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POROUS BORDERS AND LOCAL VULNERABILITIES: COMMUNITY POLICING AS A MISSING LINK IN KENYA'S COUNTERTERRORISM AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract. The continued rise of cross-border terrorism has led to serious security challenges in many states and regions, and has significantly destabilized international security. The situation has been particularly challenging in areas that border countries with weak government control or simply fragile states.

This article focuses on the North-Eastern region of Kenya, an area bordering Somalia that has experienced persistent attacks, with many of the remedial measures taken proving ineffective. The article draws from qualitative secondary data, including academic articles, institutional reports, and published papers. These sources indicate that community policing approaches have not been effectively utilized in counter-terrorism efforts.

The study reveals that the porosity of the Kenya–Somalia border facilitates the movement of terrorists, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and other criminal activities. Additional contributing factors include poor economic conditions, youth unemployment, and limited access to social amenities, all of which increase vulnerability to radicalization. It further demonstrates that community policing, rooted in trust, intelligence sharing, and partnership, can provide more sustainable solutions to the problem. Its potential to strengthen human intelligence and collaboration in security approaches is also examined. The study concludes that adopting community-based security strategies can significantly improve the effectiveness and sustainability of counter-terrorism efforts and overall national security.

Key Words: Porous borders; terrorism; counter-terrorism; violent extremism; international security architecture.

Introduction

The world has experienced a rising level of transnational terrorism, which has significantly affected international security. Militants undertake these activities illegally in more than one country because they are able to move across borders freely without limitations. These activities may not necessarily involve direct physical harm or force but also include money laundering, financing, and recruitment. In this context, there has been an increased use of social media and modern technology by terrorist groups to recruit members and radicalize communities, often targeting school-going children and unemployed youth. This shows that they target the most vulnerable and easy targets or simply people you can easily convince to join the terrorist organizations.

The study examines the nexus between the root causes of terrorism and insurgency, together with the issue of porous borders, which has contributed to volatility and insecurity in the region. The study majorly focuses on the issue of terrorism in the North Eastern Kenya region. This is an issue not limited to the Kenya-Somalia Border but affects other regions prone to weak security governance systems and inadequate attention to best practices of managing security such as effective community policing mechanisms. These are regions with vulnerable policing, and security governance systems, where inhabitants often face social and economic strain. The article analyzes the importance of community

policing when effectively implemented at national, regional, and international levels within the broader security architecture.

According to Neumann (2016), individuals are gradually introduced to extreme ideas that may eventually lead them to violence. The factors may not be the only ones that lead individuals to terrorism, but they are they are the major resultant conditions towards terrorism, insurgency and violent extremism. These ideas can be political, economic, or social in nature, including aspects of culture and religion. In the Northern Kenya context, the political issues that may influence individuals to join terrorism may include financing by politicians and the general dissatisfaction by the locals on the performance of the government. Some may even get radicalized over the feeling that they have been denied development by the past and the current political regimes. Richards (2017) also supports the argument perception among certain groups that they have been marginalized by the government can be exploited to justify recruitment into terrorist groups or rebellious subcultures. This process is often fueled by misinformation spread by political or non-state actors. Just to strengthen this, the economic circumstances that may contribute to terrorism include, poverty, unemployment and the deplorable living conditions in the North-Eastern Kenya which are simply classified by Robert K. Merton as Societal strains. In the sense of social reasons that result in terrorism, extreme ideas such as jihadi extremism, a radical ideology relating to religion has largely contributed towards individuals joining terrorism. Terror organizations such as; al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and other organizations are the best examples.

Transnational organized crimes such as terrorism are on the rise due to several factors, including globalization, porous borders, failed states, and weak governance systems and ineffective mechanisms. The global accessibility of the internet has also been misused to facilitate recruitment on a very wider scale. As you may know, nearly every person has got access to internet and social media. Terror organizations exploit social platforms for instance; telegram, X, Facebook, Instagram, among others. Recruitments happen in the platforms whereby there is a deliberate aim to bring in vulnerable youths both men and women to join the terror networks. A situation can even be created disguised as an issue that requires some help and therefore social media users are called upon to make some financial contributions. Terror Organizations make a lot of money through such illegal activities and scams. Additionally, dissatisfaction among citizens regarding government performance, as well as historical injustices, contribute to this trend.

The issue of porous borders remains a major contributing factor to transnational terrorism. Heibe, Kiragu, and Njoroge (2025) argue that poorly regulated borders allow unrestricted movement, making it easier for small arms and light weapons to circulate. This proliferation of arms supports terrorist activities and allows rebellious subcultures to thrive. This is a key factor contributing to the rise of terrorist activities in Kenya, particularly along its borders with Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania. The vast and complex nature of these borders makes effective control difficult.

Beyond the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in East Africa, which resulted in 224 deaths, Kenya has experienced several major terrorist attacks, including the 2013 Westgate Mall attack, the 2015 Garissa University attack, and the 2019 DusitD2 complex attack. These attacks have largely been attributed to Al-Shabaab militants. Cooper (2021) explains that the Westgate attack was, in part, a retaliatory response to Kenya's military intervention in Somalia in 2011. This highlights the evolving and organized nature of terrorism, where planning may occur in one country and execution in another.

To effectively address this challenge, it is necessary to examine the root causes of terrorism, which include a combination of social, economic, and political factors such as poor governance and marginalization. Addressing these root causes can significantly reduce the frequency of attacks on civilians and critical infrastructure.

One key approach to enhancing security involves collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local communities. This approach, known as community policing, is inclusive and, if effectively implemented, can play a significant role in counter-terrorism. According to the United

Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018), community policing enhances trust between citizens and law enforcement, encouraging the sharing of information that can help prevent potential attacks.

Similarly, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2014) emphasizes that early signs of radicalization can only be detected and addressed effectively when there is cooperation between the police and the community. Community policing can therefore function as a national, regional, and international security strategy that strengthens collaboration and promotes stability. However, it is important to recognize that terrorism, like other forms of crime, may not be completely eradicated but can be managed and reduced.

Émile Durkheim (1895) argued that crime is a normal part of society, arising from the diversity of human behavior. This perspective can also be applied to terrorism. While advocating for reforms, Van Den Broek (2003) highlights the importance of integrating policing into democratic values to enhance transparency and accountability. Spalek (2010) further emphasizes the role of trust between law enforcement and communities in reducing tensions and improving cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts.

Having a look at the existing research, it is clear that a lot of focus has been put on weak border control and agents of radicalization separately. This is with little study on the incorporation of community policing mechanisms at the borders to strengthen the fight against cross-border terrorism which leads to regional security and global stability.

Literature Reviews

a) Porous Borders and Transnational Terrorism

The Kenya–Somalia border is one of the regions most prone to attacks and is widely characterized by researchers as a highly insecure zone. This is particularly evident in the North-Eastern region of Kenya, where there is reported free movement of arms and militants, alongside activities that are often conducted covertly. These include both legitimate and illegitimate operations carried out by members of terrorist organizations.

In his research, Ken Menkhaus (2014) notes that it is very easy for the Al-Shabaab militants to move across the Kenya- Somalia border and conduct their illegal activities. Due to weak border control, firearms are smuggled and become easily accessible to individuals who intend to use them for criminal purposes. This has majorly contributed to the setbacks faced by security agencies deployed in the region in their efforts to curb terrorism but it is fair to equally say that the security system including intelligence officers are compromised, negligent and they don't care for as long as they benefit from the illegal activities. The uncontrolled borders has resulted in the illegal proliferation of small arms that are use to conduct attacks. Firearms can easily be accessed by anyone who has ill-intentions. The security agencies are aware of the situation but they are simply compromised and they are the ones who allow for the entry of non-citizens and the militants to smuggle firearms and carry out criminal activities.

Similarly, Paul D. Williams (2018) concludes that the vulnerability of the North-Eastern region to terrorist activities is largely due to porous borders, weak enforcement mechanisms, and ineffective border control policies. Militants are not effectively deterred and can move freely into Kenya, while the illegal trade in firearms continues to thrive. According to the study, since Somalia's collapse into a failed state in 1991, managing the Kenya–Somalia border has remained a major challenge.

Findings from qualitative field research further indicate that local populations perceive terrorism as a persistent threat, with long periods of instability and insecurity. Many respondents attribute this to poor coordination between the governments of Kenya and Somalia, as well as intelligence gaps, where information is either not shared or not acted upon effectively. Organized criminal groups also exploit poorly controlled borders and the scarcity of resources in the region to facilitate illegal activities and recruitment.

Cannon (2016) also emphasizes the role of border porosity and the ease of movement of firearms and extremist groups as key factors contributing to frequent terrorist attacks in the region. He explains

that Kenya's proposal to construct a border wall was largely motivated by the need to restrict uncontrolled cross-border movement and enhance security.

Menkhaus (2014) further highlights that Somalia's fragile state structure contributes to weak governance, particularly within the security sector. This has led to cases of corruption and bribery among border patrol officers, who may collude with militants to allow the smuggling of firearms and other illegal activities. Overall, the porous nature of the Kenya–Somalia border continues to pose a significant challenge to counter-terrorism efforts.

b) Local Vulnerabilities Along Borderlands

As indicated earlier, understanding the root causes of terrorism is essential. These causes can generally be categorized into economic, social, and political factors. They include poverty, unemployment, limited access to education and healthcare, poor leadership, and the perception among communities that they have been neglected by both past and present governments.

Such conditions place residents in vulnerable positions, where they may resort to alternative means of survival. These include forming subcultures or joining existing radical organizations. In the Kenya–Somalia border region, Al-Shabaab continues to thrive partly because of the high levels of marginalization and scarcity of resources.

Botha and Abdile (2014) argues that socio-economic inequalities manifested through poverty, unemployment, and hopelessness among the youth in the North-Eastern region create conditions that make radicalization and recruitment into terrorist organizations easier. The author further notes that the region has remained underdeveloped for many years, with limited access to medical services, education, and recreational facilities, making it difficult to counter violent extremism effectively.

A report by the United Nations Development Programme (2017) also takes not of a serious menace at the Northern region of Kenya whereby the vulnerability allows for easy subscription into extreme religious and political ideologies. Other issues highlighted as core problems include poverty whereby most of the individuals face low living conditions with the households not being able to afford basic needs including food, shelter, and giving education to their children. Inadequacy of the empowerment opportunities in the region still remains a very major concern whereby the employment rates are so low which leads to an increase in the number of idle youths. This leads them to joining terror gangs with a lot of ease. Many young people remain jobless, which increases their susceptibility to recruitment by terrorist groups to perform both violent and undercover activities. Accessibility to basic education at the very least is a problem in the North-Eastern Kenya region. With that grave concern, the illiteracy levels have always been on a steady rise, this has led young people to exploitation and abuse by the militants as they are promised a good life after joining the organizations. Education has a way of instilling good norms and values to an individual and makes them law abiding. Lack of education nurtures ignorance, ignorance nurtures vulnerability and criminal minds with intentions to make a life by harming innocent civilians and challenging the status quo flourish this way.

Similarly, the International Crisis Group (2015) points out that residents of the North-Eastern region have experienced historical marginalization since independence. Despite the introduction of devolution under the 2010 Constitution, there has been limited visible improvement in living standards. The report argues that extreme poverty and the lack of prospects for a better future have driven many youths to join terrorist groups as a survival strategy. These socio-economic vulnerabilities continue to be exploited by extremist organizations to expand their influence.

c) Community Policing in Kenya and its Possible Effectiveness in the Regional and International Security Architecture

Community policing is a security approach that brings together members of society to address criminal activities, including terrorism. It involves collaboration between security agencies, local communities, and other key actors such as the business sector and civil society in identifying and addressing security challenges. When effectively implemented, community policing can serve as a

powerful tool in reducing and preventing terrorism. However, community policing has largely not been realized due poor structure but not as a result of absence in policy and best practices.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018) explains that community policing is built on trust and confidence between the public and law enforcement agencies. This trust encourages citizens to share information regarding suspicious activities, which can help prevent radicalization, recruitment, and terrorist attacks.

Chepkong'a (2020) further argues that community policing promotes teamwork among community members, security officers, and other stakeholders. This cooperation enhances the flow of information on potential threats such as violent extremism and radicalization, enabling security agencies to take preventive action.

Mutugi (2023) maintains that effective implementation of community policing strategies particularly intelligence sharing and collaboration with local populations who understand the terrain can help prevent attacks before they occur. However, the author emphasizes that sharing information alone is not sufficient; security agencies must act promptly on intelligence received. Failure to act on public information has, in many cases, contributed to attacks that could otherwise have been prevented.

Alex P. Schmid (2013) refers to research conducted in Mandera County, where community policing initiatives have shown positive results by strengthening cooperation among key stakeholders, including local communities, law enforcement agencies, and institutions such as schools. He emphasizes the importance of civic education and continuous public awareness to ensure that security is viewed as a shared responsibility rather than solely a function of the police.

Despite its effectiveness, community policing requires proper management, adequate resources, and the integration of modern technology to enhance its impact (Koper, Lum, & Willis, 2014). Strengthening these aspects can significantly improve its contribution to counter-terrorism efforts at both national and broader levels.

d) International Security and Counter-Terrorism Architecture

There is an increasing need for states to participate actively in regional and international counter-terrorism efforts. Cooperation among states enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of security strategies. Multilateral approaches, in particular, allow countries to utilize existing frameworks and institutions to combat terrorism collectively.

Regional organizations such as the European Union (EU), African Union (AU), the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), the East African Community (EAC), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) provide platforms for cooperation in addressing security challenges. At the global level, the United Nations offers frameworks that support states in strengthening their domestic security systems and counter-terrorism strategies.

The African Union, in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, has played a significant role in supporting member states in addressing security threats. For instance, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), launched in 2007, brought together countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Djibouti, and Burundi to participate in peacekeeping operations aimed at neutralizing Al-Shabaab (Williams, 2018).

Additionally, the African Union Commission (2016) highlights a security meeting held in Djibouti, where intelligence chiefs from several East African countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia, and Burundi convened to discuss regional security challenges. The meeting emphasized the importance of collective action, intelligence sharing, and coordinated responses in addressing terrorism in the region.

These collaborative efforts have proven effective not only in combating terrorism but also in addressing other forms of transnational crime. Strengthening such partnerships remains essential for improving regional stability and enhancing the overall international security architecture.

Theoretical Frameworks

There are several theories that explain terrorism, many of which approach it as a form of organized crime, while others highlight its unique characteristics. The unique characteristics makes learners understand the causes of terrorism, how to prevent it the sustainable strategies to ensure that national security is achieved. Long-term plans to curb terrorism are very important and it needs policy makers to understand theories so well and the possible solutions they offer. This is not to say that these theories are a panacea to the problem, it only offers best practices that ensures effective counter-terrorism mechanisms. Among the key theories relevant to this study are the Relative Deprivation Theory, Rational Choice Theory, Securitization Theory, and Social Identity Theory.

The Relative Deprivation Theory, proposed by Ted Robert Gurr, seeks to explain the causes of terrorism by arguing that individuals who experience social and economic strain are more likely to rebel against societal norms. These strains may include poverty, unemployment, and inequality. When individuals are unable to achieve their goals through legitimate means, they may resort to illegitimate avenues, including involvement in terrorist activities. This theory explains the serious vulnerability that the youths in North-Eastern Kenya at the Kenya-Somalia border are facing. The factors including; poverty, unemployment, inaccessibility to the critical social amenities like hospitals and educational facilities. This makes radicalization and violent extremism very easy. Take an instance of a youth who comes from a poor family, no education, no access to employment opportunity, a poor business environment to carry out businesses and the access to light weapons together with ammunitions, the youth will easily form a sub-culture with other youths who think alike and are facing common challenges. If this issue is solved even partly, most of the youths are going to be reformed and the youths will not continue joining terror organizations as the situation is currently.

The Rational Choice Theory suggests that individuals make calculated decisions based on perceived costs and benefits. In the context of terrorism, some individuals join extremist groups after evaluating the potential rewards, such as financial incentives or support for their families. In situations of high unemployment and economic hardship, the perceived benefits may outweigh the risks, leading individuals to participate in such activities. Additionally, due to the situation in the North-Eastern region whereby most of the households are facing economic constraints including poverty, inability to pay for their basic wants among others, most of the youths are considering joining terror gangs. It is the reason why the Al-Shabaab terror organization continues to grow by recruiting new members and expanding their networks extensively. It is worth taking note that their undercover terrorist's activities are on the rise while the go unreported. The state of affairs is even being worsened by the fact that the security offices stationed in the area openly connive with the terrorists and the make money out of the dirty deals which enhances free movement of the terrorists. Using Hedonistic Calculus, the vulnerable youth will look at the level of pleasure that will come with being a member of the Al-Shabaab terror organization which includes heavy financial support to you and your family together with guaranteed security, the compare it with the consequences of arrest and prosecution which may never even happen because the security system has been compromised. The youth will eventually join the terrorist organization. It explains the reason why terrorist organizations are carrying out recruitments everyday and more members are joining.

The Securitization Theory, introduced by Barry Buzan, explains how issues such as terrorism are framed as existential threats to justify extraordinary measures by the state (Bright, 2012). Through this process, governments are able to implement strict security policies that might not be acceptable under normal circumstances. Many times it is carried out as a political process to guard the sovereignty of a state against existential threats in the sense of counter-terrorism. Despite the fact that it may be considered a punitive measure to counter terror organizations from carrying out its violent activities or even a crack down on their terror financing mechanisms including money laundering. They sometimes even carry out

legitimate businesses like owning malls to enhance their money laundering activities and be able to cover up their illegal activities. The securitization theory explains how terrorism can be handled or rather given a lot of attention by the state. For instance considering increasing the budget for the security operation to tackle terrorism in the North-Eastern region which includes; having a multi-security team deployed to the North-Eastern region including the Kenya Defense Forces Officers, the Anti-Terror Police unit, the Border Patrol Unit, the increase in the number of Intelligence officers and recruitment the locals who understand the culture and can access the secrets. This has happened before, but the securitization process will entail increasing the budget and the number of officers as a way of giving a special attention to the issue. The government and the political leaders must also work to ensure that there are development projects in the region to cure the issue of historical marginalization.

The Social Identity Theory explains how individuals identify with particular social groups, such as ethnic or religious communities. In some cases, strong group identity can lead to divisions, for instance along religious lines, which may escalate into conflict if not properly managed. This can contribute to radicalization when individuals align themselves strongly with extremist ideologies tied to group identity. In most of the instances, extreme religious ideologies have resulted to the individuals joining terrorist organizations in the North-Eastern region. The Jihadists ideologies are the extremist beliefs that have majorly contributed to the individuals joining violent extremist groups. The Al-Shabaab militants have been able to recruit members who have been radicalized and already hold the extreme religious beliefs. If you have a look at the members of the terror organizations, it is a representation of individuals who share common beliefs. It explains why it may take a long time to get rid of the terror activities in the Kenya- Somalia border.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, whereby secondary data was carefully examined. The choice of a qualitative design was informed by the nature of the study, which seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of terrorism, border porosity, and community policing within specific socio-political contexts, rather than to generate numerical or statistical findings.

Data was collected from existing academic journals, scholarly articles, institutional reports, national security documents, and other relevant publications related to terrorism, insurgency, violent extremism, and counter-terrorism strategies. Particular attention was given to peer-reviewed sources and publications from reputable institutions to ensure the credibility and reliability of the information used in the study.

The researcher systematically reviewed these sources using a thematic approach to identify recurring patterns, emerging trends in security and other key issues. The major themes that guided the analysis included the causes of terrorism, patterns of radicalization, the implications of porous borders, and the effectiveness of existing counter-terrorism measures, especially community policing in East Africa and the world at large. Emphasis was also placed on literature focusing on Kenya and the broader Horn of Africa region to ensure contextual relevance.

In addition, theoretical perspectives on transnational terrorism and border control were used as analytical lenses to interpret and give adequate explanation to the collected data. This helped to provide a structured and coherent understanding of the issues under study. The theories used majorly explain the causes of terrorism which can guide policy-makers in addressing the root causes of the phenomenon.

To enhance validity, the study relied on the corroboration of sources by comparing information from different authors, scholars and institutions both governmental and international. This approach helped to minimize bias and ensured that the findings were not based on a single perspective. Where possible, consistency across multiple sources was used as a basis for drawing conclusions which will enhance dependability.

Through this approach, the study was able to analyze past experiences, evaluate government responses, and assess the relevance of community policing as a strategy for enhancing national, regional,

and international security. Strengths and weaknesses resulting from the experiences have been examined with possible ways of making community policing effective suggested. While the use of secondary data provided broad coverage of the subject, it also presented limitations, including reliance on existing interpretations and the absence of primary field data or little exploration on the same. Nonetheless, the approach remains suitable for examining emerging issues, policy matters, and theoretical perspectives within the context of national, regional and global security.

Findings and conclusions

i) Border Porosity and Its Effects

According to the International Crisis Group (2015), the movement of militants from Somalia into Kenya is a major reason for the frequent terrorist attacks along the Kenya–Somalia border. These militants continue to engage in illegal activities, including the smuggling of firearms and ammunition, which contributes to the high incidence of attacks in the region. In addition, recruitment remains ongoing, as militants are able to access local villages and target unemployed youth whom most of them if not all have no excess to basic education at the very least.

The Cabinet Secretary for Interior and National Security in Kenya has also highlighted cases such as the abduction of five Kenyan chiefs by suspected Al-Shabaab militants, demonstrating the seriousness of the situation. This illustrates that terrorists often operate within or alongside local communities in the northern frontier.

Behr (2018) notes that border control remains difficult due to the movement of pastoralist communities in search of pasture and water. Terrorist groups take advantage of this situation to smuggle weapons and move across the border undetected. This suggests the need for stronger cooperation between the governments of Kenya and Somalia to ensure that cross-border movements are monitored without disrupting legitimate livelihoods.

While managing historically open borders is challenging, there is a need to enhance identification systems for residents in the region, including proper registration and documentation. Expanding access to social services such as healthcare, education, and administrative services can also help address marginalization and strengthen government presence, thereby reducing vulnerability to radicalization.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2009), it is difficult to determine the exact population in the North-Eastern region due to factors such as refugee movements, undocumented residents, and the nomadic lifestyle of pastoralist communities.

There are also concerns that some security officers stationed in the region may be compromised, either due to fear of retaliation or corruption. In certain instances, officers have been reported to collude with militants, allowing them to cross borders and conduct illegal activities. The United Nations Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea (2018) supports this claim, noting that Al-Shabaab has, on several occasions, been able to cross into Kenya due to compromised border security personnel. While this is not the only contributing factor, it is part of the main reasons as to why there is a continued proliferation of small arms and light weapons at the border and the whole of that region.

This situation has contributed not only to terrorism but also to other transnational crimes such as drug trafficking. To address this, the government can invest in advanced surveillance technologies to monitor border activities more effectively, while also ensuring accountability among security personnel. It is however very clear that it does not matter how the borders are securitized, without the integration of the communities at the border and the good relationship between the members of the society and the security agents the objectives of making the region safe may not be achieved.

ii) Local Community Vulnerabilities

Local community vulnerabilities remain one of the key factors explaining why individuals are drawn into terrorism and other forms of organized crime. In the counties within the North-Eastern region, there are high levels of poverty and limited access to essential services such as education and healthcare.

These conditions create an environment where individuals may resort to alternative, and often illegitimate, means of survival.

Robert K. Merton's strain theory explains how unfavorable social structures can push individuals toward deviant behavior including being rebellious and non-conforming as a way of achieving societal goals. One of the adaptations identified in the theory is the formation of subcultures that challenge existing systems, which can include extremist or terrorist groups. These responses are often driven by factors such as poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and lack of access to basic services including education among others.

McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) argue that individuals are more likely to be radicalized when they share common experiences such as economic hardship or social exclusion. Similarly, Hernandez (2020) finds that unemployment and lack of education significantly contribute to radicalization, particularly among young people who remain idle and lack opportunities for advancement and personal development. There is a sense of good morals and approved conduct that individuals develop just by going through the education system which mostly lacks in people who never received education.

In many cases, vulnerable youth are lured into terrorist organizations through promises of financial support, improved living conditions, and assistance to their families. From the perspective of Rational Choice Theory, individuals may weigh these perceived benefits against the risks, especially in contexts where law enforcement is weak or compromised. Most of the terror organizations exploit the vulnerable by promising them a lot of money and other forms of benefits that come with protection to their families. It may be difficult to turn-down the offer going by the poor living conditions of most of the residents.

The situation is further worsened by perceptions of long-standing marginalization. Despite efforts such as devolution, many residents feel excluded from national development. The lack of infrastructure, including roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, reinforces the belief that the government has neglected the region.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (2017), exclusion and lack of trust in government institutions increase the likelihood of individuals turning to alternative systems, including extremist groups. As a result, addressing these socio-economic and political vulnerabilities remains essential in reducing radicalization and preventing terrorism.

iii) Community Policing Mechanisms

The government can adopt and strengthen best practices in community policing to encourage local communities to share information openly. While community policing may not completely eliminate crime, it remains one of the most effective approaches for addressing issues such as radicalization and violent extremism.

When the public, law enforcement agencies, business communities, and both public and private institutions work together, they are able to build trust and confidence. In the context of Northern Kenya, where trust in government institutions has historically been low, such trust-building processes are essential.

For instance, collaborative initiatives between the police, local administration, and community stakeholders can help bridge this gap. Activities such as community engagement forums, awareness programs, and even social events can create opportunities for interaction between citizens and security agencies. During such engagements, civic education and security awareness can be incorporated, helping citizens understand their role in maintaining security.

These interactions create an environment where members of the community feel more comfortable sharing information on issues such as radicalization, recruitment, and planned attacks. This makes community policing a practical and sustainable approach to counter-terrorism.

The National Crime Research Centre (2017) highlights the Nyumba Kumi initiative as an example of community-based security. Under this initiative, households are organized into small clusters where

members are able to monitor their surroundings and report suspicious activities. This kind of localized cooperation strengthens early warning systems and enhances security at the grassroots level.

Muthoni (2019) further demonstrates how such initiatives have improved collaboration between communities and the police, leading to better reporting of suspicious activities. Similarly, (Opon & Gacheru, 2023) emphasizes that community policing is effective because it is inclusive, involving all members of society without exclusion.

Local leaders, including elders and administrators, play a key role in identifying vulnerable groups and supporting efforts to prevent radicalization. In the long term, improving security through such approaches can also attract investment into the region, creating employment opportunities and reducing the incentives for engaging in extremist activities.

iv) Integrating Community Policing with National and International Security

Effective counter-terrorism requires an integrated approach that brings together local communities, law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, government institutions, non-governmental organizations, and international partners. When these actors work collaboratively, the overall security framework becomes more effective and sustainable.

The World Bank (2011) notes that inclusive approaches to security, where communities are actively involved, can significantly reduce radicalization and prevent the spread of violent extremism. This is largely because improved information sharing leads to faster and more coordinated responses to security threats.

When multiple stakeholders are engaged, it becomes easier not only to respond to immediate threats but also to address the root causes of terrorism. A multi-stakeholder approach therefore provides a more comprehensive and long-term solution to insecurity.

Governments are also encouraged to align local strategies with national, regional, and international counter-terrorism frameworks. According to the National Counter Terrorism Centre (2024), Kenya has made efforts to involve actors at all levels in addressing terrorism, particularly in vulnerable regions such as the North-Eastern counties.

Strengthening relationships between security agencies and local communities remains central to this process. While building trust may take time, it is a necessary step toward achieving sustainable security outcomes. When effectively implemented, the integration of community policing within broader security frameworks can significantly enhance counter-terrorism efforts at both national and international levels.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Effective counter-terrorism strategies can be achieved through inclusive and well-coordinated security approaches. Bringing together local communities, law enforcement agencies, political leaders, business actors, and educational institutions is essential in addressing security challenges in affected regions.

Community policing remains a practical and sustainable approach, particularly when it focuses on addressing the root causes of terrorism. Tackling issues such as poverty and unemployment may appear complex, but it is critical in reducing insecurity in vulnerable areas.

For instance, the government can adopt a multi-stakeholder approach by engaging both public and private actors in the development of the North-Eastern region. Public-private partnerships can support the construction of critical infrastructure such as roads and water projects, which would improve access to resources, reduce conflicts over scarce resources, and open up the region economically. Addressing these underlying issues can significantly reduce radicalization and the appeal of extremist groups.

Human intelligence also remains a vital tool in counter-terrorism. Local communities are often best positioned to provide information on terrorist activities, including recruitment, financing, and

movement patterns ((Anderson & McKnight, 2015); National Counter Terrorism Centre, 2016). Their knowledge of local terrain and social dynamics makes them critical partners in security efforts.

It is therefore important for security agencies to respond promptly and effectively to intelligence provided by the public. Timely investigations, surveillance, and preventive actions can help disrupt terrorist activities before they occur.

Additionally, the recruitment and deployment of security personnel from local communities should be encouraged. Officers who understand local languages, culture, and terrain are better positioned to gather accurate intelligence and build trust with residents. For example, integrating local personnel into intelligence services can enhance undercover operations and improve the overall effectiveness of counter-terrorism strategies. This can be made an international best practice in regions facing security issues and together with an effective community policing approach, the counter-terrorism mechanisms can work efficiently.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the porosity of Kenya's borders remains a major factor contributing to the persistence of terrorism, particularly along the Kenya–Somalia border. However, it is not the only factor. Addressing terrorism requires a comprehensive understanding of both structural and local dynamics.

Local vulnerabilities, including poverty, unemployment, marginalization, and limited access to essential services, play a significant role in driving individuals toward extremist groups. These conditions create an environment in which radicalization can thrive if not properly addressed.

Community policing emerges as a critical strategy in bridging the gap between security agencies and local communities. Through trust-building, information sharing, and collaboration, it enhances the ability of states to detect and prevent terrorist activities.

In terms of policy, governments should move beyond purely reactive security measures and adopt more inclusive and preventive approaches. This includes investing in socio-economic development, strengthening border management systems, and promoting cooperation at regional and international levels.

Furthermore, partnerships with regional and international institutions such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the United Nations remain essential in strengthening counter-terrorism efforts. By integrating local, national, and international strategies, states can develop more effective and sustainable responses to terrorism.

Ultimately, while terrorism may not be completely eliminated, it can be significantly reduced through coordinated efforts that address both its root causes and operational dynamics.

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ПРОЗРАЧНЫЕ ГРАНИЦЫ И УЯЗВИМОСТЬ НА МЕСТАХ: ОБЩЕСТВЕННАЯ ПОЛИЦИЯ КАК НЕДОСТАЮЩЕЕ ЗВЕНО В КЕНИЙСКОЙ АРХИТЕКТУРЕ БОРЬБЫ С ТЕРРОРИЗМОМ И МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

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Аннотация. Продолжающийся рост трансграничного терроризма привёл к серьёзным вызовам безопасности во многих государствах и регионах, а также значительно дестабилизировал международную безопасность. Особенно сложной ситуация стала в районах, граничащих со странами со слабым государственным управлением или просто с хрупкими государствами.

Данная статья посвящена северо-восточному региону Кении — территории, граничащей с Сомали, которая подвергается постоянным атакам, при этом многие из предпринятых мер противодействия оказались неэффективными. Статья основана на качественных вторичных данных, включая научные статьи, институциональные отчёты и опубликованные исследования. Эти источники свидетельствуют о том, что подходы общественного полицейского контроля (community policing) не были эффективно использованы в усилиях по борьбе с терроризмом.

Исследование показывает, что проницаемость кенийско-сомалийской границы способствует передвижению террористов, распространению стрелкового оружия и лёгких вооружений, а также иной преступной деятельности. Дополнительными факторами являются неблагоприятные экономические условия, безработица среди молодёжи и ограниченный доступ к социальным услугам, что повышает уязвимость к радикализации. Далее демонстрируется, что общественное полицейское взаимодействие, основанное на доверии, обмене разведывательной информацией и партнёрстве, может обеспечить более устойчивые решения данной проблемы. Также рассматривается его потенциал в укреплении человеческой разведки и сотрудничества в сфере безопасности. Исследование приходит к выводу, что внедрение стратегий безопасности, основанных на участии сообщества, может значительно повысить эффективность и устойчивость антитеррористических мер и национальной безопасности в целом.

Ключевые слова. проницаемые границы; терроризм; борьба с терроризмом; насильственный экстремизм; архитектура международной безопасности.

КЕУЕКТІ ШЕКАРАЛАР ЖӘНЕ ЖЕРГІЛІКТІ ОСАЛДЫҚТАР: ҚОҒАМДЫҚ ПОЛИЦИЯ ҚЫЗМЕТІ КЕНИЯНЫҢ ТЕРРОРИЗМГЕ ҚАРСЫ ЖӘНЕ ХАЛЫҚАРАЛЫҚ ҚАУІПСІЗДІК АРХИТЕКТУРАСЫНДАҒЫ ЖЕТІСПЕЙТІН БУЫН РЕТІНДЕ

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Аңдатпа. Шекарааралық терроризмнің үздіксіз өсуі көптеген мемлекеттер мен аймақтарда қауіпсіздікке елеулі қатерлер туғызып, халықаралық қауіпсіздікті айтарлықтай тұрақсыздандырды. Әсіресе, мемлекеттік бақылауы әлсіз немесе мүлде тұрақсыз мемлекеттермен шектесетін аймақтарда жағдай күрделі сипатқа ие болды.

Бұл мақала Кениянының Сомалимен шектесетін солтүстік-шығыс аймағына арналған. Аталған өңірде тұрақты шабуылдар орын алып келеді, ал қабылданған көптеген алдын алу шаралары тиімсіз болып шыққан. Мақала сапалық екінші реттік деректерге, соның ішінде

ғылыми мақалаларға, институционалдық есептерге және жарияланған зерттеулерге негізделген. Бұл дереккөздер қауымдастыққа негізделген полиция қызметі (community policing) тәсілдерінің терроризмге қарсы күресте тиімді пайдаланылмағанын көрсетеді.

Зерттеу Кения–Сомали шекарасының ашықтығы террористердің қозғалысына, атыс қаруы мен жеңіл қарулардың таралуына, сондай-ақ басқа да қылмыстық әрекеттерге мүмкіндік беретінін анықтайды. Бұған қоса, экономикалық жағдайдың нашарлығы, жастар арасындағы жұмыссыздық және әлеуметтік қызметтерге қолжетімділіктің шектеулілігі радикалдану қаупін күшейтеді. Сонымен қатар, сенімге, барлау ақпаратымен алмасуға және серіктестікке негізделген қауымдастықтық полиция қызметі бұл мәселеге неғұрлым тұрақты шешімдер ұсына алатыны көрсетілген. Сондай-ақ оның адамдық барлау мүмкіндіктерін күшейту және қауіпсіздік саласындағы ынтымақтастықты дамыту әлеуеті қарастырылады. Зерттеу қорытындысында қауымдастыққа негізделген қауіпсіздік стратегияларын енгізу терроризмге қарсы іс-қимылдардың тиімділігі мен тұрақтылығын, сондай-ақ жалпы ұлттық қауіпсіздікті едәуір арттыра алатыны атап өтіледі.

Түйін сөздер. кеуекті шекаралар; терроризм; терроризмге қарсы іс-қимыл; зорлық-зомбылық экстремизмі; халықаралық қауіпсіздік архитектурасы.