# WE DON'T TRUST ANYONE

## STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS AS THE KEY TO REDUCING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN KENYA

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September 2016

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# CONTENTS

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **CC** | County commissioner |
| **FGD** | Focus group discussion |
| **IPK** | Islamic Party of Kenya |
| **IPOA** | Independent Policing Oversight Authority |
| **KII** | Key informant interview |
| **KMYA** | Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance |
| **MRC** | Mombasa Republican Council |
| **SEMG** | United Nations Monitoring Group for Eritrea and Somalia |

# 1
# INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

In April 2016, International Alert, in partnership with the Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA), began a rapid assessment of the factors that have fuelled or mitigated violence in six selected neighbourhoods: Pumwani and Eastleigh in Nairobi; and Likoni, Old Town, Kisauni and Majengo in Mombasa. The neighbourhoods were selected following a review of media, scholarly, government and civil society reports.

This partnership builds on KMYA's intimate knowledge of the issues faced by Muslim communities, especially young Muslims, and combines it with Alert's 30 years of experience in peacebuilding across the world, as well as experience of violent extremism in other contexts.

Active since 2003, KMYA represents over 150 community organisations. It empowers young Muslims through constructive engagement and participation in nurturing healthy, democratic, peaceful and just societies for all. KMYA also promotes tolerance and peaceful inter-religious and inter-ethnic coexistence. Its goals are accomplished through targeted coaching, networking, dialogue, research and communication, health-related programmes, information sharing and advocacy.

Alert approaches violent extremism from a multidimensional, context-specific perspective. The organisation explores the different social, political and individual drivers of conflict at a local level, which create a vacuum to which extremist groups respond. We look at the vulnerability factors that are created by dynamics such as disruptive social contexts, deprivation of personal needs, poor economic opportunities, failures in governance, and breakdowns in community and citizen–state relationships. We explore the relationships within and between these different factors to build an understanding of why people choose to fight and, critically, what builds resilience among the majority. We use this information to work with different stakeholders to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability.

Based on an initial literature review, we carried out a qualitative field study including 14 key informant interviews (KIIs) followed by six focus group discussions (FGDs) with over 60 participants in each neighbourhood. The research targeted communities that are considered vulnerable to violent extremism.

This rapid assessment helped us tease out some of the key issues that affect communities' vulnerability or resilience to radicalisation and violence. The respondents consistently focused on:

- socio-economic changes associated with rapid urbanisation and internal migration during the 1990s;
- divisions within and between communities; a sense of marginalisation of Muslims on the coast and in Nairobi; the spillover effects of events in Somalia;
- the ability of radical imams and ideologies to leverage the divisions between communities, and the sense of frustration created by adverse social change;
- the combined effects of a demographic youth bulge with intensified competition for socio-economic opportunities, and a widening sense of marginalisation and exclusion;
- the erosion of the legitimacy of public institutions, which are unable to provide basic services and are perceived as culturally distant;
- the securitisation of the government's responses to violent extremism, which seems to further reduce citizens' trust in government institutions and weaken communal mechanisms of resilience.

Our research hypothesis, based on Alert's work elsewhere, was that resilience to violent extremism can be linked to the strength of three kinds of relationships: between and within communities; between generations; and between citizens and the state. This was indeed the case, and we found evidence that the erosion of all three relationships was correlated with reduced resilience. Conversely, we also found instances where the existence of stronger relationships had helped reduce the risk of radicalisation and violence.

Our recommendations are therefore tailored to increase resilience through improved relationships. We have identified the need to improve state–citizen relations, promote inclusion and cohesion within and between communities, and develop a political economy that is able to bridge geographic and generational

gaps. Our most important recommendation is that government agencies seek to build the objective of improving such relationships into all initiatives, and, by so doing, rebuild resilience within society, even while meeting more specific goals and aims. For example, specific areas of intervention could include:

- improving basic public services to disadvantaged urban areas, while ensuring that the local networks that already provide such services are included in the process of consultation and delivery, thus improving citizen–state and intra- and inter-community relations;
- improving community policing and the government-led homeland security programme *Nyumba Kumi* (ten households) with an approach that is more bottom up, consultative and inclusive, working with different age and gender groups in order to ascertain their concerns and elicit their ideas;
- publicly accepting Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA) investigations that have identified heavy-handed policing; making a commitment to work with communities and avoid such events in the future;
- linking up with existing local self-help security networks in order to improve trust between citizens and the state security apparatus;
- taking advantage of the opportunities that the newly devolved county governance system presents for improving coordination and collaboration between county governors and commissioners; ensuring that both leaders engage in a coordinated way with local political elites, young people and religious leaders;
- engaging more consistently with religious leaders, and – in multi-faith neighbourhoods – with both Christian and Muslim religious leaders, as a way to improve citizen–state and inter-community relations;
- encouraging political, religious and community leaders of all ages to work together to offset divisive narratives between communities, and reduce the widespread stigmatisation of Muslims and Somalis in public discourse;
- creating new narratives of collaboration and Kenyan citizenship, through joint local initiatives for practical self-help and mutual help, community-level reconciliation and inter-ethnic solidarity;
- prioritising the issuing of national IDs to young Muslims and women; widely publicising this as a demonstration of the importance of citizenship and the obligations and rights it entails;
- working with youth groups, local government and local leaders to increase youth participation in government programmes for promoting livelihood opportunities;

- promoting development plans that help integrate marginalised regions into the national economy; engaging young people, community leaders and community networks in the design and implementation of these plans;
- working together with community leaders, young people and local government to monitor and reduce land grabbing on the coast and real estate speculation in urban areas.

The remainder of this research summary presents the background context and a summary of research findings, followed by broad conclusions and recommendations.

# 2
# NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

In Kenya, policies and practices to counter violent extremism face challenges including a dominant narrative that continues to understand violent extremism as an external, rather than a homegrown threat. Even where knowledge of the local contexts in which violent extremism emerges exists, policies and practices are not grounded in this knowledge. In addition, most violent extremism programmes seem to be driven by an over-simplistic identification of 'key drivers' of violent extremism, and fail to consider violent extremism as a complex phenomenon driven by the interplay of multiple dynamic factors.

Some informants described the widening gap between government institutions and informal networks in predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods as part of a historical process of marginalisation, which overlaps with an Islamic resurgence since the 1980s, and which has highly political overtones.

The narratives that emerged from the study place the dynamics and relations within the six neighbourhoods against the backdrop of a national context characterised by the real and perceived political and economic marginalisation of Muslim communities in Kenya. While access to power and economic opportunity in Kenya is highly correlated with ethnicity, Muslims concentrated in the coastal area, the northeast and parts of Nairobi have felt excluded from power in a country dominated by Christians (84% of the population).[1]

This widespread feeling of neglect has encouraged some Muslims to establish networks with Muslim organisations in the wider world, particularly in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Libya and Sudan. These organisations have provided services ranging from educational scholarships to infrastructure development.[2]

1 P. Gifford, Christianity, politics and public life in Kenya, London: Hurst, 2009; K. Kresse, Muslim politics in post-colonial Kenya: Negotiating knowledge on the double periphery, London: Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 2009, pp.576–94

2 H. Mwakimako, Muslim NGOs and community development: The Kenyan experience, in M. Bakari and S. S. Yahya (eds.), Islam in Kenya: Proceedings of the national seminar on contemporary Islam in Kenya, Nairobi: Mewa Publications, 1995

Since the 2007–08 post-electoral violence in Kenya, political activism on the issue of the marginalisation of coastal communities has increased.[3] For example, during 2010 and 2011 a group calling itself the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) made a simultaneous demand for a boycott of the 2013 general election and for the secession of coastal communities from Kenya. As an expression of coastal grievances, the call for secession and to boycott the election attracted a degree of public sympathy along the coast. The awakening of nativist politics in coastal areas was accompanied by localised cases of violence and an increase in extremist recruitment in a select number of mosques in Mombasa and the Pumwani neighbourhood of Nairobi.[4]

In their efforts to recruit Kenyan Muslims, Al-Shabaab propagandists have also attempted to weave coastal grievances into a wider narrative of Muslim persecution. In a 2012 video featuring Kenyan recruits, the then Al-Shabaab leader, Ahmed Godane, urged "the Muslims of Kenya" to "boycott the general elections and wage Jihad against the Kenyan military", which had started operations against the group in Somalia in October 2011.[5] Media releases by Al-Shabaab since 2014 confirm its strategy of leveraging Muslim grievances against the Kenyan state through a narrative of coastal and northeastern marginalisation and exclusion, relating this to global Jihadi goals.[6]

In this context, the introduction of the devolution process in 2010 was an important opportunity to bridge the gap between the state and citizens, but expectations seem to have been disappointed so far. New county governments are intended to command greater legitimacy than national government institutions, which are perceived as culturally and politically remote from Muslim neighbourhoods.[7] But central government institutions continue to exist at the local level, in parallel to county government structures, led by central government officials called county commissioners (CCs), who are appointed by, and are answerable to, the president.[8] On the coast (and in Mombasa in

3 International Crisis Group (ICG), Kenya's Coast: Devolution disappointed, ICG, Africa Briefing No. 121, July 2016

4 See, for example, A. Botha, Radicalisation in Kenya: Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council, Nairobi: Institute for Security Studies, ISS Paper 265, September 2014.

5 C. Anzalone, Al-Shabaab's tactical and media strategies in the wake of its battlefield setbacks, West Point: Combating Terrorism Center Sentinel 6, No. 3, 2013

6 D. M. Anderson and J. McKnight, Understanding Al-Shabaab: Clan, Islam and insurgency in Kenya, Journal of Eastern African Studies, 9(3), 2015, pp.536–57

7 Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa; two human rights activists, interview by the author, 8 June 2016, Mombasa; Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi

8 Republic of Kenya Public Service Commission, Framework for strengthening the delivery of national government functions at the county level, Nairobi: Republic of Kenya Public Service Commission, 2014, p.9

particular), the existence of CCs has aggravated local politics as CCs – not the county governor – are responsible for important public services such as education, immigration and security, and chair the county security committee.[9] Poor cooperation between CCs and locally elected politicians is seen as having further undermined the legitimacy of state institutions.

Our findings also suggest that historical tensions between centre and periphery and between state and citizens have been transferred to and intensified at the local and community level through recent processes of social change, urbanisation and internal migration. The 1990s witnessed the largest rural–urban migration in Kenyan history. In addition, the liberalisation policies that caused a decline in rural incomes and fuelled internal migration were accompanied by a collapse of the formal economy and a decline in, or disappearance of, public social services in both rural and urban areas.[10]

Internal migration was often mentioned as a source of challenges by respondents. Urbanisation in Kenya began along the coast long before British colonisation. Muslim communities established trading and kinship networks with the wider Islamic world, which were made possible by easy travel across the Indian Ocean. It was inhabitants of these coastal cities, such as Mombasa, who first established trading routes into the interior, which were later used by colonial officials in establishing inland administrative towns such as Nairobi. One of these settlements was Pumwani, which was opened in 1921 as the official location for African residents of Nairobi.[11] Other Muslim settlements in Nairobi include Kibera, which was designated for a small community of Sudanese Nubians, and Eastleigh, which was initially planned to accommodate Asians, but was later occupied by Somalis.[12]

In Mombasa, Muslims, especially Arab-Swahilis, enjoyed privileged access to institutions of authority, were allowed to maintain their traditional forms of government, and were issued freehold and leasehold titles to urban land. Christian communities tended to live in government quarters or housing estates,

9 N. Chome, 'Devolution is only for development?' Decentralization and elite vulnerability on the Kenyan coast, Critical African Studies, 7(3), p.9

10 See for example, M. Katumanga, A city under siege: Banditry and modes of accumulation in Nairobi, 1991–2004, Review of African Political Economy, 32(106), 2005; and Mitullah, W., Understanding Slums: Case Studies for the Global Report on Human Settlements 2003: The Case of Nairobi, Kenya, 2003, UNHABITAT, Nairobi.

11 L. White, The comforts of home: Prostitution in colonial Nairobi, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990; Youth leader, interview with author, 18 May 2016, Nairobi

12 A. Hake, African metropolis: Nairobi's self-help city, New York: St. Martin's, 1977

while Muslims, most of whom were born in Mombasa or elsewhere on the coast, dominated informal settlements, such as in the old neighbourhoods of Old Town and Majengo, and the Mombasa outskirts of Likoni and Kisauni. Migration into Mombasa by up-country Christian groups increased in the years after independence, and more moved into Likoni and Kisauni, where they rented rooms in Swahili-style housing. Increased pressure on land and social services reversed some of the privileges initially enjoyed by Arab-Swahili communities. A similar trend was witnessed in Pumwani and Eastleigh in Nairobi, the main difference being that migration into Eastleigh was by other Muslims: ethnic Somalis from the rest of Kenya and the Republic of Somalia.

There were reports of resentment in Mombasa against new migrants from up-country from as early as 1960, but the first well-known violent reaction against migrant communities was witnessed in 1997, when property was destroyed, hundreds were killed and thousands injured.[13] The underlying grievances leading to the violence included competition over land and perceptions of inequality.[14] Unconfirmed reports claimed that the 'nativist' violence that was again witnessed during the 2013 general elections in Mombasa, and blamed on the MRC, was incited by wealthy landowners in Mombasa who feared losing land to up-country migrants.[15]

In the Pumwani and Eastleigh neighbourhoods of Nairobi, pressure also increased on land and housing. In Pumwani, a general worsening of social conditions was blamed on increased rural–urban migration, coupled with urban poverty and political marginalisation during the post-independence period. Respondents in our research claimed that increasing pressure on land and housing had reduced opportunities for local residents, particularly young people.[16]

Eastleigh presents a slightly different case, where most of the newcomers, especially since the fall of the Siad Barre regime in Somalia in 1991, are ethnic Somali Muslims from the Republic of Somalia. Their trade networks have

13 Week of blood and tears, Daily Nation, 20 August 1997

14 A. Mazrui, Kayas of deprivation, Kayas of blood: Violence, ethnicity and the state in coastal Kenya, Nairobi: Kenya Human Rights Commission, 1997

15 J. Willis and N. Chome, Marginalization and political participation on the Kenya coast: The 2013 elections, Journal of Eastern African Studies, 8(1), 2014

16 Pumwani FGD report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi; resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016, Nairobi; imam, Pumwani Riyadha mosque, interview by the author, 21 May 2016, Nairobi; youth leader, interview with author, 18 May 2016, Nairobi

radically transformed Eastleigh, where "Somali refugees have brought capital, but also 'pieces' of politics, economics, culture and social relations from back home".[17] Their presence in Eastleigh is viewed with suspicion by non-Somali Kenyans, with a narrative that links Eastleigh with piracy in the Indian Ocean. In addition, respondents linked rising violence in Eastleigh to Al-Shabaab, especially since the Kenyan military operation that began in Somalia in late 2011 increased tension between Somalis and non-Somali Kenyans in Eastleigh.[18] Tensions also exist between Kenyan Somalis who settled in Eastleigh before 1990, and more recent Somali refugees.[19]

In a context characterised by momentous social change and real and perceived marginalisation, we looked at the strength of state–citizen, intra/inter-community and inter-generational relations as an indication of the six neighbourhoods' vulnerability to, or resilience against, radicalisation and violence.

17 N. Carrier and E. Lochery, Missing states? Somali trade networks and the Eastleigh transformation, Journal of Eastern African Studies, 7(2), 2013, p.336

18 Eastleigh FGD report, 22 June 2016, Nairobi

19 Ibid.

# 3
# SOCIAL RELATIONS AND RESILIENCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM

## 3.1 INTER- AND INTRA-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The first area we explored was the relationships between and within groups united by a shared identity, whether ethnic, religious, cultural or socio-economic. Functional relationships within and between communities are an essential element of community resilience to external shocks, and to the risk of recruitment to, and being victims of, violent extremism.

In both Mombasa and Nairobi, radical extremist groups have formed networks by affiliating with mosques and using them as channels for recruitment and funding. They have done so by leveraging a widespread narrative of Muslim 'victimisation' within a country dominated by Christians.

This narrative gained much of its traction from the experiences undergone by neighbourhoods in Nairobi and Mombasa, which were initially dominated by Muslim communities, since the 1990s. A feeling of lost power, communal humiliation and mistrust of government and incoming communities was widespread in Mombasa and Nairobi. The result, according to one respondent, is that:

> *"[Majengo] residents don't trust anyone or any institution, whether government, media, religious leaders or people from other communities, especially immigrants."*[20]

Key factors that emerged from the research and which reinforce this sense of vulnerability are:

- competition between locals and newcomers (mainly "up-country" Kenyans) over land and economic opportunity, especially when these tensions overlap

20 Gender activist and resident of Majengo, interview by the author, 6 June 2016, Mombasa

with religious fault lines and a growing narrative of "us versus them", as witnessed in Majengo, Kisauni, Likoni and Pumwani;
- the divisions between Kenyans and Somalis, and within the Kenyan-Somali community, fuelled by the military intervention in Somalia and the fight against Al-Shabaab, most visible in Eastleigh.

On a more positive note, the research found instances of inter-ethnic solidarity in places where communities have traditionally coexisted and have created strong inter-ethnic bonds, such as Old Town Mombasa. Especially in Pumwani, this solidarity also helps bridge divides between different religious communities.

Further details from our research in each location follow.

**Majengo:** There are few examples of inter-ethnic or inter-religious ties in Majengo in Mombasa.[21] In addition, pressure on land is increasing as new migrants continue to move into Majengo. This is mostly true for the younger generation of native residents, who are also experiencing declining economic opportunities. The informal nature of settlement in Majengo means that land claims are hotly contested, and are a central theme in local politics and social relations.[22] Contestations around access to land, employment and other urban resources provide much of the context around which inter-communal animosities revolve. This helps create narratives of 'us versus them', especially when inter-communal divisions align with religious identity.

**Kisauni:** In Kisauni, a community of nine sub-ethnic groups called the Mijikenda, which originate from Mombasa's immediate hinterland, have traditionally claimed primacy over land, based on original occupancy, ancestry and coastal heritage. Arab-Swahili landowners and up-country Kenyans reject these claims, citing their legal ownership of land, or on the basis of their Kenyan citizenship. These disputes at times have become violent, and have included forced evictions and forceful land takeovers by members of the community. There has also been a recent surge of migration into Kisauni, especially of non-coastal Kenyans. A new village in Kisauni, known as Nairobi Estate, symbolises the impact of this recent migration of mostly young, educated, middle-class Kenyans who work in the expanding local service industry. This trend invites local resentment, as local young people feel locked out of the growing local economy.

21 Majengo FGD report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa

22 Lauren Van Metre, Special report on community resilience and violent extremism in Kenya, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace and SAHAN Africa, 2016

These frustrations have fuelled the growth of nativist militancy (such as the MRC) and Islamist-inspired militancy (Al-Shabaab and ISIS).[23] Another threat is the proliferation of criminal gangs in the area.[24] A spate of violence – targeted killings and assassinations of Christian preachers – followed the killings of radical Muslim clerics and security operations targeted against the Masjid Swafaa mosque in Kisauni in 2014–2015.[25]

**Likoni:** Similar to in Kisauni, the Mijikenda lay claim to the Likoni neighbourhood on the south of the island of Mombasa. The informal nature of this settlement has also meant that competing claims to land access have been tense, and at times have led to violence. Despite its coastal character, Likoni's economy is dominated by outsiders and newcomers, and a majority of the coastal Mijikenda do not own title deeds to the land they have settled.

A case of land occupation was recently settled after years of negotiation, with the government buying the land from the up-country landowner and issuing land titles to the local squatters.[26] However, FGD participants decried the decision to make the squatters pay for the titles, citing this as evidence of the systematic marginalisation of coastal communities.[27]

Such claims often align with religious fault lines. In 2012–2013, the MRC linked marginalisation of coastal Muslims with land dispossession, unequal revenue sharing, low education standards, and differential access to public sector jobs. More recently, Al-Shabaab propagandists have begun to exploit the same grievances.[28] The underlying communal animosities between Muslim coastal communities and up-country Christian communities are being exploited as fertile terrain for radicalisation.

**Old Town:** Old Town was the seat of government for most of Mombasa's history. An important tourist attraction due to its historical significance, Old Town has not experienced a recent spike in migration by other groups, and its

23 ICG, 2016, Op. cit.

24 Local imam, interview by the author, 9 June 2016, Mombasa

25 W. Mwangi, Youths chanting 'Allahu Akbar' kill four, injure others in Kisauni night of terror, Daily Nation, 18 November 2014, http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/mombasa/Three-stabbed-to-death--others-injured-by-gang-in-Kisauni/-/1954178/2526160/-/11rvxnpz/-/index.html

26 D. T. Nyassy and M. Mwajefa, Waitiki land beneficiaries to pay – Uhuru, Daily Nation, 9 January 2016, http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/mombasa/Waitiki-land-beneficiaries-to-pay/-/1954178/3027438/-/126ujrlz/-/index.html

27 Likoni FGD Report, 29 June 2016, Mombasa

28 Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Al-Shabaab as a transnational security threat, Addis Ababa: IGAD, 2016, p.22

social fabric has remained relatively unchanged. Respondents mentioned the incoming of ethnic Somalis into Old Town since the 1990s, bringing with them capital and beginning new businesses.[29] However, compared to Eastleigh, the migration of Somalis into Old Town does not seem to present a radical change that is unsettling the locals. This is apparently due to its smaller scale, and also because Old Town is a predominantly Muslim neighbourhood and its Swahili residents have historically interacted with residents from other port cities on the East African coast, including Kismayo in Southern Somalia.

**Pumwani:** The population of Pumwani is cosmopolitan, and while Islam remains the dominant religious identity, no single ethnic group dominates.[30] Although not backed up by statistics, respondents in interviews and FGDs said that inter-ethnic ties are very strong, as inter-marriage among different ethnic groups is common practice, made possible by the sharing of a similar, 'Swahili' culture. Ethnic ties also enable inter-religious relations, and it is common to find Christians and Muslims within one family. Christians also have a long history in Pumwani, and they have been able to construct amiable relations with Muslims. According to respondents, these bonds explained why there was no ethnic violence in Pumwani during the 2007–2008 general elections.[31]

Nonetheless, since the 1990s there has been an increase in urban migration, poverty and inequality, visible in a growing class of youth[32] whose disaffection is expressed in terms of differences between groups, especially between Christians and Muslims. This has been exploited by radicals, such as during the 2007–2009 leadership of Ahmed Iman Ali, a local preacher.[33] FGD participants agreed that Pumwani residents initially welcomed his community leadership initiatives but were later dismayed by the cleavages between Christians and Muslims[34] that his preaching would create. Indeed, investigations by Kenyan security officials and the United Nations Monitoring Group for Eritrea and Somalia (SEMG) would reveal that some of his followers were recruited to Al-Shabaab.[35]

29 Coastal intellectual and resident of Old Town, interview by the author, 7 June 2016, Mombasa

30 Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi

31 Youth leader, interview by author, 18 May 2016, Nairobi; resident of Pumwani, interview by author, 20 May 2016, Nairobi

32 P. Kantai, Kenya: After the pain, the politics, The Africa Report, 10 March 2015, http://www.theafricareport.com/Society-and-Culture/kenya-after-the-pain-the-politics.html

33 N. Gisesa, A portrait of a Jihadist born and bred in Nairobi, Daily Nation, 30 January 2012, http://www.nation.co.ke/Features/DN2/What++happened++to+this+man+/-/957860/1315980/-/g3lygh/-/index.html

34 Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi; resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, Pumwani, 20 May 2016

35 Z. Angira, Police name 15 key Shabaab fugitives, Daily Nation, 31 December 2011, http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/1297974/-/10c6s8kz/-/

**Eastleigh:** Inter-group relations in Eastleigh are predominantly influenced by the migration of Somalis from the Republic of Somalia. Especially after the emergence of the Islamic Courts Union in Mogadishu in 2005, and Kenya's military operation in Somalia in 2011, Somali clan rivalry and support for, or rejection of, Al-Shabaab has formed part of local politics in Eastleigh.

The Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2006 brought an additional number of Somali nationals to Eastleigh, some of whom abhorred the invasion, and would later support Al-Shabaab, which emerged in 2006. Support for and rejection of Al-Shabaab in Eastleigh has long been symbolised by the opposing views of two Kenyan-Somali preachers who have preached there. Sheikh Mohamed Cabdi Umal, a Kenyan-Somali of the Ogaden clan, has preached at the influential 6th Street mosque and has been known for his rejection of Al-Shabaab's creed and violence. The younger Sheikh Hassan Mahad Omar, also a Kenyan-Somali of the Ogaden clan, who has preached at Ul-Axmar mosque along the same (6th) street, has been known to support Al-Shabaab.[36]

Eastleigh networks have also been accused of providing financial support to Al-Shabaab, as well as supplying new recruits, most of whom were funnelled through the '*Majimmo*' sector (an area of Al-Shabaab operations assigned mainly to recruits from East African countries).[37]

Eastleigh has faced some of the worst Al-Shabaab violence in Kenya, second only to Garissa county, in northeast Kenya. The majority of these attacks (especially in 2011–2012) began after the KDF operation in Somalia and were part of Al-Shabaab retaliation. It is believed that they were carried out by graduates of the '*Majimmo'* sector and members of Kenya's Al-Shabaab affiliate, Al-Hijra.[38] These attacks mainly targeted churches, commuter buses, and businesses owned by the neighbourhood's Christian residents.[39]

36 A. Ben Adam, Profile: Hassan Mahad Omar, the ISIL-allied radical Muslim cleric and Al-Shabaab's spiritual leader, Intelligence Briefs, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 23 March 2015, http://intelligencebriefs.com/profile-hassan-mahad-omar-alias-sheikh-hassaan-hussein-adam-the-isil-allied-radical-muslim-cleric-and-al-shabaab-spiritual-leader/

37 IGAD, 2016, Op. cit., p.20

38 Ibid.

39 ICG, The Kenyan military intervention in Somalia, ICG, Africa Report No. 184, 15 February 2012

## 3.2 INTER-GENERATIONAL RELATIONS

Healthy, functional relationships between generations are essential to stability and resilience in society, and any decay therein is typically an indicator of risk. In Kenya, violent Islamist extremism has largely been a youth phenomenon, and mainly a male youth phenomenon (though more recently there has been an increased focus on recruiting young girls and women).[40] The arrival of newcomers into predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods and the consequent increase in population in the urban areas of Nairobi and Mombasa affected not only inter- and intra-community relations and state–citizens relations, but also inter-generational relations. In particular, migration affected struggles around access to resources and institutions of authority at the household and community levels.[41]

In addition to the fast pace of demographic growth common across Africa, the socio-economic changes symbolised by, and related to, internal migration and urbanisation have upset inter-generational relations, just like relations between and within communities, resulting in an erosion of the legitimacy of traditional authorities. Linked to this, our research identified the following key trends as sources of increased vulnerability to violence and radicalisation in the six neighbourhoods:

Tensions between young people and older political and religious leaders, caused by frustrations at reduced economic opportunities for young people, specifically access to land, housing and employment. Young people consider elders unable to solve these problems, and see them as having contributed to them, as in Majengo, Kisauni and Likoni.

The exploitation of inter-generational tensions by political entrepreneurs and radical religious leaders to create inter-community divisions between moderate and more radical Muslims, between Muslims and Christians, and between coastal communities and up-country Kenyans.

The lack of national registration documents, especially among young and female Muslims, which constitutes a barrier to accessing government funding and programmes to support employment, as mentioned in Pumwani.

40 IGAD, 2016, Op. cit., p.23

41 Youth leader, interview by author, 18 May 2016, Nairobi; gender activist and resident of Majengo, interview by author, 6 June 2016, Mombasa

The lack of economic opportunity for young people has also been associated with a sharp rise in criminal gangs that often coexist with radical networks, as cited in Likoni and Eastleigh.

More positively, we found inter-generational tensions were reduced when young people did find opportunities for employment and livelihoods, as is the case to some degree in Pumwani, Eastleigh and Old Town Mombasa.

Details on each of the six research sites follow.

**Majengo:** Youth–elders relations in Majengo began to decline steadily in the early 1990s. Tensions have mainly revolved around access to land and housing, and declining economic opportunities for the young. The early signs of this generational conflict emerged during the formation and eventual demise of the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK), which drew most of its support from the neighbourhoods of Majengo and Old Town.

The IPK provided a platform through which young Muslims in Mombasa advocated on political issues affecting Muslims in Kenya, often leading to violent street protests when the government refused to register the party.[42] Some members of the leadership of the party decided to adopt more gradualist moderate politics, and formed other organisations, in particular the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya and Muslims for Human Rights.[43] Disgruntled by this outcome, a number of IPK followers would later inspire a generational conflict in Majengo, pitting young supporters against the older generation of Muslim clerics, many of whom were former IPK leaders.

Compared to Old Town, there is a much clearer trend of gentrification in Majengo, where people with a longer history of residence are gradually being replaced by wealthier newcomers whose acquisition of property increases the value of rents and land. One respondent stated that some of the older residents have had to move to other parts of Mombasa. Young people are finding it harder to inherit property, as household heads choose to sell family land and

42 H. Mwakimako and J. Willis, Islam, politics and violence on the coast, Observatoire des enjeux politiques et sécuritaires dans la Corne de l'Afrique [Monitoring political and security issues in the Horn of Africa], Note 4, 2014

43 These former IPK leaders dissociated themselves from the IPK's brand of radical politics inspired by Sheikh Khalid Balala, but recently, with the exception of Khelef Khalifa, they either have been blacklisted by Al-Shabaab sympathisers or are targets of Al-Shabaab violence. Sheikh Mohamed Idris was killed in June 2014 by suspected Al-Shabaab members following allegations that he was working with the government as a spy.

houses in an increasingly competitive property market.[44] This has increased youth–elder tensions.

In addition, questions about access to land have raised further questions regarding the management of property belonging to mosques by mosque committees, which are mostly composed of older men. This debate, pitting young against old, in recent years has provided a platform for charismatic preachers to exploit these divisions in an effort to develop a radicalised following.

**Kisauni:** In interviews and the FGD, a perceived correlation emerged between declining economic opportunities for young people in Kisauni and an increase in crime and extremist activities. Declining economic opportunities are seen as the latest consequence of the unresolved land problem in the area. Young people sympathetic to the message of the MRC – and whom Al-Shabaab are now exploiting – decry what they perceive as a passive and gullible older generation that failed to protect coastal land from wealthier newcomers. A youth activist in Kisauni, said:

> *"The young generation has really blamed the older generation for negligence and lack of vigilance over time concerning the coastal land issue, a situation that they now blame for their lack of land and title deeds."*[45]

This means that the community in Kisauni, similar to that in Majengo and Pumwani, lacks the institutional and material capacities to contain a demographic youth bulge, as inequality increases and extremist actors tap into youth frustrations. Security officials identified the Masjid Swafaa mosque in Kisauni as a recruitment channel for Al-Shabaab. The mosque was raided by police in late 2014 and close to 100 people were arrested.[46] A spate of violence – targeted killings and assassinations of Christian preachers – followed the security operations against Masjid Swafaa and the killing of radical Muslim clerics.[47]

44 Gender activist and resident of Majengo, interview by the author, 6 June 2016, Mombasa; Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa

45 Youth activist, interview by author, 8 June 2016, Mombasa

46 W. Mwangi and D. T. Nyassy, One shot dead in mosque raid as 250 arrested, Daily Nation, 17 November 2014, http://www.nation.co.ke/news/Masjid-Musa-Sakina-Mosques-Raid-Police/-/1056/2525964/-/6t5i6jz/-/index.html

47 W. Mwangi, 2014, Op. cit.

**Likoni:** Most of the factors affecting youth in other poor and marginalised neighbourhoods also exist in Likoni, including unemployment, low levels of education, social disintegration and the breakdown of families. In addition, according to local respondents, factors such as previous experience with militant politics, the presence of malign influencers and inequality aligned with religious and ethnic divisions have made the youth here particularly vulnerable to membership of criminal gangs and extremist recruitment.[48] The extent to which youth from Likoni and neighbouring Kwale had been recruited became apparent when the government announced an amnesty call in April 2015. Reports emerged that close to 200 returning extremist fighters were in Likoni and Kwale.[49] Some of these surrendered and, after completing a de-radicalisation programme, were appointed as peace ambassadors within local community policing structures. However, some have since been murdered, leading local people to believe that radical groups remain active in the area.[50]

**Old Town:** Compared with the other neighbourhoods in this study, the community in Old Town has been able to mitigate the disruptive effects of an unemployed and restless youth population by tapping into resources such as tourism, and access to transnational networks (especially along the East African coast and with the Middle East).[51] These resources have produced a largely productive youth population in Old Town, which engages mostly in business as the neighbourhood continues to receive tourists and shoppers from around the world.

While this feature helps to maintain cooperative youth–elder relations, increasing flows of capital into Old Town are seen as leading to other risks. In what continues to be a patriarchal community, heads of households might be enticed to sell their property and businesses to incoming migrants, in particular to ethnic Somalis.[52] This would deprive younger people of their inheritance, increasing the number of unemployed and frustrated youth in

48 Youth activist and resident of Likoni, interview by author, 9 June 2016, Mombasa; C. Onsarigo, Counter-violent extremism programme hitting a snag, The Star, 30 June 2016, http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/06/30/counter-violent-extremism-programme-hitting-a-snag_c1367846?page=0%2C1; C. Onsarigo, Three Nyumba Kumi officials killed by gunmen, The Star, 29 May 2016, http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2016/05/29/three-nyumba-kumi-officials-killed-by-gunmen_c1359744

49 L. Robert and B. Jenje, Mombasa leaders urge radicalised youth to take advantage of govt amnesty, Daily Nation, 15 April 2015, http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/mombasa/radicalised-youth-govt-amnesty-Mombasa/-/1954178/2686946/-/rsjuugz/-/index.html

50 D. Pkalya, Reasons why the amnesty for 'reformed' alshabaab returnees is failing security in Kwale, Citizen Journalism, 9 June 2016, http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/ureport/story/2000204575/reasons-why-the-amnesty-for-reformed-alshabaab-returnees-is-failing-security-in-kwale

51 Old Town FGD Report, 1 July 2016, Mombasa

52 Coastal intellectual and resident of Old Town, interview by author, 7 June 2016, Mombasa

the neighbourhood. Indeed, a number of young people in Old Town have already been denied access to ownership of houses and businesses, and some have joined criminal networks emanating from other neighbourhoods (especially Majengo).[53] A number of the neighbourhood's youth have also been radicalised into violent extremism.[54] However, this was seen as the result of the presence of malign influencers, or radical charismatic preachers, based in Majengo or Kisauni.[55]

**Pumwani:** Respondents said that inter-generational relations in Pumwani remained healthy for most of the period until the 1990s, during which time land was available, and alternative employment opportunities existed (for example, in the arts, acting and participation in dance groups). There was also a much wider scope for informal economic activities. Currently, the lack of national identity documents by many Muslim youth and women is cited as one of the main reasons behind their relative unresponsiveness (compared to Christian youth) to government-led programmes, such as the Youth Funds designed to support businesses by young people and women.[56]

In the 1990s, politically connected elites are said to have become interested in land in Pumwani and allegations arose that the mosque committee (i.e. the older generation) was bribed to give away community land belonging to the mosque (or illegally allocated the land to themselves).[57] A youth-led rebellion led by Ahmed Iman Ali, who had become an imam at the Riyadha mosque, arose in 2007, targeting the leadership of the mosque, and installing a new mosque committee.[58] Iman's stewardship resulted in the mosque regaining control of most of the land that had been grabbed.[59] One respondent, a human rights activist, said:

53 Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa; coastal intellectual and resident of Old Town, interview by the author, 7 June 2016, Mombasa

54 Ibid.

55 Official of the Council of Imams and Preachers and resident of Old Town, interview by the author, 7 June 2016, Mombasa

56 Government official, interview by the author, 15 June 2016, Nairobi; Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi

57 N. Gisesa, 2012, Op. cit.

58 Resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016, Nairobi; imam, interview by the author, 21 May 2016, Nairobi

59 Youth leader, interview by the author, 18 May 2016, Nairobi; resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016, Nairobi; resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016, Nairobi

*"When the extremist ideology was introduced to mostly urban, Muslim-dominated and poor neighbourhoods, it really took off and gained traction with the locals because of its religious posturing. Most youth may not have understood the ideology but they got carried away very fast…"*[60]

Yusuf Hassan, the area's member of parliament since 2007, said in a separate interview:

*"[Pumwani] has produced a lot of alienated, discontented young people. They have fallen off the economic radar. More troubling nowadays, they are constantly being told that they are poor and marginalised because they are Muslims in a Christian country."*[61]

It is important to note that Iman's activism in Pumwani attracted wide support and public sympathy, as he used rents collected for use of mosque land at the Gikomba market to fund youth projects and small businesses, and issue bursaries, including paying medical and funeral bills for the poor.[62] Nonetheless, reports emerged, first from the older generation in Pumwani, and then from security officials and the Somalia/Eritrea Monitoring Group (SEMG), that Ahmed Iman Ali was part of a growing Al-Shabaab recruitment network in Kenya.[63]

**Eastleigh:** The youth population in Eastleigh is much more diverse than in most of the other neighbourhoods included in this study. Eastleigh is linked to wider networks, with kinship ties to northeast Kenya, Somalia, the Middle East and the wider global diaspora. Therefore, the nature of inter-generational relations in Eastleigh varies across different identity groups, and even between clans. However, the fact that Eastleigh is also a commercial centre has meant that economic opportunities have been available, particularly to Somali youth. (However, this has also been related to the rise of crime, as a number of young people, especially non-Somali Kenyans, remain locked out of the booming Eastleigh economy.)[64] In a context of relative economic prosperity, many young residents of Eastleigh nonetheless feel excluded and marginalised.[65]

60 Human rights activist, interview by the author, 13 June 2016, Nairobi

61 Cited in P. Kantai, 2015, Op. cit.

62 Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi; N. Gisesa, 2012, Op. cit.

63 See report by Somali/Eritrea Monitoring Group, available at: http://www.bancroftglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/SEMG-Report-2012.pdf last accessed 1 September 2016.

64 Community activist, interview by the author, 21 May 2016, Nairobi

65 Eastleigh FGD Report, 22 June 2016, Nairobi

## 3.3 STATE–CITIZEN RELATIONS

Functional interactions between state and citizens, imbued with confidence, competency and a sense of responsibility on both sides, are critical to reducing vulnerability to violent extremism, as shown by Alert's research in Tunisia.[66] In Kenya, Muslim communities have traditionally been under-represented in government. In places such as Mombasa, and in Pumwani and Eastleigh in Nairobi, Muslims tend to perceive the government as culturally and politically remote. These perceptions were reinforced after a wave of rural–urban migration in the 1990s. Liberalisation reforms increased the competition for scarce resources and reduced public services to vulnerable communities. Muslim communities in low-income neighbourhoods came to see themselves as being at the periphery of the state's interest. Socio-political and economic grievances held by Muslim communities provided a platform for the emergence of parties and movements that developed a narrative of Muslim persecution by the Kenyan state and its Western allies.[67]

In all the neighbourhoods in this study, a lack of government services, including security, increases the relevance of informal networks to people's survival strategies. The failure of the state to engage with these networks, and a wider lack of government legitimacy in the perception of marginalised communities, emerged from the study as one of the main challenges in countering violent extremism.

In a context where socio-economic change has strained relations between and within communities, and inter-generational tensions have reduced the legitimacy of traditional authorities, state–citizen relations have the potential to mitigate these tensions. However, they seem to be particularly weak in the six neighbourhoods studied, where – ironically – there are indications instead that the current state of relations between the authorities and citizens risks undermining the resilience of the communities against radicalisation and violence.

Some of the key dynamics that were reported by respondents include:

- a pattern of absent or poor basic public services, including the provision of security services, which encourages the creation of informal community networks to fill this gap, as observed in Kisauni and Pumwani;

66 International Alert, Experiences and perceptions of young people in Tunisia: The case of Douar Hicher and Ettadhamen, London: International Alert, 2015

67 H. Mwakimako and J. Willis, 2014, Op. cit.

- cultural distance between local communities and civil servants and government-appointed local authorities, which weakens the legitimacy of state institutions;
- alleged police corruption, unprofessional behaviour and heavy-handed security operations, which reduce communities' trust in security institutions, thereby limiting their active collaboration with violent extremism efforts and reducing their cohesion and resilience;
- a lack of trust in politicians and civil servants, resulting in low participation in government programmes for young people, as observed in Majengo and Old Town Mombasa.

Nevertheless, when local political elites are given the opportunity to mediate between local communities and central authorities, they can play a positive role in bridging the gap between state and citizens, as mentioned by respondents in Majengo and Old Town. More details on each of the six research sites follows.

**Majengo:** Relations with the state in Majengo have historically been mediated by the neighbourhood's formal political representatives. This helped Majengo became a recipient of better-quality government services in comparison to many other neighbourhoods in Mombasa. Recently, the main disagreements between local residents and the government have revolved around counter-terrorism policies.[68]

As a result, there is much mutual suspicion between residents, particularly Muslims, and the government. There is low community participation in government projects, and FGD participants confirmed that even the response from the community towards programmes aimed at youth and women is low. The government-led homeland security programme *Nyumba Kumi*, which is designed to work at community level, has been received with a lot of suspicion.[69] It was proposed that politicians, especially the member of parliament, could provide a suitable bridge between the community and the government, but the government's security priorities are said to overlook or ignore this possibility.[70]

68 Gender activist and resident of Majengo, interview by the author, 6 June 2016, Mombasa; Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa

69 Ibid.

70 Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa

Frequent security crackdowns in the neighbourhood, in addition to alleged corrupt and unprofessional practices by the police, in particular, non-existent witness protection mechanisms,[71] were mentioned during the FGD as factors that weaken communal efforts to address regular crime and violent extremism. Police operations have been a regular feature of life in Majengo, especially after the 1998 al-Qaeda bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi. In recent years, these have increased in scale and regularity. In 2014, security operations targeted several mosques in Majengo on suspicion of extremist recruitment, to arrest what the police termed "radicalised" youth.[72] One such operation was followed by riots, concentrated in Majengo and Kisauni, resulting in a number of deaths.

During these raids, grenades, "Jihad DVDs" and an assortment of weapons, including petrol bombs, were found. A total of 376 people were arrested, of which 91 were subsequently released due to lack of evidence. Prosecutors said that they would charge 158, while police said they would take time to consider what to do with other detainees.[73]

A few months later, in August 2015, reports emerged of alleged forced disappearances of about 200 young people said to be linked to Al-Shabaab. Many in Majengo believe that security agencies are behind these disappearances, with relatives, human rights activists and journalists claiming that young people had been picked up by people, believed to be police officers, in unmarked cars, after which they either could not be traced, or were found dead. Most of these people had reportedly been arrested during the 2014 mosque raids.[74] Security officials, on the other hand, have maintained that the missing youth have instead joined Al-Shabaab in Somalia.

**Kisauni:** Due to the informality of the neighbourhood, where settlements were allowed to grow with minimal government support, Kisauni has generally lacked essential government services such as planned housing, water provision, sanitation, security and education. Residents have learned to organise and

71 Ibid.

72 Kenya terror charges after Mombasa police raid mosque, BBC News, 3 February 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26013964; 251 arrested, grenades found in Mombasa mosques, Business Daily, 17 November 2014, http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/Police-raid-Mombasa-mosques--arrest-251-youth/-/539546/2524972/-/bf1qn9/-/index.html

73 Kenya police stage fresh mosque raid, Al Jazeera, 19 November 2014, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/11/kenya-police-raids-another-mosque-mombasa-201411196542911 4463.html

74 C. Onsarigo, State gives Shabaab youth fresh amnesty, The Star, 31 August 2015, http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2015/08/31/state-gives-shabaab-youth-fresh-amnesty_c1195902

provide these key services, including security, for themselves. For instance, during the late 1990s to mid-2000s, Kisauni residents launched a successful informal community self-protection programme. Due to its informal nature, it is also important to state that Kisauni (like regular urban slums across the country) routinely missed out on budgetary allocations of important public services, including from the former Municipal Council of Mombasa.[75]

More recently Kisauni has experienced a wave of police crackdowns targeting violent extremists similar to those seen in Majengo, Eastleigh and Old Town. These raids have invited wide condemnation from the community and its leadership.[76]

**Likoni:** Likoni, similar to Kisauni, has a dominant informal character and lacks most essential government services.[77] As opposed to Kisauni, where some coastal African groups (such as the Giriama) are predominantly Christian, coastal communities in Likoni are predominantly Muslim, a factor that further animates communal divisions and the sense of cultural and political distance from national government institutions. In Likoni, the question of who is appointed district commissioner (now deputy CC) has always been contentious, as appointees rarely originate from the coastal region.[78]

A heavy-handed approach by security officials when dealing with communal conflict or insecurity has also helped to alienate community members, especially coastal Muslims, from the government.[79] Government bureaucrats are often seen as insensitive to the local culture, and their licensing of bars and nightclubs, for instance, has incurred the ire of local Muslims.[80] Widespread perceptions of police corruption and lack of professional standards also alienate the community. This absence of communal support weakens the government's responsiveness to crime and violent extremism, which in turn further erodes confidence.[81]

75 Youth activist, interview by the author, 8 June 2016, Mombasa
76 Hon. Hassan Ali Joho, Facebook post, 28 July 2014, https://www.facebook.com/photo.p?v=728835353841480&set=vb.215892765135744&type=2&t
77 A. Mazrui, 1997, Op. cit.
78 Ibid.
79 Likoni FGD Report, 29 June 2016, Mombasa
80 A. Mazrui, 1997, Op. cit., p.13
81 Likoni FGD Report, 29 June 2016, Mombasa

**Old Town:** Old Town, as a seat of government in Mombasa for many years, has been home to Mombasa's leading political elites and influential families. Increasing insecurity, particularly caused by violent extremism, now threatens the relatively good relations between public authorities and citizens. Due to the distance between the community and the civil servants of the national government, community members often don't participate in government projects, and FGD participants said the community's response to programmes aimed at youth and women was low.[82] As elsewhere, the *Nyumba Kumi* security programme has been received with suspicion.

**Pumwani:** Similar to other neighbourhoods in this assessment, weak state–citizen relations have been common in Pumwani, where the community has organised informal initiatives to fill the vacuum left by the absence of essential government services.[83] In Pumwani, positive inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations are common, helped by a common Swahili culture. Local residents have been able to address communal problems through these positive relations.[84] However, since the 1990s, an increase in newcomers, an increased trend of land grabbing and the commercialisation of residential properties has created tensions over access to urban resources and land with the City Council of Nairobi.[85]

Since reports emerged of extremist recruitment activities at the Pumwani Riyadha mosque, public authorities' engagement in the neighbourhood have become increasingly securitised.[86] Media and civil society reports, and discussions with respondents and participants during the FGD, cite extra-judicial killings and forced disappearances of terrorism suspects, which are blamed on the police. One respondent, a resident in Pumwani, said:

> *"We don't trust the government because of cases of rampant youth disappearances without trace, unwarranted police crackdowns and continuous sexual abuse and harassment of families whose children are suspected to have joined extremist groups in Somalia."*[87]

82 Old Town FGD Report, 1 July 2016, Mombasa
83 Resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016; Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi
84 Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi
85 M. Katumanga, 2005, Op. cit., p.505
86 Resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016; Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi
87 Resident of Pumwani, interview by the author, 20 May 2016

The centralisation of security policies has weakened pre-existing informal mechanisms of community self-protection, and the *Nyumba Kumi* security initiative has been received with suspicion.[88]

**Eastleigh:** Similar to Pumwani, Eastleigh has also been historically at the margins of formal government attention. Since the 1990s, increased migration by Somali refugees and the consequent economic boom have attracted state attention. The refugee crisis in Somalia, coupled with the increasing security threat to Kenya, has heavily securitised state–citizen relations in Eastleigh.[89] FGD participants mentioned human rights abuses targeted mainly at the Somali community of Eastleigh, ranging from forced bribery to rape.[90] Claims of human rights abuses were also reported by the IPOA.[91]

FGD participants also felt that government action had threatened businesses in Eastleigh, from an inquiry in 2012 into the sources of Somali business capital, to constant security operations that threaten to scare off investors.[92] In addition, participants mentioned that cultural and language barriers, especially between Somali refugees and government security officials, were a constant challenge. Here too, *Nyumba Kumi* has been received with suspicion and, according to research respondents, the initial phase of implementation re-affirmed their perception that it was intended to spy on the Somali community.[93]

In April 2014, Kenyan security officials launched an operation ostensibly aimed at 'flushing out' Al-Shabaab adherents and illegal refugees from Nairobi, particularly Eastleigh. According to a report of this operation by the IPOA, the operation involved the arrest of 4,000 people and the deportation of at least 332 Somalis. The IPOA established that the operation was carried out without adherence to discipline and professional standards, in ways that alienated the Somali community from the government and from non-Somali residents of Eastleigh.

88 Pumwani FGD Report, 23 June 2016, Nairobi; Majengo FGD Report, 30 June 2016, Mombasa
89 Eastleigh FGD Report, 22 June 2016, Nairobi
90 Ibid.
91 Independent Policing Oversight Authority, 2014, Monitoring Report on Operation Sanitization Eastleigh Publically known as 'Usalama Watch'. Nairobi, Kenya, p.2
92 Eastleigh FGD Report, 22 June 2016, Nairobi
93 Ibid.

# 4
# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This rapid assessment of relations between and within communities, between the state and citizens and between generations in the six neighbourhoods has helped us tease out some key issues that have an impact on communities' vulnerability or resilience to radicalisation and violence. The narratives that emerged from respondents consistently focused on:

- socio-economic changes associated with rapid urbanisation and internal migration in the 1990s;
- divisions within and between communities, fuelled by the sense of marginalisation of Muslims on the coast and in Nairobi, and the spillover effects of events in Somalia;
- the ability of radical imams and ideologies to leverage the divisions between communities, and the sense of frustration created by adverse social change;
- the overlapping of a demographic youth bulge with intensified competition for socio-economic opportunities and a widening sense of marginalisation and exclusion;
- the erosion of the legitimacy of public institutions, which are unable to provide basic services and are perceived as culturally distant;
- the securitisation of the government's responses to violent extremism, which seems to further reduce citizens' trust in government institutions and weaken communal mechanisms of resilience.

Our research hypothesis was that resilience to radicalisation and violence can be linked to the strength of three kinds of relationships: between and within communities; between the generations; and between citizens and the state. Our research confirmed this. The evidence demonstrated that the erosion of all three relationships correlated with reduced resilience because it reduced the capacity to resolve the issues summarised above. Conversely, we also identified examples where the existence of stronger relationships has helped reduce the risk of radicalisation and violence.

Our recommendations are therefore tailored to improving resilience through improved relationships. Addressing the challenges experienced in Pumwani, Eastleigh, Likoni, Old Town, Kisauni and Majengo will require a focus on the improvement of state–citizen relations, the promotion of inclusion and cohesion within and between communities, and the development of a political economy able to bridge geographic and generational gaps.

What seems most important is to seek to build the objective of improving such relationships into all initiatives, and by so doing rebuild and avoid undermining resilience within society, even while meeting more specific goals and aims. Specific areas of intervention could include:

- improving basic public services to disadvantaged urban areas, while ensuring that the local networks that already provide such services are included in the process of consultation and delivery, thus improving citizen-state and intra- and inter-community relations;
- improving community policing and the government-led homeland security programme *Nyumba Kumi* with an approach that is more bottom up, consultative and inclusive, working with different age and gender groups in order to ascertain their concerns and elicit their ideas;
- publicly accepting IPOA investigations that have identified heavy-handed policing; making a commitment to work with communities and avoid such events in the future;
- linking up with existing local self-help security networks in order to improve trust between citizens and the state security apparatus;
- taking advantage of the opportunities that the newly devolved county governance system presents for improving coordination and collaboration between county governors and commissioners; ensuring that both leaders engage in a coordinated way with local political elites, young people and religious leaders;
- engaging more consistently with religious leaders, and – in multi-faith neighbourhoods – with both Christian and Muslim religious leaders, as a way to improve citizen–state and inter-community relations;
- encouraging political, religious and community leaders of all ages to work together to offset divisive narratives between communities, and reduce the widespread stigmatisation of Muslims and Somalis in public discourse;

- creating new narratives of collaboration and Kenyan citizenship, through joint local initiatives for practical self-help and mutual help, community-level reconciliation and inter-ethnic solidarity;
- prioritising the issuing of national IDs to young Muslims and women; widely publicising this as a demonstration of the importance of citizenship and the obligations and rights it entails;
- working with youth groups, local government and local leaders to improve the participation of young people in government programmes to promote livelihood opportunities;
- promoting development plans that help integrate marginalised regions into the national economy; engaging young people, community leaders and community networks in the design and implementation of these plans;
- working together with community leaders, young people and local government to monitor and reduce land grabbing on the coast and real estate speculation in urban areas.

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