

The Impact of Civil Society Groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism in Kenya

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Abstract: This study examined the impact of Civil Society Groups on preventing violent extremism in Kenya. The rise of Violent Extremism and terrorism in Kenya has now created severe security threats, as this phenomenon has resulted in deaths, destruction, and instability. It is based on this understating that the study intended to rally policymakers and academia on the contribution of community organisations in preventing violent extremism. This research employed both the Soft Power Theory and the Contemporary Deterrence Theory, which refers to the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a given community. The amount of social capital a community possesses, which can deter vices like crime, terrorism, and violent extremism that threaten community cohesion, is a clear indicator of social cohesion. This research employed a case study as a research design. This research concludes that Civil Society Groups have been playing numerous roles in the eradication of terrorism and curbing its menace around the world. In most cases, community groups partner with security agencies to obtain and release relevant information that will give a clue to tackling the most unfortunate nagging problem in society. This paper recommends that different approaches should be employed by CBG, some of which include awareness creation against terrorism, which is the awareness approach, the damnation approach, the motivation approach, the appraise approach, which assesses the performance of the security agents in such a way that they do not affect ordinary citizens, the rehabilitation approach-process of giving aid to those who suffer from the act of terror, the partnership approach, and the and the indoctrination approach, which is the process of transforming and reintegrating the terrorists into society.

Keywords: Terrorism, Deterrence, Civil Society, Extremism, Youths, Radicalization

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1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The rise of Violent Extremism (VE) in Africa has posted security threats with actual attacks resulting in many deaths, destruction, and instability, hence the need to renew and sustain focus on violent extremism prevention. Kuwali posits that terror is borderless in its effects; thus, almost all states consult and work continuously to prevent, counter violent extremism and radicalization to stifle it from maturing into terrorism.¹ It is worth noting that at the moment, violent extremism and terrorism are increasing. Many states, institutions, societies, households, and individuals have experienced some form or different types and levels of threats associated with transnational terrorism.

Governments face the multifaceted challenge of mitigating the factors that lead to violent extremism, detecting and preventing homegrown attacks, and

managing the terror returnees from conflict zones.² The Counterterrorism Conference in Bratislava, focused on the importance of new thinking that directly involves community leaders, civil society, religious groups, multiagency and multi-stakeholder policies and strategies to prevent Violent Extremism and Radicalism that Lead to Terrorism (VERLT).³ The area of counterterrorism through Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) started receiving attention in the African context.

According to Kessels & Schwartz, despite the Greater Horn of Africa's (HoA) reputation as one of the

¹ Kuwali, D. "A Soft Power Approach to Eradication Extremism in Africa." (2015), pp. 3-7.

² Huckerby, J. "When Human Trafficking and Terrorism Connect: Dangers and Dilemmas." the International Human Rights Clinic, (2019), pp. 4-7.

³ Kyriakidis, K. "The 21st Century Terrorism: Wrong Diagnosis, Inadequate Remedy." Naval Postgraduate School Thesis, (2015), p. 27.

most conflict affected parts of the world, the rise of extremist and political violence in recent years has led to a heightened sense of insecurity in the subregion.⁴ Basiime argues that there is an increasing concern about the HoA sub region's potential vulnerability to violent extremism and the ongoing threat posed by al-Shabaab in Somalia.⁵ This means that preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in the Greater HoA has become a key priority for civil society community of national, regional, and international stakeholders.⁶ Therefore Civil Society Groups' participation is a fundamental part of building community resilience and contributing to the prevention of the Horn of Africa's.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC's) strategic response to global prison challenges; there is a need to understand to challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the Joint Global Initiative and discuss the role of CSOs engagement in preventing the spread of VE in the prison context of Uganda.⁷ However, there was a strong recognition that the organizations were at different capacity levels and hence called for the capacity building of CSOs to expand the scope and quality of their work in supporting the management of violent extremist prisoners and the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons.

Idris argues that the CSOs can play a range of very diverse roles in relation to VE and can also make important contributions to efforts for CVE.⁸ The members of the Civil Society Groups have a variety of legitimate interests in adopting legislation and administrative rules that might affect CSGs, including in the area of tax law, or with respect to transparency, electoral and lobbying laws.⁹ However, even if not meant to negatively affect Civil Society Groups, such measures can have an impact on them and hence have a chilling effect. The effects of single legislative or administrative acts can be difficult to assess in isolation. Combating terrorism through addressing radicalization and violent extremism

⁴ Kessels, E & Schwartz, M. "Violent Extremism and Instability in the Greater Horn of Africa: An Examination of Drivers and Responses." London, United Kingdom, (2016), pp. 9-13.

⁵ Basiime, F. "Uganda: ADF Survivor Recounts the Day the Rebels Attacked Kichwamba Technical College." Kampala, Uganda, (2015), pp. 7-8.

⁶ Koehler, D. "Violence and Terrorism from the Far-Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat." ICCT Policy Brief, (2019), pp. 1-3.

⁷ United Nations. On November 30th, 2021. "The UNODC held a consultation round table meeting with Civil Society Organizations working on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Prison Reform in Uganda." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, (2021).

⁸ Idris, I. "Gender and Countering Violent Extremism in the Kenya-Mozambique Region." University of Birmingham, (2020), pp. 1-3.

⁹ Ibid, (2020), p. 8.

has become a ubiquitous feature of national strategies, resulting in the emergence of policies and practices towards preventing and countering violent extremism in Kenya, particularly in the County Governments, such as Madera County, Mombasa County, Nairobi County and others, several organizations have also recognized the important role that community actors can play in dealing with conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, in preventing and countering violent extremism.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The United Nations (UN) High-Level Workshop held in Uganda on 30th November 2021 urged countries to pursue an action-oriented plan to reduce the threat of VE and terrorism in the HoA.¹⁰ All parties involved agreed that such a plan required full cooperation and partnership.¹¹ The United Nations further appreciated the already-existing mechanisms for communication and coordination between these stakeholders to work in partnership, but highlighted that there is an urgent need to strengthen the role of CSOs in counterterrorism activities.

The transnational nature of terrorism and violent extremism underscores the vital importance of multilateral cooperation to detect and disrupt violent extremism.¹² Terrorist organizations increased the activities, fueled by Kenyan military operations in Somalia; some of them, include al-Shabaab and the Islamic State, who pose an increasing threat to sub-regional peace and security.¹³ Conversely, now leading to a possible step-up in civil society initiatives in Kenya, as strategic counter-terrorism is alternately referred to as the new PVE.

The PVE programmes in Lamu County for instance are based on theories of change spearheaded by CSGs on how a person moves from non-violence to violent extremism, and vice versa. In spite of this, there is still a limited understanding of the challenges hindering the optimal contribution of CSG in CVE in the Horn of Africa region including Kenya.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

¹⁰ United Nations. On November 30th, 2021. "The UNODC held a consultation round table meeting with Civil Society Organizations working on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Prison Reform in Uganda." The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, (2021).

¹¹ The United Nations. "The African regional high-level conference on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism conducive to terrorism." Nairobi, Kenya (2019).

¹² Botha, A. "Assessing the Vulnerability of Kenyan Youths to Radicalization and Extremism." Institute for Security Studies Paper 245, (2013), p. 13.

¹³ Hoyt, T. "Pakistan, an Ally by Any Other Name." Naval Institute Proceedings, (2017), pp. 44-50.

The study examined the role of Civil Society Groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) in Kenya and specifically sought to

- i. Establish the contribution of Civil Society Groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism.
- ii. Assess the challenges undermining contribution of Civil Society Groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism.
- iii. Identify measures to address the challenges undermine civil groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper utilized both the Soft Power Theory and the Contemporary Deterrence Theory to examine the role of Civil Society Groups in Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) in Kenya. The Soft Power Model was first introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990, following the fall of Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union.¹⁴ At that time, scholars of international relations were searching for new models to explain the ongoing processes as the existing ones were not able to give all the answers.

Nye explains 'culture' as one of the three sources of a nation's Soft Power. He identifies three sources of a nation's Soft Power as its culture, political values, and foreign policies with internationally consented credibility and moral authority.¹⁵ 'Soft Power is culture power' and suggests in pragmatic terms, the three ways in which Soft Power advantage of a country is measured; when culture and ideas match prevailing global norms.¹⁶ The 'soft' approach main aim is to debunk certain beliefs that the youth have been indoctrinated into hence rehabilitating the individual instead of just neutralizing them.¹⁷ These measures have to be backed up by hard power instruments as last resort but nevertheless an option. The aim here is to degrade rapidly groups that promote hate and extremism.¹⁸ Social Capital is the networks found in a society that enables that society to function effectively.

The contemporary deterrence theory developed during cold war is employed in this study. Silke posits that Deterrence theory refers broadly to a body of academic work that came to dominate the security

literature in the United States (US) and Western Europe after World War II.¹⁹ However, there is no single theory of deterrence but a collection of logically connected hypotheses.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a case study as a research design. Researchers often conduct case studies in the real-world context of the subject, providing a clear understanding of their true nature. Case studies provide rich raw material for advancing theoretical ideas. The study was undertaken in Kenya. The research was mostly focusing on Nairobi and Coast Counties, which has been most affected by terrorist activities leading to the enhancement of counter terrorism measures.

Civil society groups involved in PVE in the country were the main target population. They included representatives from civil society organizations, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies such as the Kenya Defense Forces, National Intelligence Service, The National Police Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Counter Terrorism Centre.

The sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample.²⁰ Sampling is a technique of selecting respondents from a study population for the purposes of making statistical inferences and estimating the characteristics of the whole population. The study employed systematic sampling techniques to select respondents from CSGs, while using purposive sampling to pick the experts who engaged in the research.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative data. Primary data collection was done through questionnaires given to the CSGs and guided interviews with the experts. Secondary data was collected through books, journals, articles and periodicals. We sorted and analyzed the collected data using document and content analysis techniques, taking into account the emerging issues under investigation. Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the study to give voice of national cohesion and national security nexus in Kenya. Content analysis is a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. The final results were presented in histograms, frequency tables and narratives.

¹⁴ Koehler, D. "Violence and Terrorism from the Far-Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat." ICCT Policy Brief, (2019), pp. 1-3.

¹⁵ Nye, J. "Power in the Global Information Age: From Realism to Globalization." London and New York: Routledge, (2004), p. 19.

¹⁶ Koehler, D. "Violence and Terrorism from the Far-Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat." ICCT Policy Brief, (2019), p. 5.

¹⁷ Nye, J. "Soft Power Superpowers: Cultural and Natural Assets of Japan and the United States." London, England: M.E. Sharpe, Inc. ix-xiv, (2008), p. 89.

¹⁸ Koehler, D. "Violence and Terrorism from the Far-Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat." ICCT Policy Brief, (2019), pp. 1-3.

¹⁹ Silke, A. "Terrorists, Victims and Society: Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences." John Wiley and Sons Ltd, (2013), p. 23.

²⁰ Anthony, T. "Sampling frames and master samples." The Draft Handbook on Designing of Household Sample Surveys, (2003), pp. 3-4.

1.6 FINDINGS

The CSGs have progressively become key players in development issues such as the creation of hospitals for good health, schools for great education and agriculture for sufficient food for people living without food in the world.²¹ They have also played a critical role in ending civil wars in most countries in Africa. Civil society groups help in emergency relief during disasters, and these groups have also played a very key role in the waves of democratization, Beginning in Latin America and Eastern Europe and spreading across developing countries.

In Kenya, the CS has also been ahead in the fight against disease.²² Examples of Civil Society Groups working in this field are the Kenya Aids Consortium (KANCO), Kenya Network of People with Aids (KENWA), the Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Kenya (NEPHAK), and the National Aids Control Council (NACC). These CSOs are instrumental in curbing the HIV epidemic which is a huge challenge in our country. They are HIV consortia (apart from NACC) that exist to strengthen their response to the epidemic, and these consortia are vital complements to the government.

According to Sikoyo & Kobia, “just as the central government is responsible for developing national policies and coordinating programs at the national level, civil society groups are crucial for providing services to citizens, serving as the interface between the state and citizens.”²³ Subsequently, “among the many services citizens require from local officials, security-related activities are of primary importance.”²⁴ It is worth noting that the locally-driven (County action plan) framework that has been developed promotes collaboration of non-governmental, governmental and CSOs from the Coastal region. Contribution are made through in-person meetings on a regular basis to work through issues and craft an approach that could be customized based on the community needs of those implementing the CSOs framework and policies for CVE.

The CSG initiatives through CSOs tackle conditions that are considered conducive to the radicalization of VE with the ultimate aim of denying terrorist groups new support and recruits.²⁵ The first

respondent notes that the strategies require full collaboration, corporation and synergy with all the stakeholders and the shareholders and tools that governments and CSOs use to counter violent extremism vary, reflecting differing conditions and settings.

It is said that “*the Republic of Kenya is advancing measures on CVE. Therefore over the period of time CSG has been able to contribute to a reduction in VE and terrorism. This has led to collaborations and corporation such as increased sharing intelligence information that contribute to a reduction in attacks within the Nairobi County.*”²⁶ Additionally, “*the collaborations and teamwork have enabled the National Counter Terrorism Strategy and the government to roll out the County Action Plan and CVE in all the 47 counties, therefore harmonizing national and county action to prevent and counter violent extremism (PCVE).*”²⁷

The majority of the CSG (45%) respondents strongly agreed that NCTC encourage CSOs to enhance corporation amongst CVE stakeholder to join forces and synergize with the Kenya prison services, victims of terrorism, government institutions, private sector, civil society, social medial, the military, diplomatic community and the media.²⁸ This section found that, “about (22%) point-out that “*community engagement requires building trust between officials and community members in order to establish a relationship of collaboration.*”²⁹ Adding that, “*experience proves that such relationships cannot be built overnight and should be cultivated and maintained over time in order to have effect.*”³⁰

This finding differ with Ramdeen, who observed that, “*CSG officials should approach communities with basic knowledge of their local dynamics and the issues they face in order to demonstrate to the community that they are not engaging the community solely because of potential security threats arising within the community.*”³¹ This study found that civil society as a partner in addressing violent extremism, support civil society conflict resolution, human rights, and prevention programming, and protect civil society space from being closed down in the name of counterterrorism policy. It is worth noting that, “the CSGs officials and community leaders emphasize that a securitized relationship, one in

²¹ Koehler, D. “*Violence and Terrorism from the Far-Right: Policy Options to Counter an Elusive Threat.*” ICCT Policy Brief, (2019), pp. 1-3.

²² Kimutai, G. “*Civil Society Organizations and Regional Integration in the East African Community.*” Maseno University, Kisumu County, Kenya, (2022), pp. 9-11.

²³ Sikoyo, L & Kobia, S. “*Enhancing the Role of Civil Society Organizations in Public Education Sector Monitoring and Accountability.*” Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, (2021), pp. 90-95.

²⁴ Research Field Data. Participant Number 5: From Government of Kenya, (2024).

²⁵ Research Field Data. Participant Number 7: From Government of Kenya, (2024).

²⁶ Research Field Data. Participant Number 9: From Government of Kenya, (2024).

²⁷ Research Field Data. Participant Number 15: From Civil Society Organizations, (2024).

²⁸ Research Field Data. Participant Number 8, 9 & 10: From Government of Kenya, (2024).

²⁹ Research Field Data. Participant Number 2, 4, 5 & 9: From Civil Society Organizations, (2024).

³⁰ Research Field Data. Participant Number 11: From Civil Society Organizations, (2024).

³¹ Ramdeen, M. “*Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Africa.*” Djibouti, (2017), pp. 6-8.

which the security concerns of officials crowd out community concerns in other areas of government responsibility, is counterproductive to genuine community engagement and ultimately leads to distrust and bad relations.”³² This study concluded that the CSGs and the community must cohesion through trust, which is an integral party of community engagement and community-oriented policing, when it comes to PVE.

The community members across the Coastal region found that in order to build trust, the CSGs, practitioners and government officials should be honest and transparent to freely engage the community.³³ This findings show that CSG is effective in CVE and this is best achieved through strengthening community corporation and community engagement.

It is worth noting that although many communities in the Coastal region have formal leaders who ably represent their peers, understand their communities and should continue to be at the forefront of community engagement initiatives towards PVE and community-oriented policing efforts tend to work best when multiple sectors within a community are involved in the initiative. Community cooperation is very critical, and it requires involving community influencers who are not formal leaders into the PVE plans.

The CSGs involved in community policing strategies in the Coastal region have been groups and influential individuals dealing with crime prevention, PVE management and control in a given locality. Silke opines that due to the easy domestication of community policy strategies in CVE, the practice has been successful in many parts of the County.³⁴ The CSOs under the study noted that terrorism as a vice brutally robbed young person of their lives, opportunities, livelihoods, of their present and even their future.

A total of (85%) of all the CSOs interview stated that young people are also targeted by recruitment and radicalization to VE organizations and in terrorist attacks. A total of (15%) of the CSOs recognize that the prevention of VE as a major priority and therefore requires youth friendly initiatives to reduce the impact of VE, promote tolerance and enhance the value of pluralism with the aim of building resilience in their local communities and societies.

The process of PVE has in some ways evolved, depending on the areas, targets, locality, population and even surroundings; the PVE undertaken by CSOs morphed into a catch-all category that sometimes lacks

precision and specific focus.³⁵ Thus the boundaries that explicitly distinguish PVE programs from those of other, well-established community fields, such as poverty reduction, development, education, community empower, democratization and education, all these, ironically still borrow from the same inter-strategies (poverty, awareness) to tackle CVE, and therefore the CSOs sometimes have a challenge, especially reframing works of CVE that are not necessarily an extension of NCTC approaches.

According to Kimutai, “successfully addressing violent extremism and terrorism problems through CSOs will not be easy and may require a reassessment of whether CVE is a useful or effective framework for field-based interventions.”³⁶ Sikoyo and Kobia strongly reiterate that, “developing a sharper, narrower, and more focused definition of CVE, tightening the boundaries between CVE as a field of practice and its related fields of development, governance, and conflict mitigation and a stronger commitment to testing the causal assumptions underlying CVE work are initial steps that would improve the design, implementation, and evaluation of CVE programming.”³⁷ Therefore the use of CSOs in CVE requires carefully identifying CVE as a classic case of a complex and deep rooted problem, that requires time to meticulously unpack its component elements and then determining which components are tractable to specific kinds of interventions would be a very promising step in this direction.

Terrorism as a topical subject has attracted a lot of uncalled for attention from politicians, the media, clergy, scholars, policy makers and even the general public.³⁸ It should be appreciated that a terror attack not only on, but near any premises, can usually result in human casualties, property damage, business interruption, legal liability issues and long-term damages to brand reputations.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that CSGs have been widely seen as a crucial agent for limiting authoritarian governments, empowering popular movements, reducing the socially atomizing and unsettling effects of market forces, enforcing political accountability, and improving the quality and inclusiveness of governance.

³² Mesok, E. “*Counterinsurgency, Community Participation, and the Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism Agenda in Kenya.*” Taylor and Francis Online, (2022), pp. 9-13.

³³ Research Field Data. Participant Number 3: From Civil Society Organizations, (2024).

³⁴ Silke, A. “*Terrorists, Victims and Society: Psychological Perspectives on Terrorism and its Consequences.*” England: John Wiley and Sons Ltd, (2013), p. 23.

³⁵ Mesok, E. “*Counterinsurgency, Community Participation, and the Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism Agenda in Kenya.*” Taylor and Francis Online, (2022), pp. 9-13.

³⁶ Kimutai, Gt. “*Civil Society Organizations and Regional Integration in the East African Community.*” Maseno University, Kisumu County, Kenya, (2022), pp. 9-11.

³⁷ Sikoyo, L & Kobia, S. “*Enhancing the Role of Civil Society Organizations in Public Education Sector Monitoring and Accountability.*” Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, (2021), p. 19.

³⁸ Ganor, B. “*Trends in modern international terrorism.*” Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, (2014), pp. 34-36.

The CSGs in Kenya has been vital in promoting peace and security, ethnic cohesion, and religious tolerance in our nation.³⁹ Moreover, civil society groups have enhanced and promoted inter-tribal cultural exchange to enhance more understanding of each other's culture. It has achieved this by engaging the different ethnic and religious groups in mutual interactions.⁴⁰ Such mutual interactions include group meetings, cultural festivals, awareness campaigns, and religious feasts.

In the field of counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism has been the extent to which civil society actors have contributed to a range of important activities. They have developed and promoted peace education curricula in schools, for instance, helping to prevent the radicalization of teenagers in HoA, providing psycho-social interventions that teach marginalized youth in Kenya. Managing terrorism risk entails assessing and closely monitoring a variety of parameters.

The CSGs through their actions, have earned the right to be viewed as allies and not adversaries in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, and the United Nations and its member states should be doing more to recognize and champion that. Terrorist groups are increasingly positioning and escalating their abilities to launch deadly and coordinated attacks, recruit and radicalize thereby the need up counter terrorism and VE activities in the region. This study revealed that while CSGs frequently garner attention in development discourse, their unique approach to ensuring good governance stands out. Hence, an understanding of their contributions in CVE against the backdrop of various-related challenges in Kenya calls for fresh and new research.

It is vital for civil society and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to explain that human rights are a useful framework for developing effective counter-terrorism strategies rather than an impediment.⁴¹ In this regard, specific activities may include providing information to school students, youth workers, and police and law enforcement officials.⁴² With regard to the latter, civil society and NGOs may enter into partnerships with

³⁹ Lawrence, M. "Revitalizing Civil Society Organizations in Kenya: An Assessment of their Contribution to Archive Sustainable Development Goals in Narok County." Maasai Mara University, Kenya, (2021), p. 11.

⁴⁰ Sikoyo, L & Kobia, S. "Enhancing the Role of Civil Society Organizations in Public Education Sector Monitoring and Accountability." Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, (2021), p. 19.

⁴¹ Powell, R. "Nuclear deterrence theory: the search for credibility, digitally printed version." Re-Issue. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, (2018), pp. 2-6.

⁴² Bognoe, C. "Understanding the role of gender in preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, good practices for law enforcement." Security & cooperation, (2016), p. 3

law enforcement bodies to develop targeted programmes of co-operation, focusing, on increasing awareness and understanding of the diversity of communities.

The role of community organizations in implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is important because of their complexity and diversity.⁴³ One major challenge is to distinguish between those CSOs that are genuine and those that are not genuine. On the contrary, the contribution of CSOs is still highly needed for the implementation learned from previous experiences with CVE. Finally, in Kenya, CSGs are organized to respond to peoples' basic needs that either the government or the markets have failed to meet for the people. CSGs are created with different objectives with some aim at developing projects or producing goods, while others are there to bring the goods to the people and therefore, they render services to different communities.

1.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that the strategic measures are some of the problem-solving strategies for PVE management which thrives on partnerships and collaborations with the public to address issues of terrorism and VE that might adversely affect the Coastal communities and the public in general. It also recommends that in a prevention-oriented approach, the "traditional" hard strategies involving military, policing, intelligence, and legislation, become insufficient for establishing an effective long-term strategy, but they are not entirely discounted.

The CSOs achieve counterterrorism through an integrated strategy, resource base and tool kit that draws from both authority and community. This section recommends that CVE offers a mechanism for encouraging exchange between government, academia and civil society by shifting the focus of Counterterrorism (CT) on to prevention and interruption and conceptualizing VE as a social issue with security implications (as opposed to a security issue with social approach. Additionally, the potential for CVE to deliver effective outcomes requires that the prevailing CVE discourse be unconstrained from the currently hegemonic CT connotations.

There is need to strengthen state-civil society consultations, where there is an urgent need to deepen consultations between the government and the CSOs involved in CVE at the Coast region to capitalize on synergy in a deliberate effort to enhance the fight against VE and terrorism.

⁴³ Kimutai, G. "Civil Society Organizations and Regional Integration in the East African Community." Maseno University, Kisumu County, Kenya, (2022), pp. 9-11.

This study further recommends the bolstering financial capacities of the CSOs, and the government may consider directly financing the operations of some of the CSOs in CVE in the country particularly in the Coast region. The soft approach by these organizations has been appealing to the locals as opposed to the hard approach by the state agencies. This may be achieved through establishing a liaison office within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure the external donors adequately support the CSOs.

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