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ACRONYMS

CEFs County Engagement Forums

CSOs Civil Society Organization

CTCBP Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program

FGDs Focus Group Discussions

GAM Grounded Accountability Model

GBV Gender-Based Violence

IED Improvised Explosive Device

KIIs Key Informant Interviews

KNBS Kenya National Bureau of Statistics

NCTC National Counter Terrorism Centre

NPS National Police Service

NSCVE National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism

P/CVE Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism

PIF Peace Impact Framework

Search Search for Common Ground

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

VEOs Violent Extremist Organizations

VE Violent Extremism

YOWPSUD Youth & Women for Peace & Sustainable Development



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BACK GROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

Coastal Kenya faces a complex security landscape where institutional legitimacy and community agency intersect with persistent gender inequalities in security and justice institutions. The region, encompassing Lamu, Tana River, Kilifi, and Kwale counties, experiences ongoing threats from Al-Shabaab, with Lamu bearing the brunt of attacks while other counties face increasing vulnerability to radicalization.¹

Institutional legitimacy remains compromised by the severe underrepresentation of women in security leadership roles, with women constituting only 16% of the National Police Service(NPS) nationally—a figure that has declined over recent years due to discriminatory recruitment practices and inadequate institutional support.² This gender imbalance undermines community trust, particularly among women and marginalized groups who experience conflict differently and require gender-responsive security approaches.

Community agency is further constrained by deeply entrenched cultural norms and religious interpretations that systematically exclude women from decision-making processes. Despite constitutional provisions mandating gender equality, patriarchal structures persist in security institutions, with women facing barriers ranging from inadequate facilities to workplace harassment.³ This exclusion represents not only a failure of gender equality principles but also a significant missed opportunity to enhance Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) effectiveness, as women's community positioning enables early identification of radicalization signs and mobilization of community resilience against violent extremism(VE).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Search, in partnership with Action Life and YOWPSUD, is implementing the 'Mwanamke Imara' project with the ultimate outcome of strengthened women's leadership in advancing P/CVE within state security and justice institutions across coastal Kenya.

Focusing on the coastal counties of Kilifi, Lamu, Tana River, and Kwale, this project targets the need for greater leadership of women in security and justice, recognizing that their perspectives and community influence are crucial for building trust and addressing the gender-specific drivers and impacts of VE.

To realize that change, the project contributes to three **Immediate Outcomes**:

- 1. Women in security and justice institutions have the knowledge, skills, and peer support to champion P/CVE efforts;
- Male leaders in security, justice, and target communities have increased awareness
 of gender-sensitive, human rights centered approaches and the value of women's
 leadership in P/CVE efforts;
- 3. Women in security and justice institutions have increased access to platforms and opportunities to exercise leadership in collaborative community-led P/CVE initiatives.

In turn, these immediate outcomes will contribute to two **Intermediate Outcomes**:

- 1. Increased agency of women in leadership and decision-making roles in P/CVE within security and justice institutions;
- 2. Demonstrated effectiveness of women-led, inclusive P/CVE initiatives.

Collectively, these intermediate outcomes will contribute to the **Ultimate Outcome** of the initiative: strengthened women's leadership in advancing P/CVE within state security and justice institutions across coastal Kenya.

¹ Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies. (2024). Trends of Violent Extremist Attacks and Arrests in Kenya, January–December 2023. CHRIPS Terrorism Observatory.

² https://www.knbs.or.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-Kenya-Facts-Figures.pdf

³ International Development Law Organization, *Women's Professional Participation in Kenya's Justice Sector: Barriers and Pathways* (Rome: IDLO, 2020).



OUR APPROACH TO MEASURING CHANGE

To assess impact, this study is aligned with the Peace Impact Framework (PIF),⁴ which explores five elements for healthy societies. This project on strengthening women's leadership in P/CVE relates mostly to three out of the five elements in the PIF, including agency, legitimacy, and polarization as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Agency measures the extent to which women in security and justice institutions believe they can influence positive change within their institutions and communities regarding P/CVE. The baseline assesses current perceptions of institutional credibility, focusing on whether communities believe their voices are heard and their security concerns addressed through gender-responsive leadership in P/CVE efforts

Legitimacy examines trust in security and justice institutions, particularly focusing on how women's leadership affects community perceptions of institutional responsiveness and inclusivity. This includes measuring whether communities believe these institutions consider their perspectives and adequately address their security concerns, with specific attention to gender-responsive approaches.

Polarization assesses the extent to which women in security and justice roles experience marginalization or dehumanization based on their gender, and how gender dynamics affect inter-group relations within institutions and communities. The baseline examines whether women feel treated as equals by colleagues and community members, and how their leadership influences trust, collaboration, and inter-group relationships critical to P/CVE efforts.

These three themes collectively capture the core challenges this project addresses: empowering women to effect change, building institutional credibility through inclusive leadership, and reducing gender-based divisions that undermine both institutional effectiveness and community security.



Figure 1: PIF Themes

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Lemon, A. et al., "The Peace Impact Framework," Nexus (2023), available at cnxus.org/peace-impact-framework/.



METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall objective of this baseline study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current context, capacity gaps, and baseline values for indicators to inform the implementation of the project aiming at strengthening women's leadership in P/CVE among state security and justice institutions.

Specifically, the study formulated the key research questions from the objectives and is expected to:

Objective 1: Assess the current context of conflict and gender dynamics in the target communities and their implications for women's leadership in security and justice institutions.

Research Questions:

- 1.1 What are the prevalent conflict dynamics in the target communities, and how do they affect women in security and justice roles?
- 1.2 What are the gender-specific challenges faced by women within communities, security and justice institutions, and their impact on women's leadership?
- 1.3 How do community perceptions of gender roles influence women's leadership in security and justice?

Objective 2: Assess the capacity gaps and needs among state security and justice actors (specifically women) and entry points to foster women's leadership.

Research Questions:

- 2.1 What are the barriers to women's leadership within security and justice institutions?
- 2.2 What potential entry points, formal and informal, exist for fostering women's leadership?

Objective 3: Collect baseline values of the project's indicators and the indicators of Peace Impact Framework aligned measures within the project's target populations.

Research Questions:

- 3.1 What are the baseline values of the project indicators? (Baseline values will be disaggregated by sex, age, location, and category of respondent)
 - 3.1.1 Percentage of women in security and justice roles who believe they can make a positive difference in P/CVE within security and justice institution (PIF)
 - 3.1.2 Percentage increase in number of women reporting taking up leadership roles within security and justice institutions
 - 3.1.3 Percentage increase in targeted stakeholders reporting improved representation of women in leadership and decision-making in security and justice institutions
 - 3.1.4 Percentage of targeted community members who express trust in women leadership in security and justice institutions
 - 3.1.5 Percentage of targeted community members who believe women-led P/CVE initiatives are effective in addressing VE issues
 - 3.1.6 Percentage of trained women who report feeling confident in applying leadership skills in P/CVE efforts
 - 3.1.7 Percentage of targeted male leaders who report applying gender sensitive and human rights centered approaches in their work
 - 3.1.8 Percentage of targeted women in security and justice who report increased access to opportunities to lead P/CVE efforts



- 3.1.9 Percentage of targeted women who report increased ability to influence/contribute to key decisions in P/CVE efforts
- 3.1.10 Percentage of women in security and justice roles who believe they are perceived as less than human in their society because of their group membership (gender) (PIF)
- 3.1.11 Percentage of targeted women in security and justice roles who take action to influence P/CVE in their communities (PIF)

3.2 What are the values of the following PIF indicators?

- 3.2.1 Percentage of the population that feels safe walking alone around the area where they live
- 3.2.2 Percentage of the population, disaggregated by sex, who believe they can make a positive difference in the area where they live
- 3.2.3 Percentage of the population that takes action to influence the things they care about
- 3.2.4 Percentage of people who believe they are perceived as less than human in their society because of their group membership (disaggregated by gender, age, religion, ethnic group, and political affiliation)
- 3.2.5 Percentage of the population that is willing to use violence to advance their group interests
- 3.2.6 Percentage of the population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive
- 3.2.7 Value of time and resources invested in identified priorities to support peace

3.3 What peace outcomes do women in security and justice roles believe are most needed to support safer, more cohesive communities?

Research questions:

- 3.3.1 What are the signs that someone (especially a woman) holds power in your institution or community?
- 3.3.2 What peace outcomes/changes do you believe are most urgently needed to improve safety and cohesion in the community?
- 3.3.2b How do you think women in leadership roles can influence these outcomes/changes?

Objective 4: Assess potential risks associated with the project and draw recommendations for programming to ensure "Do No Harm", safeguarding, and conflict sensitivity are embedded in the project.

Research Questions:

- 4.1 What are the potential risks, including operational and institutional, associated with the project implementation and their impact on the target populations, particularly women?
- 4.2 What recommendations can be made to enhance safeguarding, Do No Harm, and conflict sensitivity in the project.



RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

For this baseline study, a comprehensive mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a holistic understanding of the complex dynamics at play and to offer rich contextual insights alongside statistical data. The study primarily relied on primary data, as it provided the base values for the project indicators that would inform future project implementation and evaluations. The selected research design emphasized quantitative data, while qualitative insights were used to enrich and contextualize the findings. By employing both approaches, the study enhanced data reliability through the confirmation and cross-validation of findings. Additionally, the collected data was disaggregated by gender, age, county, and category of the respondent to facilitate a deeper understanding of the underlying realities.

The Grounded Accountability Model (GAM) participatory research method strengthened the study by ensuring that indicators of peace, safety, and women's leadership were defined by the communities themselves, in line with the project's objectives of local relevance and inclusivity. By adopting GAM's participatory approach, such as conducting discussions to identify context-specific indicators, including trust in women-led security initiatives, access to decision-making spaces) and refining them through community verification—the study captured nuanced, actionable metrics that standard frameworks might have missed. This method not only complemented the baseline's quantitative data but also embedded community ownership into the project's design, monitoring, and adaptive mechanisms. For instance, GAM's emphasis on locally generated indicators helped uncover overlooked priorities in Coastal Kenya, ensuring that the findings resonated with both stakeholders and beneficiaries, thereby enhancing the project's long-term impact.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS OF THE STUDY

The baseline survey was conducted across four counties in Kenya, with key focus areas in Kenya, including: Lamu (Lamu Island, Hindi, and Mpeketoni, as well as the Operation Amani Boni areas (formerly referred to as the Boni Enclave Operations); Tana river (Hola, Garsen (Minjila), and Madogo; Kilifi County, the survey concentrated in Malindi, Kilifi North, and Kilifi South; Kwale County, the targeted locations were (Kwale Town, Ukunda, and Kombani).

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The baseline study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection. This entailed both primary and secondary data sources. The primary sources included focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs), alongside quantitative methods through surveys to ensure data triangulation and enhance the validity of the findings. Secondary data sources comprised an extensive review and analysis of literature on P/CVE in coastal Kenya, including existing policies, institutional frameworks, gender mainstreaming initiatives, security sector reforms, women's participation data, relevant policy frameworks, and evaluations of previous P/CVE initiatives with documented lessons learned.

SAMPLING AND REPRESENTATION

The qualitative component consisted of 34 KIIs (27M, 7F) and 8 FGDs (31M, 31F), stratified by gender, to capture nuanced perspectives from both formal and informal institutions. The study employed a non-probabilistic purposive sampling approach, targeting key stakeholders across four coastal counties in Kenya. This approach was appropriate for this study given the need to engage individuals with specialized knowledge (in security, justice, gender, religion, culture), lived experience, or institutional roles relevant to women's leadership and



P/CVE. This approach ensured the inclusion of diverse yet information-rich perspectives essential for addressing the study's objectives.

The quantitative data comprised 406 respondents, with 157 (39.3%) women and 239 (59.8%) men, thus, providing a valuable comparative perspective on gender dynamics. The majority of the respondents were adults (58.3%) followed by youths (41.0%), suggesting that adults may be more represented within the sampled institutions, with minimal elderly representation. There was an equal representation across the four counties, with each contributing 25% of the total respondents, ensuring balanced geographical insights across the coastal region. Refer to Figure 2 below.

On the education level, the majority (65.5%) attained tertiary education, while 30.3% attained secondary education. In contrast, 9.5% attained primary education and 3.8% had no formal education. This indicates that respondents are educated and have strong capacity for leadership and informed engagement in P/CVE work. The majority (42.0%) were the community leaders, representing an essential group for the local-level P/CVE efforts. In addition, civil society actors accounted for (20.0%) and security personnel (19.0%), representing key operational stakeholders. Lastly, those from the judicial system were 7% and other government officials were 6.5%.

Despite the common perception that coastal areas are predominantly Muslim, the findings reveal a surprising distribution. A significant portion of respondents identified as Christians (53.5%), followed by Muslims (45.0%), while traditionalists constituted a smaller fraction (1.3%). This indicates a potential dynamic in the interfaith landscape within P/CVE spaces.

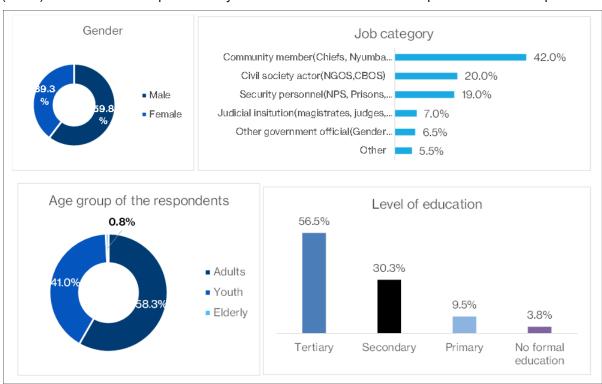


Figure 2: Demographic information

DATA ANALYSIS APPROACH

Quantitative data: The data was cleaned using MS Excel and thereafter imported to Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were calculated for categorical variables,



while measures of central tendency (mean, mode, and median) were applied to scale variables for some research questions. This allowed for appropriate summarization and interpretation of both quantitative and categorical data.

Additionally, baseline values for the project indicators under objective 3 were computed and disaggregated by sex, age, location, and respondent category. For PIF indicators, the standard data analysis strategy outlined in the PIF documentation⁵ was followed to ensure comparability with other PIF-aligned projects.

Qualitative data: The qualitative data was transcribed and coded using a framework ⁶based on research questions and emerging themes. Thereafter, the themes, patterns, and relationships were identified. Finally, qualitative data was triangulated with quantitative data to complement the findings.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Table 2 documents the field challenges and limitations encountered during the study, with a short description and corresponding mitigation measures that were used and suggested to be utilized in future similar studies.

Table 2:Limitations and mitigation measures

Table Z.Limitations and mitigation measures					
	Limitations	Mitigation Measure			
Access restrictions	 Difficulty accessing senior officers and formal stakeholders due to lack of prior approvals or letters. 	- Secure stamped letters and schedule appointments through official channels before fieldwork.			
Institutional gatekeeping	- Bureaucratic delays in accessing formal security structures like prisons or police units.	- Pre-engage institutional heads and build relationships with key gatekeepers.			
Data collection delays	- Data collection logistics and coordination were often disrupted due to resistance from the high-level respondents.	- Reschedule interviews to weekends and extend the data collection timeline.			
Low female representation	 Few women held leadership roles, limiting the number of respondents fitting the criteria. 	- Broaden respondent criteria to include emerging informal leaders and youth			

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⁵ The Peace Impact Framework" by Lemon, A. et al.,2023 available at cnxus.org/peace-impact-framework/

⁶ The thematic codebook was developed through systematic review of the baseline assessment's four core objectives and corresponding data collection instruments. The coding framework emerged from detailed analysis of focus group discussion guides and key informant interview protocols, with codes organized hierarchically to capture both manifest and latent themes. Primary codes were derived directly from research questions while sub-codes reflected specific dimensions identified in the field guides. The framework incorporates 66 distinct codes across four major domains: conflict and gender dynamics (18 codes), capacity gaps and barriers (16 codes), baseline indicators aligned with project metrics and Peace Impact Framework measures (20 codes), and risk assessment with mitigation strategies (12 codes). Cross-cutting themes addressing intersectionality and contextual factors were included to capture the complexity of women's experiences across different demographic and geographic contexts.



FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Objective 1: Assess the current context of conflict and gender dynamics in the target communities and their implications for women's leadership in security and justice institutions

#Finding 1: Gender-based, resource-based, and livelihood conflicts are the most prevalent, with significant county-level and gender variations

Figure 3 shows that overall, gender-based conflicts/violence affected 65.8% of the respondents, highlighting that it is a significant threat to community safety. The consistency of these high rates across all coastal counties demonstrates that gender-based violence constitutes a universal challenge requiring sustained intervention.

Notably, the qualitative data revealed the pervasive nature of gender-based conflict. A key informant from Kilifi County noted that "What I have noticed so far is that the conflicts mainly affecting women include gender-based violence, such as early marriages, forced marriages, and domestic violence within their homes." A community leader from Kilifi County further emphasized women's vulnerability in resource conflicts "When they are confronted in solitude places such as in the farms, they become easy targets for the perpetrators".

Additionally, the data reveals that resource-based conflicts (land, water) constitute 63.8% of reported cases, making them the second most frequent type of conflict affecting the respondents. This underscores the critical importance of addressing land tenure and resource allocation issues to achieve sustainable peace outcomes.

This quantitative evidence strongly aligns with qualitative insights from study participants. A key informant from Kilifi explained, "In Kilifi the common conflicts are not only land issues between clans of the same tribe or the same community but also inter-county conflicts. For example, between Kilifi and Tana River we have had a few conflicts because they are basically herders or cattle keepers, and we are farmers."

Yamano and Deininger(2006) posited that land conflicts in Kenya have intensified due to ongoing competition over access to scarce land and water resources between herding, farming and wildlife that has persisted for over decades.⁷ Additionally, a recent study by Onguny and Gillies (2019) confirms that the structure of politics is a key organizing element of land conflict in Kenya, as politics define relationships people have with land and institutions governing land rights.⁸

Economic or livelihood disputes affect 54.0% of respondents, and a key informant reflected on the intersection between poverty, unemployment, and conflict vulnerability. The qualitative data stressed how economic pressures drive conflict escalation. A key informant from Tana River County explained, "We have economic violence mostly affecting women, whereby support is cut off from their husbands. Women do not have assets or decision-making power, men decide how much to sell livestock and agricultural products."

⁷ Takashi Yamano and Klaus Deininger, "Land Conflicts in Kenya: Causes, Impacts, and Resolutions," *Land Use Policy* 23, no. 4 (2006): 458-464.

⁸ Onguny, Philip, and Taylor Gillies. "Land conflict in Kenya: a comprehensive overview of literature." *Les Cahiers d'Afrique de l'Est/The East African Review* 53 (2019).



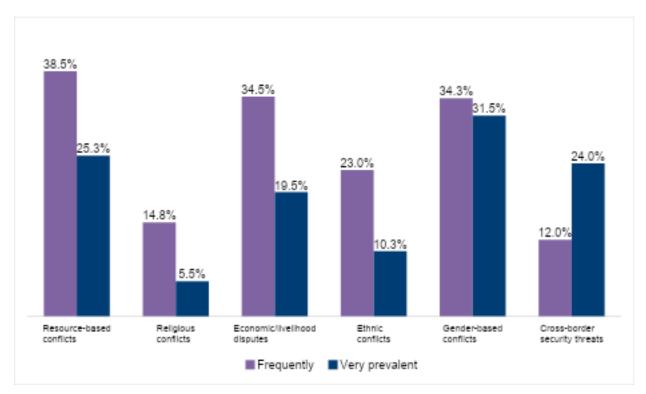


Figure 3:Types of prevalent conflicts

#Finding 2: County-level variations reveal context-specific conflict patterns

The disaggregated county data in Figure 4 demonstrates significant geographical variations in conflict prevalence. Kwale County recorded the highest burden of resource-based conflicts at 60%, while two thirds (66%) of Lamu respondents reported facing exceptional cross-border security threats. These variations underscore the need for tailored peace interventions addressing local conflict drivers.

Qualitative data from Lamu confirms these patterns. A key informant from Lamu County noted that "Due to its proximity to Somalia, Lamu has been targeted by Al-Shabaab, especially in border areas. Manifestations include attacks on security installations, improvised explosive device (IED) explosions, and abductions." In contrast, Tana River County experiences distinct pastoral-agricultural tensions with a tribal undertone. A key informant from Tana River stressed, "We have tribal conflicts, which is mainly brought about by migration of livestock involving locals, farmers and pastoralists."

These findings align with broader research on East African conflicts, where Bedasa & Deksisa., (2024) identify that land-use conflicts represent continuous, growing and complex confrontations between herders, farmers and wildlife over restricted land and water resources particularly in arid and semi-arid regions.⁹

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⁹ Bedasa, Y., & Deksisa, K. (2024). Food insecurity in East Africa: An integrated strategy to address climate change impact and violence conflict. Journal of Agriculture and Food Research, 15, 100978. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jafr.2024.100978.



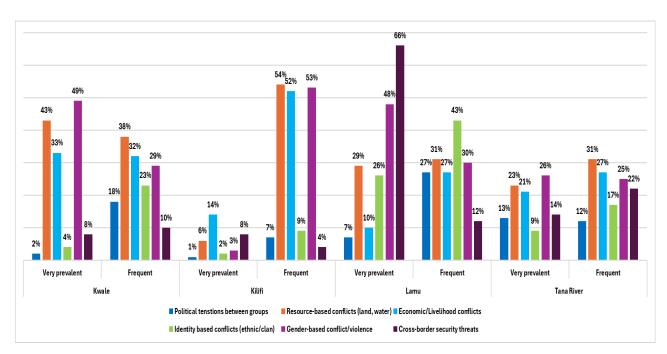


Figure 4:Types of prevalent conflicts by county

#Finding 3: Gender differentials reveal women's heightened vulnerability

The gender-disaggregated data in Figure 5 reveals critical differences in conflict experiences, with women reporting higher rates (69.4%) of resource-based conflicts compared to men (60.3%). These differentials validate women's unique positioning to understand and address P/CVE challenges. Nearly, 67% of the female respondents reported gender-based conflicts compared to male counterparts (65.3%). This aligns with research showing that 45% of women in Kenya have experienced physical violence from someone close to them, higher than the global average of 33%.¹⁰

¹⁰ Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, "Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022," (Nairobi: Government Printer, 2023),



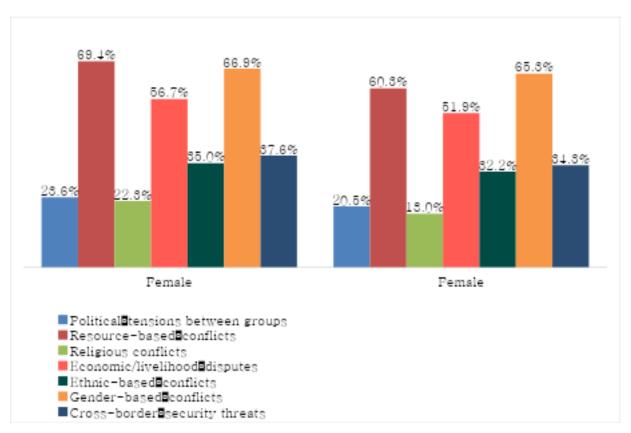


Figure 5:Types of prevalent conflicts by gender

#Findings 4: Traditional gender role expectations and family responsibilities are key barriers affecting women's leadership

The quantitative data in Figure 6 revealed that 84% of respondents noted gender role expectations as the most significant barrier to women's leadership. This finding demonstrates the pervasive influence of cultural norms that restrict women's participation in leadership roles across Kenya's coastal region.

Qualitative evidence supports this quantitative finding, a key informant from Tana River County emphasized, "They believe that a woman is supposed to be led and not to lead, they cannot be entrusted with leadership because they believe it is a principle of men."

Onamu et al., (2024) in their research demonstrate that in numerous patrilineal societies, traditional assumptions concerning a woman's role, primarily as a wife and mother, had a negative impact on campaign success for women seeking political leadership.¹¹ Furthermore, a recent study in Kenya confirms that cultural barriers and unequal access to services continue to impede women's political participation despite constitutional reforms.¹²

Family and domestic responsibilities constitute the second most significant barrier at 80.5%, reflecting the unequal distribution of care work that limits women's availability for leadership roles. This finding validates women's emphasis on structural support systems as critical

¹² Beatrice, K., Nyamwaka, E. O., & Kandagor, D. R. (2024). Breaking Barriers: The Struggles and Prospects of Women Leadership in the Gusii Region. East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, 7(2), 51–63. https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.7.2.2232.

¹¹ Onamu, B. A., Matanga, F. K., & Odhiambo, E. O. S. (2024). Women's Political Participation Opportunities in the Nakuru and Narok Counties of Kenya. African Journal of Empirical Research, 5(4), 1296–1303. https://doi.org/10.51867/ajernet.5.4.106



peace outcomes. A male FGD participant from Kwale stressed that, "When women are faced with competing obligations, they are expected to be at home, and so there is very little time left for leadership advancement."

Similarly, a key informant from Lamu County further noted that, "Heavy domestic responsibilities, especially for single mothers or widows, limit their time and freedom they will need to attend training or public forums."

Research on women's career advancement in Kenya's health sector confirms that harmful gender norms burden women with unpaid care work and discrimination and potentially prioritize and normalize men's careers and leadership.¹³

A significant majority of the respondents (77.3%) highlighted that religious interpretations limit women, indicating that religious doctrines are often used to justify women's exclusion from leadership positions. Qualitative evidence supports this quantitative finding, a female FGD participant in Kilifi highlighted, "Religious interpretations are sometimes used to justify the exclusion of women from public spaces." Moreover, a key informant from Tana River stated that "For those deeply rooted in the Islamic faith, it is evident that women remain more peripheral. When examining conflict resolution mechanisms, it is rare to find a woman involved." Obulemire (2025) research on intersecting inequalities in Kenya, confirms that religious interpretations are sometimes used to justify the exclusion of women from public spaces and that in Islamic communities, women are rarely considered for leadership roles. This study demonstrates that cultural and religious beliefs discourage women from taking security roles particularly in traditional communities. ¹⁴

This is particularly crucial as the counties of project focus have a strong religious presence, predominantly Islam in Lamu, Tana River and Kwale counties. Religious leaders and interpretations often hold significant sway over social norms, including gender roles. When religious doctrines are interpreted in ways that limit women's participation, they can reinforce structural exclusion from leadership and public life, underscoring the need for religious engagement while promoting women's participation in P/CVE.

Further, community mistrust of women leaders represented 74.8% of respondents, indicating widespread skepticism about women's leadership capabilities. This barrier reinforces other structural obstacles and creates additional challenges for women seeking to advance into leadership positions. Similar findings were reported from the qualitative data, and a key informant from Kilifi explained "As a woman, you are not respected when you're a leader, as much as men are respected. Their authority is undermined even by their fellow women, they think she cannot be a leader." Similarly, a key informant from Lamu County noted, "Women who try to lead may be seen as going against tradition, even where women are accepted, they are often not taken seriously."

Research on women's political inclusion in Kenya demonstrates that women leaders are often questioned or not fully accepted¹⁵ and face limited recognition and stereotyping. Mwangi et al., (2023) further posit that gender bias and stereotypes frequently occur, consciously or unconsciously, regardless of whether women take on leadership roles.

¹⁴ Obulemire, Eunice Anyanje. "Gender-based inequalities, religious extremism, and the Shakahola pandemic: exploring the intersection of women, religion and sustainable development in Kenya." *Pharos Journal of Theology* 106, no. 2 (2025).

¹³ Mwangi, Leah, and Emma Kimani (IDinsight). 2023. The Hidden Burden: Gender Bias and Stereotypes as a Barrier to Women's Leadership in Kenya. IDinsight Blog, March 9, 2023.

¹⁵ Ranta, Eija. "Intersecting inequalities in women's political inclusion in Kenya." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 26, no. 4 (2024): 881-902.



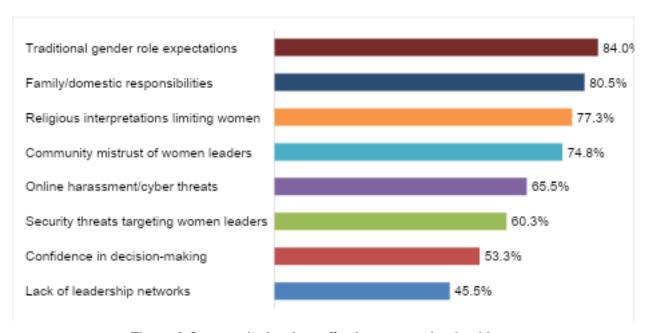


Figure 6:Community barriers affecting women leadership

The gender-disaggregated data in Figure 7 shows that traditional gender role expectations are the most cited barrier, with 86.0% of women and 82.8% of men acknowledging their impact. This reflects deeply rooted societal norms that define leadership as a male domain and assign women domestic, caregiving, or subordinate roles. Additionally, a significant 82.8% of women and 78.7% of men recognize family and domestic responsibilities as a critical barrier. These duties, ranging from childcare to household management disproportionately fall on women and leave them with limited time, energy, and flexibility to pursue leadership opportunities.

Religious interpretations were identified by 73.9% of women and a higher 79.5% of men as a barrier to women's leadership. In many communities, conservative interpretations of religious doctrine are used to justify the exclusion of women from public and decision-making spaces. The findings from qualitative data confirms the above findings, where a Kilifi community leader stated that, "Women lack voice and recognition, especially in religious and political spaces, they are typically more affected in non-local communities and within vulnerable groups". Previous studies conducted confirms that women must overcome general gender bias and stereotypes to break the glass ceiling and reach leadership positions¹⁶ and that conscious and unconscious gender biases often occur at the time of entry into an organization/institution.¹⁷

¹⁷ Galsanjigmed, Enkhzul, and Tomoki Sekiguchi. 2023. "Challenges Women Experience in Leadership Careers: An Integrative Review" *Merits* 3, no. 2: 366-389.

¹⁶ Vundi, Nason. "When Will It Be Our Turn to Lead? An Evaluation of Women's Perceptions on Barriers to Access the Top Positions in Educational Institutions' Leadership in Kenya." *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2024): 292-303.



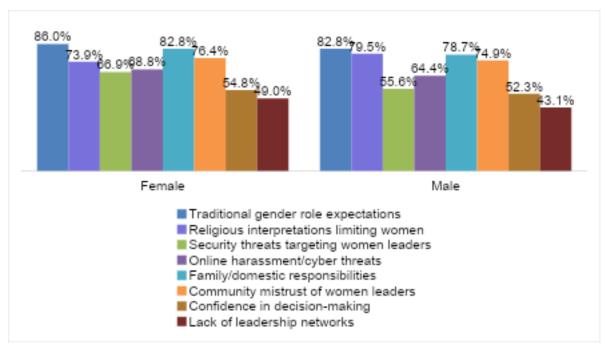


Figure 7: Community barriers affecting women leadership by gender

#Findings 5: Gender inequality norms and economic deprivation were the most prevalent root causes impacting women in leadership roles

The chart in Figure 8 shows that gender inequality norms (70.1%), followed closely by economic deprivation (67.3%) and historical marginalization (58.3%) are perceived as the root causes that impact women's leadership in P/CVE efforts. These findings highlight the intersection of social, economic, and historical injustices in limiting women's participation in leadership and security-related decision-making.

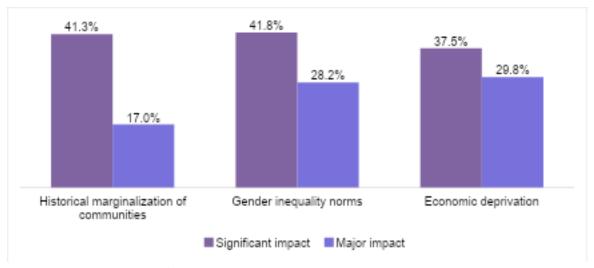


Figure 8:Root causes impacting women in leadership roles

Economic deprivation as a gendered barrier to women's leadership

The findings in Figure 9 show that economic deprivation affects a higher proportion of women (73.2%) than men (63.6%), highlighting its disproportionate impact. The severity of



this impact is greater for women, reflecting how economic barriers amplified by gender inequalities more acutely hinder their leadership advancement.

Qualitative data reveals that economic deprivation impacts women's leadership. A key informant from Kilifi explained, "Economic violence affects women whereby support is cut off from their husbands. Women don't have assets or decision-making power, men decide how much to sell livestock and agricultural products". Similarly, a key informant from Lamu County added, "Poverty prevents women from accessing leadership resources like mentorship, networks, or even transport to attend meetings or trainings".

Previous study on women's career advancement confirms that material resources, organizational policies, and work culture significantly influence women's career progression¹⁸ and that economic barriers like poverty prevent women from gaining education and leadership experience.¹⁹

Gender inequality norms emerge as a prevalent root cause across both genders

Figure 9 reveals that gender inequality norms constitute a significant root cause impacting women's leadership, with a combined impact of 72.6% for women and 67.8% for men. This finding demonstrates widespread recognition across both genders that institutional and cultural gender inequalities fundamentally constrain women's leadership opportunities.

Qualitative data substantiate these quantitative findings, with a key informant from Tana River emphasizing that, "When you look at conflict resolution mechanisms you will hardly find a woman there. They believe that a woman cannot be entrusted with leadership because they believe it is seen as a man's role." Additionally, a key informant from Kilifi noted, "Traditional beliefs exist that women should be at home, taking care of children while the man provides for the family."

Galsanjigmed and Sekiguchi (2023) in their study confirm that gender bias and stereotypes frequently occur, consciously or unconsciously, regardless of whether women take on leadership roles and that cultural beliefs create unconscious gender bias regarding workplace structure and supervision.²⁰ Research on women's political inclusion in Kenya shows that traditional assumptions concerning a woman's role, primarily as a wife and mother, had a negative impact on campaign success.²¹

Historical marginalization of communities shows slightly gender differential impact

Historical marginalization of respondents represented 60.5% of women compared to men at 56.9%. This substantial differential reveals that women experience historical marginalization with more severity in major impacts while men perceive it primarily as a significant factor. The qualitative data from the targeted counties supports this gender differential, with a key informant from Lamu County emphasizing, "Women are among the most affected by these issues. They often have limited power or voice in decision-making, both at home and in the community".

¹⁸ Mišić, Andrić Marijana. "Women's career advancement in organisations: Integrative framework for research." *Journal of Engineering Management and competitiveness (JEMC)* 5, no. 2 (2015): 102-107.

¹⁹Mucheru, Doreen, Eilish McAuliffe, Anosisye Kesale, Brynne Gilmore, et al. 2024. "A Rapid Realist Review on Leadership and Career Advancement Interventions for Women in Healthcare." *BMC Health Services Research* 24: 856

²⁰ Galsanjigmed, E., & Sekiguchi, T. (2023). Challenges women experience in leadership careers: an integrative review. *Merits*, *3*(2), 366-389.

²¹ Ranta, Eija. "Intersecting inequalities in women's political inclusion in Kenya." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 26, no. 4 (2024): 881-902.



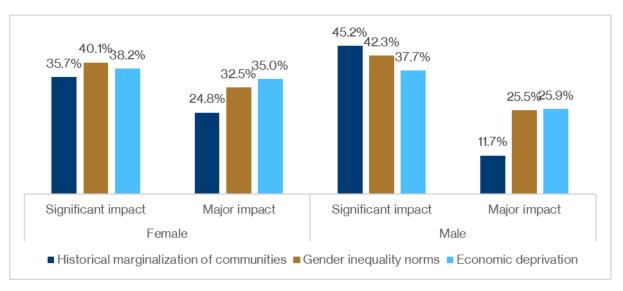


Figure 9: Root causes impacting women in leadership roles by gender

Objective 2: Assess the capacity gaps and needs among state security and justice actors (specifically women) and entry points to foster women's leadership

#Findings 6: Discriminatory recruitment and exclusion from decision-making constitute primary institutional barriers to women's Leadership

Figure 10 reveals that discriminatory recruitment practices constitute the most significant institutional barrier reported by respondents at 77.8%. This finding demonstrates widespread systemic bias in hiring processes that systematically exclude women from leadership opportunities across Kenya's coastal security and justice institutions.

The qualitative data reveals how recruitment processes disadvantage women "Sometimes, you're told that to access an opportunity, you must first sleep with someone; it becomes both an opportunity and a challenge". Female FGD participant, Kwale

A key informant from Kilifi County emphasized the systemic nature of these barriers, "Opportunities are very limited for women, especially in leadership positions... training opportunities for advancing skills are given more to men as opposed to women, especially in rural areas. The opportunities we don't get to have... those opportunities are very limited for women." Similarly, a key informant from Kwale County further noted, "Low recruitment of women into male-dominated leadership doesn't encourage female advancement in leadership."

Exclusion from decision-making was reported at 76.5%, representing the second most significant institutional barrier. This finding highlights how women are systematically marginalized from key strategic and policy decisions even when they hold formal positions within institutions.

A CSO representative from Lamu County *emphasized that, "Women often have limited power or voice in decision-making, both at home and in the community. They lack voice and recognition, especially in religious and political spaces."* Notably, a key informant from Tana River added that, *"When you look at conflict resolution mechanisms you will hardly find a woman there, women remain more peripheral"*. A key informant from Kilifi further added that, *"Women are not included in policy making as much as men are included."*

Research on women's leadership further confirms that organizational structures and practices, including gender bias in hiring and promotion, and workplace discrimination,



further exacerbate barriers to decision-making participation.²² Moreover, these studies demonstrate that women must establish credibility in a culture that is deeply conflicted about whether, when, and how they should exercise authority.²³

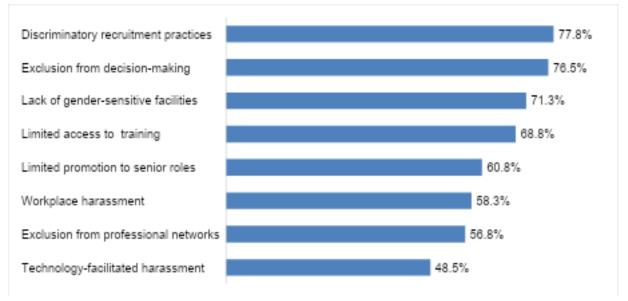


Figure 10: Institutional barriers affecting women's leadership

Lack of gender-sensitive facilities creates substantial physical barriers and was reported at 71.3%, ranking as the third most significant barrier. This finding reflects how institutional infrastructure systematically excludes women by failing to accommodate their specific needs and safety requirements.

Qualitative findings illustrate the practical impact of this barrier, with a key informant from Lamu County explaining that, "Safety and mobility concerns affect remote postings and night duties, which pose risks especially in conflict-prone areas. Domestic responsibilities prevent women from working late or traveling". Similarly, a Lamu CSO representative noted, "Geographical barriers and security concerns limit access to women's participation in decision making processes". Likewise, a key informant from Kilifi County emphasized, "Women lack exposure or training in marine operations. Lack of tailored training programs for women in maritime security creates additional infrastructure challenges".

Gender disaggregation reveals recognition of institutional barriers

Figure 11 shows that discriminatory recruitment practices were reported by women (79.6%) compared to men (76.6%). Additionally, exclusion from decision-making was cited by women (79.6%) versus men (74.9%). A lack of gender-sensitive facilities was noted by women at 71.3% and men at 71.5%. This relatively balanced recognition suggests that institutional barriers are so widespread that both genders acknowledge their existence, though women experience them more directly. Overall, the findings show that both women and men recognize institutional barriers at high levels across most categories, indicating widespread acknowledgement of systemic discrimination.

²² Thelma, Chanda Chansa, and Loveness Ngulube. "Women in leadership: Examining barriers to women's advancement in leadership positions." *Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports* 18, no. 6 (2024): 273-290.

²³ Ibarra, Herminia, Robin Ely, and Deborah Kolb. "Women rising: The unseen barriers." *Harvard business review* 91, no. 9 (2013): 60-66.



However, significant gender disparities emerge in specific areas; limited access to training, with women (75.8%) vs. men (65.3%) workplace harassment, with women (60.5%) vs. men (57.3%). These variances indicate that women experience more severe impacts from training limitations and workplace harassment, reflecting their specific vulnerabilities in male-dominated institutions. The same findings were observed from a key informant from Lamu County who stated that, "Workplace harassment includes sexual harassment and bullying that discourage women from advancing or even joining the field".

Limited access to training affects 68.8% of respondents overall, with women experiencing higher impacts (75.8%) compared to men (65.3%). This substantial gender gap demonstrates how training opportunities are systematically skewed toward men, limiting women's capacity to advance into leadership roles. Evidence from qualitative data proves these findings, a key informant from Kilifi County emphasized, "This is the first time I am even hearing about P/CVE training. I have never really attended any training for peace building. That is a challenge like lack of training and exposure". Equally, a key informant from Kilifi County noted, "Women lack technical knowledge of P/CVE, public speaking, advocacy, and negotiation basic maritime safety and response training". Moreover, training remains particularly challenging for women as pointed out by an officer from the Kwale County, "In a training for violent extremism, we were 15 members and only two were women" demonstrating persistent gender gaps

Technology-facilitated harassment emerges as an evolving institutional challenge as reported by 48.5% of respondents, representing the lowest but increasingly significant barrier. The gender breakdown shows women (51.0%) experience slightly higher rates than men (46.9%), indicating that digital platforms create new venues for discrimination against women leaders.

A key informant from Lamu county noted, "Women leaders face heightened threats, and their families are often targeted as a form of psychological warfare" through various channels including digital harassment.

In conclusion, the gender-disaggregated data reveals that while both genders recognize these barriers, women experience more severe impacts, particularly in training access and workplace harassment. This validates the need for targeted interventions that address both institutional reforms and gender-specific support mechanisms.

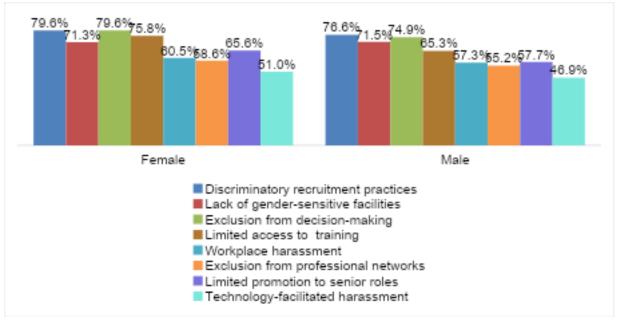


Figure 11: Institutional barriers affecting women's leadership by gender



#Findings 7: Inclusive recruitment and performance-based approaches emerge as primary formal pathways for women's leadership advancement

Figure 12 reveals that inclusive recruitment is recognized as the most effective formal entry point for women's leadership (84.4%) identifying it as a critical pathway. This finding demonstrates widespread recognition that systematic changes to hiring practices represent the most fundamental intervention for increasing women's representation in leadership roles.

A key informant from Kilifi emphasized, "There is the two thirds gender rule that does support the recruitment and engaging of women, but it's the spirit, not the letter of the law. Does it make sense to those in decision-making tables?" Comparably, a CSO representative from Lamu County noted, "Creating opportunity through affirmative action, whereby, if recruitment is for five positions, at least two have to go to females actively encouraging the participation of women".

Likewise, a key informant from Kwale County noted the practical impact on inclusive recruitment, "We have a lot of women working as officers in those institutions, magistrates, probation officers. We have a significant number of them there" demonstrating how inclusive policies translate into representation. However, barriers persist, as noted by a key informant from Lamu County "Inclusive recruitment is restricted because of corruption."

Additionally, figure 12 shows that both performance-based promotions and women-focused training programs are recognized as critical formal entry points, as reported by 81.8% of respondents. This dual recognition highlighted the importance of both merit-based advancement systems and targeted capacity building programs for women's leadership development.

The qualitative data validates these findings, backing the importance of performance-based systems. A key informant from Kilifi county stressed that, "More training is important. I would greatly appreciate a refresher and advanced training, especially capacity building needs to be done". In addition, a key informant from Kilifi County emphasized that, "I have never really attended any training for P/CVE. That is a challenge like lack of training and exposure".

Regarding performance-based promotions, a key informant from Tana River explained, "We are seeing gradual acceptance of women leadership, we have instances where women went to election and were elected, not just nominated."

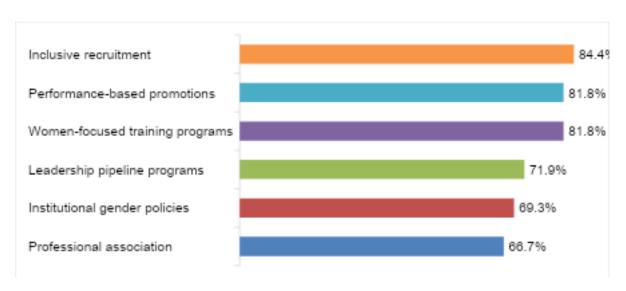




Figure 12: Formal potential entry points for women's leadership

Perceived Entry points for advancing women's leadership by gender

Figure 13 shows recognition of formal entry points across both genders, with women consistently reporting slightly higher recognition rates. The data reveals interesting patterns, with men showing a higher recognition of performance-based promotions (84.7%) compared to women (78.8%) and professional associations (65.8% vs. 67.5%), while women show higher recognition of women-focused training programs (72.5% vs. 67.6%). This suggests that men may place greater emphasis on formal institutional mechanisms, while women recognize the specific value of targeted support programs.

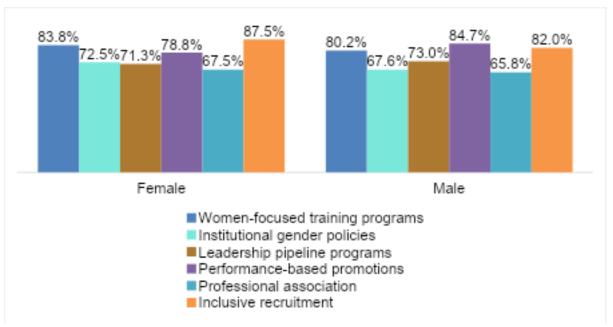


Figure 13: Formal potential entry points for women's leadership by gender

#Finding 8: Community-based platforms and women groups (chamas) emerge as primary informal pathways for women's leadership development

Figure 14 indicates that community dialogues emerge as the predominant informal leadership pathway. The survey data shows 89.6% of respondents recognize community dialogues as critical pathways for women's leadership development. Grassroots dialogue platforms offer unique spaces where women cultivate leadership abilities while gaining community acceptance.

In Kilifi County, a key informant observed, "In those dialogues you can easily identify talent, that is you could easily identify some leadership skills, and they can easily be a source of recruitment". Building on this, a key informant from Lamu County emphasized broader entry strategies, "The key entry point should start when children are in school but for adults, there may be need for dialogues, community dialogues".

Cultural dynamics within these forums reveal complex gender negotiations. A Tana River community leader described, "There are forum guards who say mothers cannot express their opinions but those very old mothers who have lived long in communities, they know how to talk about community things even if they are with men, they give her space". Such testimonies illustrate how experienced women navigate traditional structures to secure speaking opportunities within male-dominated spaces.



Implementation barriers temper these positive findings. A key informant from Kilifi County stated, "When it comes to dialogues, these are people who are already adults, it may not be feasible to keep holding community dialogues because it is a transformation process that needs to take place". Despite challenges, academic literature supports community engagement approaches, showing that informal organic mentoring relationships and collaborative learning through community engagement prove crucial for leadership development.²⁴

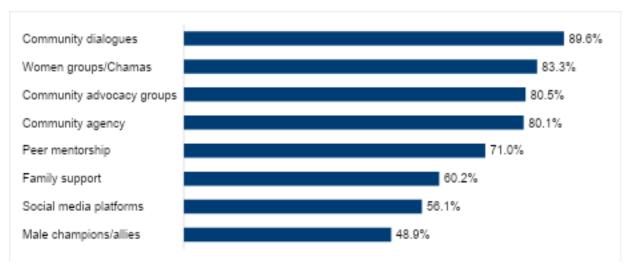


Figure 14: Informal potential entry points for women's leadership

Women's groups (Chamas) provide essential collective organizing platforms

Data in Figure 14 above indicates 83.3% of respondents acknowledge women's groups (Chamas) as vital informal entry points. These collective organizing structures rank second among informal pathways, underscoring their fundamental role in building leadership capacity through mutual support networks.

Various county-level testimonies validate this statistical prominence, a key informant identified "They use Chamas and community-based organizations sometimes they also use theater to create awareness". Expanding on organizational diversity, a Lamu official described "Women's groups (Chamas) where women organize themselves and build collective power as indispensable entry mechanisms."

Regional variations in group structures emerged through fieldwork. A Tana River community leader detailed "There are traditional groups where mothers sit together. We help each other in farming, those are traditional groups that we know, those who have studied, those who haven't studied, young mothers, old mothers". Meanwhile, a key informant from Kilifi County highlighted, "capacity building potential giving them opportunities to make decisions within households and outside, accepting that they can lead and have good advice and leadership skills".

Challenges within group dynamics require attention, as observed by a key informant from Kilifi County, "The reason why there's usually conflict in Chamas is the lack of understanding of leadership and potential, there is usually rivalry". necessitating targeted capacity

²⁴ Ayaya, G. I. (2020). Equipping students for leadership through community engagement. Improving Schools, 24(3), 277–292. https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480220969296.



interventions. Ety (2024) posits that women's groups and peer networks provide crucial social capital and collective action opportunities for leadership advancement.²⁵

Community advocacy groups and agency mechanisms demonstrate strong recognition

Survey results in Figure 14 above show community advocacy groups (80.5%) and community agencies are formal entry points for women to be active in the community (80.1%) ranking third and fourth respectively among informal entry points. These parallel recognition rates reflect understanding that advocacy work and local agency mechanisms create platforms for women to cultivate leadership skills while addressing pressing community concerns.

Field testimonies emphasize advocacy platform importance, a Lamu CSO representative noted that "CSOs like MUHURI provide advocacy, education, and act as a link between community and security actors, media and peace meetings provide platforms for women to participate in dialogue and conflict resolution." Complementing this perspective, a community leader from Kilifi County observed "There are some elderly women who have been participating in society that they can speak even in front of men and they are heard".

Women's agency in addressing local challenges manifests through informal mediation roles, a Kilifi community leader described "Community members often turn to older women or widows who act as mediators in family and village disputes. They are trusted because of their experience and neutrality".

Informal potential entry points for women's leadership by gender

In regard to community dialogues, the data in Figure 15 below indicates that men report slightly higher recognition (91.7%) compared to women (87.1%), indicating broad consensus across gender lines. These grassroots platforms create spaces where women develop political skills while establishing community credibility. A key informant from Kilifi emphasized dialogue effectiveness "In those dialogues you can easily identify talent you could easily identify some leadership skills and they can easily be a source of recruitment". Cultural dynamics emerge in these forums, as a Tana River key informant explained "There are gate keepers who claim that mothers cannot express their opinions, but some of these older women, who have lived in the community for a long time, know how to speak on community matters even in the presence of men, and are given space to do so."

Women favor group-based organizing more than men

In Figure 15 below, women's groups(chamas) secure 83.3% overall recognition, with women reporting significantly higher appreciation (81.2%) than men (66.2%). A male FGD participant from Kwale County explained that, "It's not that men are against Chamas. It's just that we don't have the same structures. Maybe we feel left out, or unsure how to engage." Women demonstrate stronger preference for collective organizing structures that provide mutual support and shared decision-making.

A key informant from Kilifi described group utilization, "They use Chamas and community-based organizations sometimes they also use theater to create awareness". Organizational diversity spans educational backgrounds, as a Tana River respondent noted "There are traditional groups where mothers sit together, we help each other in farming, those who have studied, those who haven't studied, young mothers, old mothers".

Community advocacy groups achieve 80.5% recognition with minimal gender variation, with women at 80.0% and men at 81.2%. Both genders equally acknowledge advocacy platforms'

²⁵ Ety, J. F. (2024). Significance of Social Capital as a Resource for Women's Empowerment. Society & Sustainability, 6(1), 47–58. https://doi.org/10.38157/ss.v6i1.643



importance. A Lamu official highlighted advocacy roles "CSOs like MUHURI provide advocacy, education, and act as a link between community and security actors".

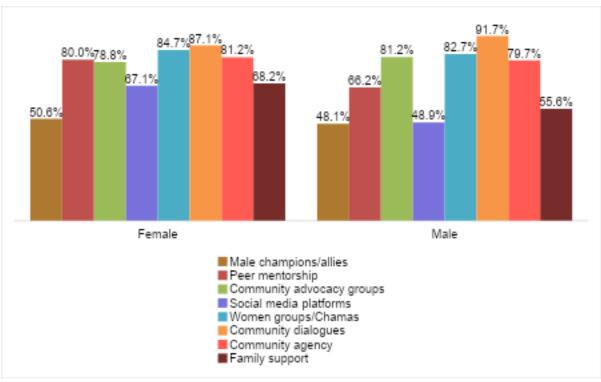


Figure 15: Informal potential entry points for women's leadership by gender



Objective 3: Collect baseline values of the project's indicators and the indicators of Peace Impact Framework aligned measures within the project's target populations

#Finding 9: Project baseline indicators and PIF Indicators

The Table 3 below illustrates the PIF indicators together with their baseline values:

Table 3: Baseline indicators and PIF with their baseline values

Table 3: Baseline indicators and PIF with their baseline values				
Indicator	Baseline Value	Project Target	Comments on Baseline Value	PIF Theme Measured
	comprehensive understanding of the current context, capacity gaps, and his Leadership in P/CVE Among State Security and Justice Institutions acro			entation of the
	values of the project's indicators and the indicators of Peace Impact Frame			oulations
3.1 The baseline values of the	e project indicators (Baseline values will be disaggregated by sex, age, loc	cation, and ca	ategory of respondent)	
3.1.1 % of women in security and justice roles who believe they can make a positive difference in P/CVE within security and justice institutions PIF)	Age(female) average-91% Adults-89%		An outstanding 96% of women in Kilifi and justice sectors (94%) believe they can make a positive difference in P/CVE efforts. However, Kwale recorded the lower (84.0%) Only 60% of the respondents in the security sector believe that they can make a positive difference in P/CVE.	Agency



Agency



3.1.4 % of targeted	Average-85%	It's very interesting to see Lamu	Legitimacy
community members who	Male-83%	(92%) as having some of the highest	Legitimacy
express trust in women	Female-87%	levels of trust in women leadership in	
leadership in security and	Terriale-07 /0	security and justice institutions AND	
	Ago cotogony 959/	who believe women-led P/CVE	
justice institutions	Age category -85% Adults-85%	initiatives are effective in addressing	
	Youth -85%	· ·	
	TOURT -05%	VE issues, given Lamu is most	
	Location Average OFO/	susceptible to attacks and deal with a lot of cross border VE issues.	
	Location-Average-85%		
	Kilifi- 89%	At 74%, Kwale reported the lowest	
	Kwale-74%	level of trust in women's leadership	
	Lamu-92%	within security and justice institutions	
	T. River-84%	compared to the other counties.	
	0.1		
	Category-Average 90%		
	Justice-96%		
	Security-93%		
	CSO-90%		
	Community-77%		
	Other Govt-92%		
3.1.5 % of targeted	Average-76%	91% of community members in Lamu	Legitimacy
community members who	Male-74%	believe women-led P/CVE initiatives	
believe women-led P/CVE	Female-78%	are effective in addressing violent	
initiatives are effective in		extremism.	
addressing VE issues	Age category -76%	Conversely, both Kilifi (68%) and	
	Adults-76%	Kwale (60%) reported the lower	
	Youth -76%	levels of belief in the effectiveness of	
		women-led P/CVE initiatives, falling	
		below the regional average of 76%.	
	Location-Average-76%		
	Kilifi- 68%		
	Kwale-60%		
	Lamu-91%		
	T. River-85%		
	Catagory Average 770/		
	Category-Average-77%		
	Justice-71%		
	Security-84%		
	CSO-81%		



	Community-71%		
	Other Govt-77%		
3.1.6 % of trained women	Female 27%	Only 27% of trained women feel	Agency
who report feeling		confident applying leadership skills,	- ,
confident in applying	Age category by female-27%	with Kwale standing out with 52%,	
leadership skills in P/CVE	Adults-28%	double the average.	
efforts	Youth -26%	Ŭ	
	County by Female-Average-29%		
	Kilifi- 17%		
	Kwale-52%		
	Lamu-20%		
	T. River-26%		
	Category(female)-Average 27%		
	Justice-12%		
	Security-36%		
	CSO-30%		
	Community-26%		
	Other Govt-31%		
3.1.7 % of targeted male	Male-75%	Other Government male leaders	
leaders who report		such as ODPP, Gender & probation	
applying gender sensitive	Age category(male) -75%	far outperform all sectors (94%	
and human rights	Adults-75%	adoption), while community leaders	
centered approaches in	Youth -74%	trail at just 68%, revealing a 26-point	
their work		institutional gap in applying	
their work	Location by Male-Average-76%	gender-sensitive approaches.	
	Kilifi- 80%	gender sensitive approaches.	
	Kwale-73%		
	Lamu-72%		
	T. River-77%		
	1. Tavor TT /0		
	Category by Male -Average 81%		
	Justice-75%		
	Security-80%		
	CSO-86%		
	Community-68%		
	Other Govt-94%		
	Other Govt-94%		



3.1.8 % of targeted women in security and	Female 54%	While Lamu shows promising female leadership access in P/CVE (78%),	
justice who report	Age category by women-54%	Kwale reports a shocking 12%	
increased access to	Adults-55%	Times repeate a esseeming 1276	
opportunities to lead	Youth -52%		
P/CVE efforts			
	Location-Average-50%		
	Kilifi- 68%		
	Kwale-12%		
	Lamu-78% T. River-42%		
	1. River-42%		
	Category-Average 60%		
	Justice-69%		
	Security-60%		
	CSO-60%		
	Community-44%		
	Other Govt-67%		
3.1.9 % of targeted	Female 36%	Kwale's women report twice the	Agency
women who report		national average decision-making	
increased ability to	Age category by women-37%	influence (52%) compared to Lamu	
influence/contribute to key decisions in P/CVE efforts	Adults-41% Youth -32%	(24%), inversely mirroring their P/CVE leadership access	
decisions in P/CVE elloris	Youth -32%	P/CVE leadership access (Kwale-12% vs Lamu-78%	
	Location-Average-34%	(Kwale-12% vs Lalliu-76%	
	Kilifi- 26%		
	Kwale-52%		
	Lamu-24%		
	T. River-50%		
	Category-Average-38%		
	Justice-19%		
	Security-40%		
	CSO-53%		
	Community-33% Other Govt-44%		
3.1.10 % of women in	Female-57%	A staggering 76% of women in Kilifi's	Polarization
security and justice roles	Terriale-577/6	security/justice sectors report being	FUIdHZaliUH
	Age category by women-57%	dehumanized due to gender – nearly	
Will believe they are	Tigo catagory by Wortion of 70	achamamized due to gender – nearly	



perceived as less than human in their society because of their group membership (gender, PIF)	Adults-51% Youth -63% Location-Average-55% Kilifi- 76% Kwale-54% Lamu-51% T. River-27%		triple the rate in Tana River (27%) and higher than all professional categories	
	Category-Average-61% Justice-69% Security-59% CSO-58% Community-58% Other Govt-60%			
3.1.11 % of targeted women in security and justice roles who take action to influence P/CVE in their communities (PIF)	Female-51% Age(women)-54% Adults-54% Youth -54% Location-Average 51% Kilifi-53% Kwale-52% Lamu-44% T. River-55% Category-Average-53% Justice-60% Security-50% CSO-60% Community-39% Other Govt-56%		While 60% of women in justice roles and CSOs actively influence P/CVE, only 39% in community roles do so. Interestingly, Lamu recorded the lowest at 44% compared to average of 51%.	Agency
	of the following Peace Impact Framework (PIF) indicators?	-		
3.2.1 % of the population that feels safe walking alone around the area where they live	Average-80% Male-73% Female-86%		Contrary to common patterns, women (86%) reported feeling safer walking alone than men (73%). Tana River and Kwale showed the highest	Violence/ Safety

	Age category -80% Adults-81% Youth -79%	overall sense of safety at 86% and 83% respectively, while Lamu recorded the lowest at 74%.	
	Location-Average-80% Kilifi- 77% Kwale-83% Lamu-74% T. River-86%		
	Category-Average 85% Justice-96% Security-93% CSO-75% Community-77%		
3.2.2 % of the population, disaggregated by sex, who believe they can make a positive difference in the area where they live	Other Govt-85% Average-87% Male-87% Female-88% Age category -88% Adults-86% Youth -89%	87% believe they can make a positive difference—high across all groups	Agency
	Location-Average-88% Kilifi- 94% Kwale-86% Lamu-85% T. River-85%		
	Category-Average 92% Justice-100% Security-93% CSO-89% Community-83% Other Govt-92%		
3.2.3 % of the population that takes action to	Average-61% Male- 62%		Agency



influence the things they	Female-60%		
care about			
	Age category average-61%		
	Adults-66%		
	Youth -56%		
	Location-Average-62%		
	Kilifi- 51%		
	Kwale-64%		
	Lamu-63%		
	T. River-69%		
	lab Catagory average COM		
	Job Category average-63% Justice-64%		
	Security-54%		
	CSO-60%		
	Community-64%		
	Other Govt- 73%		
3.2.4 % of people who	Gender Average-51%	71% of people in Tana River feel	Polarization
believe they are perceived	Male-51%	dehumanized due to their group	1 Glarization
as less than human in their	Female-51%	identity, highlighting deep social	
society because of their	Torrido o 170	exclusion and perceived	
group membership	Age category -51%	marginalization.	
group memberemp	Adults-48%	marginanzation.	
	Youth -53%		
	Location-Average-51%		
	Kilifi- 47%		
	Kwale-30%		
	Lamu-54%		
	T. River-71%		
	Category-Average 48%		
	Justice-32%		
	Security-54%		
	CSO-48%		
	Community-55%		
	Other Govt-50%		



3.2.5 % of the population that is willing to use violence to advance their group interests	Average-24% Male-26% Female-23% Age category -24% Adults-21% Youth -27% Location-Average-24% Kilifi- 44% Kwale-3% Lamu-42% T. River-7% Category-Average 21% Justice-18% Security-24% CSO-31% Community-24% Other Govt-8%	24% are willing to use violence for group interests, with very high in Kilifi (44%) and Lamu (42%), suggesting risk hotspots	Polarization
3.2.6 % of the population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive (security and Justice)	Average-56% Male- 57% Female-55% Age category average-56% Adults-55% Youth -56% Location-Average-56% Kilifi- 51% Kwale-34% Lamu-61% T. River-78% Category average-54% Justice-39% Security-58% CSO-55% Community-59%	Only 56% believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, with Kwale being extremely low (34%), but high in Tana River (78%)	Legitimacy



	Other Govt-58%		
3.2.7 Value of time, on	Average-93 hrs	Extremely variable—Kilifi reports high	Investment
average, invested in	Male-90 hrs	civic time (200 hrs) while Kwale is	
identified priorities to	Female-95 hrs	low (32 hrs). Could reflect structural	
support peace in the		or motivational barriers	
community	Age average-92 hrs		
	Adults-98 hrs		
	Youth - 86 hrs		
	Location Average O4 hrs		
	Location-Average-94 hrs		
	Kilifi- 200 hrs		
	Kwale-32 hrs		
	Lamu-97 hrs		
	T. River-45 hrs		
	Average- 88 hrs		
	Justice- 54 hrs		
	Security-106 hrs		
	CSO-138 hrs		
	Community-77 hrs		
	Other Govt- 63 hrs		



#Finding 10: Locally developed Indicators through the Grounded Accountability Model Research

In regards to the GAM model, the following Table 4 presents the outcome priorities per county based on the respondents' input, as follows.

Table 4: Outcome priorities per county

Iable 4: Outcome priorities per county				
County	Outcome Priorities	Verbatim Quotes		
Lamu	Increased women's representation in conflict resolution spaces	"When you look at conflict resolution mechanisms you will hardly find a woman there" – A key informant, Tana River		
	Increased belief in women leadership by community members	"They believe that a woman cannot be entrusted with leadership." - A key informant, Lamu		
	Enhanced trust in women-led interventions	"They come to us when there is a problem because they trust we listen." – A female FGD participant, Lamu		
	Religious leaders expressing support for women in leadership roles	"Some religious leaders now say women can lead if they have integrity." - FGD participant, Lamu		
	Policy reform advocacy	"The laws are there, but we must push for them to work." - KII Participant, Lamu		
	Economic support as empowerment	"When women have businesses, they influence decisions." - FGD participant, Lamu		
Tana River	Need for gender inclusivity in community dialogues	"We need to ensure women are included at every table, not just as observers." - KII Participant, Tana River		
	Improved awareness on women's rights	"Our people need to understand that the constitution gives women equal rights." - KII Participant, Tana River		
	Women's groups (chamas) fostering unity	"Our Chama helps us talk about peace and resolve family issues too." -Female FGD participant, Tana River		
	Increased reporting of gender-based violence	"Women now report GBV cases directly, not just to family." - KII Participant, Tana River		
	Enhanced interagency coordination and information sharing	"Police, chiefs, elders, they all must work together." – Male FGD participant, Tana River		
	Community-led monitoring of peace efforts	"We formed a committee to watch out for new tensions." – Female FGD participant, Tana River		
Kilifi	Increased support for women in local administration roles	"I was the only woman assistant chief. Many thought I couldn't manage." – Female FGD participant, Kilifi		
	Empowerment through mentorship and leadership programs	"Workshops and seminars have helped women know their rights." – Male FGD participant, Kilifi		
	Youth sensitization and inclusion	"We involve youth because they are most vulnerable to recruitment." - KII Participant, Kilifi		
	Promotion of inclusive security policy	"Policies must reflect our needs, not just men's." – Female FGD participant, Kilifi		
	Media campaigns on women's role in peace	"We use the radio to talk about women's rights every week." – Male FGD participant, Kilifi		
Kwale	Reduction of traditional gender role biases	"Traditionally they say a woman's place is in the home. This must change." – Male FGD participant, Kwale		
	Increased female participation in P/CVE trainings	"When trained, we become confident to speak and act." – Female FGD participant, Kwale		
	Tackling economic dependency through women's economic groups	"When women earn their own money, they have a voice at home." – KII participant, Kwale		
	Improved male ally ship	"Some men support us now. They attend our meetings too." -Female FGD participant, Kwale		
	Mentorship for young women leaders	"Young girls should see us and say, as I want to be like her- Female FGD participant, Kwale		
	Addressing religious misconceptions	"Religion is misused. Islam does prohibit women from leadership." - KII Participant, Kwale		



Women in security and justice roles across Kenya's coastal region articulate peace outcomes that transcend traditional security paradigms, emphasizing interconnected approaches spanning immediate safety concerns and long-term community resilience, through community-centered and coordinated peace strategies. Their perspectives, grounded in professional experience and community understanding, reveal sophisticated thinking about sustainable peace that addresses root causes while managing immediate threats.

Enhanced inter-agency coordination emerges as a fundamental peace outcome women prioritize. Similarly, a male FGD participants in Kwale county, consistently identify "Information sharing between the relevant agencies as urgently needed." This emphasis reflects that both women and men recognize that fragmented responses undermine community safety. A Key informant from Lamu emphasized how "Weak coordination among partners and stakeholders represents a critical project implementation risk that mirrors broader systemic challenges." Women's professional experiences reveal how institutional silos prevent effective conflict prevention and response, making coordination essential for sustainable peace.

Community-based conflict resolution represents another cornerstone of women's peace vision. A male FGD from Lamu county explained, "When conflicts arise, such as those involving pastoralist communities, women, especially mothers, tend to relate deeply to the consequences. Their experiences with caregiving, like tending to animals or managing household needs, make them more sensitive to the impact of such issues. This emotional connection often leads them to intervene." This is because they experience conflict consequences directly through family disruption and economic hardship.

Economic empowerment emerges as both a peace outcome and prerequisite. A Female FGD female participant in Tana River consistently emphasized "Train them on empowerment as essential for community stability." Their analysis connects economic vulnerability to security threats, particularly youth radicalization. A security officer from Kilifi County explained how "The youths are now leaving extremist activities when provided alternative economic pathways." This perspective reflects women's understanding that sustainable peace requires addressing structural inequalities that create vulnerability to recruitment and exploitation.

Gang elimination and enhanced security presence represent immediate safety priorities women identify. Additionally, women's contributions to security are often rooted in community engagement and prevention, contrasting with enforcement-heavy models. Female participants in Kwale County emphasized that "Women's approach to security enhancement differs from purely enforcement-based models." A male FGD participant from Tana River emphasized on community cooperation, "Security can be achieved if there is good cooperation between the citizens and soldiers while addressing underlying factors like tribalism and family protection of criminal children".

Youth-focused education and awareness programs feature prominently in women's peace strategies. The analysis recognizes generational dimensions of conflict transformation. An FGD male participant from Tana River noted that, "The mother is a child's first teacher, because no one understands or nurtures them from the very beginning like the one who gave them life. That's why prevention starts at home, within the family."

Cultural sensitivity in peace programming represents a sophisticated element of respondents' insights. They understand that effective interventions must navigate traditional structures while promoting change. A male FGD participant in Lamu described that "Even those who are angry are calmed down because of the mother's compassion demonstrating how traditional gender roles can be leveraged for peace without reinforcing harmful restrictions." Women advocates emphasize building on existing respect for maternal authority while expanding women's public roles.

Women's peace vision demonstrates remarkable coherence between immediate security needs and long-term transformation strategies. They articulate outcomes that address symptoms while targeting root causes, recognizing that "Security must be developed. No development is



happening" without addressing underlying inequalities", Male FGD participant from Tana River. Their emphasis on coordination, community engagement, economic empowerment, and cultural sensitivity reflects sophisticated understanding of peace as a multidimensional process requiring sustained, collaborative effort across multiple sectors and levels of society.

Objective 4: Assess potential risks associated with the project and draw recommendations for programming to ensure "Do No Harm", safeguarding, and conflict sensitivity are embedded in the project

#Finding 11: Political interference, community resistance, and resources disruption are the most prominent operational risks

In Figure 16, a significant portion, accounting for 71.8% of the respondents, reported that political interference was the highest operational risk, followed by community resistance (71.0%) and resources or funding disruptions (70.0%), reflecting the complex socio-political dynamics in coastal Kenya that affects operations.

Community resistance is the second operational risk that is likely to occur during implementation of P/CVE efforts, which demonstrates entrenched cultural and social barriers that challenge women's leadership advancement in P/CVE contexts. This resistance stems from deeply rooted traditional gender expectations and religious interpretations that view women's leadership roles as culturally inappropriate. This is backed by qualitative findings where a CSO representative from Kilifi alluded to "One of the biggest risks is the lack of culture shift and therefore making it just a checkbox exercise".

The above findings are in line with a study by Phipps and Prieto (2020), which found that community resistance is one of the most significant operational risks that impacts the women from advancing in their leaderships. Resistance can manifest itself in various forms, including lack of trust or mistrust which can lead to resistance from the community. A security officer from Lamu pointed out that "There's a lot of mistrust between government agencies and the community. There is also mistrust within the community themselves, people who will fear getting involved in PCVE projects for fear of repercussions," highlighting the dangerous environment women leaders navigate when engaging in P/CVE work.

The issue of resource and funding disruptions will affect the implementation of the planned activities. Consequently, this will impede the program's sustainability and women's consistent participation in leadership development activities (Jose et al., 2023).²⁷A key informant from Kilifi highlighted that "Bureaucratic hierarchy will be a very major challenge, while the second challenge will be the resources. In my organization, resource allocation is going to be very troublesome because my organization does not support projects unless the organization specifically states that this organization will fund and facilitate". These resource limitations disproportionately affect women who often lack independent financial means to participate in training or leadership activities, creating additional barriers to their advancement in security and justice institutions.

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²⁶ Phipps, S. T. A., & Prieto, L. C. (2020). Leaning in: A Historical Perspective on Influencing Women's Leadership. Journal of Business Ethics, 173(2), 245–259. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04566-6. sssss

²⁷ Marquez-Tejon, J., Jimenez-Partearroyo, M., & Benito-Osorio, D. (2023). Integrated security management model: a proposal applied to organisational resilience. Security Journal, 37(2), 375–398. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41284-023-00381-6.



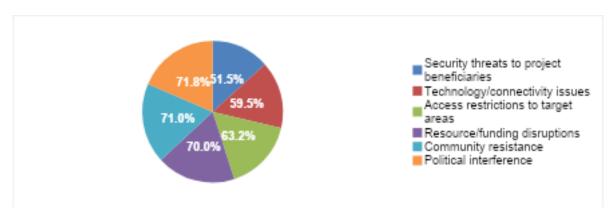


Figure 16:Potential operational risks in project implementation

#Finding 12: Cultural bias, inadequate coordination between partners and lack of gender-sensitive policies topped as the institutional risks

Figure 17 shows a significant portion (79.8%) indicates that cultural bias is the most critical institutional risk (problems or challenges within organizations or systems), reflecting deeply entrenched gender norms that systematically limit women's participation in security and justice sectors. This finding demonstrates how traditional cultural expectations create institutional barriers that prevent women from accessing leadership opportunities in P/CVE contexts. This institutional cultural bias manifests in formal meeting structures and decision-making processes where women's voices are systematically marginalized. A county government officer from Tana River stated "Women will sit behind and be silent. You'll be asking for their views and opinions. They will not answer. Their men are the ones who will be answering though, if you want to get their opinions, you probably have a group focused discussion. You put them separate."

Inadequate coordination between implementing partners (75.3%) emerges as the second-highest risk, indicating fundamental challenges in multi-stakeholder collaboration that are essential for effective P/CVE programming. This coordination deficit undermines the synergistic effects needed for sustainable women's leadership development. A CSO representative reported "In Kenya, the majority of organizations, sadly, work in silos. It takes a lot of time to navigate bureaucracy and access what you need. By the time you get it, the project has already progressed, exposing us to the risk of delays and extending timelines beyond what was initially anticipated."

Lack of gender-sensitive policies (70.3%) ranks third among institutional risks, highlighting critical gaps in policy frameworks that fail to address women's specific needs, barriers, and safety concerns in P/CVE roles.

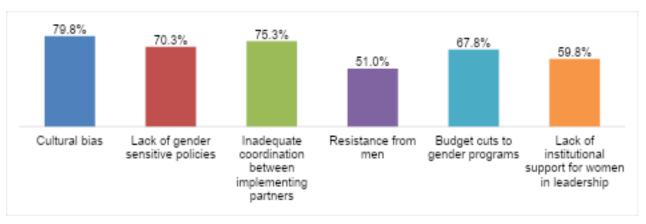


Figure 17:Potential institutional risks in project implementation



#Finding 13: Staff training on conflict sensitivity and rapid response to emerging tensions and grievances topped as the essential elements in ensuring conflict sensitivity

Figure 18 shows an overwhelming majority (90.3%) of the respondents reported that staff training on conflict sensitivity is the most essential conflict-sensitive practices. Additionally, responding to emerging tensions (87.8%) is another essential element, highlighting the need for preparedness and adaptability. Programs should invest in localized risk assessments, foster inclusive communication channels, and train partners in gender-sensitive conflict mitigation.

The above findings are supported by Forbat et al., (2016), which found that training staff is crucial to ensure that the staff are well equipped to identify, understand, and manage conflicts effectively. In addition, responding to the emerging tensions is crucial and the project should establish ways to identify and address grievances in a timely and proper way.²⁸

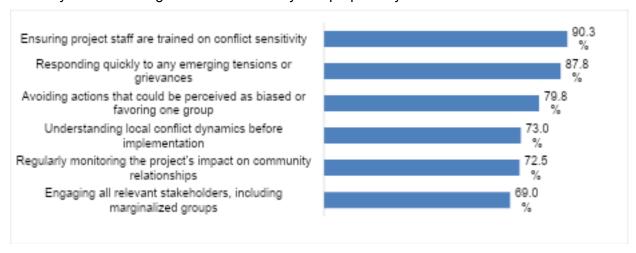


Figure 18: Essential elements for ensuring the project is conflict-sensitive

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that women face deeply rooted gender-specific challenges within communities, and especially in security and justice institutions. Conflict dynamics, ranging from tribal violence and land disputes to drug abuse and violent extremism. This disproportionately affects women, often leaving them displaced, overburdened, and vulnerable.

The baseline study reveals a complex but promising landscape for advancing women's leadership in P/CVE across Kenya's coastal counties. While women continue to face entrenched barriers, ranging from cultural expectations and religious constraints to institutional biases within justice and security sectors, there is strong evidence of community support, agency, and recognition of women's roles in peacebuilding. At the same time, a growing recognition of meaningful male engagement, importance of education, economic empowerment, and visible female role models is emerging as a powerful force in shifting attitudes and advancing women's leadership in P/CVE efforts.

The data shows that women perceive themselves as capable of influencing change, with 88% expressing confidence in their impact within communities. High levels of trust in women-led initiatives, particularly in Lamu and Tana River, further reinforce the potential for scaling inclusive

²⁸ Forbat, L., Simons, J., Sayer, C., Davies, M., & Barclay, S. (2016). Training paediatric healthcare staff in recognising, understanding and managing conflict with patients and families: findings from a survey on immediate and 6-month impact. Archives of Disease in Childhood, 102(3), 250–254. https://doi.org/10.1136/archdischild-2016-310737.



interventions. Notably, 83.3% recognition of women's groups (Chamas) signals their critical role as organizing platforms for community-level resilience.

Opportunities also lie in the strong sense of agency among youth and women, the elevated trust in informal justice and security structures, and the willingness of some County-level institutions to adapt. Despite lower scores in counties like Kwale and among security actors, these disparities present targeted entry points for reform, capacity building, and locally driven gender transformation.

Overall, while challenges remain, the data highlights clear opportunities for Search and its partners to work with local institutions, community leaders, and civil society actors to unlock and support women's leadership as a pillar of sustainable peace and security in the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study it is recommended that;

-Design and fund county-level strategies that support women's leadership in P/CVE, including safe spaces for women-led organizations, gender-responsive infrastructure in institutions, and awareness campaigns to challenge exclusionary norms.
-Should establish institutionalized partnerships with Search and partners through formal memorandums of understanding and create county-level women's P/CVE coordination committees to ensure sustainability beyond project timelines.
-Develop gender-responsive land and water management policies, given that most conflicts are resource-based and disproportionately affect women.
-Due to a lot of dynamics and variations across the counties in the findings, County government and Search should adapt and tailor approaches in each County given the sensitivities, cultural dynamics and barriers or opportunities.
-Integrate gender-sensitive and P/CVE leadership modules into all programming and capacity-building efforts, ensuring both institutional and community actors are trained on inclusive, rights-based approaches to peace and security.
-Implement differentiated approaches by County, given significant variations for women's P/CVE leadership access and conflict dynamics, develop county-specific strategies rather than uniform programming.
-Develop comprehensive safeguarding protocols including anonymous reporting mechanisms, establish community accountability structures with women's representation.
-Develop intensive mentorship and peer support networks to address the confidence gap in women.
-Promote inclusive judicial practices by implementing mentorship programs, strengthening gender desks, and enhancing accountability systems to address workplace discrimination and improve women's access to leadership and influence.



Security institutions	-Collaborate with Search to enable them to adopt more gender-responsive approaches and break down socio-cultural barriers that remain a challenge. -Institutionalize reforms that increase women's participation in leadership, deploy gender focal points in command structures, and ensure recruitment and training policies promote equal opportunity and responsiveness to women's safety concerns.
CSOs and NGOs	-Mobilize and strengthen women's groups (Chamas) as entry points for P/CVE engagement, while facilitating intergenerational mentorship and community dialogues that amplify women's voices in peacebuilding and decision-making processesShould design culturally sensitive community dialogue programs that engage men as champions of women and leadership, establish platforms for showcasing successful women leaders as role models, create multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms to prevent working in silos, and develop economic empowerment programs linked to leadership development.
Religious and Community leaders	-Support and legitimize women's leadership within local peace and conflict resolution mechanisms by ensuring their representation in community forums, mediation processes, and customary leadership platforms, especially where informal authority shapes local security responses.



ANNEXTURE

ANNEX 1: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS-UPON REQUEST

ANNEX 2: CODING FRAMEWORK-UPON REQUEST

ANNEX 3: BASELINE TERMS OF REFERENCE

ANNEX 4: EVALUATOR'S BIOGRAPHIES-UPON REQUEST