (KNCHR 2015: 4). This notice indicates that activist groups are being targeted by the KPS and are being disallowed from aiding Muslims who have been victims of violations by the hands of security forces. A commission was established in 2007 to investigate killings in Kenya. The commission concluded that the police was responsible for 30% of the 1500 deaths in Kenya but no accused were arrested, indicating a lack of accountability from the KPS (Osamba 2015: 10).

Reports have also indicated that citizens and refugees have also suffered at the hands of the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (ATPU) (Amnesty International 2015: 2). In February 2014, the ATPU was reportedly responsible of shooting 7 people during their search operation in a mosque in Mombasa (Amnesty International 2015: 3). More than 129 people were also arrested and later released because of a lack of evidence. One man who was last seen during the arrest has been declared missing (Amnesty International 2015: 4). Since 2014, thousands of Somali refugees have been subjected to arrests, harassments and ill-treatment at the hands of security forces (Amnesty International 2015: 4). The ATPU is also responsible for assassinations. There have been 21 assignations reported but no one has been held accountable (Osamba 2015: 10). Amensty International stated that some Kenyan immigration officials were found to be corrupt by allowing foreigners to cross the borders for a small fee (Hellsten 2016: 4). There have been reports that these foreigners actually had explosive material with them and yet they were allowed to enter Kenya, as a consequence aiding the Al-Shabaab to send their recruits to Kenya for terror executions (Hellsten 2016: 4).

Ombaka pointed out that the involvement of the KDF in internal security can be detrimental, since the military is not trained for such tasks or to deal with civilians (Ombaka, 2015). When the military was deployed to restore peace among citizens in November 2014 in Kapedo to resolve violence in the city, there followed complaints of civil rights and freedom violations (Ombaka, 2015). Residents were forced to flee the area due to harassment by the army and the army destroyed residents' property (Ombaka 2015: 21).

Amnesty International has reported that the KDF violated human rights, executed extra-judicial killings and enforcing disappearances (Amnesty International 2015: 2). The KDF

arrests and tortures those who are perceived to have links with the Al-Shabaab. On the 4th of May 2015 security forces picked up a man, Affey Ali Abdullahi, after they couldn't find his brother, Hussein Ali Abdullahi, who they were looking for. They took 3000 KES out of his wallet and took him to the police station. He was only released on the 18th of May after severe whippings, kicks, electric shocks and denial of food (KNCHR 2015: 6). The security forces also arrested Hussein on the 8th of May when he attempted to visit his wife, Ebla, who was also arrested on the 4th. He has since then not been seen (KNCHR 2015: 7). His brother Affey Ali was held next to Hussein. The last time he heard Hussein was when he was crying from pain (KNCHR 2015: 7).

Hassan Mohamed was arrested on the 18th of April 2015. Hassan was released on 4000 KES a day later with severe injuries. He died two days later from his sustained injuries by the hands of the security forces (KNCHR 2015: 13). A 35-year-old was also arrested on the 15th of May 2015 by KDF officers in Mandera. His body was discovered 6 days later with 5 bullet wounds at the back of the head (KNCHR 2015: 18). Since 2007, more than 500 young men were killed or have disappeared after being arrested (Osamba 2015: 10). This brutal aggression by the KDF can cause the Muslim youth to retaliate against the state by joining terror groups who have the will and capacity to inflict terror on the state.

The ambition of the Kenya government to curb the Al-Shabaab has led to human rights violations and ethnic profiling by the hands of security forces (KNCHR 2015: 4). The Kenyan government, making itself guilty of ethnic and religious profiling, rounds up terror suspects who are mostly Somali and deports them to Somalia or sends them to refugee camps after enduring assaults or bribes (Ombaka 2015: 23). The Kenyan government established the "Usalama Watch" to purposefully respond to the insecurity

through information sharing between the army and police as well as to pool all resources and to synchronize all responses (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 5).

In March 2014 police officers were deployed in Nairobi's Eastleigh suburb with the command to disrupt all terrorist cells. Thousands were indiscriminately screened and detained. The operation did disrupt the terrorist cells, however, this deployment showed cracks in the platform. Police forces searched homes multiple times without any regard towards the residents and based it on ethnic profiling of Somalis (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 5). Documents were destroyed in order to extort money from the residents and the residents were forced to "pay for their freedoms" (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 6). The KDF have been accused of exploiting citizens during anti-terror initiatives. Security forces looted and stole from "suspects" during the "Usalama Watch" (Anderson 2014: 3). "Suspects had to pay bribes in order to be released, thus defeating the purpose of the operation (Anderson 2014: 3).

Several instances it has also been indicated that the KDF is benefited from the Al-Shabaab's activities. Video footage showed how Kenyan soldiers ransacked stores during the second day of the four-day Westgate Mall siege while terrorists were still-hunting down victims (Ombaka 2015: 20). Moreover, the United Nations (UN) banned charcoal exports, a source of revenue for this group, from Somalia in 2013. These exports still continued with a value of $250 million while the Kenya Force was controlling the Kismayu port. The UN Somalia-Eritrea Monitoring Group indicted that revenues of the exports are being divided among the Al-Shabaab and the Kenya forces (Ombaka 2015: 20).

With the security forces and state undermining Kenyan Muslims, it has made it easier for Al-Shabaab to become their "saviors" from oppression (Anderson 2014: 3). Ethnic

profiling, harassment and exploitation have pushed vulnerable youths to turn to groups such as the Al-Shabaab in order to "survive" in Kenya (Atta-Asamoah 2015: 6). Human rights organizations and the state are also suspicious of each other. The government has accused these organizations of protecting terror suspects and as such the "power" of these organizations is limited in aiding oppressed and marginalized citizens (Hellsten 2016: 5).

The government of Kenya and the security sector, through human right violations, a lack of accountability, ethnic profiling, being guilty of bribery and limiting the work of human rights organizations, are fueling citizens' frustrations and also adding to citizens' mistrust, creating more insecurity than security. These frustrations, violations and mistrust can lead to the youth turning to the Al-Shabaab for "security" and protection.

2.2.2.5 Political Factors

Al-Shabaab uses the diverse and fragile politics of Kenya to recruit (Osamba 2015: 15). Tensions between Muslim Somali, Swahili communities and non-Muslim ethnic groups in the North-East and the Coast have created motivations for groups such as the Al-Shabaab to target Kenya in an attempt to liberate the oppressed (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 11). Kenya's politics is dominated by a Christian ethos, which leads to hostility towards Muslims, thus Al-Shabaab's "enemies" (Anderson 2014: 2).

Kenyan Muslims make up 11% of the population of Kenya (International Crisis Group 2014: 6). About 65% of Kenya's Muslim population is between the ages of 18 and 35. 30% of the Muslim population is of Somalian origins, yet were born in Kenya (Botha 2013: 2). There is an absence of Muslim representation in public service as well as at the level of decision-making (International Crisis Group 2014: 7). Kenyan Muslims are regarded by their fellow Kenyans as being foreigners, which leads to exclusion and hostility (Botha 2013: 19). Islamic violent extremist groups blame the central Christian

government for undermining coastal ethnic groups, especially Muslim groups, by excluding them from the political sphere. The Islamic Party of Kenya was banned in the 1990s and as such Muslim groups feel they do not have a voice in the state (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 11).

Even though the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM) was created to be the representation for the Muslim community, the community perceives this council as being too closely associated with the central government and have made claims that this council does not have the Muslim community's interests at heart (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 15). Kenya's fractured and discrimination political system alienates communities and thus fuels citizens to join extremist groups who can be the voice they need (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 10).

In Kenya, most Muslim communities are from marginalized regions compared to other regions (Botha 2013: 14). To extremist groups, the grievances of the local people from the coast have been politically, economically and culturally undermined, thus they aim to liberate it (Glazzard & Jesperson & Maguire 2015: 11). A video released by the Al-Shabaab pleaded with the Muslim youth of Kenya to recognize their oppression and to join their movement (Anderson 2014: 2). The government's exclusionary politics can lead to the youth seeking alternative means such as violent extremist groups in an attempt to feel inclusion and to be able to have a voice.

Political climate has also contributed to insecurity Kenya. On the 5th of June 2014, 48 people were killed by Al-Qaeda affiliate, Al-Shabaab, who took responsibility, in the village of Mpeketoni, in Lamu County (Anderson 2014: 1). Buildings were set alight and more than 48 non-Muslims were massacred (Anderson 2014: 1). President Uhuru Kenyatta dismissed Al-Shabaab's responsibility claim and stated that his political

opposition was responsible because majority of the victims were of Kikuyu ethnicity, the same as that of the president. To the president, if Kikuyus are victims of an attack, he perceives it not as a terrorist attack but an attack from the opposition (Ombaka 2015: 23).

On the 20th July 2014, attacks in Lamu and Tana took place after the Mpeketoni attacks (International Crisis Group 2014: 15). The attackers left leaflets behind stating "This is a revenge for our Kikuyu brothers who were killed in Mpeketoni by you Luos. And you would not stay in peace" (International Crisis Group 2014: 15). The government fueled these ethnic attacks by the statement they made regarding the Mpeketoni attacks, which were actually the doing of the Al-Shabaab. The Al-Shabaab justified the June 2014 attack in Mpeketoni, saying the government is to blame as a result of them oppressing and killing Muslims, demonstrating that the government's opposition politics is indirectly creating spaces for the Al-Shabaab to perform and succeed in their attacks (Osamba 2015: 14).

Weak state security intelligence has undermined follow up on Al-Shabaab activities and has resulted to citizens to lose confidence in the state's ability to curb terrorism. The NIS stated that they had information regarding the Westgate Mall attack prior the attack, and passed it down to the police services that didn't act on the intelligence. The police defended themselves by stating that the intelligence was vague and thus they couldn't act. The NIS is failing to provide intelligence for security and is focusing predominantly more on regime survival (Ombaka 2015: 23).

The complex politics in Kenya is creating spaces and opportunities for the Al-Shabaab to recruit and to execute their massacres. The government's strong focus on regime survival instead of state survival is failing Kenyan, Muslim and non-Muslim, citizens by making them victims of the Al-Shabaab and politically motivated attacks. These political issues

could also contribute to the youth seeking alternative means for escaping power politics, oppression and a lack of representation (Botha, 2015).

2.2.2.6 Historical injustices/ grievances and Marginalization

Historical injustices reflect the capacity of violent extremism to recruit, through perception of collective punishment, grievances, personal humiliation and victimization (USAID, 2011). Events of State-led mass Killings proliferate the Kenya History; cases of mass killings such as Wagalla Massacre and Shifta war in the Northern region of Kenya are evident of harsh state responses. Until today, the tactics of the security operations employ oppressive postcolonial strategies, which are considered the source of insecurity in the country (Assamoah, 2015).

Although the introduction of the Kenyan constitution 2010, redress processes and institutions such as the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, (NCIC), National Land Commission and devolution process, Truth commission and reconciliation processes, marginalization and historical injustices remains unresolved.

In the coastal region for instance deep-seated resentment to perceived unjust land grabbing from locals still remains a great issue. The nature of the issue enlightens much of the inter-ethnic animosity and communal conflicts in various parts of the country. Both regions have also expressed concerns of being treated as second-class citizens, which reveals institutionalized discriminations that excludes them from political and socio-economic processes (Assamoah, 2015).

2.2.3 Bottom-Up- CVE Approach

This approach is oriented towards community level action, driven by local civil society organizations and community based organizations. Initiatives under this approach revolve around those considered 'vulnerable' and/or 'at-risk' of joining violent extremist groups

as active participants in their attacks (planning and commission of). Stronger focus on individual-aimed interventions is also seen under this approach (Finn, 2016).

Given the fast pace of change and the many uncertainties in countering violent extremism and the security environment as a whole in Kenya at the national and county levels respectively, forward-looking community-based approach is essential and appreciated (Atta-Assamoah, 2015). This is with preparation for a variety of possible threats and ready to take advantage of opportunities, both, which may appear in different, forms than in the past and which will call for creative responses. With long traditions of risk assessment, on one hand, and risk mitigation/management on the other hand, being brought together to produce fresh insights on the Kenyan CVE and security environment (Crenshaw, 1981), specific tools and methods of community engagement can be employed to discern trends and alternative futures. The other significant concern in Bottom-Up CVE Approach is with regards to the spread of Internet access per population, with the nature of participation on the internet and participation in online discussions via social media being the new political activism. The process of turning political activism to political violence is an active one, and not a passive one hence the power of social media has meant the CVE practitioners are now producers as opposed to simply the audience, which means that to effectively counter violent extremism in Kenya the CVE Bottom-Up stakeholders have had to embrace taking a pro-active role in our interactions on the Internet (USIP, 2014).

The use and strategic importance of social media and the internet in radicalization is mainly based on the ability to have constraint-free and easy communication with anonymity (United Nations, 2016). It should however be noted that the recruitment strategy and approach over social media is completely different compared to the clearly

marked and recognizable extremist websites and forums. The Social media however provides higher "success" levels than the use of the alternative extremist sites and forums mainly for three reasons:

1. The opportunity for data-mining and individualized monitoring;

2. Easier creation of the perception of critical mass appeal; and

3. Space with less pressure to join or not.

The circumstantial opportunity comes by monitoring and jumping in with the right timing giving leaks of small information meant to trigger "harmless discussions" on ideologies and state of affairs in the country while progressively introducing undertones of call to action in small bits with the target being based on the individual's opinions (Mkutu, 2007), preference and skills from the previous monitoring and data mining; Appealing to individuals, rather than the masses.

The bottom-up approach enjoys much currency in terms of preference in public debates due to the privilege of community reach and understanding that the involved civil society organizations and community-based organizations have. The approach is inclined towards first meeting the individual and community needs/interests first, and the national/global interests second and for that, many times comes at loggerheads with the governments agencies pushing the parallel top-down CVE agenda(s). For this reason, too, the methods used under this approach are distinct but intense, applicable to a particular context at a time and may not be duplicated successfully to another context using history by analogy; not to overlook the fact that many methods under this approach have and are still duplicated in other contexts with questionable levels of success.

Criticisms of this approach however hold that this approach is overcrowded with duplication of efforts and overlapping interests, and not properly defined as to what exactly is CVE in practice, and what isn't, hence the credibility of the CVE works using this approach is lessened, and highly doubted. Each involved organization is seen to promote its methods just to maintain credibility and relevance in the field, as leverage for further funding support for works(s) whose impact(s) cannot be objectively measured and evaluated. This is mainly because the approach itself in general, focusing on 'vulnerable' and 'potentials' cannot prove how many 'vulnerable' or 'potentials' did not become extremists as a result of the intervention(s); they might have just been fine without it. The Bottom-up approach is often criticized not to be really CVE in the strict sense, but more of community development work, while its supporters claim the legitimacy of the community development work as P/CVE is relevant to the universally recognized push and pull factors to violent extremism leading to terrorism (Finn, 2016).

According to Darden (2018) in "Compounding Violent Extremism? When efforts to Prevent Violence Backfire", Community-based P/CVE programming may not be the low-cost solution to Violent Extremism as was envisioned from the global enthusiasm to the Bottom-Up approach since the 2015 White House Summit convened by the then US President, Barack Obama. Bottom-Up P/CVE programs may also be largely failing on targeting the right individuals with strong emphasis placed on "youth at risk of violent extremism". An outside evaluation for instance of the USAID's Kenya Transitional Initiative found that the program did not adequately target those youth at risk of VE radicalization instead working predominantly with youth at risk of either criminal activity or drug use with no direct link to Violent Extremism. The targeting of 'Community' as a unit is faulted for the overt assumption made that 'community' is wholly mainstream and completely inclusive. Targeting and/or accessing marginalized youths through

mainstream civil society invites serious distortions because marginalized youths are part of a civil society that is distinctly separate from the mainstream; a mainstream that relies on the convening power of the community leaders who are powerful but not necessarily popular, which is an indirect contribution to cynicism against the youth group-set (Darden, 2018).

Another key takeaway is the lack of consensus on the foundational premises and concepts regarded as Bottom-Up P/CVE and related practice, which essentially shifted the direction of the ethical question from 'does CVE work?' to 'What should CVE look like/address in practice?'

2.3   Theoretical Framework

The Kenyan counter violent extremism efforts are aimed at preventing, countering radicalization, or rather referred to as 'Violent Extremism and radicalization leading to Terrorism' (VERLT) that arise in a set of different dynamics (Allan, 2015). These radicalization dynamics have been globally placed into a binary set of theory, each claiming primacy and legitimacy over the other.

The significance of appreciating this set of theories on radicalization is that recent research and programming efforts on the Kenyan counter violent extremism space has focused so much on understanding the radicalization dynamics (Botha, 2015), basing the importance of this endeavor on the ability to predict the cycle in order to prevent or counter it, and understand the fluctuating trends of radicalization. This current focus shows that the Kenyan counter violent extremism efforts are making progress towards being as proactive as possible in stopping the life-cycle of violence (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, 2016).

2.3.1 Islamization of Radicalism

The "bottom-up radicalization" characteristic of non-Islamic individuals or newly converts turning to radicalism as a form of generational revolt and using the religion as a scapegoat for their action. This theory is formally known as Islamization of radicalism developed and pushed forward by a French political scientist and professor, Olivier Roy (Roy, 2012), which in effect seems to exonerate the Muslim religion of the full blame of VERLT. Radicals here, it is argued, had a choice beyond their objective situations (Steinburg, 2015) and the theory in essence argues that the realm, face and dynamics of radicalization and violent extremism leading to terrorism is so different and contemporary. It is no longer absolute that recruits to terror groups are incidental/accidental, or that they didn't have a choice beyond their objective situation, or that they were economically underprivileged (World Bank, 2016), naïve or unknowledgeable of the consequences of joining an extremist group (BBC, 2015). Ideally the outcomes of socio-economic discontent in the contemporary setting is most likely to lead to crime and occasional riots in the country (Zeiger S, 2015).

Subject of this theory, the subject interests are described as the second-generation radicals who broke away from their parents' norms and values on way of life. They are well absorbed and adjusted into the westernized society not holding to their cultural tradition(s) that would necessarily revolt against westernization. They however all of a sudden (re) converted to Salafi Islam – that which rejects the concept of culture and allows them to rebuild themselves. Radicalization hence attracts them by definition, which occurs around, an imaginary hero, violence and/or death and not necessarily Sharia or utopia.

2.3.2 Radicalization of Islam

The "top-down radicalization" characteristic of deeply Islamic individuals turning to radicalism due to, non-integration, unemployment, their marginalization and other forms of structural problems. This theory is formally known as Radicalization of Islam having a long-standing history as the main basis/explanation used on VERLT globally, seemingly placing most, if not all, and the blame on the religion of Islam. Radicals here, it is argued and assumed, are pushed towards extreme forms of Islam due to circumstances empirically supported by political situation(s) and/or political empirical credibility (Cilliers, 2015).

This form of radicalization is often considered a spillover from the Middle East conflict and instability crisis. This theory hence in practice justifies the Top-Down approach dynamics that single out and focus on monitoring the Muslim communities and neighborhoods (Majengo, Eastleigh, Lamu, Garissa Mombasa), intrusion into Mosques traditionally considered off-limits for government's forces, amongst other overt actions of specific target and focus. This has in turn undermined the P/CVE efforts to engage the Muslim communities on the subject of intervention causing further disenfranchisement that remains largely debated upon but unaddressed. This theory feeds in directly into the perceptions of radicalization leading to homegrown terrorism and is otherwise known as the "religious conveyer-belt" theory.

2.4   Conclusion

A state is regarded as strong when it can effectively provide security, law and order, medical and health services, schools and educational services, critical infrastructure, effective money and banking services, a good business environment, and a space for civil society to undertake activities (Ombaka 2015: 13). Kenya is currently failing to be a

strong state for its citizens. The government needs to focus more on improving socio-economic issues, the state of the security sector and to provide justice for victims. The state is expected to create a secure space for its citizens to prosper and to be less motivated to join violent extremist groups. Exclusionary measures and actions can cause the youth of Kenya to turn to the Al-Shabaab in an attempt to escape their circumstances of which the state has a hand in. It is important to note that violent extremism cannot be countered through intelligence or police and military means alone. The structural causes such as intolerance, government failure in providing security and basic services, and marginalization to mention a few, need to be addressed in order to be able to deal with violent extremism (Frazer & Nünlist 2015: 1).

Through the literature review, this study has identified and is filling a knowledge gap on the nuanced shortcomings of the Top-Down and Bottom-Up CVE approaches, vis-à-vis how their strengths can be complementary to each other. The study further provides focused and centric exploration of domain of the Bottom-Up approach as the enduring Kenya's approach to countering violent extremism because this approach presents the subtle and often overlooked grassroots realities (Hoorweg, 2016) and the objective future of Kenya's CVE journey.

To achieve the above in filling the knowledge gap identified, this study has explored how the Bottom-up approach places heavy emphasis on the procedure of establishing P/CVE policy in the country, in contrast with the Top-Down approach which places emphasis on the policy of establishing procedure in P/CVE practice, which is slowly but surely being phased out with the dawn of the 'Whole-of-society' P/CVE concept, favorably formulated and adopted globally, as spearheaded by the United Nations under its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, and its United Nations Resolutions 2242 (United Nations , 2015) on

Women, Peace and Security and 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. Bottom-Up approach represents the specific local circumstances, empirical data and the living reality of those most affected by violent extremism leading to terrorism, and moving up to inductively develop consensus recommendations and policy, promoting trust and transparency in the process. Herein, in this approach also lies the possibility of achieving the popular question in P/CVE policy and practice, 'Does CVE work?'

This study appreciates the positive progress that has been made in countering violent extremism in Kenya and offers a critical purview of the lean on the intervention strategies that knowingly, or unknowingly, are built on two different theories on radicalization. The significance of this is it shows that Kenya has taken up the "global effect" (Hoorweg, 2016) in its CVE process, that is, acting at the most basic and grassroots levels with a global mindset on a global issue without losing the sight of the local realities.

Lastly, this study has identified the stakeholders, away from the traditional form, who are currently being involved in the CVE process in the country, which includes the youths and women. Regardless also of the different approaches in CVE in the country, the defining characteristics of CVE programming in Kenya have been identified.

CHAPTER THREE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Non-doctrinal research method, also known as empirical research, has been adopted in research. Herein, as it being a subject pertaining to practice, it is of necessity that various policy declarations pronounced and relevant to the Kenyan Counter Violent Extremism space are taken into consideration.

More specifically to meet the required goal of the research study; the researcher applied a qualitative research of a descriptive research design (Yakin, 2008). Descriptive designs are used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret it for the purpose of classification (Jick, 1979). The foundation therefore of this thesis was secondary qualitative research on existing literature on the subject of Kenya's approach in countering violent extremism which enabled the combination of existing knowledge on the subject, and the results presented comparatively between bottom-up approach and top-down approach to illustrate the nuances of both approaches. This illustrative analysis of the bottom-up and top-down approach in countering violent extremism in Kenya allowed for a discussion that could help inform the CVE policy and practice, and answer the research questions subject of this paper.

3.2 Method

This study relied on Secondary data which essentially is *"the use of existing data to find answers to research questions that differ from the questions asked in the original research"* and, for the purposes of this study used to *"apply a new perspective or new*

conceptual focus to the original research issue (Jonker, 2010)*"* (Long-Sutehall, Sque, & Addington-Hall, 2011, p. 336). The use of Secondary data in this study allowed for the exploration of various diverse factors connected, directly and indirectly, to Kenya's approach in countering violent extremism to be included, giving a deductive portrayal of the factors herein.

The Secondary Data were collected and found through online library repositories, online search engines, library search, and majorly by evaluating the available references used in the reviewed research literature on the subject (Terrell, 2012). In terms of data target used in this study, the maintenance of high quality analysis was very central and necessary throughout this study research process (Flick, 2006) hence the necessity to further sort the available literature material found into according to two inclusion criteria:

1. The included research had to be addressing the subject issue of countering violent extremism in Kenya with the assumption on the uniqueness of the Kenyan context from others; and

2. The data collected in the included material had to be addressing CVE in the strict sense and not crime, delinquency, peace or security in the general purview, as research has shown that the success factors differ across the different sub-domains included in such general purviews (Denoeux & Carter, 2009).

3.3 Data Analysis

By design, the data analysis in this thesis research was exploratory in nature drawing on a thematic analysis process with the objective of identifying and mapping themes. Boyatzis (1998, p. 4) states that thematic analysis is *"not another qualitative method, but more a process that can be used with most, if not all, qualitative methods* (Goode WJ, 1986)*"*. It is a process that gives room for *"identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes)*

within data (HM, 1965)*"* (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). The few included materials addressed the chosen categories for this research directly hence allowing themes to be objectively identified even with the lack of consensus in the material chosen (Price MO, 1979), making it a possibility to synthesize the data and make comparisons relevant to Kenya's approaches in countering violent extremism.

The data analysis therefore proceeded with the usage of a deductive approach with an 'a priori framework' in the form of the categories predetermined and derived from the literature on Kenya's approaches in countering violent extremism. This approach was the best fit considering the intention of the thesis was not to derive new theory (McConville M, 2007), but challenge and broaden the understanding of the already existing concepts on countering violent extremism in Kenya (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The predetermined categories have been useful in the reflective process of the general understanding (Payne, 1965) that the approaches in countering violent extremism in Kenya do not differ in objectives, but on direction of action and impact, and thus, comparing within this framework accentuates the findings. Further merit of the usage of these predetermined categories was in the time saved in coding the findings, that is, that some factors were only found to be relevant for one approach and it were therefore not comparable to the other approach factors (Bottom-up approach and Top-Bottom approach). This necessarily didn't mean that such factors do not play a role for both approaches, just that evidence could and was found to support this notion.

Furthermore, some overlap is present between the factors and across the Bottom-up and Top-Down approaches in countering violent extremism in Kenya.

3.4 Reliability, Validity and Fidelity

The reliability of this thesis' research approach based its foundation on the possibility of getting the same and consistent results over a period of time using the same approach and methodology, and that the said results of this thesis are factual representation of the total research population (Surrency EC, 1959). The researcher further acknowledged that the research population at hand is influenced by a variety of factors, considering the nature of the subject. This fact of not existing in a vacuum hence means that it remains unlikely to get the same exact results after lapse of time, even if the same methodology and approach is used (Nahid, 2003, p. 598).

The validity of this thesis' research approach and methodology is based on the researcher's pursuance of factual accurateness of the results (PV, 1962), and the results' ability to accurately answer what was intended (Nahid, 2003, p. 699). This research's basis being secondary data allowed the research to explore the predetermined factual accurateness already established framework for interpretation of the included material and consistency throughout the analysis of the available literature.

Finally, the fidelity of this thesis' research approach and methodology was also a consideration throughout the research process. While primary researchers have the merit of one-on-one contact with the participants/informants, with the advantage of seeking clarity where necessary to fully capture the participants' perspectives, this merit was not available when doing the secondary analysis of the data. Thus, in addition to evaluation of the evidence presented in the included material, attention was paid to the original researchers' analysis thereof.

3.5 Ethics

While pursuing the ethical standards of research relying on secondary data, consideration was maintained on the contextual basis off which the primary data was collected as not to change the focus of this particular research (Long-Sutehall et al., 2011). This was done by balancing the needs of the present thesis against the original research questions of which the primary data was derived (Kahn, 1952).

It was also very necessary to observe that the initial consent principles between the primary researcher and the participants were not violated in the reuse of the data (Wani, 2001). Lastly, considering the thesis relied on literature available to the public, there was hence no requirement for ethical approval.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The main objective of this study was to review the strengths and shortcomings of the approaches used in countering violent extremism with a specific focus on Kenya. The current approaches applied to respond and counter violent extremism, namely the state-led Top-Down approach and the civil society-led Bottom-Up approach, have replicated dominant narratives some of which are proving to be counterproductive and re-creating a cycle of violence. This study's specific objectives therefore looked into the hegemonic dogmas that largely shape Kenya's CVE approaches above, with the aim of filling the knowledge gap by recommending alternative approaches that can contribute positively to the effectiveness and efficiency of the two approaches. In doing so, the hypotheses for this study were hence based on two main variables; Counter-Violent Extremism through state-led efforts and through community-led (Civil Society) – led efforts. The study postulated that;

i. That enhanced community engagement has a corresponding merit in countering violent extremism;

ii. State-led CVE efforts on Kenya are built on the foundation of predominance of the society narrative;

iii. Kenya's counter-violent extremism efforts has both successes and failures.

The data collected for this study directly confronted a bibliography of past researches on the CVE efforts in Kenya in a two-dimension thematic focus, the Top-Down approaches and the Bottom-Up approaches. This study followed a deductive approach hence the data collected helped in attaining the objectives of this study stated above by giving a clear

understanding of the foundational context-driven discrepancies and deficiencies of both the Top-Down and Bottom-Up approaches.

This chapter presents the findings of the thesis research, on the perspectives alive to Kenyans on the subject of countering violent extremism, true as at the time of the research.

4.1 Bottom- Up Approach: Perspectives and Shortfalls

The concept of Countering Violent Extremism from Bottom-Up approach differs with counter-terrorism (CT) strategies in that they mainly focus on developing technical resilience in the communities (Denoeux, 2009) to counteract the ideological appeal of violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism (Khalil J. &., 2016). This hence has called for, time and again, the needs to bring the state closer to the grassroots-level community, as 'equal' partners in the process (Sageman, 2008), based on the foundation that regardless of this being a primary role of the state, the communities, the media, civil society and private sector are equally as stakeholders interested in the positive outcome of the counter-violent extremism process. This creates a sense of shared responsibility based on mutual support between the state and the communities.

Defining 'community' itself is complex and has earned difference and diverse interpretations, though at the basic, is used consistently to mean/consist of "individuals, groups and institutions based in the same area and/or having shared interests". It's can also be used to denote a stakeholder group of common concern and interest(s), on common issues or a group of individuals sharing a common and general reality, within a specific geography, region or country (Hedayah Center and Global Center on Cooperative Security, 2014). This interpretation therefore means that individuals can and often belong to different communities based on the different common interests shared and/or different

realities they face as a group. Such common interests and realities shared can sometimes transcend beyond geographical/regional borders.

Community resilience on the other hand is the "capacity of a community to withstand, respond to and recover from a wide range of adverse events, either natural or caused by an individual or a group (Wood, 2009)". Rand Corporation defines it as:

> *"A measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations and to learn from past disasters to strengthen future response and recovery efforts."*

The association given to the term 'Community resilience' is in the occurrence of disaster, hence the need to disaster risk reductions, the preparedness to mitigate disasters, emergency response and the ability to recover to the default normal functioning of the community before the said disaster. The use of the term 'resilience' is not confined to development in risky environments but is increasingly being associated with a broader set of conditions of adversity such as economic downturn, crime, conflicts and terrorism.

The paradigm shifts to focus on community resilience is a positive development from emergency response and infrastructural development which views the community and its members therein, as non-passive victims with active roles and ability to make informed decisions in recovery and restoration of the community in face of adversity (Horgan, 2009).

Community resilience encompasses community cohesion as a contributing factor to community and human security, covering an even wider range of issues that directly affect the livelihood of the community members. This has been the recent focus of CT and CVE policies and practice in the field to protect the country from violent ideologies

and actions. It is expected that the development of resilient communities will subsequently turn to such communities joining efforts with the state in support of countering violent extremism. This is the essence of Bottom-Up approach in countering violent extremism in Kenya (Horgan, 2009),.

The main distinction between Top-down and Bottom-up CVE approaches in Kenya is that the Top-down approach directly involves the state driven by the national security priorities of law enforcement and intelligence gathering efforts, and as such always running the risk of alienating certain communities of individuals, while on the other hand, Bottom-Up CVE approach hold highly the pillar of community resilience in its undertakings, better oriented to earn the community trust by consulting with them and involving them to ultimately take up the responsibility as active stakeholders in countering violent extremism. The Bottom-Up approach places particular emphasis on the community concerns on the subject as a practical testimony that the state security depends on its citizens' human security (Blair, 2013).

The Bottom-Up approach which relies on community resilience (Burris, 2005) has proven practical and useful through fostering close community ties within families, peer-groups, religious institutions and education institutions. Here, the approach has worked on creating trust between the members of such social groups/communities to easily detect changes on behavior and/or trends. Bottom up initiatives in Kenya have employed means of the activation of communities, families, religious leaders, youth and women's groups, private sector, and neighborhood watches instilling the foundation that they have the most basic interest in the process, and subsequently the most organic responsibility to protect such interests.

Globally, the recognition of Bottom-Up approach is growing with the adoption of the 'Whole-Of-Society' approach in countering violent extremism by the United Nations. This is a positive development towards ensuring the accountability of states to its citizens in their counter-violent extremism programming and efforts.

4.2 Pitfalls of Bottom-Up CVE Approach in Kenya

While the Bottom-Up approach has proven practical and useful in countering violent extremism in Kenya, it is not without challenges as the following setbacks have been met:

Ostracizing and stigmatizing particular communities by putting them under scrutiny: When the Bottom-up initiatives are made to seemingly target only a certain geographical area or certain communities, the alarmist tendencies take root of such areas or communities followed by stigmatization as "problem areas" or "problem communities" undermining their reputation, and subsequently their resilience. In Kenya, particular areas have been over-emphasized on being Eastleigh (Nairobi), Majengo (Nairobi & Mombasa), Pumwani (Nairobi), and Garissa, Lamu, all of which are predominantly residential areas of Muslim and Kenyan Somali community. This has created a pre-labelling of these areas as 'danger areas', and in return such communities living in those areas taking an unwelcoming stance against Bottom-Up initiatives.

Interference from the outside: Even with the advancement of the process of CVE in Kenya, it still remains an implicit and sometimes explicit 'us-vs-them' binary debate between the Kenyan communities, mostly divided on the basis of religion. With this dynamic, the bottom-up approach often faces the challenge of managing expectations from different communities going on against each other, especially when the organic evolution towards resilience had not been cultivated from the onset of the initiative with room for diversity within the cohesion of a common-identity community.

Cooption of communities by the state for security purposes: The Bottom-Up approach does not have the privilege of unlimited access to state resources hence time and again, the stakeholders undertaking the Bottom-Up initiatives face support discrimination if they do not cooperate with the interests of the state. This form of cooption arrangement automatically breaks the trust the community had on such actor as such arrangements turns the whole initiative into a top-down operative.

4.3 Top-Down Approach: Perspectives and Pitfalls

The top-down initiatives in Kenya are popular for all the wrong reasons, hardly getting a positive reputation. The approach is guided by short-term interests (Okombo, 2010) in the community whose end product is narrow for the sustaining CVE agenda. Primarily, top-down CVE approaches in Kenya have often been seen as predominantly targeting Muslim and Kenyan Somali communities unfairly with obtrusive and alienating actions (Mkutu, 2007). This approach is not exactly concerned with community resilience, at least primarily.

One of the most popular Top-Down initiatives in Kenya was the Eastleigh Sanitization initiative back in 2014, publicly known as Operation Usalama Watch which mainly targeted the Kenyan Somali community living in Eastleigh area and its environs, Nairobi (National Police Service, 2016). As per the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) report) released in July 2014 (Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR, 2008), it was unanimously established that the police went contrary to the standards of discipline and professionalism set for the force, and contravened the requirements of Article 244 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) on accountability and transparency during the operation. Civil Society Organizations and Lobby groups documented various issues relating to the human rights violations during the operation.

The second most popular Top-Down initiative in countering violent extremism was the attempt by the government to re-introduce the concept of community policing through the Nyumba Kumi Initiative. This however did not quite pick up as anticipated owing to the already bad reputation of directly collaborating with the state on community security matters (Chapman, 2003), more specifically, the Kenya Police. While the initiative itself had good intentions and reputation in helping the police in keeping vigilance, gathering intelligence and in making arrests, the lacking element was "trust".

The most basic principles of community policing (Government of Kenya and UNDP, 2015) are mutual interests/needs and trust between the community and the police, and this, by default is expected to be there especially on the subject of countering violent extremism:

"The legitimacy of the policy can increase in the eyes of the community when consent is sought in matters of local law and order, and public service delivery is tangibly improved. The public can in turn be encouraged to share with the police its concerns, new information, and to report any suspicious activity (Buchanan-Clarke S. &. 2016).

The police, however, in this case, was viewed as the enemy who lacks credibility, legitimacy, neutrality and professionalism, "meddling in community affairs (Hedayah Center and Global Center on Cooperative Security, 2014)" while riding on the support and legitimacy given by the state.

4.4 Conclusion

Thus study found out that while the role of the state is recognized and acknowledged in countering violent extremism (Gunning, 2007) in Kenya, it is still being viewed suspiciously owing to the poor relationship between the Kenya police and the Kenyan

citizen (UNDP, 2015). The state's role in building trust and by extension, resilience, for Kenyan communities in countering violent extremism would be to foremost improve Police-Community relations (Gitau, 2017), provide adequate information, improve communication of its initiatives and provide credible assessments of counter-violent extremism threats.

On the other hand, the study revealed that despite the general "preference" for the civil society-led CVE efforts which characterize the Bottom-Up approach, there's yet to be established a tangible linkage between such efforts and the impacts/outcomes they create. It is generally observed that the domain of CT and P/CVE is under-evaluated and dominated by assumptions rather than evidence; the important question of whether the Bottom-Up approaches actually contribute to CVE or merely and attribution. This considerable skepticism about the extent to which P/CVE programming in particular has to date delivered the desired results remains an area for further research as identified by this study.

These two revelations on the approaches in CVE in Kenya were relative to the objectives of this study in furthering the discourse on the need to find a balance between Top-Down and Bottom-Up approaches in countering violent extremism in Kenya, as we've established that over-focus on community development and resilience don't provide long-term sustained solutions either.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Summary of Key Findings

Thus far, this paper has established not only the existence and activeness of the Counter-Violent Extremism process in Kenya, but also the adverse effects of the different approaches on the Kenyan community. A few reforms and adjustments are necessary to improve the standing of CVE with the Kenyan community, build community resilience and present actual and objective results. This final section herewith proposes reforms for effective policy and practice on countering violent extremism in Kenya.

5.2   Recommendations

The focus of this study remained on the Kenyan experience in countering violent extremism, and how securitized counter-terrorism discourses have shaped Kenya`s efforts to Counter Violent Extremism, taking a lean towards militaristic and coercive approaches. The outputs of this research are a few notable recommendations which however should not be interpreted as a judgment on prospects for success of ongoing or concluded P/CVE initiatives. Rather, by raising potential concerns, the concluding goal of this study is to contribute to the successful planning, implementation and evaluation of current and forthcoming P/CVE initiatives:

5.2.1 Improve Police-Community relations

This paper has established that the best practice in countering violent extremism in Kenya is based on community resilience hand in hand with community cooperation with the state in the process. The Kenyan police represent the most direct link between the Kenyan

community and the state as far as security matters are concerned, but at the same time has the worst relationship. Efforts should be added on taking non-securitized approaches that foster more open communication, trust, reliability, credibility and professionalism to improving the relationship and cooperation between the two, as key stakeholder in the Kenyan CVE process. This is a process that can jointly be pursued by the Kenyan government and the Kenyan civil society organizations in the field of preventing and countering violent extremism.

5.2.2 Improve Inter-Community relations

The process of countering violent extremism in Kenya has mainly focused on the Muslim communities, which in effect has created 'us-vs-them' mentality between the Muslim and Christian communities in the country. This has not only slowed down the process of building community resilience by has further reinstated the factions that CVE is all trying to break down, that also form the basis of discrimination and unfair targeting, both in violent extremist attacks and overt counter-terrorism actions. There's therefore need to foster inter community, inter-religious dialogues founded on mutual interests as Kenyans, to improve empathy levels in dealing with each other.

Further, sustaining peace and cohesion goes beyond security alone and goes into other civic issues such as good governance, reduced corruption rates, employment, and streamlined public systems amongst others. The state and relevant stakeholders should therefore increase efforts and reach into such broader areas both in policy development and action in order to improve community resilience against violent extremism. Working closely with the private sector and the community, the Kenyan state should do more to undermine the push and pull factors to radicalization as preventive and proactive measures to violent extremism in the country.

5.2.3 Develop County CVE Plans

Kenya has already designed and developed the National Strategy CVE plan as a wider Counter –Terrorism framework that allocates roles to various government agencies, religious organizations, county government, civil society and communities.

However, the NSCVE has been critiqued for remaining unclear on how inclusive the stakeholders were since its inception. Notably some counties such as Mombasa, Kilifi, and Lamu have drafted their county CVE plans.

To establish a clear localized roles each county should prioritize CVE strategies and engage parliamentarians and other stakeholders. This will promote ownership for civil society, the communities and non-governmental organization to engage in CVE. The county CVE strategy will enable a tailor-made strategy with in-depth threat analysis and required resources. This will also allow different actors to hold each other accountable.

5.3 Conclusion

As we also focus on new research, analysis and policy making to reflect the realities of today, Kenya's counter violent extremism process is making positive strides in handling the current challenges. Ultimately, the positive and objective results we envision will rely on promoting the agency of each and every member of society and a process of continual engagement between parties. Action by the state and county governments will be critical, though approaches should also come from the bottom up and involve a myriad of actors, each with clearly demarcated roles in defeating the proximate and structural causes of violent extremism while laying the foundations for building and maintaining peace (Nordic Africa Institute, 2016).

The process of countering violent extremism in Kenya can no longer be handled in isolation by the state alone, and this reality should be fully embraced, and its ends

pursued. This should compel state agencies, policymakers and practitioners to explore new and innovative model and/or normative conditions for working together as equal partners in the process.

Further, the success and sustainability of the CVE process also depends on the state of the community itself; this therefore means that the hard-pressing issues at the grassroots levels have to be handled and managed. Such issues include, but not limited to, high corruption rates (especially in the Kenya Police service), good governance, discriminate treating of certain communities (as second-class citizens), high unemployment rates, and uneven distribution of state resources amongst other issues.

While this study commends moderate expectations in having completely answered the research questions, further research and efforts should be placed on improving the evaluability of CVE efforts in Kenya. The first chapter of this study proved to be the most crucial, yet difficult considering the difficulty in introducing a subject with an influx of information, of varied and opposing opinions over just a short period of time. This chapter was however mainly anchored on the significance of the study which came in selecting the overall topic in the first place. The second and the third chapters had a symbiotic relationship and took bulk of the time in doing this research. With a wide range of available literature on CVE in Kenya, reviewed in chapter 2, the research design and methodology had to be informed by this reality to ensure the whole study is as focused yet deductive as possible.

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