Prevention and Management of Emerging Forms of Violence in Learning Institutions in Kenya: Perceptions of Education Stakeholders

Situational Assessment Report 2017
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Security, peace building and conflict management are critical components of social, economic and political development of a country. The Government of Kenya is committed to promoting peace and harmonious coexistence among the Kenyan people as enshrined in the Kenya Constitution 2010. This is reflected in the Kenya Vision 2030 whose social pillar emphasizes the promotion of a just and cohesive society that enjoys equitable social development and operationalized through government ministries, departments and agencies.

The education sector offers a unique opportunity towards peace and social cohesion as it is expected to empower individuals to recognize human connectedness and commonalities across cultures hence live peacefully in an interdependent world. Specifically, education equips children and young people with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that help them operate effectively in society. In line with this, the Ministry of Education, through the State department of Education and in collaboration with partners, has developed and implemented various initiatives towards promoting peace and harmonious coexistence among Kenyans. Key among them are; continuous training of education officers and teachers on peace education, development and operationalization of the Education Sector Policy on Peace Education, and establishment of peace clubs in schools.

The Ministry takes cognizance of the fact that there are emerging forms of violence that pose a threat to peaceful coexistence of communities, national security and economic prosperity. This challenge arises out of individuals or groups of people embracing ideologies that are radical in nature and advocate the use of violence to achieve their objectives. In Kenya, this form of violence is manifested through emergence of criminal gangs, ethnic violence and religious-based radicalization to violent extremism. This violence has affected teaching and learning and discipline in schools.

The Ministry of Education through the Inter-Country Quality Node (ICQN) on Peace Education in collaboration with the Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and with the support of United States Agency for International Development (USAID), conducted a Situational Assessment whose main aim was to gather relevant data to inform the development of effective policies and strategies to prevent and manage emerging forms of violence through the education sector in Kenya.

This situational assessment report identifies the emerging forms of violence affecting the learning institutions, the drivers, the extent and impact of the violence. It also presents the existing interventions within the education sector aimed at preventing and managing violence while identifying gaps and recommendations for consideration by the Ministry of Education in order to strengthen the ongoing efforts in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence through education.

I appeal to all stakeholders and partners in the education sector to use this situational assessment report in development of guidelines, training manuals and other related materials on prevention and management of emerging forms of violence to support the Ministry of Education to promote a cohesive and peaceful society. I also urge our partners to continue supporting the education sector in the promotion of Value Based Education so as to enhance peaceful coexistence in our beloved country.

Dr Belio R. Kipsang, CBS  
Principal Secretary  
State Department of Basic Education
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The situational assessment report on prevention and management of emerging forms of violence is a product of extensive consultation and collaboration among individuals and relevant stakeholders.

The Ministry of Education sincerely acknowledges the contribution and hard work of the many individuals and organizations that contributed to the study. In particular, we wish to acknowledge the valuable contribution of the Directorate of Policy Partnership and East Africa Community affairs, Ministry of Education, for spearheading this study.

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Leah Rotich (Mrs), MBS
Director General
State Department of Basic Education
Kenya has experienced various forms of violence ranging from violence fueled by electoral processes, ethnicity and religious beliefs, to acts of terrorism among others. Some of the most significant cases of violence witnessed in the country include the post-election violence in 2007/2008, and terrorist attacks of the last decade such as the Garissa University attack of April 2015 and the Westgate attack of September 2013 among others. Many organized criminal gangs have also emerged in various parts of the country. For example, the Gaza Boys in Nairobi’s Kayole estate and its environs, Wakali Kwanza in Kwale County and China Squad in Kisumu are some of the outlawed organized criminal groups in the country.

These emerging forms of violence have had a negative impact on various sectors in the country. The education sector has suffered a major blow due to loss of lives for both teachers and students, destruction of learning institutions leading to their closure, disruption of learning programs, displacement of teachers and learners among others. The country has experienced heightened unrest within the schools with over 100 arson attacks witnessed in the year 2016. This perhaps could be attributed to the increase in the number of organized criminal gangs in the country (NCRC, 2012).

In recent years, the role of education in countering violent extremism (CVE) has gained prominence among policymakers and practitioners. The Ministry of Education has put in place various mechanisms aimed at preventing and addressing violent extremism in schools. However, there are no national guidelines and capacity building materials for use in guiding the educators to respond to the challenges of radicalization and eventual engagement of learners in violent extremism.

In view of the aforementioned, the Ministry of Education commissioned this study aimed at gathering data for informing the development of effective policies and strategies to prevent and manage emerging forms of violence through the education sector in Kenya. This was a qualitative study that sought to collect the views of various education stakeholders including education officers, pupils, teachers, parents, Boards of Management and civil society organizations. The school community was represented by community opinion leaders who included the religious leaders and chiefs. This study was conducted in seven counties in Kenya.

The study found that in addition to the common forms of violence in schools (bullying, fighting, rioting), there has been an emergence of youth embracing violent extremism – those perpetrated by organized criminal groups that advocate violence or conduct violent activities. The common forms of emerging violence included: harassment and threatening of both teaching staff and students; destruction of school property; school children carrying weapons to schools; and fights between teachers and parents. According to the study findings, the most vulnerable group for recruitment into the violent groups is young people from the age of 9 to 25. The boys are the most targeted although girls are increasingly getting involved. The most targeted levels in primary schools are from class 6 to 8, while in secondary schools they target all levels.

Violence has resulted in many adverse effects on the education sector with cases of abuse, deaths and injuries to both students and teachers being reported. Intimidation of teachers and students is also common, creating an environment of fear that is not conducive for learning. This perhaps has also led to the increased cases of riots and indiscretion reported in some schools.
The study found that the drivers and catalysts of violent extremism are multiple, complex, context-specific and multi-dimensional in nature. The study adopted the USAID model of classifying the drivers into push and pull factors but also identified catalytic factors. Some of the commonly mentioned push factors included social environment, youth unemployment, poverty, weak family structures and a search for identity, negative role models, political influence, and ethnic influence among others. The common pull factors included peer pressure, perceived material incentives, protection and power. The catalytic factors that are said to facilitate the process included the innate adolescent factors, media and internet.

The study established that the Ministry of Education had also come up with various measures to curb violence in schools including: development of admissions guidelines for registration of non-citizens into the schools; sanctioning of the transfer cases; vetting of all teaching and learning materials going to schools; use of national drama and music festivals with themes for countering violent extremism; partnership with security agents and law enforcers; implementation of Child Friendly School initiatives; Peace Education; development of guidelines for formation of Peace Clubs at school level and the ongoing review of the curriculum to integrate prevention of violent extremism in schools.

At school level, the study found that the schools have put in place some measures to address violence including offering Guidance and Counseling services to students, integration of violence prevention in life skills lessons and into co-curricular activities, use of peer counselors, foster parenting and engagement of motivational speakers from the community.

The identified gaps which included inadequate capacity of schools in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence; inadequate capacity by teachers to offer Guidance and Counseling services; lack of guidelines and capacity building materials in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence; weak partnerships between the schools and communities; non-conducive social environment; presence of religious and other actors in schools with minimal supervision by the county; and weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

This study therefore highlights the need to develop the capacity of various parties in the schools using the whole school approach. This should include training of teachers, BOMs, parents, support staff and students on identification of early warning signs, alternative discipline mechanisms in handling violent cases, parenting skills, key security measures, and guidance of learners. There is also need to build the capacity of schools in managing student’s welfare issues. Other recommendations made include strengthening the guidance and counseling department in the schools, integration of prevention and management of emerging forms of violence into the curriculum, development of guidelines and materials for prevention and management of emerging forms of violence in schools and strengthening partnerships with the communities. In addition, the study recommends expansion of the low cost boarding schools beyond the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands to provide safe spaces for children from violence-prone areas. There is also the need for close monitoring of the religious and other actors working closely with the schools by County Education Boards. The study also recommends development of M&E framework to streamline the reporting mechanisms on emerging forms of violence.

Lastly, this study recommends the need for further research to inform strategies for prevention and management. Some areas could include research on appropriate discipline mechanisms for learners that promote a conducive environment for peaceful learning, the relationship between student welfare and emergence of violence in schools, and the role of communities in addressing emerging forms of violence in schools.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>ADEA</th>
<th>Association for Development of Education in Africa</th>
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<td>ADF</td>
<td>Allied Democratic Forces</td>
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<td>AMISOM</td>
<td>African Union Mission in Somalia</td>
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<td>Arid and Semi-Arid Land</td>
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<td>Anti-Terror Police Unit</td>
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<td>BOM</td>
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<td>GCTF</td>
<td>Global Counter Terrorism Forum</td>
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<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
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<td>ICQN</td>
<td>Inter-Country Quality Node</td>
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<td>ISIS</td>
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<td>Institute for Security Studies</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MRC</td>
<td>Mombasa Republican Council</td>
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<td>National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism</td>
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<td>Prevention of Organized Crime Act</td>
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<td>POTA</td>
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<td>SLDL</td>
<td>Sabaot Land Defense Forces</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
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Radicalization: It is a gradual or phased process that employs the ideological conditioning of individuals and groups to socialize them into violent extremism, and recruitment into terrorist groups or campaigns. It is dependent on a fanatical ideology that rejects dialogue and compromise in favor of an ends-justifies-ends approach, particularly in the willingness to utilize mass violence to advance their objectives.

Drivers of Radicalization: This refers to experiences, perceptions and narratives that provide entry points for violent extremism.

De-Radicalization: This is the process of interacting through which individuals avoid or reject views on legitimacy of violence as a means to achieve a specific political and ideological objective.

Violence: The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.

Violent Extremism: Refers to actions of radicalized individuals, who are prepared to engage in or actively support acts of violence in furtherance of radically illiberal, undemocratic political systems or ideologies.

Terrorism: Criminal acts against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death, serious bodily injury, take hostages with the purpose to provoke a state of terror, intimidate and compel.

Countering Violent Extremism: The employment of non-coercive means to delegitimize violent extremist ideologies and thus reduce the number of terrorist group supporters and recruits.

NB: Definitions adopted from the Kenya National Strategy To Counter Violent Extremism, 2016
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

The world continues to face violence of different forms with terrorist threats becoming more frequent. Many terrorist groups pose a threat by seeking to radicalize and recruit young people to their cause. The new trend has been radicalization of students either within the school boundaries or outside during weekends and school holidays. The radicalization of young people often results in their engagement in violent extremism. Data from the US National Centre for Education statistics show that in 2014, there were about 486,400 non-fatal violent victimizations at school among students 12 to 18 years of age. In addition, approximately 9% of teachers reported that they have been threatened with injury by a student from their school; while another 5% reported to have been physically attacked by a student from their school. In 2013, 12% of students ages 12–18 reported that gangs were present at their school during the school year (Zhang, A. et al, 2015). This, therefore, points to major challenges that are top on the list for the governments and specifically the Ministry of Education in curbing violent extremism within the society.

Africa has not been a continent of exception when it comes to violent extremism with many cases of terrorism, and ethnic and civil wars being witnessed in the recent past. Countries like Nigeria and Kenya have experienced terrorism in many ways with Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab groups posing security threats. The electoral process in some of the Africa's new democracies has also been characterized by violence. Countries like Rwanda, Libya, Egypt, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and South Sudan among others have experienced human violence, even to the extent of mass genocide, as a result of civil unrest or ethnic group fights that have resulted in socio-economic and political instability.

Kenya has experienced various forms of violence across it ranging from violence perpetuated by electoral processes, ethnicity, religious beliefs and terrorism among others. The most significant case of violence perpetuated by ethnic and political conflicts is the post-election violence that occurred in 2007/2008 that caused the death of more than a thousand innocent Kenyans while many others were internally displaced.

Many organized criminal gangs have also emerged in various parts of the country. In Nairobi, for example, the Gaza Boys in Nairobi County’s Kayole and its environs, the Wakali Kwanza of Kwale County and China Squad in Kisumu are some of the outlawed organized criminal groups in the country (GOK, 2016). Most of the members of these groups are said to be teenagers, both girls and boys aged as young as 12 years.

Kenya has been a victim of some of the largest and most significant terrorist attacks of the last several decades including the Garissa University attack, the Westgate attack, the 1998 bomb attack on US embassy and the Mandera attack on civil servants.

This violence within the society has had a negative impact on various sectors in the country undermining Kenya’s development. The education sector has suffered a major blow which has led to loss of lives for both teachers and students, destruction of learning institutions leading to their closure, disruptions of learning programs, displacement of teachers and learners among others. Indeed, the country has witnessed heightened unrest within the schools with over 100
arson attacks witnessed in the year 2016. This is likely an indication of the impact of radicalization and violence in the country.

It is against this background that the Ministry of Education conducted this situational assessment aimed at determining the impact and extent of emerging forms of violence within the education sector. The findings of this study will be used to inform the Ministry in the development of national guidelines and capacity building materials for use in the prevention and management of violence in schools.

1.2 Problem Statement

Kenya has experienced many forms of violence in the recent past, including those instigated by political reasons, ethnicity, religious intolerance and acts of terrorism. Radicalization among school going children is on the rise. According to the Continental study on the Impact of armed conflict on children in Africa, 2016, a swoop carried out in Mombasa’s Musa Mosque by security agents rescued over 200 children as young as 12 years said to have been undergoing radicalization. The Horn of Africa Bulletin by Life and Peace Institute, 2016, reported that in Isiolo County in Eastern Kenya alone, an estimated 200 children have been reported missing since 2014 and are assumed to have crossed over to Somalia. Although the Ministry of Education has put in place various mechanisms aimed at preventing and addressing violence in schools, there are no national guidelines to guide the education stakeholders to respond to the challenges of radicalization and eventual engagement of school going children in violent extremism.

The lack of national capacity building materials to train and guide the teachers and students on prevention and management of emerging forms of violence is another challenge that the country is facing. There is need to equip the school community with skills to identify the early warning signs to be able to address emerging forms of violence.

In order to prevent and manage violence in schools, appropriate guidelines and capacity building materials are necessary. This calls for a deeper understanding on the existing forms of violence affecting schools, the impact, the drivers and the ongoing interventions. This will ensure increased effectiveness and efficiency in addressing radicalization into violent extremism in learning institutions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of the situational assessment was to inform the development of effective policies and strategies to prevent and manage emerging forms of violence through the education sector in Kenya. The Objectives of the situational assessment were:

- To identify emerging forms of violence affecting learning institutions.
- To establish the extent and impact of radicalization and violent extremism in learning institutions.
- To determine the drivers of radicalization into violent extremism among the learners.
- To establish the interventions aimed at addressing radicalization into violent extremism affecting learning institutions.
- To determine the existing gaps in addressing radicalization into violent extremism in the learning institutions.
1.4 Justification of the Study

The common forms of violence in Kenyan schools have for a long time included bullying, fighting, rioting, corporal punishment and sexual violence. However, in the recent past, violence in schools has increased, and this is likely to be associated with many factors including influence by organized groups among communities. In 2016, for example, Kenya experienced a wave of burning of schools by rioting students during which more than 100 schools were affected.

With the reported cases of radicalization in Kenyan schools, there is need for stakeholders to put in place control measures. Radicalization affects the life of children in many ways. It results in grave violations of children’s rights, deaths, physical abuse, psychological and emotional abuse.

According to the Continental study on the Impact of armed conflict on children in Africa, 2016, the number of reported attacks on educational facilities is rising. There are indications that in some places schools are closed down for considerably long time as parents have stopped sending their children to school, denying the children their basic right to education.

As this threat evolves and more youth embrace extremist ideologies, it places a growing burden on the educational system to provide appropriate services to students who view hatred or targeted violence as acceptable outlets for their grievances. This, therefore, calls for deeper understanding on the various forms and manifestations of violence affecting learning in schools, the drivers and the ongoing interventions.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

This study collected data from sampled primary and secondary schools and their communities in seven counties.

The topic of study was a particularly sensitive one in terms of interaction with members of the public. This made some respondents hesitate in disclosing some information for fear of identification as they felt it would pose a security threat to their lives. The respondents were assured of confidentiality. However, in some areas, they failed to open up and researchers could not collect the data as expected.
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of Violence in Kenya

Kenya has experienced a variety of forms of violence ranging from violence fueled by electoral processes, negative ethnicity, religious intolerance and terrorism among others.

The Country has witnessed many incidences of ethnic and political violence. The most significant is the post-election violence that occurred in 2007/2008 that caused the death of more than a thousand innocent Kenyans while others were displaced. Other community based violent groups have continued to unleash violence to the Kenyan people.

Many Criminal gangs have also emerged in various parts of the country. The Prevention of Organized Crimes Act Declaration through a gazette notice in 2016 listed 84 outlawed criminal groups in the country (GOK, 2016). The country has also witnessed heightened unrest in the schools with over 100 arson attacks witnessed in the year 2016.¹

Kenya has been faced by terrorism since 1998, and it is now the biggest security threat facing the nation. Initially, the primary targets of these attacks were foreign interests in Kenya and not its citizens. However, Kenyan citizens formed the majority of its victims. In 1998, Al-Qaeda bombed the US embassy based in Nairobi killing 224 and wounding 5,000 people.

In 2002, the Paradise Hotel in Mombasa was bombed by Al-Qaeda, killing 15 and wounding 40. From 2012 Kenya has suffered a series of terrorist attacks, including the deadly attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi which killed over 70 people, the attack on Mpeketoni in Lamu that killed over 100 people, and the Garissa University attack that claimed 148 lives.

Further, Al-Shabaab has led a series of attacks across Kenya’s northeast border, abducting and killing foreign aid workers and tourists and dealing a blow to Kenya’s tourism industry.

Indeed, Kenya has been a victim of some of the largest and most significant terrorist attacks of the last several decades. It is reported that many terror attacks and killings in Kenya are led by Al-Shabaab ² trained Kenyan youth, deployed to take the war from Somalia to Kenya’s doorstep and key economic nerves – the tourist dependent coastal cities and key commercial arteries in Nairobi. The Northern Kenya, which had endured low key grenade attacks and targeted assassinations, was subjected to large-scale attacks with twin massacres in Mandera in December 2013, the shooting to death of 28 kidnapped civil servants (mainly teachers) who were travelling home for Christmas, and 38 quarry workers who were slaughtered in their sleep (NCTC, 2016).

Violent activities have tended to be clustered in the North Eastern province which borders Somalia, the Coast province in the south-east, and Nairobi (Dowd & Raleigh, 2013). According to the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, 2016, in the recent past and mainly after Kenya deployed its forces to Somalia to support in flushing out Al-Shabaab militants, there has been a marked increase in the number of youth drawn to extremism as evidenced by rising recruitments and terrorist attacks in various parts of the country and re-emergence of radical groups such as

¹ MOE (2016); Draft Report on Causes of School Fires by Ministry of Education
² Al-Shabaab, a terrorist group affiliated with Al-Qaeda, has been active in Southern Somalia where they occupy a dwindling territory due to concerted efforts of AMISOM and IGAD to flush them out.
the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC). Kenya has become a target in Al-Shabaab’s oft-stated agenda to establish an Eastern African region of a global caliphate. The terrorists seek to ensure a constant supply of recruits through radicalization and recruitment of vulnerable Kenyan youth through networks that include online recruitment (NCTC, 2016).

As a result, the terrorism and violent extremism threat will continue to be dynamic and extremely dangerous, not only in Kenya but also globally, as it evolves and adapts to counter-measures.

2.2 The Role of Education in Countering Violent Extremism and other Emerging Forms of Violence

In recent years, the role of education in countering violent extremism (CVE) has gained prominence among policymakers and practitioners. Preventing violent extremism through education is reflective of a broader international shift toward terrorism prevention and the need to identify the enabling environment for extremists to disseminate their ideologies and recruit supporters. During the inaugural meeting in April 2012 in Abu Dhabi, the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) identified education as a key pillar in countering violent extremism.

An important step in this direction was the launch, in December 2015, of the UN Secretary-General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism3, which recognizes the importance of quality education to address the drivers of this phenomenon. The United Nations Security Council also emphasized this point in its Resolutions 21784 and 2250, which notably highlighted the need for “quality education for peace that equips youth with the ability to engage constructively in civic structures and inclusive political processes” and called on “all relevant actors to consider instituting mechanisms to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that involve youth and discourage their participation in acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia, and all forms of discrimination.”

In October 2015, UNESCO’s Executive Board adopted a Decision5 that unequivocally affirms the importance of education as a tool to help prevent terrorism and violent extremism, as well as racial and religious intolerance, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity worldwide. Whether provided through schools, clubs and community associations or at home, education is indeed acknowledged as an important component of a societal commitment to prevent the rise of violent extremism.

There has been a shift by the terrorist groups to targeting school-going children for radicalization into violent extremism. School-going children are the most vulnerable especially in this 21st Century where social media has become a dangerous mode of information transfer. In the article ‘Preventing violent extremism in school’ by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the US, January 2016, radicalization threat is evolving and more youth are embracing extremist ideologies. To complicate matters, youth possess inherent risk factors making them susceptible to violent extremist ideologies or possible recruitment.

6 Decision 46 adopted at the 197th session of UNESCO’s Executive Board (197 EX/Decision 46); http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002351/235180e.pdf
Social media has been used as a platform to recruit young people. Youth are embracing many forms of violent extremism; those perpetrated by terrorist organizations or other domestic violent extremist movements, to those maintaining biases towards others due to their religion and ethnicity.

The starting point for the effective role of education in countering violent extremism (CVE) is access to and protection of schools as a safe space – both physically and intellectually. Because education is a universal value, educational environments can be a space for CVE interventions that are effective across cultures and contexts. As with any CVE programming, CVE educational interventions are only relevant if they address the local push and pull factors leading to radicalization and recruitment.

### 2.3 Emerging Forms of Violence

Numerous factors shape violence in schools and communities. These factors include cultural understanding of violence, social and economic factors, student’s home life and the external environment of the school. For instance, there can be great disparities between cultures and societies in defining what constitutes a violent act. Regardless of the cultural or socio-economic context of the school, violence can be both physical and psychological in nature. It can be manifested through the following forms:

**Political Violence:** This refers to violence perpetrated by either persons or governments to achieve political goals. At times groups and individuals believe that their political systems will never respond to their demands. As a result, they believe that violence is not only justified but also necessary in order to achieve their political objectives. Political scientists see political violence as part of “contentious politics” or collective political struggle, which includes such things as revolutions, civil war, riots and strikes, but also more peaceful protest movements (Patrick, H.O., 2011)

**Ethnic/Cultural Violence:** It refers to violence fueled by ethnic hatred and conflict. It is commonly related to political violence, and often the terms are interchangeable, or one is used as a pretext for the other when politically expedient.

**Resource Based Violence:** According to the Institute for Security Studies in Africa (ISS), this is when access to resources is based on ethnic, cultural or religious characteristics or there is a growing divide between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ in countries and communities. Harsh economic conditions further contribute to instability. Violence in Kenya is oftentimes instigated by struggle over shrinking resources.

**Terrorism:** According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2012 (POTA), a “terrorist act” means an act or threat of action —

(a) which — (i) involves the use of violence against a person; (ii) endangers the life of a person, other than the person committing the action; (iii) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public; (iv) results in serious damage to property; (v) involves the use of firearms or explosives; (vi) involves the release of any dangerous, hazardous, toxic or radioactive substance or microbial or other biological agent or toxin into the environment; (vii) interferes with an electronic system resulting in the disruption of the provision of communication, financial, transport or other essential services; (viii) interferes or disrupts the provision of essential or emergency services; (ix) prejudices national security or public safety; and
(b) which is carried out with the aim of — (i) intimidating or causing fear amongst members of the public or a section of the public; or (ii) intimidating or compelling the Government or international organization to do, or refrain from any act; or (iii) destabilizing the religious, political, constitutional, economic or social institutions of a country, or an international organization.

2.4 Extent and Impact of Violence to the Education Sector

Violent extremism often than not results in mass killing of innocent people, many vulnerable families left without parents, and countries lagging behind in economic development. Further, conflict situations can impair a student's ability to learn and attend school. Conflicts may also impact adversely on the school infrastructure, availability of qualified teachers, and distribution of and access to learning materials. Reports from communities and countries in conflicts have found that the situation exposes students to violence, increasing their risk of being victimized both in and out of school. General effects of the violence in the society include:

i) **Abuse, injury and death**: The actions of violent extremists result in multiple outcomes such as abuse, injury, death, or incarceration. Research shows that youth who join these organized groups are subjected to bodily abuse including rape, fingernail removal, and beatings, or are forced to watch or participate in beheadings or assassinations of entire families. These actions strengthen the violent extremists' hold on youth and their developing minds. Females are particularly at risk. They are sold into slavery, forced to become child brides, and commit atrocities on behalf of a violent extremist organization. There are reported instances of individuals who expressed doubt and wished to quit the group but were assassinated by extremists for desiring to leave.

ii) **Victimization**: Members of the public have been innocent victims of violent attacks, along with individuals who speak out against others based on personally held beliefs – a retaliatory action. The violence has also resulted in religious and social stigma especially to children whose relatives have joined criminal or extremist organizations.

iii) **Political instability**: Research shows that most of the radicalized youths especially the returnees have undergone military training on the use of explosives and are capable of launching lethal attacks which aside from the loss of lives and property, could undermine state stability and therefore regional stability.

While education plays an important role in addressing emerging forms of violence, the sector has been adversely affected by the same. The outlawed organized groups have in some instances targeted learning institutions. For example, the Garissa University attack where at least 148 students died and hundreds others suffered physical and psychological injuries. This attack created a lot of fear across all institutions with some reporting cases of increased absenteeism especially in colleges. Teachers have not been spared either. In 2013, at least 28 teachers were attacked in a bus in Mandera. The 1998 bomb attack on the US embassy in Kenya also directly affected the Ministry of Education whose offices were situated next to it.

Indeed, violence in schools and other educational establishments is causing increasing concern. Results from an EU survey in 2000 showed that 4% of employees in learning institutions have been subjected to violence at work and, in addition, 12% of workers in the education sector reported having been subjected to intimidation.
2.5 Drivers of Radicalization to Violent Extremism

Many models have been developed by different players to classify the different factors influencing the radicalization of youth into violent extremism. Some of the commonly sighted factors include the following.

Ideological Drivers

There are multiple forms of violent extremist ideology. Some are secular while others claim religious legitimacy. At present, the ideology that is most responsible for radicalization in Kenya is disseminated by terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda, Daesh and Al-Shabaab. Their Salafi-Jihadi ideology utilizes a selective reading of some Islamic religious texts and histories to justify terrorist violence in the name of protecting and advancing Islam. They also use claims of global and local victimization of Muslims to create militant recruits willing to carry out suicide and mass casualty attacks against civilians and infrastructure. These groups often express an ambition to establish an Eastern African region of a global caliphate that would replace secular legal and governance systems it depicts as illegitimate under Islam. This ambition, as is evident from the actions of groups such as ISIS, is both a threat to world peace and a potent motivator of thousands of young people across the world that have been convinced to join the project. Experts in Islamic religion worldwide have strongly rejected the terrorist organizations’ claims to religious legitimacy. In reality, their ideologies have no support in religion. They are driven by a will to win power over populations and nation states. They are radically anti-democratic and are, in their authoritarianism, willing to use mass violence. Their refusal to embrace diverse beliefs is comparable to Stalinism or Nazism.

Socio-economic Drivers

Adverse socio-economic conditions create high levels of frustration and a sense of powerlessness – ideal conditions for persuading groups and individuals to embrace violent extremism and to oppose the political, social and legal status quo.

Political Drivers

Real or perceived exclusion from political representation, discrimination, mis-governance and narratives of historical injustice are powerful drivers of radicalization. Violent extremists often invoke such injustices to inspire opposition to national political structures.

Personal Drivers

These include the search for status, meaning, power, a sense of belonging and identity, or an all-encompassing theory to explain personal crises. Individuals personally susceptible to radicalization include those experiencing low self-esteem, a sense of victimization or alienation from normal social networks, boredom and frustration, and a sense of powerlessness.

Global/Geopolitical Drivers

Global and geopolitical drivers in Kenya are the local effects of international struggles between violent extremists and their opponents worldwide. Anger over Western country policies and interventions in the Middle-East and other acts associated with a perceived ‘Western’ agenda, including Kenya and AMISOM’s intervention against Al-Shabaab in Somalia, drive reactions towards Kenya by sympathizers with violent extremists. In addition, proponents of extremist ideologies abroad finance and facilitate the exportation of ideological extremism in the guise of religion.
Technological Drivers

Technological drivers include the wide availability of social media – blogs and chat-rooms – for disseminating extremist propaganda. The increasing affordability of smartphones and data means that there is now borderless connectivity that allows extremist ideologies to be produced far from Kenya but consumed by millions of Kenyans. This allows for self-radicalization, and clandestine recruitment and training online. Technologies of encryption of digital communications further facilitate dissemination and evasion by radicalizers.

The USAID model categorizes the factors into two: the push and pull factors. Broadly, structural “push” factors are important in creating the conditions that favor the rise or spread in appeal of violent extremism or insurgency.

Push factors are socio-economic, political, and cultural in nature. Examples of push factors include high levels of social marginalization and fragmentation, poorly governed or ungoverned areas, government repression and human rights violations, endemic corruption and elite impunity, and cultural threat perceptions. The USAID policy also identifies the “pull” factors that are necessary for push factors to have a direct influence on individual level radicalization and recruitment. Pull factors are associated with the personal rewards which membership in a group or movement, and participation in its activities, may confer. Such potential benefits include: access to material resources, social status and respect from peers; a sense of belonging, adventure, and self-esteem or personal empowerment that individuals and groups that have long viewed themselves as victimized and marginalized can derive from the feeling that they are making history; and, the prospect of achieving glory and fame. Social networks comprised of relatives, friends, or neighbors can also draw others similarly affected by social marginalization or frustrated expectations into the orbit of violent extremist ideas and networks. Other pull factors include: the presence of radical institutions or venues, service provision by extremist groups, and extremist involvement in illegal economic activity.

Harriet et al (2015) conceptualized these factors in three levels, with situational factors working at the macro level (i.e. country or community-wide), social/cultural at the meso-level (i.e. affecting smaller communities or identity groups), and individual factors at the micro level.

Figure 1: Theoretical Model of Drivers of Violent Extremism
2.5.1 Pathways to Radicalization

The overall consensus is that there is not a single pathway or method in which an individual becomes radicalized. “Several efforts have been made, however, to articulate a general sequence of stages, events, or issues that might apply across and within group types” (Brum, 2011). This has given rise to many different models developed by different researchers.

Extremists have many diverse starting points and follow many different paths that lead to ultimate involvement in terrorist activities. The various models suggest a prevailing radicalization model that has three main components: grievance, ideology/narrative, and mobilization (Peter, N., 2010). The three stage model as explained by H. Ryan (2010) is as follows:

Grievance

Discontent seems to serve as the prerequisite of the radicalization process. Issues driving this attitude toward individuals may include perceived persecution of a certain religion, alienation, or lack of acceptance; feelings of discrimination, especially among second- or third-generation immigrants; or a general search for identity.

This discontent may be based on individuals’ actual experiences or those of other people within their community, or it may result from the normal process of identity formation among young people. These latter feelings of uncertainty of oneself during adolescence and early adulthood are common and well-known in developmental psychology, but after an individual feels rejected by society, these emotions can lead to a deep identity crisis and cause one to search for a new purpose of life.

Ideology/Narrative

Ideological framing adopts this diffuse feeling of discontent and leads it in a defined direction. The idea of “us” – the community of the believers – defending against “them” – the non-believers conducting an alleged war against our religion – secures a strong bond among the followers while alienating them from other citizens.

The core significance of this ideological framing component should not be sought on the basis of its content, but because it provides followers (true believers) with an idea of their “true purpose” and sense of belonging to a transnational community. By accepting this highly polarized worldview and its narrow set of rules, the uncertain individual searching for meaning receives simple answers, as well as a comprehensive framework of social and moral norms and values. Terrorist movements or ideologues then can build on this ideology by strengthening the perception of global suppression; the picture of a religion under threat, triggering the belief that the community and the radicalized individual exist in a state of permanent self-defense; and the view of violence as a legitimate response.

Mobilization

In the majority of cases, extremists become radicalized in large part through intensifying social interaction with other people with shared beliefs. Such a relationship then results in a mutual push toward violence. Sometimes, a spiritual leader will goad individuals to take such actions.

The sense of identity and belonging that likely accompany group interaction may provide a psychological and emotional reward that exceeds the original ideological motivation. Through
ongoing mutual assertion of the righteousness of shared beliefs, new moral norms and standards replace existing ones. Group members increasingly see violence as an acceptable and legitimate, even desirable, way to achieve the common goals of the group. Visual propaganda is intensified, including hate videos with high emotional impact.

Typically, mobilization is the only radicalization component involving specific actions possibly subject to criminal prosecution. Potential operatives are recruited by an extremist group or individual, small groups are prompted to form a terrorist cell of their own, and extremists begin preparing direct attacks or supporting others planning to attack. Logically, law enforcement and intelligence resources will focus on mobilization because activities conducted in this latter stage of radicalization present the opportunity to make arrests. Further, the majority of those harboring grievances and adopting the ideology do not progress to violence. However, this final phase can be short-lived, enforcing the need for intelligence agencies to fully understand and become aware of the earlier components.

![Figure 2: Pathways to Radicalization](image)

### 2.5.2 Models of Radicalization to Violent Extremism

This study also analyzed some Behavioral Models that outline the dynamics and factors leading to violent extremism. Most notably, violent extremism is not a linear progression, but an evolving dynamic situation involving numerous factors, catalysts, inhibitors, and mobilization variables. Behavioral experts hypothesize that the efforts of those seeking to combat radicalization can be informed by consideration of other models of social behavior and development, including:

**The Pyramid Model** – Promoting a child’s social development through early intervention and the prevention of social-emotional delays or the occurrence of challenging behaviors. An “at-risk” child may exhibit developmental delay or disorders, resulting from low quality supportive environments.

**Social Identity Theory** – An individual’s self-image and status is directly connected to the group to which they belong, resulting in social categorization. A sense of belonging becomes an important factor in pride and self-esteem. The central theme is that group members seek to find negative aspects among other groups, which enhances their self-image, but also might result in prejudice, hatred, and violence toward other groups.

**Gang Model of Criminal Behavior** – A gang member feels de-individualized and willing to commit violent acts consistent with the gang’s behavior and feels less personal responsibility. This separation from one’s self results in less accountability and reduced self-awareness, and therefore, manifests in instances of deviant behavior.
Causation Model of Juvenile Delinquency – A child is vulnerable to detrimental influences from familial, socio-economic, educational experiences, or ideological factors, often resulting in criminal deviant behavior. Once exposed to dysfunctional norms, the child begins to exhibit behavior that is contrary to social expectations.

Risk Analysis of Terrorist Attacks – An individual is thought to become “at-risk”, when three elements are present: threat to core values or beliefs, vulnerability, and consequence of one’s actions. These three elements are not independent of each other, but rather all must be present to result in an “at-risk” individual. The sum of these three elements equate to an individual’s risk to act on their intentions, subscribing to their motivation, intent, capability, opportunity, and psychological gain.

The main challenge for the schools is in understanding the underlying catalysts associated with a student’s behavior and determining the form of ideologically motivated extremism the student has embraced.

2.5.3 Phases of Radicalization

Countering violent extremism involves the use of crime prevention methods that use soft and hard approaches to address the following four phases of radicalization. According to the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, 2016, the phases of radicalization include:

Pre-Radicalization – is the earliest exposure of an individual to the radical ideology, appealing narratives and other inducements by recruiters.

Self-Identification – is the phase where individuals begin to explore radical ideology and membership of extremist groups. They gravitate away from their old identity and begin to associate themselves with radicalized individuals and adopt the extremist ideology.

Indoctrination – is the phase in which an individual progressively intensifies his beliefs, wholly adopts extremists’ ideology and concludes, without question, that the conditions and circumstances exist where action is required to support and further the cause.

Violent Extremism – refers to radicalized individuals who are prepared to engage in, or actively support, acts of violence in furtherance of radically illiberal, undemocratic political systems or ideologies.

2.6 Interventions for Countering Violent Extremism

2.6.1 General Response to Terrorism and Youth Indoctrination at National Level

Prevention of violent extremism calls for multi-prong approaches among all stakeholders. These approaches range from global to regional and national levels. The Kenya Government has enacted the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA, 2012), the Proceeds of Crime and Anti-Money Laundering Act (POCAMLA, 2009), and the Prevention of Organized Crime Act (POCA, 2010), and established a National Counter-Terrorism Centre and an Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU) among other security agencies.

Further, in the spirit of spearheading prevention against VE, Kenya has developed a National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NCVE), which identifies 9 work Pillars namely:
**Education Pillar:** The aim is to address radicalization in learning institutions from elementary to tertiary and higher education levels.

**Psycho-social Pillar:** It is important to address the psycho-social needs of individuals who have been radicalized and even gone as far as joining violent extremist networks or groups. The same is true of their families who often also experience trauma, fear and shame.

**Political Pillar:** In a democratic country, engaging political leaders at the local, county and national levels is key to countering radicalization. Agencies will work with political leaders to assist them to advocate for increased cohesion, patriotism and rejection of all extremist ideologies based on religious or ethnic dogma.

**Security Pillar:** The aim here is to ensure that radicalization is met with the full force of the law whenever and wherever possible. It is also important that CT and CVE efforts be conducted in accordance with laws and best practices to ensure that they do not lead to alienation and radicalization of citizens.

**Faith Based and Ideological Pillar:** The aim of this pillar is to ‘immunize’ the Kenyan population to violent extremist ideologies, particularly by promoting values of freedom, democracy and interfaith tolerance.

**Arts and Culture Pillar:** Under this pillar, the action priorities include supporting cultural and arts activities that showcase Kenya and Africa’s diversity of views, histories and cultural production, and coexistence.

**Training and Capacity Building Pillar:** This pillar will ensure that government institutions, political and religious leaders, and all actors with a mandate to counter radicalization possess the right skills, tools and awareness.

**Media and Online Pillar:** The networks advancing violent extremism increasingly seek to attain their aims online. Efforts under this pillar include deploying counter narratives online, sensitizing media not to be unwitting transmitters of images or narratives that further the cause of terrorists, engaging the private sector in communications technologies and while encouraging citizens to identify and resist extremist speech online.

**Legal and Policy Pillar:** Relevant laws and policy frameworks must support CVE.

### 2.6.5 Good Practices in addressing Violence in Schools

The literature provides many interventions that the schools can adopt to address emerging forms of violence. According to Office of Partner Engagement, FBI 2016, violent extremism can be addressed by:

- Building resilient schools through enhanced student social and emotional well-being;
- Increasing awareness about the forms and dynamics of violent extremism;
- Enhancing information sharing among those stakeholders who can provide support and services to students;
- Facilitating disengagement programs to turn at-risk youth away from violent trajectories;
- Leveraging school programs to deter youth from embracing extremist ideologies; and
- Fostering the ideals of diversity, inclusion and tolerance, while upholding Constitutional freedoms and rights under the law.
The Global Counter Terrorism Forum developed good practices that schools can adopt in countering violent extremism as stipulated in the *Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism*. The approaches are divided into 5, namely: General Approaches; Educational Approaches; Institutional Approaches; Family-Centered Approaches; and Sport, Arts and Culture Approaches. A summary of the approaches is given below.

**General Good Practices:** The emphasis is on multi-sectoral, comprehensive approach including education sector while noting that labeling programs as “CVE” may have adverse effects and utilizing an evidence-based approach to conduct interventions at an early age.

**Educational Approaches:** These would include Enhancing problem-solving and critical thinking skills; Promoting civic education, civic responsibility and human values in curricula; Offering vocational and technical training; Relating CVE issues to existing social issues; and Addressing role of trauma in building resilience to trauma.

**Institutional Approaches:** This entails Utilizing experiential learning techniques, Promotion of safe space for discussion of ideas in school setting, Providing incentives to parents for school enrollment/basic access

Train teachers on managing biases and on identifying signs of radicalization: This entails integrating marginalized communities, engaging and incorporating private sector partners where relevant, media engagement to reinforce values learned in school as well as tapping into technology to enhance learning of basic skills.

**Family-Based and Community Approaches:** This entails the involvement of youth in the development of their own educational programming, engaging community leaders in educational programs to raise awareness on VE and techniques to counter it, offering opportunities for families and parents to learn about VE, and interaction with families to reinforce formal lessons at home.

**Sports, Arts and Cultural Approaches:** This entails incorporating and coordinating sports, arts and cultural programs to reinforce and build secondary effects for formal educational programs for CVE.

**Private sector Engagement:** It involves engagement of the private sector through relevant corporate social responsibility.

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3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation Design

This study adopted a qualitative approach where the views of various stakeholders within the education sector were sought and analyzed. The approach allowed for capture of attitudes and perceptions of the education sector stakeholders and general members of the public about their knowledge and/or experience of organized criminal gangs and how they have affected learning in education institutions. In addition, a desk review of existing government reports and research studies in violence extremism was conducted to further inform the study on the context, impact and extent of emerging forms of violence in the country. A review of ongoing interventions in other parts of the world was also conducted to inform the recommendations.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in seven counties in Kenya: Kwale, Isiolo, Garissa, Murang’a, Nairobi, Bungoma and Kisumu.

3.3 Population and Sampling Design

1.3.1 Population

The primary population in this study comprised teachers, members of school boards of management and the learners. Key informants from the civil society and community opinion leaders including religious leaders and chiefs were involved. At the County and Sub-county levels, views of the education officers were sought.

1.3.2 Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the seven counties on the basis of prominence of their criminal activities and impact on the local population. Regional representation was also considered. Counties and Sub-counties in which the activities were concentrated were purposively selected in consultation with education officers from the respective regions. Further, two schools (a primary and a secondary school) in each Sub-county were identified for data collection as follows based on the high concentration of violence activities in the region as informed by the education officers. This was done to ensure that the respondents had a high probability of having information on effect of organized violence in the schools.

Table 1: Sampling Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Selected sub-county</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo</td>
<td>Garbatula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>Fafi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Kandara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungoma</td>
<td>Mt Elgon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Selected sub-county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisumu</td>
<td>Muhoroni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kisumu Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Njiru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwale</td>
<td>Msambweni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4 Data Collection Methods

The study collected qualitative data. Seven teams were formed, each made up of four people (a team leader, 2 research assistants and 1 representative from the MOE at the Sub-county level).

Primary data was collected through FGDs with study respondents being parents and school-going children. Study respondents for the Key Informant Interviews included the MOE officials at County/Sub-county level, the Religious leaders, Chiefs, and Partner Organizations.

#### Table 2: Study Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FGD Guide for Parents</td>
<td>Parents from the participating schools; to include BOG members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD Guide for Students</td>
<td>Students from Class 5 to 7; and Form 1 to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII Guide for Teachers/Head</td>
<td>Head Teacher and a key teacher preferably from Guidance and Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII Guide for Religious Leaders</td>
<td>A religious leader at the Sub-county level – Christian, Muslim, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII Guide for MOE Officials</td>
<td>MOE official at the Sub-county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII Guide for Partner</td>
<td>A representative of a partner organization implementing violence prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>activities at schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Data Analysis

The collected data was first analyzed at County level where it was organized into sub-themes before further organizing it into the five major themes as guided by the study objectives.

### 3.5 Quality Assurance

To ensure data quality, the Research Assistants and team leaders went through a 2-day training. A feedback meeting was also conducted following data collection in the field.

**Validation of Data Collection Tools:** To ensure appropriateness of the tools, a team of experts drawn from various sectors reviewed and validated the tools before data collection was conducted. They were mainly drawn from Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior Peace Building and Conflict Management, National Cohesion & Integration Commission (NCIC), National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), Civil Society Organizations.
3.6 Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitivity of the topic, permission was sought beforehand from the relevant government agencies at the national level. On the ground, the Sub-county education officers were informed about the purpose of the research and permission granted. All the respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the information and no personal identity was required. Permission was sought after explaining to them the purpose of the research before FGDs were undertaken. No coercion or false representations were made. Those who declined to participate were respected for their views. All the information obtained was solely used for writing the report of the study and not for any other purpose.
4.0 STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 FORMS OF VIOLENCE

This section outlines the different forms and manifestations of violence in the schools and in the community.

4.1.1 Forms of Violence in Schools

The common forms of violence in Kenyan schools have for a long time included bullying, fighting, rioting, corporal punishment and sexual violence. While these remain the common forms of violence to date, the intensity and frequency has increased in the recent past. This could be as a result of many factors including influence by outlawed organized groups in the communities. In the year 2016 for example, Kenya experienced a wave of burning of schools by rioting students where over 100 schools were affected.

This study found that there has been an emergence of youth embracing violent extremism – those perpetrated by organized groups that advocate violence or conduct violent activities.

The common form of emerging forms of violence reported in the schools included:

Harassment and threatening of both teaching staff and students: Cases of children harassing and threatening teachers were reported. A school in Nairobi County reported that a Class 5 pupil, claiming to be a member of a dangerous organized group, threatened to attack and kill his classmates and his teacher.

One school in Nairobi also reported a case where a student had attempted to attack a teacher. It was alleged that he was in possession of a gun; however, the school administration was tipped off by other students before the student could attack. In Isiolo, an education officer said, “Cases of students assaulting teachers have been reported in the past, causing injury to the involved teacher.”

In Garissa County, fights between students and teachers were also reported.

Destruction of school property: Even though destruction of school property has been there before, the latest trend where over 100 schools were torched spirally in 2016 astounded even the education managers. Among the schools interviewed, a few had experienced arson. One teacher said, “Riots usually are instigated by student grievances. However, deliberate burning of schools did not have any basis. I think it was a pure act of violence conducted in partnership with organized groups in the community.”

Carrying of weapons to schools by students: There are also cases where students go with weapons to school as reported by one teacher from Nairobi County. “Some of these children come with weapons to school, they then hide them in the compound, and since we do not have a good fence here, the weapons are later picked by their accomplices who in many cases are their relatives.”

One teacher from Kisumu County said, “Students carry crude weapons to schools such as slings, knives and arrows and when caught they say that they need to be ready in case a situation arises.”
This is in line with the findings of National Crime Research Centre 2012, where they reported that children are used by criminals to convey arms and drugs from one point to another for adult criminals especially where law enforcers are likely to detect the adults.

**Fights between teachers and parents:** Cases of fighting between teachers and parents were reported in Garissa County. This is usually as a result of misunderstandings between the two especially on disciplinary mechanisms that should be applied.

These emerging forms of violence are manifested in various ways:

*Mass conversion of students from one religion to another:* One observation made was the tendency for mass conversion of students from one religious group to another that often resulted in violence. A school in Nairobi County reported a case of several girls who converted to a certain religion. Teachers noted change in behavior among the girls. They became indisciplined with violent tendencies and the school engaged security agencies to address the challenge.

*Emergence of petty thieves in schools:* Some schools especially in Kisumu and Nairobi reported a new trend where some students who were considered disciplined would change and start committing petty crimes such as stealing. One teacher said, “We interrogated one student who told us that he belonged to a criminal group and they were required to steal from other students and take the items to their leaders.”

*Drug abuse:* Some schools reported increased cases of children abusing drugs especially once they were out of the school compound. A teacher in Kisumu said, “We are aware that many of our students abuse drugs, but for as long as they do not bring them to school, we cannot intervene.” More astonishing are cases where children as young as 10 years in Kisumu County were reportedly abusing hard drugs such as cocaine, mandrax and shisha.

### 4.1.2 Outlawed Organized Groups that affect Learning in Schools

The study found that there were many illegal organized groups around school communities. Some of the students were part of these groups and were involved in committing crimes in the community. These groups were reported to be involved in all kinds of violence including robbery, cattle rustling, killings, beatings, rapes and destruction of property.

One student in Nairobi shared his experience:

> “Some of these groups engage in bank robbery. I was a member of a group and I participated in a bank robbery, I am having a case in court (sic). We acquired a pistol to rob the bank from a police man for sh. 10, 000.”

The commonly mentioned organized outlawed organized groups across the counties are as shown in the following Table 3. Most of these groups are part of the 84 outlawed criminal groups in Kenya.

**Table 3: County-based Outlawed Organized Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Outlawed organized groups</th>
<th>Common form of violence that they are involved in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kwale</td>
<td>Al-Shabaab, MRC, Kaya Bombo, Mulunganipa and 40 Brothers, 7 Lions, KamJeshi, Wakali Kwanza and Wakali Wao</td>
<td>Terrorism, political and ethnic-based violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Outlawed organized groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Form of Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>Gaza Group, Topaz, Super Power, 40 Thieves, Full Nesco, Wasanii, Boma and Black Bra</td>
<td>Criminal gangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garissa</td>
<td>Al-Shabaab</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungoma</td>
<td>SLDF, Baghdad Boys</td>
<td>Political violence and criminal gangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murang’a</td>
<td>Mungiki</td>
<td>Ethnic-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kisumu</td>
<td>China Squad, America Submarine, Achego Central</td>
<td>Criminal gangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isiolo</td>
<td>Al-Shabaab</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These groups are instigated by:

**Politics:** Violence instigated by politics was reported to be commonly manifested through riots in public places and was commonly reported in Kisumu, Bungoma and Kwale counties. The MRC group in Kwale was reported to be more of a political body than an ethnic or religious one, agitating for secession of the coastal plain from Kenya.

**Ethnicity and Culture:** One of the common reasons behind ethnic violence was found to be land and boundary disputes as well as marginalization of minority groups. This form of violence was common in Isiolo, Bungoma and Kisumu counties. Cattle rustling was found in Bungoma, a form of violence that is instigated by cultural beliefs.

**Resources:** This is violence as a result of perceived unfair distribution of resources in the community. This violence was witnessed in Bungoma where the main resource under dispute is land. The Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) was particularly noted to be championing the land rights of their members.

## 4.2 Extent and effects of emerging forms of violence

This section discusses the extent of emerging forms of violence in terms of the most groups at most risk of being targeted. The effects are classified into two: General and those affecting the learning institutions.

### 4.2.1 Target Groups

The study found out that violent groups mainly targeted for recruitment are the young people from the ages of 9 to 25. Boys were the most targeted although girls were also increasingly getting involved. Individuals were found to be targeted either for conscription into these groups or as victims of violent attacks. The study found that the most targeted levels for recruitment in primary schools were from classes 6 to 8, while in secondary it was all levels. One teacher from Isiolo County reported:

“Most youth are prone to violent extremism especially between the age of 10 and 16 years. Boys are more vulnerable than girls.”
The study established that younger children in classes 4 and 5 are often involved in ferrying firearms for criminals since they are less likely to be suspected by security forces. One teacher in Nairobi commented:

“The young ones in the groups are used to transport guns and drugs as it is hard to suspect them.”

It was reported that girls are usually used to lure innocent people to crime hotspots, although in urban settings such as Nairobi, girls are also involved in conducting crime. This is in line with the findings of National Crime Research Centre where they found that females usually masquerade as prostitutes to identify potential targets. Muchwanju, C. (2015) noted that most criminal activities are carried out by young men aged between 15 and 30, but also highlighted the presence of girls among the groups who play peripheral roles.

4.2.2 General Effects of Emerging Forms of Violence

The study found that many children had lost their loved ones due to violent attacks while others had been maimed. In addition, many youth had died in the hands of the violent groups or following police raids on the perpetrators. The children were aware of their peers who had been shot down by police while involved in criminal activities. In fact, some youth feared for their lives as they said they would either be gunned down by their peers who were criminals or by the police. In Isiolo, a parent reported:

“Radicalization is escalating and causing loss of loved ones and loss of income due to working dependents joining such groups.”

Another parent from Isiolo reiterated,

“The disappearance of children to join the group in Somalia has created psychological torture to the parents concerned.”

One student from Nairobi County reported:

“Hapa kwetu, ukifikisha miaka kumi na nane kama hujafa, shukuru Mungu (In our area, a youth who has survived past the age of 18 years should thank God).”

Consequently, the children have been affected psychologically and emotionally due to displacements and loss of loved ones.

In Bungoma County, a teacher reported,

“Violence has caused family breakages, women assaults, divorce and children assuming responsibilities at home after parental death or displacement.”

Teachers reported cases of children who required professional counseling due to exposure to very traumatic situations.

4.2.3 Effects of Emerging Forms of Violence on the Learning Institutions

This study found that the involvement of youth in violence had led to increased cases of indiscipline in the schools including bullying and fighting among students; frequent strikes and rioting of students; and increased rates of school drop outs and absenteeism. In Nairobi for example, it was reported that many school going children join the Gaza group, an outlawed criminal group, and eventually drop out of school to fully participate in the group activities. A case of a student
who had been remanded in Kamiti Prison for robbery with violence was highlighted in one of the schools. The student had however been released on bail and returned to school. The school authority came to learn of the incident through the media.

A teacher in Kwale reported that three Form 3 students had dropped out of school in 2016 after joining violent groups. He also reiterated that in addition to school going children dropping out of school, indiscipline cases among students has been on the rise.

A student from Nairobi said,

“I know of a girl who did not complete her Class 8 studies and is now pregnant after joining one of the groups.” Another student added, “Even a Class 6 pupil dropped out and joined ‘Boma’ and he’s now a known thief.”

In Bungoma County, parents expressed hopelessness as many of their children remained out of school due to violence. All these factors are said to contribute to the poor performance in schools.

In all the counties, it was noted that the sense of fear and insecurity among both teachers and pupils was very high. In Murang’a County for example, students reportedly feared learning religious subjects such as Christian Religious Education (CRE) because they felt it was against the teachings of outlawed organized groups in the area. In Kwale County, a community opinion leader commented:

“There is a lot of fear not only in the students but also the community at large. … people fear being killed by either the returnees or Al-Shabaab members.”

The violence has also resulted in disruption of learning activities. Kwale and Bungoma counties reported closure of schools often due to eruption of violence.

Increased cases of early pregnancies due to rapes executed by violent members were also reported especially in Kwale and Bungoma counties. An opinion leader in Kwale said that there were about seven rape cases of girls reported per month in their area. This instilled fear in girls who schooled far away from their homes. In Bungoma, it was reported that many girls had dropped out of school due to pregnancy as a result of rampant rape cases.

At an individual level, the staff and students expressed the following effects:

**Physical harm:** Cases of teachers and students who had been attacked physically were reported in several schools. Some had been stabbed while others were reported to have suffered gun shots.

**Stress and emotional trauma:** Both teachers and students expressed stress and anxiety especially when dealing with the known criminals in schools. Past violent incidences witnessed were also a cause for their emotional trauma.

**Feelings of powerlessness and demotivation:** This was evident especially among the teachers who did not know how best to address the challenges related to violent extremism. While they had reported some cases to the security agencies, they were also afraid that the criminals would eventually get to find out the truth. In addition, teachers working in violence prone areas were reportedly demotivated and many were pursuing transfers to other regions.

It is also worth noting that the violence had resulted in negative consequences for the employer/
organization including high staff turnover. This was evident as teachers sought transfers from the regions. In one school, it was reported that ten teachers had left the school and were yet to be replaced. A teacher in Nairobi reported:

“At one point, almost every teacher in this school had applied for a transfer due to violence.”

Head teachers also reported increased absenteeism by teachers due to threats.

4.3 Drivers of violent extremism and other emerging forms of violence

Considering that school going age children are the target by outlawed violent groups, this study sought to understand the drivers that influence learners to join the violent groups.

Research findings have shown that the drivers and enablers of violent extremism are multiple, complex, context-specific and have religious, ideological, political, economic and historical dimensions (Hassan, M., 2012). Different researchers analyze the factors from different perspectives. For this study, the factors are grouped into three: Push, Pull and Catalytic factors. The push factors drive youth to join extremist movements, whereas the pull factors attract youth towards violent extremism. The study identified catalytic factors as those that are likely to influence and facilitate learners to join violent groups.

The findings of this study are in line with other researches where it has been found that children and youth are an easy target for various reasons such as the need for quick money, peer pressure and lack of employment.

While many factors were common across the seven counties, there were disparities with some factors varying from one county to another as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Drivers of Violent Extremism and other Emerging Forms of Violence by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Push Factors</th>
<th>Pull Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Nairobi (Njiru Sub-county) | • High levels of poverty  
• Lack of parental guidance  
• Very high youth unemployment  
• Idleness  
• Lack of social amenities  
• Youth estrangements and frustrations  
• Lack of social belonging  
• Force and threats | • Peer pressure  
• Material incentives and rewards  
• Protection  
• Status |
| Kwale            | • Poverty and unemployment  
• Marginalization  
• Unattended historical injustices  
• Police harassment  
• Cultural profiling | • Misinterpretations of teachings on jihad  
• Radicalized religious environment  
• Appeal by charismatic preachers  
• Hero worship of extremist individuals  
• Lack of effective mosque structures |
| Bungoma          | • Unattended historical injustices  
• Political influence  
• Rewards  
• Cultural influence | • Peer pressure  
• Material incentives and rewards  
• Protection |
### Push Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Kisumu   | - Political influence  
            - Youth estrangements and frustrations  
            - Lack of social belonging/Identity crisis  
            - High levels of poverty  
            - Lack of parental guidance  
            - Very high youth unemployment  
            - Idleness  
            - Force and threats |
| Isiolo   | - Poverty and unemployment  
            - Marginalization  
            - Religious influence |
| Garissa  | - Poverty and unemployment  
            - Marginalization  
            - Religious influence |
| Murang’a | - Very high youth unemployment  
            - Idleness  
            - Marginalization  
            - Cultural influence  
            - Political and religious affilations  
            - Youth estrangements and frustrations  
            - Peer pressure  
            - Lack of social belonging |
|          | - Peer pressure  
            - Material incentives and rewards  
            - Protection  
            - Status  
            - Misinterpretations of teachings on jihad  
            - Radicalized religious environment  
            - Appeal by charismatic preachers  
            - Hero worship of extremist individuals  
            - Lack of effective mosque structures  
            - Misinterpretations of teachings on jihad  
            - Radicalized religious environment  
            - Appeal by charismatic preachers/role models  
            - Peer pressure  
            - Material incentives and rewards  
            - Protection  
            - Status |

The common factors as per the findings of this research included:

#### 4.3.1 Push Factors

**The social environment:** This study found that learners are exposed to harsh environments characterized by lack of parental care, low socio-economic status and violence, among others. In all the counties, it was reported that children are exposed to violence at a very early stage making them vulnerable to radicalization into violent groups. One student from Nairobi County said,

“I grew up in Sasha, a known place for violence. I saw people being killed and many rape cases.”

A teacher from Kisumu County said,

“... the parents (here) are prostitutes and drug dealers, thus making it easier for the children to have such tendencies. The children lack role models in the society.”

Some students reported that violence was a normal occurrence and they did not know what it meant to live in peace. From the above scenario, it is evident that the social environment has a
role to play in determining what children become. A nurturing environment might help a student withstand the threat from violent extremists, while a dysfunctional one might lead to greater acceptance or adherence to extremist philosophies.

**Lack of employment upon graduation:** One commonly cited driver of violence was unemployment. Many respondents said that the youth, upon completion of studies, were idle and frustrated since they could not access decent employment. As a result, school going children were also not hopeful of securing employment. A respondent from Isiolo commented:

“Some youth want to join the military. Once they fail to get recruited by the government after several attempts, they see the militia as an alternative to fulfill their dream.”

Youth unemployment (15 – 29 years) in Kenya constitutes 70% of total unemployment in the country (UNDP, 2013). Indeed, a study conducted in Kenya by Mercy Corps did find a relationship that positively linked employment to non-participation in political violence (Mercy Corps, 2016).

**Poverty:** Many respondents cited that poverty was a key driving force to joining violent groups particularly children from poor families who could not afford the basic needs. As a result, such children and youth are left to fend for themselves. Some of the children were reported to be the bread winners in their families forcing them to engage in any odd jobs to make ends meet.

Although poverty was commonly cited across the seven counties, there was considerable skepticism with regard to the role of this factor in the literature review. For instance, a qualitative study on CVE programming under the Kenya Transition Initiative (KTI) found that the majority of those arrested or suspected of involvement in violent extremism in Mombasa are from middle-and upper-class families where poverty is not an issue.

**Weak family structures:** This was mentioned across the board with many relating the problem to poor parenting skills and absent parents. It was reported that the parents are less involved in what the children do. A head teacher from Isiolo said,

“Very weak parenting roles and responsibilities – parents cannot account for their children especially during school holidays.”

Teachers reported that the parents of the most affected children do not participate in school activities and are less concerned about their children’s performance. As a result, the children are left to make their own decisions at a very early stage in life. One head teacher from Nairobi commented:

“We had to come up with very punitive actions to force parents to attend parents’ meetings.”

Research has shown that the family plays an essential role (whether positive or negative) throughout any person’s life, but especially in the period between infancy and the moment a child reaches school going age. The family is deemed to be the first step in the transmission of fundamental values. The bond (or lack thereof) between parent and child plays an extremely important role in developing a person’s self-esteem and identity. In other words, if there is no strong bond between parent and child in early life, the chances that a person will carry over certain positive values and lessons to later life will be limited. A study by Botha, A. (2015) on terrorists from organized groups found that many among the Allied Democratic Forces – ADF (44%), Lord’s Resistance Army – LRA (38%), Al-Shabaab (18%) and MRC (31%) had grown up without a father figure.
Identity crisis: One commonly mentioned factor was that the children joined these groups in search of their identity and the need to belong and be accepted by others. One student from Nairobi said,

“The groups are like families and it is the only place where one feels accepted.”

Psychologists argue that all human beings have a desire to belong to a certain group. This desire is more in adolescents, and if not well handled in a healthy environment they are likely to make unhealthy decisions including joining violent groups (Botha, A., 2015).

Negative role models: It was reported that there are many negative role models that the youth look up to especially those who seem to have become successful because of engaging in violent activities. This is made worse by the fact that for some, the role models are immediate family members, making it easy for them to be influenced to join.

Some children and youth indeed viewed being in school as a waste of time since they had seen many successful people who did not have education qualifications but had become leaders within the groups and were seemingly doing very well. Joining the groups was therefore seen as a shortcut to becoming ‘rich’.

Research has shown that becoming a radical often involves a role model whom a new member can look up to in teaching him or her how to act. This person plays an important role in instilling the negative values that the group upholds and to think and act collectively (Hassan, M., 2012).

Threats and force: In some cases, it was reported that the violent groups were intimidating and forcing children and youth to join the groups against their wishes.

One student from Nairobi said,

“... the gang members used to pressurize me to join them and every time we met, they could ask, ‘Jibu yetu? (Give an answer)’. They threatened to rape me if I did not join them. I missed school for two days and almost suffered depression.”

Another one said,

“Members of ‘Black bra’ asked me to join them. They went ahead to threaten my parents and even beat my mother because she had not allowed me to join the group. Girls are more in that group.”

Indoctrination (religious, political or ethnic influence) – The study findings showed that religion plays a key role in influencing the children and youth to join the organized violent groups. Respondents reported cases where religious teachings were being used to radicalize the children. Some schools were also said not to be using the recommended national curriculum and were instead training using religious lessons. This was a common approach in recruitment of Al-Shabaab militia as reported by the respondents.

A parent in Garissa County noted:

“Children are lured by being told that it is a holy war.”

A teacher from Isiolo County affirmed this:

“... they (youth) are taught that they are fighting for the cause of believers as jihad – and they will go to heaven thereafter.”
Studies show that religious scholars and other leaders play an important role in the ‘collective conditioning’ or indoctrination process of new members. For example, 34% of Al-Shabaab and 29% of ADF respondents were introduced to the respective organizations through a religious figure (Botha, A., 2015).

**Ethnic/Cultural influence:** It was found that some violent groups such as Mungiki initiate boys to the group during circumcision which is a way of life. As a result, the boys are coerced to being members.

Lastly, **political affiliation** also played a part in influencing the youth to join criminal groups. This was evident in Bungoma and Kwale counties.

### 4.3.2 Pull Factors

Most of the commonly mentioned pull factors included:

**Peer pressure:** The study found that children and youth influence one another to join the groups. Existing group members lure others by showing them their expensive items that they had acquired after joining the groups. A parent from Nairobi County said, 

“Class 8 dropouts and Form 4 leavers who cannot continue with schooling due to poverty join the gangs and then influence the other students in schools.”

A study by Botha, A. (2015) showed that friends played a central role in introducing youth to join terrorist groups. Indeed, the findings show that the friend influence represented the biggest single role player in terms of influencing one’s decision to join. An assessment of KTI program showed that youth ‘are at risk of being exposed to extremism and violence due to peer pressure, particularly the fear of being called “mama’s boy” by their contemporaries who were already showing violent tendencies.’

**Use of reward systems/Material incentives:** The study found that children receive monetary rewards for engagement in violent activities.

A parent from Garissa County noted:

“They are promised huge amounts of money.”

A teacher from Nairobi County also commented:

“They (children) are lured into the groups by being given money and expensive phones and in their current situation, who would turn down such?”

In Bungoma County, the youth were promised huge tracts of land as rewards.

The study found that most organized groups have well-structured promotion systems based on performance. The children usually start off by peddling weapons as they train and eventually join in the actual criminal activities. This means that the more they are engaged in violent activities, the more the returns. A report by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) says the Al-Shabaab terrorist group offers recruits between $150 (sh. 13,350) and $500 (sh. 44,500) per month to join it. In Nairobi, the study found that different crimes attract different rewards with reports of some crimes fetching up to sh. 40,000.
**Status:** The children reported that members of the violent groups seem to have a high status in the community. In Nairobi, the children noted that the group members lived lavishly unlike most of the people who are engaged in decent jobs. The children admire the lifestyles of the group members and thus look forward to being like them. One teacher said,

“**Children from this region join these gangs for prestige and popularity among their peers. They are promised that they will be given money, nice clothes and phones and this attracts them into joining these groups.**”

Another student said,

“**They are attracted to the fancy phones the members of the groups own. In the long run, they drop out of school to make more time for stealing such phones and accumulating more cash.**”

Indeed, a former member of Al-Shabaab interviewed by Muhsin Hassan claimed that ‘walking in the city with a gun as a member of Al-Shabaab ensured everybody feared and respected you,’ and that ‘girls also liked you.’ (Hassan, M., 2012)

**Protection and power:** Many groups are formed with the ideology that they will protect the community from injustices. One parent from Murang’a said,

“**Some join the violent groups for protection. They feel it is not safe for them out there when they are not in a gang.**”

In other regions, it was reported that the youth are made to believe that their communities were at a risk of losing their land or had been discriminated against and therefore compelled to fight back to protect what belongs to them. This driver was mainly reported in Bungoma and Murang’a counties.

**Revenge:** It was reported that others joined because they wanted to revenge for the loss of a loved one who was killed by the police or members of a rival gang. A respondent from Nairobi observed that,

“... there was one whose brother was killed by police ‘Terror squad’ so he decided to join a gang so as to revenge the killing of his brother.”

4.3.3 **Catalytic Factors**

This study analyzed some underlying factors from literature that are thought to further facilitate the children to join the violent groups. While some are innate like adolescence risk factors, others provide good media for influencing one another.

**Adolescent risk factors**

Children undergo their adolescence period in schools, a period that is marked by the transition from childhood to young adulthood and viewed as one of the most dynamic stages of human development. The characteristics of adolescence include physical, emotional and intellectual changes, as well as changes in social roles, relationships and expectations. Adolescence is characterized by redefining and developing relationships with parents, family and peers, and consists of not one developmental stage, but three inter-related periods:
Developmental period age ranges

- Early Adolescence: 10 – 14 years of age
- Middle Adolescence: 15 – 17 years of age
- Late Adolescence: 18 – 24 years of age

Each period of adolescence contains inherent expectations that cause an individual’s needs to fluctuate dramatically. As needs fluctuate, so do the associated risk factors. There are associative risks within schools from guns, gangs, drugs, bullying, sexual harassment and developmental issues that can result in violence, including suicide or targeting others.

Schools comprise students in each adolescent developmental period creating a unique dynamic. High schools are at a greater risk as students may be more susceptible to embracing violent extremist ideologies, joining extremist organizations, or self-radicalizing, if they are unable to withstand the many influential factors and daily stressors in their lives.

This dynamic also presents unique challenges for our educators – recognizing and understanding the underlying catalysts to violent extremist behaviors and designing grass roots initiatives to help students resist the temptations and lure of extremist organizations.

Internet and social media

The inundation of violent extremism in mainstream culture can be aligned in part with technological advances. According to U.S state, FBI 2015, as new technologies have emerged, so too has the virtual spread of violent extremism. Violent extremist organizations’ ability to transcend geographical boundaries is made possible by the internet and the use of social media. Violent extremists troll for youth in social media or online forums, to spot, assess and recruit those who are vulnerable. This targeting of youth is increasingly putting them ‘at risk’ as many are tech-savvy and often spend large quantities of time on social media networks.

Social media also provides youth a platform for identifying violent extremists or becoming curious about the subject matter to conduct research – gaining an appreciation for or understanding of its principles. Youth may find the content appealing or attractive, especially when they meet others (peers or young adults) online, who are violent extremists and viewed as rational people. These online contacts offer meaning and understanding to the ideological underpinnings that drive acceptance of radical beliefs or support for future actions. These interactions result in bringing new supporters into the fold. A teacher in Bungoma commented:

“... Children have phones in school which help them access social media. In the event of violence like during the rampant burning of dormitories, they influence each other to burn their schools.”

4.4 Interventions

This section outlines the current interventions by the Ministry of Education in preventing and managing emerging forms of violence. The interventions are grouped into two: those at the national level and those at the school level.

4.4.1 Interventions by the Ministry of Education at National Level

The Ministry of Education has also put in place several measures aimed at addressing violent extremism in schools:
**Development of admissions guidelines for registration of non-citizens into the schools:** The Ministry of Education has developed admission guidelines to guide the schools when admitting non-citizen students. This process ensures that schools are aware of the background of the students minimizing the risks of admitting students who are already members of violent groups.

**Sanctioning of the transfer cases:** The Ministry of Education has also introduced sanctioning of all students seeking transfer from one school to another. The process involves conducting background checks to confirm the circumstances for transfer. This is aimed at curbing possibility of admitting students who are seeking transfers after engaging in violent activities in their previous schools.

**Vetting of all materials going to schools:** The ministry has also introduced a system where all materials being used in schools are vetted to ensure their appropriateness and that they do not promote violence in schools. This includes vetting of guest speakers in schools and their presentations.

**Use of national drama and music festivals with themes for countering violent extremism:** The Ministry of Education holds national drama and music festivals. These events have for a long time been used to promote global citizenship, peaceful co-existence and national cohesion.

**Partnership with security agents and law enforcers:** The Ministry of Education has partnered with the department of police and other security agencies to address challenges facing them. All children suspected or involved in violence are usually handed over to the security agencies for the law to take its course. Several schools reported that they were indeed working very closely with law enforcers.

**Implementation of child friendly school initiatives:** The Ministry of Education in partnership with civil society is implementing the child friendly initiatives which aim at creating a friendly and supportive environment for children.

**Development of guidelines for formation of peace clubs at school level:** In partnership with the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, the Ministry of Education has introduced ‘Amani clubs’ (peace clubs) which aim at planting seeds of appreciation and tolerance by enabling students to learn to co-exist harmoniously despite ethnic, racial and religious differences and guide youth to respect diversity in a pluralistic society. Amani clubs foster school-community partnerships by engaging in and conducting community outreach programs that enhance learners’ understanding and interactions with communities.

**Ongoing review of the curriculum to integrate prevention of violent extremism in schools:** The Ministry of Education is also reported to be reviewing the current curriculum with plans to integrate prevention and management of emerging forms of violence as a key theme.

### 4.4.2 Interventions at the School Level

This study found that the schools had put in place some measures to address violence. Interventions reported included:

**Counseling and Guidance:** Most schools were reported to be offering counseling to students through the guidance and counseling department. However, the teachers reported that they only offer general counseling and not specific on prevention and management of violence extremism. This is because they felt ill equipped to handle the issues.
Integration in Life skills lessons: Some schools reported to be discussing issues related to violence during life skills lessons, however there was a general feedback that the current life skills curriculum is not adequate to address the challenges at hand.

A teacher in Nairobi said,

“The life skills education curriculum is too basic and we cannot use it to teach our students. Our students are faced with bigger challenges which are not addressed by the curriculum. Maybe we need a special curriculum here.”

A student from Kisumu said,

“There is a life skills teacher who talks to us on different issues raised by the students. However, sometimes, the students disagree with the teacher’s views. Sometimes the life skills teacher is not confident to address some issues.”

Clubs and societies: Some schools reported to be discussing the issues of violence through school clubs and sports activities. A student from Nairobi County commented:

“There are also societies like the Christian Union (CU) that is run and conducted by Jubilee Christian Church, Young Catholic Society (YCS) and Islamic Union which are facilitated by walimu from the mosque. These societies build the students spiritually. There is also the St. John’s ambulance which teaches students how to cope in society. Another program is called ‘World starts with me!’ which teaches the students how to deal with difficult situations and also coping strategies within the society.”

Peer counselors: Some schools reported an approach of working with peer counselors. This entails identifying and training some students on good role modeling. The students are then challenged to influence other students positively.

Foster parenting in schools: This approach was reported in a school in Kisumu County where students are divided into cluster groups of twenty and a teacher is assigned to them as their foster parent. Students meet and share their problems with their foster parents aimed at coming up with solutions. Students are also taught virtues by their foster parent.

Motivational speeches: Schools also reported that they invite role models and motivational speakers to address the students and hopefully influence them positively.

One student in Nairobi County said,

“Motivational speakers come to our school on Wednesday and they talk about different issues.”

Students forums: Some schools reported that they hold forums for the students where they discuss general issues affecting them. One student said,

“…also, in the boys’ and girls’ forum where we discuss anything ranging from dreams, drugs and goals.”

Programs by different civil society organizations: Schools mentioned programs that were being run by various partners either in the past or currently. One student in Nairobi said,

“A program called I Choose Life was in the school in 2014. It was dissolved after 2 years. I don’t know why it ended in our school and when I asked a student from another school, she told me that the program is still on in their school. It used to inform students of life choices. The main topics
of discussion included sexual harassment, goals, drugs, victimization, relationships and friendship. The program was very helpful.”


4.5 Existing gaps

1. Inadequate capacity of schools in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence

One major challenge reported by all schools was the lack of capacity to prevent and address violent extremism in schools. The teachers, parents, support staff, students and BOM members lacked capacity to identify the early warning signs. The teachers and BOMs were not conversant with mechanisms that should be put in place in order to curb any opportunities that would lead to radicalization of children in schools. There was thus no coordinated mechanism in addressing cases of violent extremism in schools. The study established that some schools did not have basic security systems in place including a perimeter fence and security guards. This left the schools vulnerable and easy targets for recruitment and violent attacks.

2. Inadequate capacity of teachers to offer guidance and counseling services

While most schools reported that they were addressing violence through the guidance and counseling departments, they also reported that the trained teachers did not have the expertise in handling violent extremism. In addition, it was reported that there is a conflicting role of a teacher as a counselor and disciplinarian. One teacher noted:

“All teachers should be trained and sensitized on matters pertaining to violent extremism in our school so that they know how to deal with such issues.”

The lack of skills among the teachers made them less confident to directly address suspected cases of children involved in violent activities.

3. Inadequacy of the education curriculum to address the emerging forms of violence

Although the MOE has put in measures to integrate prevention and management of emerging violence, there is need for deliberate integration within the curriculum at all education levels. The current curriculum does not integrate issues of radicalization, violent extremism, countering violent extremism in schools, among others.

4. Lack of guidelines and capacity building materials in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence

According to the study findings, there was no clear and coordinated process of handling students involved in violent extremism in schools. The schools heavily depended on the Basic Education Act of 2013 which stipulates the process of disciplining learners. However, in cases where the children were suspects and not necessarily committing crimes within the school compound, there were no clear processes of handling them. The applied interventions in this case varied from one school to another with some reporting to the security agencies, others to the chiefs while others did not report.
There were also no training manuals or IEC materials available to facilitate dissemination of information on prevention and management of violence in schools.

5. Weak partnerships between the schools and communities
   The study established that the schools and communities did not have strong partnerships. The community was not actively involved in school activities and in other cases there were no deliberate efforts by the schools to engage the communities in addressing violence in schools. Linkages with the security agents and administrative offices existed in some areas.

6. Non-conducive social environment
   The study found that children are raised in environments that expose them to violence at a very early stage in life predisposing them to easy recruitment.

7. Presence of religious and other actors in schools under minimal supervision by the county
   Many schools are under sponsorship by religious organizations with many other actors implementing programs at school level. While the MOE has put in place measures to monitor the different players, there are still gaps as the ministry may not be able to vet every material including speeches given by the actors.

8. Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
   The study established that there was not one coordinated M&E framework to guide reporting of the violent cases. Indeed, the study was not able to establish the number of violent and indiscipline cases reported by schools.
In order to address the identified gaps, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. **Adopt Whole School Approach in Capacity Building of Schools**
   The study recommends adoption of a whole school approach to develop the capacity of various stakeholders by equipping them with skills for prevention and management of violence extremism. The stakeholders should be empowered to enable them put in place prevention measures and response mechanisms in cases of violence. This should include the training of teachers, BOMs, parents, support staff and students on identification of early warning signs, alternative discipline mechanisms in handling violent cases, parenting skills, key security measures and on guidance of learners. There is also need to build the capacity of schools in managing student’s welfare issues. Schools should embrace diversity in school programming, daily interactions and affirmative messaging thus eliminating cultural stigmas, intolerance and prejudice.

2. **Strengthen the Guidance and Counseling Services**
   To strengthen the guidance and counseling department in the schools, this study recommends engagement of full-time professional counselors to offer guidance and counseling services to learners. The Ministry of Education should put in place a coordinated mechanism for guidance in schools with clear reporting structures at the various levels (school, Sub-county and County).

3. **Integration of Prevention and Management of Emerging Forms of Violence into the Curriculum**
   With the ongoing review of the school curriculum, the Ministry of Education should ensure that prevention and management of emerging forms of violence is well integrated at all levels of education. This should include use of co-curricular activities like drama, music etc.; student’s dialogue forums; Life Skills Education, service learning through education and peace clubs. In addition, the Ministry should make the curriculum relevant to modern world of work like sports, media, ICT among others.

4. **Development of Guidelines and Materials for Prevention and Management of Emerging Forms of Violence in Schools**
   To provide guidance to all stakeholders, the study recommends development of national guidelines on Prevention and Management of Emerging Forms of Violence in learning institutions. In addition, capacity building materials including teacher training manuals and IEC materials on prevention and management of violence should be developed. This should include development of online platforms and materials for information dissemination.

5. **Strengthened Partnerships with the Communities**
   To foster strong partnerships, schools should establish sustainable mechanisms to continuously engage the communities in prevention and management of emerging forms of violence. This should include engaging the parents/guardians, focusing on afterschool programming for the graduating youth and role modeling through school alumni. The schools should also engage the community to strengthen the security measures within the schools and foster partnerships with security agents.
6. **Expand the Low Cost Boarding Schools to violent prone areas**

   Following the reports of school dropout due to insecurity challenges, the study recommends expansion of low cost boarding schools beyond the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) to schools in rural and urban slums where violence is a major concern. This is aimed at providing safe spaces for children reducing their vulnerability and the possibility of joining the violent groups.

7. **Close Monitoring of Actors working closely with the schools by County Education Boards**

   This Study recommends the need for the Ministry of Education through the County Education Boards to closely monitor the various players including religious organizations implementing/spONSoring activities at school level to ensure adherence to guidelines on vetting of all materials going to schools.

8. **Development of M&E Framework**

   Early reporting and response is critical in prevention and management of violence in schools. The Study recommends development of M&E framework to streamline the reporting mechanisms on emerging forms of violence. In addition, a communication mechanism to facilitate reporting of security threats should be enhanced.

In Conclusion, this Study has demonstrated that there are many emerging forms of violence within our schools and communities exposing children to violence from a very early stage in life. There is therefore need to educate, build skills, and assist students to develop strong social and emotional well-being which are essential components in preventing violent extremism and other types of violent acts. These preventative measures will diminish the likelihood of schools becoming potential nodes of radicalization or recruitment hubs for violent extremists.

Quality education, both formal and non-formal, should help to create intercultural dialogue, and provide young people with citizenship and human rights education which would have a positive impact on society.

As violence evolves and more youth embrace extremist ideologies, the education system must provide appropriate services to students who view hatred or targeted violence as acceptable outlets for their grievances. As discussed, youth possess inherent risk factors, making them susceptible to violent extremist ideologies or possible recruitment.

Countering violent extremism is a shared responsibility between law enforcement, civic leaders, and their communities. Schools share in this responsibility within their local communities, which builds resilience against the catalysts driving violent extremist activities. Schools should remain a healthy environment for learning, personal growth, physical and cognitive development, and not be infused with extremist or hateful rhetoric.

Lastly, this Study recommends the need for researchers to conduct further study to inform strategies for prevention and management. Some areas could include research on appropriate discipline mechanisms for learners that promote conducive environment for peaceful learning; the relationship between student welfare and emergence of violence in schools and the role of communities in addressing emerging forms of violence in schools.


Conference of the German Bundeskriminalamt, or Federal Criminal Police Office, Wiesbaden, Germany).


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Situational Assessment Report 2017

For more information, please contact:
Ministry of Education,
P. O. Box 30040-00100 Nairobi
Tel: 020-318581,
Email: elm@education.go.ke,
Website: www.education.go.ke