BRICS 005 Project: Working with National and County Governments to Mitigate Violent Extremism in the Coast Region

Research Team
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(a) Brief background on project focus for the reporting period - milestones: (1 paragraph)

This is the 4th report for the period ending 31st May 2016. There were delays in the release of funds from DAI. A small amount Ksh 363,000 was released from DAI to facilitate initial sets of meetings especially the visit by BHC. Project activities were mainly conducted in Kwale County. Activities in Kilifi and Lamu County are planned in the coming months. The prevailing conditions in Kwale County have taken a turn for the worse. The IOM amnesty program has collapsed. The leader of the returnees who had embraced amnesty was assassinated and the 48 returnees who had received support from IOM face severe threats. The KIMYA team who were negotiating the amnesty also are on the radar of the extremists and are taking extra precautions to avoid falling victims. Due to the heightened state of affairs most research assistants are unwilling to venture into Kwale for data collection.

Kwale County

Recruitment of Research Assistants
Due to the heightened insecurity in Kwale, KIMYA were requested to recommend seasoned research assistants who would be able to navigate the more difficult terrain. The following CVs were submitted and approved after discussion with the concerned.

For research on Mosques
1. Safari RamadhanMwakulaula (was included from pilot phase)
2. Said ChimwayaKamanza (is a returnee and knows the terrain)

The team also considered and realized that before engaging the women victims, it is necessary to collect some baseline information about them. Hence a research
program was initiated to do the baseline survey with women victims of terror related issues. Two names were submitted and approved by the research team

1. Zuleikha Ramadhany Boi
2. Mwanasiti Fadhili Kibwanga

The two were recommended by KIMYA who would link them to the network of victims. They are also female madrassa teachers (Ustadha). Due to the fact that most victims are women who subscribe to the extreme brand of Islam, women (Ustadha) research assistants were seen to be more appropriate to engage this group.

**Training of Research Assistants**
The four trainees were invited to Pwani University Kilifi for induction on the questionnaire and the objectives of the research project. The research assistants were also sensitized on the dangers of the project especially the killing of Subira Sudi Mwagore. They expressed confidence that they would be able to do the work.

**Research and Data Collection**
Research started on 28th May 2016 and would go on up to 4th June 2016. By 31st May 2016 data collection was reported to be progressing well. The killing of 3 elders in Bongwe on Saturday the 29th May shook the research assistants forcing the field officers to re-direct the assistants away from Bongwe. Victims from Bongwe were willing to be interviewed over the phone about their plight/situation.

**Meetings with Imams**
The TTUC’s BRICS team organized two meetings with Imams on the 16th of May (26Pax) and on 18th of May (32Pax). Each meeting also included women Sheikhs so called Sheikhat/Ustadha (Teachers). Both sets of Imams were taken through the research findings from the pilot phase of study and the general problem of radicalization in Kwale County. The Imams were drawn from Msambweni and Matuga Sub-County. The meetings were held at the PrideInn Hotel in Diani. Due to heightened insecurity, the meeting could not be held in a more community setting.

**Meeting between County and National Government and Imams**
On the 19th of May, the TTUC BRICS Team held a meeting to bring together the County and National Government Officials from Kwale County (29 Pax). The meeting was held at the Kenya School of Government. In total about 29 participants attended included County and deputy County Commissioners from Kwale, Msambweni, Matuga, Kinango and LungaLunga. The National Government officials took the exercise very seriously. The County Government Officials were represented by the County Secretary, One CEC for Agriculture, One Director for Community Affairs, two sub-county administrators and several ward administrators. The political leaders of the County (Governor and MCAs) did not attend.
The meeting in Kwale also include Mr Joseph Kaguthi from the National Community Policing Steering Committee, Mr Gachichio of the NCTC and Mr Rogers of the NCPSC Secretariat and the Director of the Kenya School of Government in Matuga.

Also invited were two Imams who had been part of the meetings in PrideInn

Visit by the British High Commission Officials
British High Commission Officials/DAI/Wasafiri team visited Kwale on 16th May 2016. They were hosted by the TTUC team at PrideInn Hotel first for a private briefing by the research team and KIMYA officials. They were briefed on the project and general radicalization issues in Kwale. After a daylong wait, the BHC team also had a session with the Governor at Maji Beach Hotel who expressed a desire for data and more information to help in the fight against radicalization. He pledged to cooperate with all stakeholders in the fight against radicalization in Kwale County.

Lamu County
Letters requesting for a meeting to develop strategy for Lamu County have been written to the Governor and County Commissioner, but there has been no response. The team has decided to delay the Lamu phase of the project to the June and July due to the intense activities in Kwale. Mr Joseph Kaguthi has promised to help with Lamu

Kilifi County
The Research activities in Kilifi County will begin on 4th May 2016 and will run for 6 days. This part of the project does not face any challenges that are apparent at this moment.

(b) Description of change/results achieved during the reporting period: (2 paragraphs)
(i) The research output will inform interventions with mosques and women victims. The growing number of women victims present a current and future challenge but could also be potential allies.
(ii) The Imams fully embraced the commitment to participate in the struggle to explain the issues fueling radicalization and to work with the research team and the Government to counter radicalization and violent extremism. They recommended two of their representatives to attend the meeting between the County and National Government Officials.
(iii) The National Government Officials appreciated the research findings and requested for the report and presentations (which was given to them). They agreed to work on a joint strategy for Kwale County. They also agreed to have a committee bringing together the County Government, the Sheikhs and the National Government to work on a joint strategy. Both County and National Government moved from a very cautious engagement with the project to a full embrace of the project and its objectives.

(c) Project’s/BRICS’ contribution to the change/results achieved: (2 paragraphs)
In the long term the project will contribute to enhancing cooperation between the two levels of Government and the community in the fight against radicalization and violent extremism in Kwale. The interaction needs to be sustained. The research findings from the pilot phase were very revealing to all parties on how they can collaborate to minimize radicalization.

There are about 40 University level Sheikhs whose contacts were given to the BRICS team. It was recommended that these highly educated Muslim scholars need to be brought at the forefront in the fight against radicalization. All of them are from Kwale but some are working in Mombasa and Kilifi.

The research of the mosques will show how prepared the mosque is to tackle challenges facing the community and whether imams, mosque leaders and adherents have the will to work with other stakeholders to fight radicalization and violent extremism.

(d) Challenges & Lessons learnt during the reporting period and options for improving performance: (2 paragraphs)

(i) The IOM Program has collapsed but amnesty still remains a potent tool in ending the problem of radicalization and violent extremism in Kwale.

(ii) The killing of Subira Sudi and the three elders have cast a shadow over the project. Researchers, field Officers and their assistants are required to exercise more caution.

(iii) The killings have brought more fear into the community but also anger. The Community needs more information about what is happening so that they direct their anger at the right place. Right now it is misdirected at the police.

(iv) The police officers are bearing most of the blame from the community for being ineffective. A bad relationship between the police and community will hamper progress.

Information on the killings in Kwale can be obtained at the following links
