

Mechanisms Put in Place to Curb Al-Shabaab Activities in Garissa County

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Abstract:- Islamism has in recent times grown popular and is used by its followers to emphasize a return to the Holy Scriptures and reliance on the fundamental texts of Islam, as a way to live in today's world. Terrorist groups have used Islamism in their operations especially to inform their activities due to its adaptability. The objective of this study was to assess the mechanisms put in place to curb Al-Shabaab activities in Garissa County. The study established that, there were mechanisms put in place in curbing Al-Shabaab activities. These mechanisms include: the role of the local community in curbing Al-Shabaab activities in Garissa County, role of Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders in re-integration process of radicalized individuals and social mechanisms put in place to deal with stigmatization of terrorist-linked families. It also seemed unlikely that any single mechanism could help in curbing Al-Shabaab activities in Garissa. The study also found out that despite mechanisms put place, there were multiple and diverse pathways that were still being explored by Al-Shabaab. The reality is that, there are many factors that can bear on individual's or community's role in curbing Al-Shabaab activities. The study recommends improved approach on the re-integration of formally radicalized individuals back into the society and a tailored re-integration system that breaks the cycle of radicalization.

Keywords:- Islamism, Al-Shabaab, counter-terrorism, radicalization.

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern world, a key security measure to guarantee the masses of security is counter terrorism by various security agencies. Bjørge (2015) argues that a holistic approach to applying counter-terrorism to augment crime prevention is key. He notes that counter-terrorism as a mechanism for crime prevention is a norm in democratic societies. This is broad and elaborate process of averting terrorism and is based on a raft of measures. An effort to reduce radicalization, aborting recruitment of terror perpetrators is key. Besides, the use of a single approach to countering terrorism cannot work in the contemporary security environment. Miller (2013) observes that deterrence policies may not be effective since terrorist exudes an irrationality level that cannot be merely suppressed by deterrence mechanism. It is against this background that this study sought to assess the mechanisms put in place to curb Al-shabaab activities in Garissa County. Kimunguni (2011)

asserts that, in the East Africa region, the AU has ensured member states put in place mechanisms for counterterrorism purposes. Several treaties, aimed at countering the terror threats in the region, have been ratified by member states but of the 53 states only 37 have ratified the OAU Convention of 1999 and the AU Plan of Action of 2004. The African Centre for Study and Research of Terrorism (ACSRT) was established by AU in 2004 .It specializes in terrorism and counterterrorism programmes. It is also aimed at giving expert guidance; harmonizing and standardizing legal frameworks; disseminating research on counterterrorism and organising functions for improving counterterrorism capacities of states. Additionally, another mechanism for counter insurgency and terrorism was established in 2008. The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) a component of the U.S-Africa Command (AFRICOM), was established to bolster the fight against insurgency and terrorism. Besides these establishments, the Horn of Africa also has the East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI) put in place by the U.S and this overly plays a preponderant role in militating against acts of terror.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was anchored upon Social Distance Theory. The proponents of the Social Distance Theory include among others Black. Black states that the point of departure of this approach from other approaches such as rational choice theory and new terrorism theory, is that, long-standing grievances alone cannot explain extreme violence. Black (2004) moots that, perpetrator's grievances, enemies and the sociological interrelationships plays an integral role in identifying the actor's motive in the whole process perpetuating terror. Black (2004) further identifies several other social distances and argues that terrorism has an 'inter-collective' direction. First, terrorists targets civilians who are associated with ethno-religious milieu. Secondly, terrorism has an upward direction, where terror attacks are directed towards targets that symbolize the central government, dominant regime or socio-economic or political superior group. Therefore, terrorism implies the social distance phenomenon that is orchestrated by individuals who are socially linked (Black 2004).

The Al Shabaab capitalizes on the huge differences between Islam and other religious and cultural groups. It discriminates against Christians and other mainstream religions. This makes non-Muslims based in Northern Kenya an easy target for Al-Shaabab attacks. These groups are

attacked and eliminated in the name of banishing evil and the wrongdoers who don't live according to Islamism advocated by the Al Shabaab. To this end, there have been attacks on places of worship and cultural centers of other faiths and cultures. Any institution that hosts and provides sanctuary to other distant religions and cultures have been targeted as well. It was against this background that this theory was employed to assess the mechanisms put in place to curb Al-shabaab activities at Garissa County.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive correlational survey design. The descriptive correlational approach described the status of the variables while showing how the variables relate in the natural setting (Creswell, 2013). This design was useful for greater understanding of complex social phenomena as it allowed the researcher to retain whole and meaningful real events. It also allowed the researcher to delve and concentrate on a particular case which allowed greater depth in the inquiry. The outcome was fit for making generalizations with regards to the topic under investigation. This design further employed the qualitative approach in gathering data from the sampled population. The study was based in Garissa County whose close proximity to Somali has contributed to incessant terror related activities perpetuated by the Al-shaabab. The county has a total area of 44,174.1 Kilometers square (17,056 Square Mileage) and its population total to 623,060 (334,939 male and 288,121 female) with projections showing the population had increased to 849,457 by 2017. The study covered the six constituencies of Garissa, namely: Lagdera Garissa Township, Balambala, Dadaab, , Fafi and Ijara. Primary data was collected from four groups (Islamic Clerics, radicalized youths, security agency officials and heads of households in the communities). In the case of the household heads, semi-structured questionnaires were issued for filling across the six sub-counties that make up Garissa County. Garisa County has a population of 623,060 (KNBS, 2010). In this regard therefore the target population for the study was more than 10000. The desired sample population for household heads was determined using Fisher's formula for sample size determination (Fisher *et al.*, 1983 cited in Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999:43). The formula is stated below.

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where n=desired sample size
 (The target population is greater than 10,000).
 z=the standard normal deviate at the confidence level of 95% is 1.96.
 p=the proportion of the target population
 Estimated to have characteristics being measured is set at 50%
 q=1-p (probability of non-success)
 d=level of statistical significance set at 0.05

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2}$$

 n=384

Purposive sampling was used to sample 6 Islamic clerics, one from each of the six sub-counties. Snowball sampling was used to sample 30 radicalized youths, 5 from each of the 6 sub-counties. Security officials were samples as follows: 1 county commissioner was sampled purposively; 6 deputy county commissioners were sampled purposively from each of the 6 sub-counties; 3 regional commanders were also sampled purposively in the County; 1 representing the Administrative Police (AP), 1 representing Kenya Police, and 1 representing the Criminal Investigation Directorate (CID); 1 County boss of the Anti- terrorism police Unit was purposively; 2 Anti- terrorism police Unit in charge of Garisa and Daadab sub-counties; 6 Officers in charge of Police Divisions (OCPDs) were purposively sampled and 6 Officers Police Stations were purposively sampled, 6 chiefs were also sampled purposively for the study.

IV. STUDY FINDINGS

A. Measures to curb terrorism

The study sought to establish the knowledge of the respondents on the measures put in place in curbing terrorism in the study area. The respondents were asked to state whether there were measures put in place to curb terrorism. The results are as shown in figure 4.1

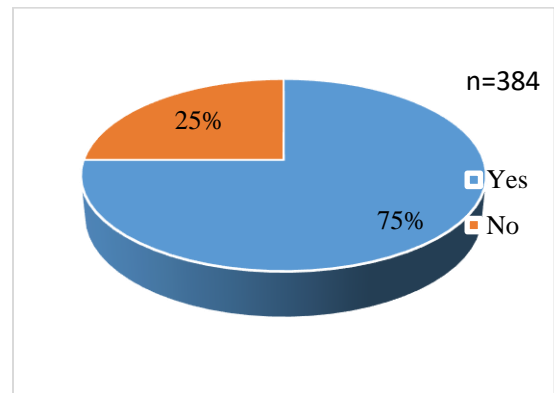


Fig 4.1:- Knowledge of measures present in curbing terrorism in Garissa County

Source: Field Data 2018

The results in figure 6.1 show that, 288 (75 %) of the household respondents knew about the measures put in place to curb terrorism while 96 (25 %) of the respondents indicated that they did not know about the measures put in place to curb terrorism. These results implied that the respondents had background knowledge regarding the measures put in place to fight Al-Shabaab activities.

The key informant interviews supported the findings by indicating that they had knowledge about the measures to curb terrorism in the study area. Islamic clerics, radicalized youths, security officials indicated that measures to curb terrorism were in place. The County Commissioner, the deputy County commissioner, regional commander, Anti-Terrorism Police Units (ATPUs), OCPDs, OCSs across the six sub-counties,

were all in tandem that measures to curb terrorism were in place. In support of the results from the household heads, an Imam indicated that:

Muslim scholars should help in spreading the right teaching of the Quran and its applicability to the contemporary world especially in regard to terrorism, government to intensify its operation against terrorist, monitoring activities of mosques and madrasas in the rural areas within Garissa County and the refugee camps. (Interview With chairman of imams in Garissa County, 17th May 2018).

Albeit, acknowledging the fact that measures to curb terrorism have been put in place, he however reiterated the need to intensify the measures that were in place. His assertion were in agreement with Gatuiku (2014) who argue that Kenya, has witnessed a relative success story and has been doing its best to combat terrorism, though the process needs to be more intensified.. According to the Global terrorism index (2014), Kenya was ranked twelfth, among the highest ranking

countries affected by terrorism. This is indicative of an ingrained culture of terror perpetuated by Al-Shabaab in Kenya since Kenya’s incursion in Somalia. The mechanisms to fight terrorism have been bolstered by the introduction and review of Kenya Police strategic plan of 2003-2008 and 2013-2017 respectively. Besides the establishment of National Counter Terrorism Center (NCTC) has also played a preponderant role in streamlining methods used in curbing activities of Al-Shabaab.

B. Mechanism put in Place by the Government to Curb Al-shabaab activities

The study sought to establish the extent to which the respondents agreed with the following mechanisms in Garissa County; police stations, increased border patrols, establishment of Military camp, screening of refugees from Somali, Nyumba Kumi and public awareness through local leaders and Government officials. The Results are as indicated in Figure 6.2

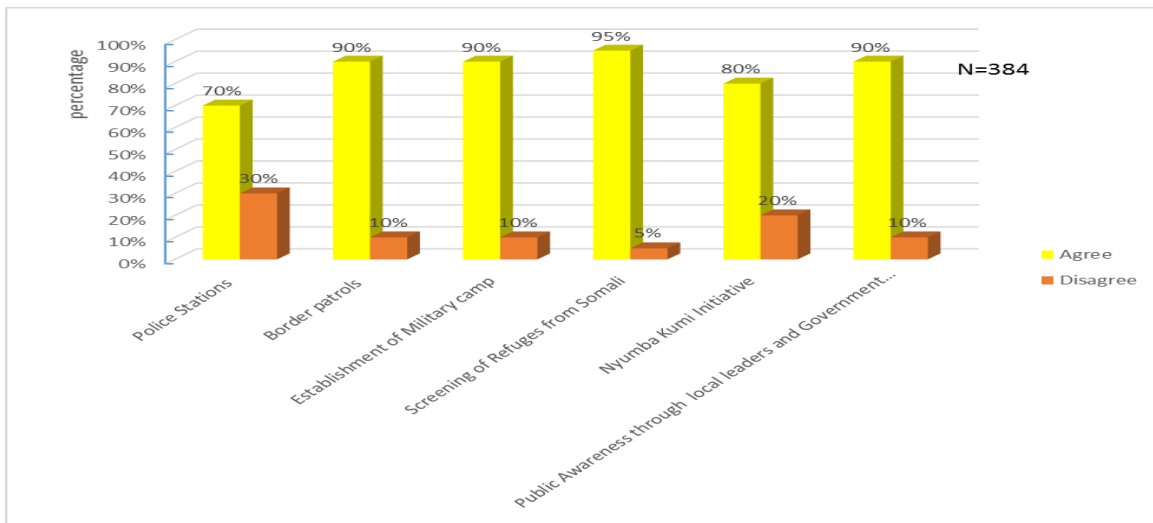


Fig 4.2:- Mechanism put in Place by the Government to Curb Al-shabaab activities in Garissa County
Source: Field Data 2018

• *Police Stations*

The Study sought to establish the extent to which police stations were a concern in the study area. The result in figure 6.2 indicated that out of 384 household heads 268 (70%) of the respondents asserted that the need for police stations was a major concern as compared to a 116 (30 %) who were of the contrary opinion. Police stations which is mainly associated with beefing up security among community members, is a factor that respondents agreed to be a major factor that has often been overlooked or given little regard among community members with people continuing to fall victims of heinous acts of terror.

Reiterating the household heads findings, on the need for more police stations, the regional commander asserted that, formation of anti-terrorist police unit (ATPU) in all sub-counties for efficient and effective response to terrorist

activities was preponderant. Besides, exposure to how past terrorist attacks evolved and what their root causes are, help develop a deeper understanding that can, if done right, translate into improved day-to-day policing.

More police stations can also help in developing simulation: where police officers boost their training levels by simulating possible attacks and learning to get into the mindset of the “terrorist criminal” by studying a group.

These findings are corroborated with social distance theory that asserts that high levels of social distance between perpetrators and victims increases mass casualty. Therefore, establishment of police stations is a terror deterrent, though perpetrators view the police, affiliated to the government, as obstruction in their quest to commit heinous acts. De la Roche (1996) & Black (2004), suggest that mass casualty can be

avoided when the distance between the protectors (the police) and the victims is narrowed against the perpetrators of terror-Al-Shabaab. These findings therefore, suggest that when more police stations are established the residents can be cushioned from unwarranted attacks from Al-shabaab.

The GoK in 2013 divided CT roles between the three arms of the National Police Service: the Anti-Terrorism Police Unit, the Kenya Police consisting of the civil police, the Directorate of Criminal Investigation, the paramilitary General Services Unit and the Administration Police; and the non-police agencies like the KDF, the National Intelligence Service and installation of more police stations, was part of this restructuring. However, much has not been realized due to the fact that, more, yet intensified trainings, are yet to be carried out in all levels of security operations. Ploch (2011) observes that, since the Kenyan government created the Anti-Terror Police Unit, the government has been muscling up efforts on preventing the migration of foreign fighters, including Kenyan nationals, to join Al-Shabaab in neighboring Somalia. Several attacks by Al-Shabaab militants against and inside Kenya, made the Kenyan government to realize that terrorism is a cross-border crime and a national security threat. This necessitated the formation of a multi-agency mechanism, effective coordination of key actors and a coordinating mechanism as national CT focal point. In September 2003, a CT strategy paper was approved since its conception in April 2003 and presented to the Kenyan Cabinet. As a result, NCTC was established and inaugurated on the 27th of January 2004. This document sets precedence in fighting external aggression by a militant group, thus the need to establish more police stations with technical as well as abrasive skills to militate against Al-shabaab activities.

From the foregoing, it is evident that effectiveness in the adoption and implementation of more police stations as a mechanism, relates to how best the mechanism has been regarded and employed. This entails the communication, interpretation and adoption strategies put in place so as to realize its importance. From these findings, it can be stated that putting more police stations as a mechanism is not just a mere structural effort but an important aspect in helping the community be adequately prepared to fight Al-shabaab. The effectiveness of police stations needs to be considered in the context of enhancing patrols and tightening vigilance. Their specific purpose and their functions also need to be considered along the border. Police station focus on increasing or maintaining security and wellbeing and 'stopping things from occurring-Al-shabaab activities.

C. Establishment of military camps

The study sought to establish whether there was need for establishing military camps that could avert possible terror attack. The results in figure 6.2 showed that out of 384 respondents, a whopping 346 (90 %) acknowledged that, military camps have been established within the county and have served a preponderant purpose in curbing terrorism. However, 38 (10%) of the respondents were cagey and

therefore did not agree that such mechanism to curb terrorism had been put in place to combat terrorism in the County. This is due to the fact that there were still sporadic attacks that were being witnessed in a few areas that became new conduits for terrorists.

Military camps play a vital role in foiling attempts of terror attacks. Many countries have special counterterrorism units, which are brought into play to deal with situations involving terrorists. They have specially trained police or military forces designed to deal with situations in which terrorism groups have captured hostages. Kenya has continually faced terrorist threat from Somali-based terrorist group Al-Shabaab, against which the Kenya Defense Forces have engaged in military operations in Somalia since 2011 as part of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (Country Reports on Terrorism, 2016).

A more recent example includes the use of American and British Special Forces units, including 22SAS, to disrupt Sunni and Shia insurgent activity in Baghdad, notably the suicide and car-bomb attacks committed by al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). The establishment of military along the borders of Baghdad has helped fight terrorism. In this light, the efforts of Special Forces were lauded as key step in fighting terror (Hughes, 2011)

According to the findings from the regional commander, prioritizing terrorism activities by all security agencies in the county and coordination/multiagency approach to terrorist activities was a key role. In this light, establishment of more tailored military camps would serve the purpose of curbing terrorism along the border lines. While the government has made laudable efforts in putting in place more stations, those efforts have proved to be insufficient in areas of corruption, border control and security.

The military, as an instrument of power, to some extent has not effectively been used to combat terrorism. A reference point is 1998 terrorist attack in Nairobi. This was due to the notion that terrorist activities were not as pervasive as could have been little imagined. The reality that porous border land were entry point for terrorists, were far peripheral a thought. Nevertheless the military needs surveillance along Kenya-Somalia border to protect Garissa County from Al-Shabaab inroads and attacks. Since 2002, the government increased security along the Kenya-Somalia border and participates in U.S Counterterrorism Combined Joint Task Force in Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) for counterterrorism. This initiative utilizes US training of regional militaries in fighting Al-Shabaab and is in tandem with CJTF-HOA's mission of detecting, disrupting and defeating transnational terrorism so observes (Fisher-Thompson, 2004)

Further, Adan (2005) argues that this training has bolstered Kenya's military preparedness. However, the military still lacks efficient, effective real-time communication equipment within the camp establishment. This assertion

resonates with the household respondents who felt that the establishment of military camps had not achieved much. In evaluating the effectiveness of establishment of the camps to fight Al-Shabaab, the focus was on assessing the government's use of the instrument of power in averting possible or future attacks in Garissa County. Thus, to determine the overall effectiveness of this particular variable, the findings from the majority of household respondents, suggested that this mechanism was highly effective.

D. Screening of Refugees from Somalia

Refugees from Somalia have been zeroed in as potential perpetrators of terrorism. The study therefore sought to find out whether there is mechanism put in place to check the movement of the Somali refugee as they traverse into Kenya. Amongst the household respondents, 365 (95 %) agreed to the inquiry that the refugees are being screened as a way to avert possible threat. On the contrary, 19 (5 %) of the respondents did not agree that such initiative has been put in place to militate against terrorism. The overwhelming appreciation of the fact that screening of refugees was being conducted indicated that the respondents had sufficient knowledge of cross border requirement.

Screening is not only part of physical security but also involves intensified night patrols along the border and main supply router (MSR's) to prevent terrorist group from infiltrating into the county specially at the refugee camps which is a safe haven for terrorist. It is a known fact that causes, sources, operations and targets of terrorism have largely become transnational. In fact, terrorism has transnational dynamics. This is a precise reason why migration controls through screening of refugees with migration control instruments are seen as appropriate tool for militating against terrorism.

Albeit it is not possible to draw as well as confirm a natural nexus between terrorism and Islamic migration conduits for terrorists, it is nevertheless true to assert that, these migration control mechanisms along the border might help monitor and prevent possible attacks by the terrorists (Cinoglu & Altun, 2013). Integration of security elements, and conducting thorough immigrant's identity as well as determination of forgery and falsification of documents are a raft of measures that can be adopted. However, these measures have been obscured by apparent lack of enforcement as well as presence of porous border without properly instituted check points.

States that are also party to the Cartagena Declaration or the 1969 OAU Convention have also incorporated broader definition of a refugee, recognizing individuals fleeing generalized violence and other breakdowns of public order. Against this background, it may be understood why stringent measures in containing refugee movements are necessary. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 also offers protections to refugees with regards to Chapter IV which guarantees the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual. Refugees face numerous

difficulties and their human rights are often breached. Most refugees in Kenya live in terrible conditions in refugee camps where food, water, sanitation and shelter are not adequately provided. Refugees are often times not allowed into Kenya.

The Refugee Act (2006) lays down provisions relating to recognition of refugees and asserts the principle of non-refoulement and codifies the rights and duties of refugees in Kenya and it is mandated to coordinate activities and programmes relating to refugees.

Kenya is the country hosting the fourth largest number of refugees in the world, behind Pakistan, Iran and Germany, according to the UNHCR's 2012 annual Global Trends report.

The refugees are mainly from South Sudan and Somalia fleeing civil wars due to political strife in their countries. Nzwili (2015) asserts that, the two refugee camps in Kenya are Kakuma and Daadab. Kirui & Mwaruvie (2012) assert that, refugee camps often do pose security challenges for host countries. The freedom of refugee movement is a fundamental human right which is protected by numerous treaties and agreements. However, for Somali refugees, it is harder to acquire the movement pass as they have to undergo serious vetting before being granted the pass. This is screening in verity. This stringent process was necessitated by the government on the basis of security reasons and fear of terrorism (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Human Rights Watch (2009) further noted that the criteria for a valid reason to obtain a Movement Pass has been developed on an ad hoc basis over time, are not prescribed by law or regulation, and are not available in written form.

E. Nyumba Kumi Initiative

Nyumba Kumi initiative was founded by the government some years ago as part of security policy and strategy to improve security. In view of this, the study sought to ascertain whether the Nyumba Kumi initiative had been rolled out as a security mechanism against terrorism and if it had been effective. The results in figure 6.2 revealed that 307 (80 %) agreed that such initiative has been put in place as compared to 77 (20 %) who were of the contrary opinion. The majority felt that information sharing between the government authorities and the members of public would be extremely effective in curbing Al-Shabaab activities.

The foregoing position is held by Botha (2013) who observes that the police have a critical role of engaging with local communities to increase their ability to identify individuals at risk of falling to violent extremism of Al-Shabaab. Nyumba Kumi initiative which is associated with streamlining security matters among communities, are factor that those who did not agree with viewed as lacking the goodwill. The reasons for failing to share information with the County included lack of confidence in the country's legal system and fear of intimidation by the Police. The respondents believed that some public are not convinced that the witness protection machinery is sufficient enough and therefore

recommended a scrutiny of the witness protection Act in view of strengthening Nyumba Kumi. Mkutu's et al (2014) argument, correspond to the immediate claim, that, protection Act needs fastening in order to help gathering sufficient intelligence needed. They opine among other issues, that the public complain about failure of rapid response to crime, petty corruption, and poor protections of witnesses and police brutality as hindrances in fighting violence instigated by terror groups. Such fears, they note, have hampered intelligence gathering and exacerbated illegal forms of community 'security', thus Nyumba Kumi initiative has still been elusive concept to some extent.

Strengthening of Nyumba Kumi was further supported by the evidence from Regional Commander who asserted that:

"The use of Nyumba Kumi as a community policy that aids in collection of information and facilitate action and coordination with local administrators (chiefs and village elders) in curbing terrorism. (Interview Security Agency Regional Commander - 18/5/2018)

The findings from household heads were in resonance with community policing adopted in Kenya in 2013. According to Ruteere and Pommerolle (2003), Nyumba Kumi is an ambiguous concept that acquires diverse meaning in the minds of different actors and different circumstances. Majority of the respondents agreed that Nyumba Kumi, a community policing tool, is a way of dealing with runaway crimes-violent terror attacks within the study area. More precisely, Nyumba Kumi initiative deals with building confidence and trust in the community. Despite the obscurity exhibited by other respondents, the study focused on the broader approach to know in-depth-significance of Nyumba Kumi.

From the immediate explication, the conceptualization of Nyumba Kumi as a mechanism to help deconstruct the concept of curbing terrorism, emphasizes the sole responsibility of everybody in curbing terrorism. NK helps the community to have its voice heard and actively engage in counterterrorism measures. Though NK serves a number of purposes, this study focused on knowing how it can be used effectively to mitigate terrorism rather than just having a mere knowledge of its existence in the study area. The study found out that NK is an effective tool to ward off Al-Shabaab activities.

Garissa County has faced hurdles in realizing fully the benefits of this initiative. This is supported by the respondents who felt that NK has not been entrenched in their communities due to insecurity challenges posed by Al-Shabaab. This is hinged upon cooperation, partnership and promoting communication between the citizen and the police.

Albeit Nyumba Kumi has failed in some counties such as Lamu, with 72490 crime cases reported in 2016 as compared to 69736 cases in 2014 (KPS 2014, Mukinda 2016), the initiative in Garissa county is a milestone. However, much still needs to be done to address the concerns of the

respondents of contrary opinion. The fight against al-Mujahidin cannot be fought while human rights abuse is tolerated. The use of force, raiding people's houses and subjective detention cannot substitute the efficacy of Nyumba Kumi initiative and therefore NK should be embraced as preponderant tool in ameliorating the suffering of the local communities (Ndili, 2014).

An important goal of Nyumba Kumi is to provide higher security service to neighborhoods; therefore, neighborhood resilience is enhanced. This becomes an important measure of effectiveness.

F. Public Awareness through local leaders and government officials

Public awareness is another cynosure that the study sought to find its feasibility in the study area. According to figure 6.2, 346 (90 %) of the total respondents agreed that sensitization exercises had been conducted through public awareness. However, 38 (10 %) did not agree to the fact that public awareness has been carried out in the County. The plausible reason is that, they were either ignorant of public awareness or segregated from key County machineries. The study blamed the government for lacking goodwill in countering terrorism. The respondents expect the state to be the lead agency in the fight against terrorism. It should bring together the citizens regardless of religion and educate them that terrorism is a common enemy whose impact affects people regardless of their religious orientation.

These sentiments were echoed by one of the local chiefs' who sought for anonymity. He said:

"Jamii inaandaliwa kupigana na kundi haramu la Al-shabaab kupitia uhamasisho wa waume na wake katika mikutano. Tunawafundisha jinsi ya kuwasialiana wao kwa wenyewe na kuripoti visa vya kigaidi. (The local community is better prepared to fight Al-Shabaab by engaging men and women in baraza meetings. Additionally we train people how they can communicate with one another and report incidences of perceive terror.) (Garissa chief)

Despite the efforts put in place to sensitize the people on how to fight Al-Shabaab, great concern for respondents of contrary opinion still remains a significant issue. More efforts need to be put to address these concerns of the respondents who felt that much has not been done to address Al-Shabaab activities in the study area.

G. The Role of Local community in Curbing Al-shabaab activities in Garissa County

The study sought information on whether the local community plays any role in curbing Al-shabaab activities in Garissa County. Figure 4.3 presents the finding to this inquiry.

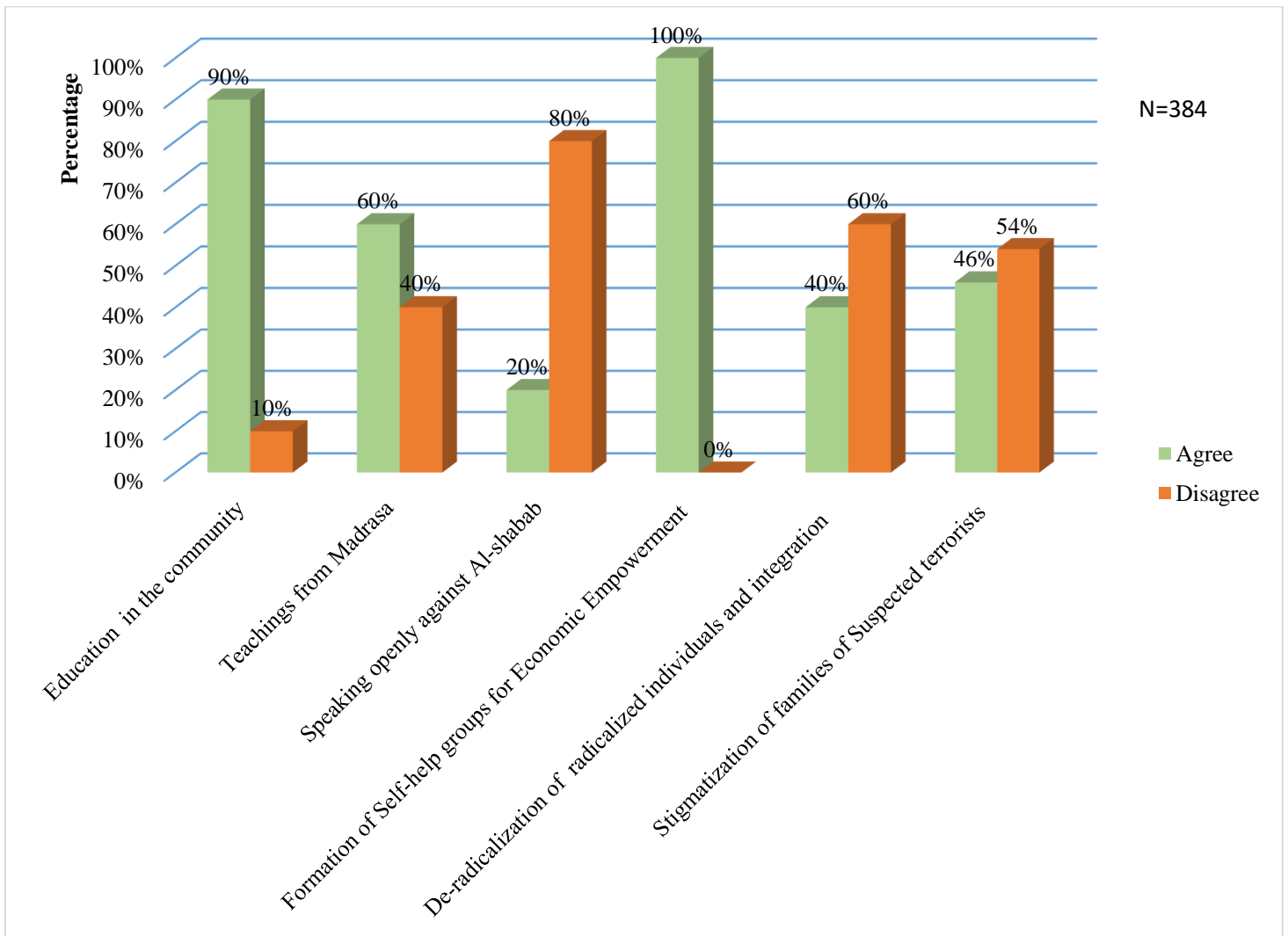


Fig 4.3:- Role of Local community in Curbing Alshabab activities in Garisa County

Source: Field Data, 2018

From the results, the majority of the respondents (59%) indicated that local community plays an important role in curbing Al-Shabaab activities while 41% indicated that the local community does not play any significant role in curbing the activities of the Al-Shabaab. This implies that local community gets the support they require from the County government in dealing with terrorism.

Local communities play significant role in curbing terrorism. Among the respondents who agreed that local community plays a vital role in curbing security, unity factor emerged as an important interplay in the fight against terrorism. The household respondents therefore were in agreement that this was important in immigrant and minority communities where perceptions and fears of terrorism cross-cut key countermeasures. They also indicated that community meetings and advisory committee were avenues to express

concerns and provide feedback on how terrorism can be curbed.

Chome (2016) opines that, the Somalia-based Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen continues to influence the politics of the region and has proved adept at exploiting community risk factors in gaining a foothold in Garissa. Therefore, the local community must frustrate attempts of Al-shabaab in attacking the locals. Though Al-Shabaab’s success in convincing Kenyans to join its ranks is determined by the interplay of reliance and risks factors in Garissa County. Community also plays a preponderant role in building local networks of civic engagement that are inter-clan and associational. Lauren (2016) identifies collective action as key role that communities play in militating against violence and conflict. She also emphasizes citizen participation and

community attachment that further a common purpose in fighting violence.

From the foregoing it can be stated that local community has played a key role in fighting Al-Shabaab despite incidences of unbelief and skepticism from some respondents.

- *Education in the Community*

The study sought to establish whether the local community plays any role in encouraging education in the community. From figure 6.3, the results indicate that 346 (90 %) of the respondents agreed that the local community plays a preponderant role in promoting education. On the contrary, 38 (10%) of the total respondents did not agree with fact that the local community plays any role in encouraging education in curbing the activities of Al-shabaab in Garissa County. These findings were also a confirmation that education on Quran and violence are taken serious matter by the local community. Part of the respondents attest to the fact that Islam like its monotheistic cousins, Judaism and Christianity, is a religion whose sacred scripture, history and tradition include both peace and violence.

A burden of understanding of Jihad and violence is also shared. From the respondents' perspective, education on Jihad and violence is emphasized from Quran 9:5. This verse has been viewed as 'sword verse' by Islamic extremists. The understanding by the local community on Quran 9:5, for example, is corroborated by Esposito (2015) who argue that, polemical critics of Islam and Muslims terrorist are to blame for education in this line of thought. Esposito further argues that, to assert that the religion of Islam is a violent religion that commands the killings of Jews and Christians is defeatist and a version propagated by critics. Al Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram have used these verse to justify unconditional warfare on unbelievers and Al-Shabaab is no exception. This section of the verse is often overlooked," "But if they repent, perform the prayer and pay the zakat, then let them go their way, for God is forgiving and kind" (9:5).

Education is an emancipation tool. Therefore, engaging the local community effectively in education efforts require, first and foremost a proper understanding by the public of the role in ensuring that education plays significant role in curbing the activities of Al-Shabaab. Promoting educational program on awareness of terrorist threats is critical to inspire and mobilize the members of the community to play active role and take necessary precaution regarding their safety.

In Israel every citizen is used to living his/her life in the shadow of terrorism with fear of religious extremism. In this vein, education plays a pivotal role in the local communities. The public are informed to understand terrorism in its proper context vis-à-vis other threats of safety and homeland security. In this regard the household heads respondents confirmed that this was work that has been done and is ongoing. Thus education plays a vital role in helping the locals in fighting Al-Shabaab. The locals are equipped with apposite skills and

techniques that help them better understand sustainable solutions to fighting terror.

- *Teachings from Madrasa*

Islamism encourages as well as values Madrasa for propagation of Islamism as a fundamental drive of Islamic faith. The study sought to find out if the local community plays a part in monitoring teachings from madrassas. From the results in figure 6.3 230 (60 %) of the total respondents concurred that monitoring exercises are conducted and the level of aptitudeness ascertained by community leaders. However, 184 (40%) of the respondents did not concur with this inquiry. This outcome brings out clearly the fact that Al-Shabaab activities remain threat in Garissa and in Kenya. However, uncommon it may be, the County is not safe from terrorism attack. This calls for more concerted effort by the local community to monitor the teachings from the Madrassas.

The findings from the household heads were supported by those from the key informants. The regional Commander indicated that:

Al-shabaab group conforms and profess Islam hence making it look like religious violence though not so because Al-shabaab activities is inhuman and even targets innocent civilians in Somali. However, radicalization and recruitment take places in the local mosques and madrassas targeting young boys and clerics who are susceptible for recruitment into terrorist group. Al-shabaab terrorist group target mosques and madarasa since it's easy to radicalize, where Quranic teaching are used to indoctrinate students, certain madrassas probed due to the rate of radicalization taking place in it that is madarasatul Najah within Garissa town, where one of the Al-shabaab commander was once a teacher and many students have joined terrorist group.

(Interview Security agency Regional Commander - 18/5/2018)

These findings indicated that madrassas are possible conduit for radicalization and thus there is need to monitor the teachings in Madrassas. Further, the findings were corroborated by another Imam who postulated that:

Alshabaab target Madarasas, duksi (informal education schools) and mosques to indoctrinate young boys and Imams that actually don't have much knowledge in Islamic teachings and laws as well as Quran. This gives then opportunities to recruit youths to join terrorist's groups.

- *(Sheikh Ahmed imam daadab mosque 18/5/2018)*

The process of education in Al-shabaab is tailored upon several stages which included; Radicalization – recruitment – violent extremism – Military training (use of weapons) - graduation – posting. All these stages, element of indoctrination, always continue with the view of reminding the recruits that they are in Jihad. This is preached by senior Al-shabaab commanders. The narratives during preaching are

quoted from the Quran to justify such activities (basically preaching on killing infidels and imposing Islamic Sharia and formation of caliphate). These findings reflect the nature of teachings that goes on in Madrasas when monitoring mechanisms are neglected.

Effectiveness of teachings that centers on cultural identity, peace building and restoration are enhanced through tolerant madrasa sessions. In this light, religious actors can play a role as educators and help people into more accommodating views of religious doctrine (Hayward, 2012). These assertions are in agreement with the findings from the respondents and therefore tolerant teachings from madrasas plays a unifying role.

- *Open speaking against Al-Shabaab*

Cases of reprisal attacks are not new in Kenya and so Garissa has not been an exception. Such attacks that emanates from covert actions by the community, are often triggered by disclosure of personal identity. According to figure 6.3, 77 (20%) of the household heads agreed that the local community dares to confront Al-Shabaab by openly speaking against it. On the contrary, when asked to share instances where community has spoken out to condemn Al-Shabaab, a whopping 307 (80 %) of the respondents did not agree to this inquiry. The findings are alarming and clearly portray the level of fear in fighting the militia group. It points out that much has to be done in building confidence as well as the capacities to bravely confront Al-Shabaab.

Despite having three quarters of the household respondents not agreeing whether speaking openly against Al-Shabaab was anything to mention, let alone discussing, the minority's response was backed by an Imam who agreed that overt characterization and rebuke against Al-Shabab was something present, this is what he said:

An action by Al-shabbab is irreligious since it does not conform to the teachings of Islam and practice of Prophet Mohammed (Pbuh) because they have little understanding of Quranic interpretation. For example, Jihad during the prophetic time was necessitated by the fact there was need to spread Islam and this was done in a systematic revelation of Quran to the prophet on that. For example, the prophet uses to write to the kings of Christian kingdoms telling them about Islam as the true religion others have accepted i.e. the Oman empires while the roman refused and later faced by combat Mujahiden (foreign fighters) as per instructions from the prophet that the adversaries are given date, where and the numbers of soldiers who will fight them. (Prior Knowledge) is given to the enemy which is a major requisite for Jihadism which Alshabaab are not confirming to it. Secondly, that Jihad can only be directed by one Imam or Muslim leader who authorizes Jihad but in the current Muslim worlds there is no one Muslim leader (or Imam). Thirdly, there should be some justifiable reason that compel or call for Jihad, which there is no such reason in the contemporary world. (Sheikh Issack chairman of imams in Garissa County)

These findings further resonated with UNSOM (2017) carried out in South Central Somalia, where respondents reported that public condemnation was scant or nonexistent due to widespread fear and the pervasive culture of mistrust. However, this lack of action does not mean that community members do not harbor private resistance to the group.

The contemporary terror threats in the Horn of Africa mostly emanate from the terrorist organization- Al-Shabaab, and Garissa County has been on the receiving end of heinous attacks. The household heads respondents were largely in fear of openly rebuking Al-Shabaab. Though they labelled and considered Al-Shabaab a terror group, Al-Shabaab is typified as a dispersed entity with its ruling class picked from different conflicting clans and thus raising the possibility of internal political wrangles. This study sought to underscore whether the community in the study area speak against Al-Shabaab. From the results above, it is evident that majority of the respondents do fear referring to Al-Shabaab. However, considering this mechanism and day to day operations, this strategy is remote and still unattainable in the war against Al-Shabaab.

- *Formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for Economic Empowerment*

Self-help groups have unprecedentedly become the economic mainstay of many communities. The study sought to establish the role the local community plays in formation of self-help groups for economic empowerment. From figure 6.3, it was evident that the local community has actively and most significantly played a vital role in the formation of self-help group as a way of empowering the community. All the household heads respondents 384 representing a 100% of the information got from the findings agreed that the local community plays a huge role. This they argued, helps in cushioning them against the outcome of a terror attack.

These findings were supported by Lawson Mc Dowall *et al* (2016), who argue that SHGs are Community –Based Approach to microfinance. Greater resilience to diversify shocks and stresses caused by activities of Al-Shabaab is an important aspect of SHGs. SHGs also supports livelihood assets, thus strengthening resilience. According to the respondents, SHGs are essential tool for empowering marginalized parts of the study area population.

This study also found out that, the communities engage in training members to enhance economic resilience by strengthening capacities within and beyond financial capabilities. Credit alone is not sufficient. Therefore, there was needs to take cognisance of financial management and specific technical skills such as livestock rearing.

Though this research demonstrates that SHGs can enhance economic power, the evidence that it can effectively contribute to social and human dimensions of livelihood and resilience still remains fragmentary and elusive. Additionally,

albeit SHGs can promote and accelerate economic empowerment, they can be undermined by weak management, constant retaliatory attacks from Al-Shabaab insurgency as well as by lack of transparency.

- *De-radicalization of radicalized youths and Integration*

A majority of the respondents said that the local community was not contributing as expected to the re-integration of formally radicalized individuals back into the society. This was represented by 230 (57.1%) of the respondents. Conversely, 154 (40 %) of the respondents agreed that the local community is playing an integral role in re-integrating the formally radicalized individuals back to the society. The County government of Garissa was perceived to be doing little in sensitizing the local community in the re-integration process.

The role of the community cannot be underestimated in re-integration process. This is because terrorism evolves into other uncharacteristic ways and can potentially lead back the formally radicalized individuals into radicalization. Therefore a strong community is vital in re-integration, rehabilitation and prosperity. When asked why they thought the community does not re-integrate the formally radicalized individuals, majority of the respondents said that the individuals have created an ingrained credence of appetizing opportunities from Al-Shabaab.

These findings were supported by response from one of the formally radicalized youth. When asked why community's effort towards re-integration was mooching, this is what he had to say:

I was attracted to join terrorist/ Al-shabaab for economic gain. They are offered good remuneration of about 500 USD per month for the first three months, however, salary was delayed later due to financial constraints emanating from constant offensive attacks from Amisom troops and reduction of contraband goods this forced Alshabaab to resort to forceful collection zakat from pastoralist living along the border and those under the area of their control. We were also radicalised to fight the infidels (Kufar) and advocate the rights of Muslims in Northern Kenya and coast regions where prominent Muslims clerics were killed by Kenyan security agency this on the other hand motivated us to join terrorist. When we came we rescinded our support for Al-Shabaab and came back we met strong opposition because we are perceived as betrayers. This affected us in being accepted back in the community. (Radicalised youths Respondent One – 20/5/2018)

This study found out that reintegration of formally radicalized individuals is not enough as there are several factors such as stigmatization and criminogenic environments that seriously undermine reintegration. Furthermore, de-radicalization is fundamentally a psychological and cognitive process, where individuals go through fundamental change. However, de-radicalization is not akin to disengagement since

some individuals were reported of exhibiting a violent-bent mind. Thus, the notion that reintegration is a dynamic system, which depends on the context in which it is applied and involves overtime, is fundamental to the whole reintegration process.

De-radicalization, according to Kundnani (2009), refers to a substantive change in a person's mind-set, so that they no longer hold radical ideologies or beliefs and in turn, no longer engage in terrorist related activities due to that change in beliefs which would help in re-integration process. However, Bjorgo (2009) identifies that there are both 'push' and 'pull' factors that are equally important in the decision for a terrorist to leave their terrorist group. Pull factors regard positive motivators from outside the group influencing the individual. They may become intimately attached to someone from outside the group, for example, or they may be drawn away from the group to pursue a new career. Push factors can typically be seen a negative motivators, such as the individual becoming disillusioned with the ideologies of the group, or fearing lack of protection or retaliation. Though re-education and rehabilitation programs are ideological, it is imperative to escalate the efforts further.

- *Stigmatization of families of suspected terrorists*

The results in Figure 6.3 show that from the 384 respondents interviewed; 177 (46 %) agreed that the local community addresses stigmatization of families of suspected terrorists while 207 (54%) disagreed and said that the local community does little in addressing stigma cases among the families of suspected terrorists. Stigmatization of families of suspected terrorists was therefore a major concern of the respondents. They also indicated that the County as well as the national government has not empowered the local community to address cases of stigma among the stigmatized families.

The human cost of terror activities has been virtually felt in every corner of the globe and Garissa County has not been spared. Families suffer from shock and stress when they learn that their children, relatives and friends are engaged in terrorism in the name of religion. In this lens, certain aspects of consideration come to the fore. The right to life of suspected terrorists, incessant torture, profiling and principle of non-discrimination plays a critical role in addressing stigmatization. Families need to be protected. In the same vein, data protection and surveillance and right to privacy of families linked to suspected terrorist is vital.

Social Exclusion Unit of the UK government (2016) in particular, alludes to the histories of social exclusion that many terrorist suspect have suffered prior to, and as a result, of their incarceration. Schneider (2015) referring to activities of Boko Haram, argues that, stigmatization, a form of social exclusion, can emanate from discrimination, marginalization, unemployment, lack of education. This assertion is in tandem with the fact that the local population has not been empowered socially and economically. When these aspects play out, then the terror suspects who come back to the society are looked at

with disdain. While addressing the case of Pakistan religious group, Diwalri *et al* (2014), assert that a backdrop of discrimination enables and facilitates continued violence against religious minorities. A stellar case has been witnessed in the upsurge of sectarian violence against the Shi'a Muslim community, particularly Hazara Shi'a.

These findings confirms that stigmatization of families regardless of religion, creed or caste is still a tall order. Thus more sustainable means should be adopted to uproot stigmatization of individuals in the study area.

V. CONCLUSION

The study established that, established that there were mechanisms put in place in curbing Al-Shabaab activities. It also seemed unlikely that any single mechanism could help in curbing Al-Shabaab activities in Garissa. The study also found out that despite mechanisms put place, there were multiple and diverse pathways that were still being explored by Al-Shabaab. The reality is that, there are many factors that can bear on individual's or community's role in curbing Al-Shabaab activities. Still, it is worth noting that there is a reactive quality to most of the mechanism identified. Of all the mechanisms employed, Self Help Groups (SHGs) stood out as a key mechanism put by the local community in Garissa County. Therefore, SHGs play an important role in supporting livelihood, strengthening financial capabilities as well as building a resilient community. On the other hand the government's role in curbing terrorism was evident through establishment of police stations and military camps.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends improved approach on the re-integration of formally radicalized individuals back into the society and a tailored re-integration system that breaks the cycle of radicalization. In conjunction with this, a sustained effort through community policy that incorporate dynamic security understanding on radicalization should be put in place. This should be churned out by both national and county governments with the help of community members who are the most affected by Al-shabaab activities.

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