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JAMII BILA BALAA
BASELINE REPORT

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY INFLUENCERS TO PREVENT RECRUITMENT INTO VIOLENT EXTREMISM GROUPS IN GARISSA AND TANA RIVER COUNTIES, KENYA

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Executive Summary

Search for Common Ground (Search), in partnership with Ijara Women for Peace (IJW) and Tana River Peace Reconciliation and Development (TRPRD), would like to implement a 24-month program, Jamii Bila Balaa (JBB – a community free of conflicts), with the goal to strengthen the role of families and community influencers to prevent recruitment into VE groups in at-risk communities of Garissa and Tana River Counties. The project is made possible with generous support from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism.

In response to the project needs, Search conducted a baseline assessment of the existing violent extremism responses and prevention strategies: applied by family and community influencers in Garissa and Tana River Counties. The study analyzes the context, cultural norms and perceptions, establishes baseline values, tests the project theory of change, and assesses the potential risk while providing “do no harm” recommendations.

In order to gather the necessary information to answer these questions, a mixed methods approach based on data triangulation was used. The research process included a desk analysis, youth survey, key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs). In total, 112 youth (ages 18-35 years old) were surveyed, 112 key informants were interviewed, and 140 stakeholders participated in focus group discussions. The study findings indicate that the project is relevant to Garissa and Tana River Counties and that it will likely have buy-in from community members during implementation.

Key Findings

Context Assessment

- While security has improved in some areas of Garissa and Tana River Counties, the two counties are still insecure. Key areas of instability include the Boni Forest and community boundaries.
- Youth continue to be vulnerable to VE recruitment and few youth have knowledge of early warning signs of VE recruitment. Families and community members do have strategies to attempt to TVE, but the implementation is often limited due to fear of being targeted by VEOs.
- Mothers are the individuals identified by youth as giving positive nonviolent solutions to their problems. Mothers are also one of the top individuals, second to fathers, youth turn to for advice in dealing with their frustrations.

1 While preventing violent extremism” and “countering violent extremism” are mentioned here, Search for Common Ground prefers to use “Transforming Violent Extremism (TVE)” for our work in this area. This is explained in detail in “Transforming Violent Extremism: A Peacebuilder’s Guide”: “Transforming violent extremism recognizes that while violent extremism exists, the reasons and motivators leading up to an individual being drawn to violent extremist movements can be transformed into a different type of agency or engagement. This is distinct from countering violent extremism, which is reactive to extremist violence rather than aimed at altering the dynamics that motivate it. For more information see https://www.sfcg.org/trnasforming-violent-extremism-peacebuilders-guilde/.
• **Phones and social media (Facebook and WhatsApp)** are the major forms of communication used in VE recruitment. In addition, herders were identified as key individuals who transmit information to VE groups and could be and channel through which to support counter-extremist narratives.

• **Clan structures are the dominant social structure in both target areas.** Ethnic and religious social structures also exist, but clan structures are the most important. With regard to the family influence and power structure, authority flows from the father, mother and then the elder brother. Intergenerational relations were found to be positive and an underutilized TVE opportunity.

• **Religious institutions, camp security teams and peace committees were seen by youth as effective in their efforts to address VE respectively.** However, many respondents were not aware of any legal structures available that responds or could respond to VE issues and had little knowledge on the psychosocial support structures available to help VE defectors.

**Cultural Norms and Perceptions**

• **Violent extremism is condemned by almost all study participants.** In addition, stakeholders across the community see violent extremism as undermining development.

• **Cultural barriers undermine women’s potential to be peacemakers and increase their vulnerability to VE recruitment.** Most respondents believed that while women have strong relationships and extended periods of interaction with youth, women have limited exposure or formal education which often prevents them from being able to address VE. In addition, respondents said that cultural expectations of women both limit their ability to be peacemakers as well as increase their vulnerability to being recruited to VEOs.

• **Positive influencers are working to address violent extremism.** Despite the culture of fear to support TVE efforts, respondents said that there were positive influencers in the community who were actively working to respond to TVE. These efforts included providing basic needs, protecting the community, mediating violent conflicts, and working to prevent youth from being recruited.

• **Politicians and religious leaders were most often identified as the top negative influencers.** Politicians were seen to instigate violence along clan lines and encouraging stereotyping certain clans as VE perpetrators or protectors of violent extremists. Additional community and familial fault lines include socio-economic class, sibling rivalry, and rumored connections to violent extremists.

**Baseline Values and Theory of Change**

• **Project theory of change and proposed activities had strong relevance to the context and received strong support from community members.** Respondents were particularly enthusiastic about activities aimed at supporting the community and family.

• **Respondents are willing to publicly support TVE efforts.** The study also found that while there was fear to participate in TVE efforts, over 81 percent of adult male respondents, 71 percent of male youth respondents, 66 percent of female adult
respondents, and 64 percent of female youth respondents said that they would be likely to take part in addressing VE issues in public.

Risk Assessment and Do No Harm

- An adaptive robust risk management plan is needed to ensure “Do No Harm.” The study found that the proposed project could create risk for project stakeholders. Key risks include targeting, killing, or isolation of community members, Search and partner staff, and donor staff. A robust and adaptive risk mitigation plan is needed to ensure do no harm to potential project participants. As previously stated, while project stakeholders are worked about potential risk, a majority of those surveyed said they would publicly support TVE efforts.

1. Introduction

The Boni Enclave in Northern and Coastal Kenya, once famous for its biodiversity, is now infamous for being a frontline in the fight against the violent extremist group Al Shabaab. Since 2012, Al Shabaab has perpetrated attacks across the region and promoted an extremist ideology of violence. Despite efforts by the Kenyan government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), local civil society organizations (CSOs), and the international community, Al Shabaab continues to succeed in recruiting and radicalizing individuals. Despite the incredibly difficult circumstances, communities continue to resist Al Shabaab and prevent further recruitment.

Historically, Kenya has experienced intense violence ranging from political violence (NCIC 2018), ethnic and inter-clan violence (Kimenyi and Ndungu 2005), gender-based violence, and criminal violence (NCIC 2018; Cheserek et al. 2012). These historical conflicts now serve as a underpin and are eclipsed by the acts of violent extremism perpetrated by Al Shabaab. Garissa and Tana River Counties, two counties in the Boni Enclave, have been at the forefront of this fight.

Similar to much of the country, Garissa and Tana River Counties have experienced recurrent inter-ethnic and clan conflicts, often over the control of resources. Geographically, Garissa and Tana River Counties are counties with vast territory and porous borders with Somalia. In addition, the region continues to suffer from insecurity due to Al Shabaab attacks as well as ethnic and clan-based conflict, making it easier for Al Shabaab to operate. A majority of the population in the two counties is between the ages of 15-35 years old, and rates of poverty and unemployment are extremely high (Government of Kenya 2018; Government of Kenya 2018b). For example, in Tana River County, 76.9 percent of individuals are living in poverty (Government of Kenya 2013). While this is not a source of conflict, research has shown that countries with
large unemployed youth populations have a higher risk of violent conflict (Population Reference Bureau 2009). All of these factors intersect, overlap, and reinforce each other creating vulnerability to violent extremism.

Research has shown that the root causes of violent extremism in the region are complex, multifaceted, and intertwined (UNDP 2016). Al Shabaab has been dynamic in recruitment and mobilization, targeting both young men and women and capitalizing on their grievances and lack of economic opportunity (Botha and Abdile 2016). Initially, men were recruited as fighters while women were recruited to become “Al Shabaab brides” (Sunguta 2019). However, roles are now shifting. There is growing evidence that women are increasingly targeted for recruitment and used to carry out attacks. This was evident in the January 2019 Dusit 2 (D2) Hotel attack in Nairobi in which there were two female fighters (Some 2019). While women and young people are targeted for recruitment, there is a lack of understanding of how women and youth may resist recruitment as well as the roles that women and youth hold in transforming violent extremism.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Globally, there is a growing interest and attention on the place of youth and women in radicalization and VE, especially in areas like Coastal and North Eastern Kenya where violent extremism continues. Studies have extensively analyzed push and pull factors leading to violent extremism, but there is a limited understanding of the role that youth and women play in transforming violent extremism (Bizina and Gray 2014; Kessel, Durner, and Schwartz 2016; and Njui 2018). Stereotypes of women as simply victims and in need of protection serve to justify women’s exclusion from negotiations and roles of power (Mwangi, 2015). According to the United Nations Development Program (2016), most TVE programming focuses on how to engage men, thereby continuing to marginalize youth and women from TVE processes. This not only contributes to their vulnerability, but more importantly, excluding youth and women misses a critical opportunity to engage the capable actors that have unique abilities to transform violent extremism.

Families and youth peers of individuals at risk of radicalization play a crucial role in shaping attitudes and beliefs during adolescence, yet how can these relationships respond to violent extremism? Are families and peers able to recognize risks of VE recruitment and if so, do they have the capacity to respond? This is the gap in research that this study seeks to fill.

1.2 Objectives of the Baseline

Search for Common Ground (Search), in partnership with Ijara Women for Peace (IJW) and Tana River Peace Reconciliation and Development (TRPRD), will implement a 24-month program with the goal to strengthen the role of families and community influencers to prevent recruitment into VE groups in at-risk communities of Garissa and Tana River Counties. The purpose of the baseline study was to assess the current context, with regards to conflict sensitivity, drivers and risk factors of VE recruitment and radicalization processes as well as community perceptions, stereotypes, and social and cultural structures in Garissa and Tana River Counties. The findings of the baseline will be used to inform the implementation strategy for Jamii Bila Balaa, a project
that will be implemented by Search, IJW, and TRPRD. The study was guided by the below objectives.

1. **To assess the current context, with regards to drivers and risk factors of VE recruitment techniques and radicalization processes** in the target areas; particularly analysing communication channels used in youth radicalization and recruitment and the role of families and community influencers in acting as prevention or drivers of radicalization and recruitment in at-risk communities.

2. **To assess community perceptions, stereotypes, social and cultural structures that add pressure to at-risk youth** deliberately or inadvertently to be recruited into VE (Al Shabab), and how family and social relationships and expectations increase vulnerability to recruitment among at-risk youth in communities; and existing legal and psychosocial support structures for victims and at risk individuals.

3. **To collect baseline values and assess** whether the project’s Theory of Change (ToC) resonate with targeted communities and their needs and its relevance to the current VE context in Garissa and Tana River counties.

4. **To conduct a risk assessment and draw recommendations** for programming to ensure “Do No Harm” and conflict sensitivity are respected in the project.

Based on the specific objectives, the baseline study sought to answer the following research questions.

**Objective 1. Contextual Assessment**

1. What are the existing VE responses and prevention strategies used by family and community influencers in Garissa and Tana River Counties? What is the level of VE awareness on early warning signs of youth vulnerability? Are there legal and psychosocial support structures for youth VE victims in Garissa and Tana River Counties?

2. What are the relationships and existing opportunities for intergenerational exchange and learning on VE-related issues? Which are the communication channels of youth radicalization and recruitment?

3. What are the existing community structures, networks and spaces related and/or implicated in VE? What are the roles of the local governance systems and structures in addressing VE?

**Objective 2: Cultural Norms and Perceptions**

1. What gender norms and social expectations play a role in VE dynamics? How do culture and gender norms influence the relationship among different stakeholders involved in VE?

2. Which role does clan affiliation, families and community influencers play on VE among youth in Garissa and Tana River Counties?

3. What are the perceptions of people about violent extremism?
Objective 3. Baseline Values and Theory of Change

1. Does the project Theory of Change (ToC) resonate with targeted communities and their needs? Is the ToC relevant to the current VE context?
2. What are the baseline values of the project indicators?
3. Are there recommendations for adaptations of the current project logic and results chain to improve the potential impact of the projects?

Objective 4. Risk Assessment and “Do No Harm”

1. What are the contextual and project-related risks that require monitoring?
2. What can the project do to ensure it is conflict sensitive and respects “Do No Harm” principles?
3. Are the project approaches and strategy conceived culturally appropriate? If not, how can they be reframed to be more culturally appropriate?

2. Literature Review

This section presents reviewed existing literature on VE in Kenya, radicalization, women and VE, influencers and networks, communication channels, conflict sensitivity and risk management.

2.1 Violent Extremism in Kenya

Since its independence in 1963, Kenya has experienced many challenges that have increased the risk of violent conflict. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2012) points out that regional inequalities and imbalances have increasingly become a source of political and social conflict in Kenya. For example, in 2007-2008, Kenya experienced post-election violence (PEV) predicated on extreme weaknesses of ethnicized governance systems. Hope (2012) further attributes violence and conflict in Kenya to socio-economic grievances that arise from unemployment, marginalization, harassment by the police and limited access to basic services. Violence can also be attributed to perceptions of injustice and mistreatment of certain groups in society. Such are the realities and sensitivities that have driven the global and national agenda of youth recruitment into violent extremism. According to Anderson and McKnight (2015), recruiters for violent groups have taken advantage of such grievances to recruit and radicalize Kenyan youth.

More precisely, VE is the product of historical, political, economic and social circumstances, including the impact of regional and global power politics (UNDP 2016). Critically, unemployment or poverty alone is not the only push factor inciting violence and extremism: perceptions of injustice, human rights violations, social-political exclusion, widespread corruption or sustained mistreatment of certain groups, may also be considered as important push factors.

The rising number of refugees, especially in the North Eastern region of Kenya, has increased competition over already limited resources and jobs (USAID 2011). When in the face of the aforementioned realities, it is easy for youth in crisis situations to embrace VE as a viable alternative source of livelihood and security.
2.2 Social Identity and Radicalization

Identity plays critical role in establishing the participation of individuals in social, political and economic life (Finn et al. 2016; Botha 2013; and Mwakimako 2012). It is observed that when individuals lack a sense of identity, it becomes easy for them to be manipulated. Furthermore, when these identity loopholes are not sealed in good time, individuals become vulnerable to joining groups that can bring them a sense of belonging where a collective identity replaces individual identity (Mwakimako 2012).

In the words of Salifu and Ndung’u (2017), VE has had far reaching consequences on individuals and the community at large. More significantly, it is observed that VE has grossly damaged community relations, caused collective trauma and has led to loss of livelihoods. Even with the foregoing, there is an acute shortage of inclusion of a gendered perspective in the transformation of VE, thereby neglecting the dynamics of VE (Ndung’u, Salifu and Sigsworth 2017).

2.3 Women and VE

Over time, the place of women both as victims and sympathizers in VE has dominated public debate. Emerging trends indicate that women are actually at the center of the whole act of VE. According to Ndung’u et al. (2017), women are more actively involved in VE by providing the ‘invisible infrastructure.’ Their involvement in VE and terrorism is closely related to their economic and socio-political circumstances prevailed upon by their strong ties of relationships (ibid).

It is noted that in Garissa, some women have in the past been arrested on charges related to recruiting for al-Shabaab, and that there was intelligence of women in the refugee camps actively recruiting as well as participating in the logistics of recruitment (ibid). In fact, women were said to use their influence at the family level being the ‘custodians of cultural, social and religious values’ to lure the youth into radicalization (Chowdhury, Barakat & Shetret 2013). Women’s involvement in VE is a paradox since they are both negatively affected by it but also vulnerable to the economic opportunity joining an extremist group presents.

2.4 Influencers and Networks

Socialization is a fundamental process in the acquisition of human behavior (Brown, et al. 2007). Socialization play a significant role in influencing the likelihood of individuals becoming radicalized. This can be true when we look at agents of socialization such as the family, school, peers, religious institutions and the media. It is also important to note that people get pulled into radical and violent movements through the socialization processes that are usually facilitated by personal, emotional and psychological factors. It is critical to note here that those we consider victims of VE and in need of trauma healing, rehabilitation and social reintegration into the society, actually also need reverse socialization also known as re-socialization. In this regard, socialization becomes key in acquiring and reacquiring acceptable behavior in society.
2.4.1 Family

Families play a significant role in the process of socialization and identity development and hence have a significant role in influencing an individual towards the choice of becoming part of VE groups or not. As noted by David et al., (2015), the “guilt of letting friends and family down, especially because of the inability to provide for them, can also serve as motivation to join VE groups.” In some circumstances, youth find themselves entangled in revenge circles where they are expected to honor their deceased or injured family members by joining the cause in their so-called fight for justice.

2.4.2 Friends

Several studies (Botha 2013; Khalil and Zeuthen 2016; the Global Centre on Cooperative Security 2016; International Alert Annual Report 2018) point to the influence of family and peers as the ‘radicalizing mentorship’. However, it seems that friends and peers play a more prominent role than family in turning individuals to Al Shabaab followers and sympathizers.

2.4.3 Religious Institutions

Religion is a source of motivation and inspiration for the vast majority of people around the world (UNDP 2016). There is a nuanced understanding of the role of religion, ideology and identity and its impact on individuals, communities and institutions. Because of population’s strong beliefs, manipulation of religious politics and fanatical ideas poses a challenge to community peace. Religious leaders bear a responsibility due to their intra- and inter-faith dialogues at the regional and global levels. Many youths joining VE groups do so after being approached by a religious leader or watching and listening to CDs, videos or audiotapes of radical preachers. This has made ideology one of the drivers of recruitment into VE groups (Denoeux and Carter 2009).

2.5 Communication Channels

Communication is a critical part of the VE and radicalization. This is because it provides a channel through which perpetrators of VE and recruits get and pass messages. Noting that the forms of VE in Garissa and Tana River Counties are varied, ranging from inter-clan, to inter-tribal, to inter-religious, the modes of communication will also vary. However, word of mouth, use of the phone and internet are the most likely forms of communication to be used. For regions where phone network and internet connectivity are limited, word of mouth is likely to dominate. The internet plays a significant role in the relay of information among the members of VE groups. According to LeSage (2014), Al Shabaab has set up media-campaigns, relying on tools such as videos in Swahili-language, audio recordings and websites. There also exist propaganda online magazines, which pass very powerful and professionally written messages to their target audience, which incites against Western and Kenyan security forces (Anderson and McKnight 2015).
2.6 Contextual and Project-Related Risks that Require Monitoring

The Jamii Bila Balaa project targets Garissa and Tana River counties in the Boni Enclave. Due to their proximity to the porous border with Somalia and the Boni Forest, two known areas where Al Shabaab militants operate, the area is vulnerable to insecurity. In addition, due to long-standing community grievances, these two counties are extremely vulnerable to VE recruitment. It is critical that risks related to this context are identified, well defined and included in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan of Search project.

Given the context of the project and the various issues raised in the literature review, the following are the risks to which the research team monitored during the survey:

a) **Risk of project resources targeted for harm.** Project staff and/or participants could be physically threatened or become targets for the security forces and/or VE groups because of their involvement in the project.

b) **Labeling every youth as at risk.** There is a danger of viewing every youth in the project area as being at risk. There is the need to properly define what “at risk” means within the context of the project. Equally, there is a risk of youth working with project being labeled “at risk” and attracting the attention of security agencies in a negative manner.

c) **Unintentionally supporting justifications for violent extremism.** Project team members unintentionally support narratives that poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment justify violent extremism.

d) **Benefiting VE group recruits or sympathizers.** Garissa County hosts one of the world’s largest refugee camps, Dadaab, home to close to a quarter of a million Somalis. In seeking to engage those affected by VE, there is a chance of also engaging in VE sympathizers.

3. Methodology

Due to the highly sensitive nature of the baseline research, the study used a mixed methods approach that allowed for a triangulation of data. This approach ensured a deep collection of data as well as a check on the validity of the finding. The methodology included:

a) **Desk review** of contextual issues and existing literature.

b) **A survey** on the target population (boys, girls, men, and women) that met the characteristics of the project. Accordingly, questionnaire and interview schedule for youth were employed to collect information on specific project parameters.

c) **Key Informant Interviews (KII)*** with community influencers.

d) **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** with not at-risk male and female youth (conducted separately) aimed at understanding the group dynamics related to TVE.

3.1 Survey Locations and the Target Population

The study locations were seven sub-counties that bordered the Boni Enclave in Tana River and Garissa Counties, Kenya. These included Ijara, Fafi, Township and Dadaab in Garissa County and Tana North, Rana River, and Tana Delta in Tana River County.
3.2 Sampling Strategy

In order to achieve the objectives of the study and reach the needed participants, the study used a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques:

- **Stratified Sampling** was applied at two levels—county and sub-county.
- **Purposive Sampling** was used in Garissa County in order to select participants in the seven target sub-counties in Garissa and Tana River Counties.
- **Proportionate Sampling** was used at the sub-county level to allow for equal representation from each of the seven sub-counties.
- **Snowball Sampling** was used at the sub-county level to identify additional study participants.

Table 3.1 below shows a summary of the participants sampled and the research tools used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Tool</th>
<th>Participant Category</th>
<th>No. of Participants per sub-county</th>
<th>Total Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Questionnaire</strong></td>
<td>Male Youth (18-35 years old)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Youth (18-35 years old)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Youth Questionnaire Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)</strong></td>
<td>Male Parents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female Parents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Influencers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Search Staff (Operations/Management/Field Officers)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Search partners (Refugees Affairs Secretariat, UNHCR head, Ijara Women for Peace, and Tana River Peace Reconciliation &amp; Development)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total KII Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>112</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)</strong></td>
<td>Not at-risk you, women, and men</td>
<td>4 groups with 5 participants</td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total FGD Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Total Study Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>364</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Data Analysis

Since the study adopted a mixed methods approach, both qualitative and quantitative analysis were undertaken. Qualitative data included the recorded responses from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Content Analysis (CA) of relevant documents. Collected data was transcribed, summarized, and then coded and thematic patterns identified. Theme analysis involved the grouping of the data into manageable categories, patterns, themes and relationships in accordance with the research objectives and questions. To this end, the researchers used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel for analysis. Frequency tables, graphs and charts were drawn to present the emerging trends from the study.
findings. From the organized and reduced description of the data, the results are interpreted to give meaning to emerging information in the context of the two counties, the study’s baseline values and the Theory of Change as envisioned in the project.

3.4 Risk Management Plan

Appointments and courtesy calls were made to the key security offices in the study locations, specifically, to the County Commissioners and to the local administration. The objective was to inform them of the researchers’ presence in their jurisdiction, and to seek security guidance from them. The research team was also accompanied by two Search staff who had started working in the study locations prior to when the survey was conducted. The Search team also included a local partner in each of the locations who mobilized and traveled with the team for the duration of the fieldwork.

The vehicles used for movement within and across the locations were hired from locals in Garissa and Tana River counties with advice from Search staff and partners to minimize risk. Mobilisers, research assistants, and drivers were also sourced from the study locations; they served both to introduce the team to the locals and as translators where needed. They were also served as local security contacts.

The team also spent the shortest time possible in the locations as a risk mitigation measure. To achieve this, questionnaires, KIIIs and FGDs were administered simultaneously in central locations rather than house-to-house. The team spent at most one day in each location to minimize tracer risks. For the respondents, no attendance lists (or any form of documentation that identifies them) was circulated for them to fill or sign. The research team also took no pictures, recordings or videos of respondents in compliance to the ethical principles of anonymity and confidentiality of information.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The research team upheld the ethical standards during the research process. Participation in the study was voluntary after the respondents had given their informed consent based on information about the project given to them by the researchers to participate. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and anonymity since the tools did not request for any personal identification information. To ensure gender sensitivity, the team was made up of consultants and research assistants from multiple genders and participants were allowed to choose which team member they worked with. Findings from the study and all other information accrued is considered as the property of Search and will only be used for the purpose of this study. The report provides an honest and true picture of the fieldwork, giving relevant quotations where applicable. Given the conservativeness and sensitivity of the engaged communities, especially in Garissa, having research team members from the context and having sought buy-in from local gatekeepers, the rigor of this procedure assures the authenticity, validity and reliability of the study findings.

The study also adhered to Search’s “Do No Harm” policy (as outlined in the appendices) by taking relevant steps to avert any imminent harm to the team, respondents or the community.
The study was also open to the participation of Search field staff, not only did this assure quality and integrity of the data collected, but it also supported institutional learning as the Search team could likely use the experiences from this action research to inform their future decisions and enhance implementation of the project activities. All actions by the research team were guided by the Search mandate and policies, and the theory of change adopted by the organization.

3.6 Limitations of the Study

The Search baseline study was conducted using survey research design, meaning that it relied on reports rather than observation of behavior from the respondents. Due to ethical considerations, the study did not include any participant under 18 years old. The sensitivity of information collected on conflicts, radicalization, recruitment into VEOs and VE during the survey, could have compromised the quality of data to some extent given the observed fear and tension among participants when questions touching on these issues were raised. The inability of the research team to speak Somali and hence reliance on the local research assistants, Search officers and the local partners when we encountered participants who could neither speak English or Kiswahili, may have limited free conversation during the process of data collection. The fact that the consultants were also not from the local communities in Garissa and Tana River, and the risks associated with the topic of study to the research team and the respondents may also have had some impact on the quality of data collected.

However, the consultants were aware of these limitations and risks involved in the study, especially with the knowledge of the sensitivity and risks associated with the topic of study and that data collection was to take place along the Boni Enclave. In mitigation of the limitations and risks therefore, a mixed methods approach was adopted and a clear risk management plan was developed to ensure not only that valid and reliable data is collected but also to protect the safety and security of the research team, equipment, Search staff, partners and Search as an organization once the project commences.

4. Findings of the Study

The following sections present the findings of the study and are organized by study objectives: context assessment of violent extremism, cultural norms and perceptions, baseline values and project theory of change, and a risk assessment and “Do No Harm” recommendations.

4.1 Respondent Profiles

The study interviewed at risk youth, key informants (parents and community influencers) and had focus group discussions (FGDs) with youth not at risk. Of the 112 youth respondents, 59% were from Garissa, while 41% were from Tana River sub-counties. The distributions of participants by sub-counties was as follows: Dadaab (31%), Garissa Township (15%), Garsen (14%), Hola (14%), Ijara (12%), Madogo (10%), and Tana North (14%). With regard to sex among the youth, 54 percent were male and 46 percent were female. Of the total 112 youth, 81 percent were
Muslims (most of whom were from the Al-Sunna Sect), while 19 percent were Christians. The analysis shows that more than two thirds (68%) of the youth were aged between 18 - 24 years, while 32 percent were 25 years and above.

Findings on the respondent’s level of formal education show that 16% had no formal education, while 21% had not completed their basic education. It was also reported that 30% had completed secondary education, while 32% had either tertiary or university education. The low levels of education reported probably explains the observation that most (93%) of the youth also reported having low monthly income of less than Kshs 3000 per month, while only 7% reported having an income level of more than Kshs 15000. These findings are not surprising, since 35% of the youth were observed being unemployed, while 19% were still students or apprentice.

Sixty-one percent of the youth were in families that had between 6 to 10 members, while 18 percent of respondents were in families with more than 10 members. Fifty-six percent of youth respondents reported that the primary provider for the family was the father (see Figure 1). Fourteen percent identified the mother as the primary provider and nine percent identified themselves. The study found that 61 percent of main providers earned their income self-employment, 20 percent as employed for someone else, and 14 percent from subsistence farming or pastoralism (see Figure 2).

### 4.2 Context Assessment

This section presents findings on existing VE responses and prevention strategies applied by family and community influencers in Garissa and Tana River Counties. It details the level of VE awareness on early warning for youth amongst communities and the available legal and psychosocial support structures for VE victims. The relationship and existing opportunities for intergenerational exchange and learning on VE-related issues and the communication channels of youth radicalization and recruitment are also covered. The section concludes with a presentation of findings on the existing community structures, networks and spaces related and/or implicated in VE and the roles of the local governance systems and structures in addressing VE.
Family Expectations and Feelings of the Youth

When asked what expectations families had of young people, 38 percent of youth respondents said they were expected to support or “lift up” their family. Seventeen percent expected to have a bright future and 11 percent said that they were expected to get jobs or start a business. While these may be positive expectations, in some cases the inability to meet these expectations may lead to frustrations and a greater vulnerability to recruitment into a VEO. Three percent of youth respondents each said they were expected to get married or to work for the family. Pressure to get married or work for the family can be a source of frustration that can drive youth to be easily mobilized into VE. While these are the expectations of the family on the youth, the researchers probed into how the youth themselves feel about these expectations. Findings of the study are captured in Figure 4.

Eighty-eight percent of the youth were positive about their family’s expectations on them, while ten percent felt negatively about them. The higher (88%) feeling of positivity with regard to family expectations by the youth may be due to the positive nature of the expectations of their families on them. In fact, this is almost the norm in family socialization experience, where families push for success of its members for social support and security in old age.

Persons Youth Consult for Advice when Frustrated

Recognizing how frustrations may make youth more vulnerable to violent extremism, the study sought to understand who youth turned to for advice when they felt frustrated. The study asked youth to identify the top three individuals, in order of who they turned to first, that they asked for advice. These results are presented in Figures 5, 6, and 7. Thirty-seven percent of youth respondents said the first person they turned to was their father, whereas 35 percent said their mother. Three percent of respondents said they turned collectively to both of their parents. Overall, the first person youth turned to were almost exclusively immediate family members or...
close relatives. Less than six percent of youth respondents said they first turned to an elder, sheikh or friend.

The pattern of turning to family members for advice continued when asked to identify the second and third person they would consult. These findings highlight how the family power structure is a patriarchal hierarchy in which the father is first consulted, then the mother, followed by the eldest brother. This finding is significant for Search as it depicts the parity of family influencers who may be used to transform VE in the study sites.

**Persons and the Solutions they give to Youth Frustrations**

Youth respondents were also asked to identify the person that gives them positive advice when they feel frustrated. Thirty-six of youth respondents said that mothers give them positive advice, 26 percent said their fathers, and 8 percent identified both their mothers and fathers. The other 29 percent of respondents identified siblings, grandparents, pastors, sheikhs, wives, and aunts.
Respondents said that some of the positive advice given to them included, trust in God/Allah, and not to get involved in VE and to coexist peacefully with others.

Youth were also asked to identify those who gave them negative solutions when they sought advice. Over half of respondents did not answer this question. Data gathered during KII's and FGDs shows evidence that this may be due to the youth survey respondents being afraid of targeting by VE groups if they identified associated individuals. This conclusion is bolstered by the finding that 51 percent of youth who report that they could not identify with a relative who is radicalized or recruited into VE because of fear of being targeted by security agencies or VE groups. The negative solutions proposed to them include: to get married early, to handle the situation as they saw fit or do what they want to do, and that revenge is the best way to deal with problems.

The State of Security in Garissa and Tana River

Findings from the KII's reveal that while security in both Garissa and Tana River Counties has improved in some areas, over 50% of the two counties have continued to experience insecurity. Key areas of instability include border points, Boni Forest, and community boundaries. Respondents also point to changing patterns of violence.

In Garissa, participants identified the following as forms of insecurity: bombings and kidnappings in camps, attacks on the military and police, attacks on churches, inter-clan conflicts, border fights over resources, and a lack of trust between the police and the community. In Tana River, respondents identified the following as forms of insecurity: inter-clan conflicts, rape cases, livestock theft, killing of security personnel, car bombings, resource disputes over land, water, and grazing, political conflicts, and attacks targeting communication infrastructure.

When asked about levels of VE recruitment, respondents in Garissa County said that they believed recruitment in the county had decreased and was no longer openly done. However, respondents in Tana River said recruitment in the county was high. Respondents identified
several causes of recruitment: proximity to Somalia, misconceptions about Islam, drug use, unemployment, lack of cultural and/or formal education, inter-clan wars, political grievances, tribal clashes, lack of official documents, poor advice from friends, and conflicts over resources.

**Forms of Communication used in Radicalization and Recruitment into VEOs**

In order to understand forms of communication that may be used to recruit young persons into VEOs, the study first identified physical and virtual spaces in which youth socialize. These spaces included virtual spaces such as social media and via mobile phones and physical spaces such as playgrounds, video rooms, maskani (also known as bases), forests, schools, sports grounds, traditional dances, and other cultural events. Though these are spaces in which youth usually learn and interact, they are also social spaces that could be used to introduce and/or cement extremist ideas.

When asked which forms of communication may be used to recruit youth into VE groups, 37 percent of respondents said recruitment is likely to happen through phone calls and text messages, 20 percent said by social media, and 18 percent said in face-to-face meetings. The most popular social spaces where youth are likely to be mobilized were identified as through social media, video rooms (i.e. cinemas), mosques, sports areas, youth meetings, seminars/workshops, boda boda stages, schools, home, during cultural events/ceremonies, and in refugee camps. KIlIs also identified dance halls, matatu stages, and radio as tools that may be used to mobilize and recruit youth for VEOs. All these forms of communication corroborate those mentioned during the FGDs and KIlIs in Garissa and Tana River. The study also found herders may play a role in facilitating communication flows with violent extremists. Seventy percent of youth respondents said that they believed herders to facilitate exchange of information between VE groups. This is discussed further in later sections.
Identification of Early Signs of Radicalization and Recruitment into VE

Knowledge of early signs of radicalization and recruitment into VE is critical in transforming VE in Garissa and Tana River counties. Figure 15 shows the self-reported ability of families to identify these signs.

Results in Figure 11 show that only 31 percent of the youths reported to have high-level ability to identify early signs of recruitment into VE. Over two-thirds of respondents (69%) said to have either moderate (37%) or low-level (32%) ability to identify these signs. The latter finding is critical for Search in empowering the family with this knowledge given the fact that earlier findings of this study have shown that the father, mother and brother are key influencers of youth whenever they have frustrations.

Since families had little knowledge signs of recruitment into VEOs, the research team also asked respondents what the families’ first and second priority actions were to prevent a young person from being recruited. Figures 12 and 13 show their responses. Over half (58%) of the respondents mentioned that their families give them guidance to avoid joining VE groups, while (19%) said that they were kept busy with work and school and some say families provide religious teachings (4%) that deters them from joining such groups. Very few (2%) mentioned that their families threaten to report their involvement in VE activities to authorities.
With regard to the second set of family actions to prevent recruitment into VE groups, Figure 13 shows reporting to authorities (36%) and guidance (24%) as the most mentioned actions by the youth to prevent them from joining VE groups. In addition, results from the KIIIs reveal a diversity of actions to also include: engaging the youth in income generating activities, vocational training, youth sensitization on dangers of joining VE groups, monitoring youth movements, having family meetings and discussing VE issues at home, investing in education, and youth involvement in decision making and permitting youth to engage in sporting activities. However, the discrepancy of family action to prevent youth from recruitment into VE groups of reporting to authorities in option one in Figure 12 with only (2%) of the respondents and over one third (36%) in the second option in Figure 13 is a reflection of what happens in most families where the practice is to seek referral support whenever they cannot resolve an issue.

**Community Frustrations Pushing Youth into VE**

Youth were asked to give two main reasons, in order of priority, explaining why they get involved in VE. Figure 14 shows the first frustration that youth respondents identified that pushes them to VE and Figure 15 shows the second frustration. Fifty-nine percent of respondents identified unemployment as the primary motivation that pushes them to VE. This was overwhelmingly the single most common primary driver. Other primary motivations included a need for money (14%) followed by a mention of religion/religious leaders (7%) and 6% said lapses/harassment by security agencies.

*Figure 13: Most Likely Frustration to Push Youth to VE*
Similarly, when asked what the second major frustration that youth feel pushes them to VE, 24 percent of respondents said poverty and 20 percent said unemployment. These responses clearly identify unemployment and poverty as key factors that youth feel pushed to VE in Garissa and Tana River Counties.

In Figure 15 on second priority major frustration cited by the youth, respondents gave their second priority response with regard to major community frustration that pushes them into VE as poverty (24%), with unemployment (20%) coming second. Views of respondents in Figures 18 & 19 clearly show that unemployment is a critical driver that pushes youth into VE in Garissa and Tana River.

The researchers probed further to establish the perceived level of community awareness on recruitment of youth into VE. Sixty-three percent of youth said that community awareness of VE recruitment was low, very low or nonexistence and only 38 percent said that community awareness was high or very high. These results are corroborated by those from KII’s, which reveal also that awareness was “very low due to poor communication”…and that “attacks in the area[s] come as a surprise.”

Note that the graph shows sections adding to more than 100%. This is due to rounded statistics.
Findings drawn from the youth KII and FGDs showed that critical signs of recruitment into VE included someone frequently talking about supporting violent solutions to community problems, constant disappearance of youths from the neighborhood, being indecisive, talking very negatively about specific groups, extreme decision making, youth hiding their identity when commenting on divisive issues (i.e., change of names, covering their faces, especially men having beards or scarves), being unfriendly/aggressive to the family, keep on talking about what will happen, avoiding government agencies, self-isolation, being suspicious and fearful, taking drugs, and having money from unexplained sources. One participant of KII also mentioned that “a major indicator of the timing for recruitment into VE is during the dry season…this is when resources are scarce and communities are on the edge, making it easy for people to join VE groups”.

“A major indicator of the timing for recruitment into VE is during the dry season…this is when resources are scarce and communities are on the edge, making it easy for people to join VE groups” – Study Participant

### Groups at-risk of Recruitment into VE

In the survey of youth, respondents were asked to rank how likely different groups of individuals were most at risk for being recruited into VEOs. Forty-three percent of respondents said male youth were very likely to be recruited, followed by 24 percent of respondents saying male adults were very likely to be recruited. Thirty-four percent of respondents said that they believed that female adults were the least likely to be recruited. These findings echo general VE recruitment dynamics in Kenya in which male youth are perceived most at risk of VE recruitment.

However, the dynamics of VE are such that there are active and passive actors in both VE recruitment as well as TVE efforts. The study made a deliberate attempt to document groups that are most likely to be sympathizers and/or recruiters of VE. Thirty-four percent of respondents said
that male youth were the very likely sympathizers, followed by twenty-three of respondents identifying male adults as very likely supporters. This finding is contrary to the popular view that females (youth and adults) have been perceived as sympathizers of VE and those involved in its recruitment process.

**4.3 Community Structures and Response to VE**

**Family Response to VE**

The family is a basic unit of social organization. Accordingly, participants were asked to detail how families in Garissa and Tana River Counties respond to VE. Findings from KIIIs and FGDs with not at-risk youths show that families see responding to VE as frightening task because of fear. Youth respondents were adamant that families “…have fear of being labelled traitors …fear of being targeted or fear of being killed.” These fears were shared by respondents across the study locations. However, despite these observations the researchers noted that families are not entirely unresponsive to VE. The study found that families warn their members against involvement in VE, discourage children to interact with strangers and those engaging in VE, seek for religious counselling for their children, and that families report missing kin to the authorities. In fact, with regard to the latter it emerged in one FGD with youth not at risk that “…the government cannot be trusted to act in good faith…there are many cases of abductions, disappearances and killings associated with VE, which we think are carried out by their agents”.

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**Families working to support TVE**

“…have fear of being labelled as traitors …fear of being targeted or fear of being killed”

– Study Participant
The study also found that families restrict, monitor and trace youth movements to try and prevent them from joining VEOs. FGDs and some KII participants revealed further that “…pastoralists/herders hold and transmit a lot of information…once they get information they share.” These findings suggest a two-way information sharing system, which in the context of the study may mean that herders/pastoralists are an important communication channel, which can support or TVE efforts in Garissa and Tana River counties.

Legal Responses to VE in Garissa and Tana River Counties

Respondents in Garissa and Tana River were largely not aware of any legal structures that are actively responding to VE. Youth and KII participants did identify stakeholders that may generally relate to TVE efforts. These included Ijara Women Peace, Tana River Peace, Reconciliation and Development, local chief’s, security offices, courts, the military, the National Security intelligence Service (NSIS), the Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU), administration police, local national administrators (county commissioners and assistance commissioners), peace committees, and border security. While respondents were able to identify these actors, they were unaware how each may be responding to VE, a key knowledge gap that has implications for Search’s work.

Psychosocial Structures

People who get recruited into VE undergo various facets of trauma in their engagement in VE activities. Accordingly, those who return, especially the defectors need some form of psychosocial support to easily reintegrate into the community. The study found that there was little knowledge among the respondents, across categories, on the psychosocial support structures available in Garissa and Tana River Counties to help VE defectors. However, respondents did describe counseling from religious leaders and elders, guidance from peace committees and family members, youth empowerment groups and NGOs (Film Aid, Red Cross, River Peace Group, SUPKEM, Garissa Muslim Mediation, Tana River Peace Initiative and Human Rights Organizations) that may be working to provide psychosocial support.

Intergenerational Relations

While some youth respondents felt that elders increase the push factors leading to VE, 75 of youth respondents felt that the relationship between young people and elders is good. Respondents said that elders are able to identify those involved in VE and are able to provide advice and mitigate VE recruitment. These findings were echoed in KII in Garissa County. However, while KII results in Tana River were largely positive, some respondents identified intergenerational fault lines. Respondents in Tana River said that there was a disconnect between the youth and the elderly, each operating in isolation from the other and with youth rarely being involved in decision-

“The government cannot be trusted to act in good faith...there are many cases of abductions, disappearances and killings associated with violent extremism, which we think are carried out by their agents.”
– Youth Respondent
making processes. Additionally, youth in Tana River perceived the elderly as less informed or guided by culture, and therefore unable to understand and provide advice relevant to the challenges the youth were facing. Lastly, respondents said that youth seek quick and easy solutions through social media networks instead of consulting elders.

Since intergenerational relations were largely positive across both target areas, the study also sought to identify opportunities for intergenerational learning that may help transform violent extremism. Respondents agreed that these areas existed and identified key areas of opportunity. These included community and cultural meetings, household-level approaches, inter-clan dialogues, religious gathers, guidance and counseling, indigenous knowledge, and historical approaches to TVE. On an individual level, respondents repeatedly shared how they saw elders as good role models for youth, and that elders had wisdom that youth would benefit from.

Community Social Organization in Garissa and Tana River

Communities in the study areas were found to be organized around diverse criteria including tribal/ethnic, religious, clans, social class, elders, on levels of education, interest groups (i.e. women and youth groups), markets, mosques, schools of religious thoughts, Nyumba kumi (neighborhood watch groups), administrative boundaries (i.e chiefs), local boundaries (i.e. villages, wards and sub-counties), police stations, camps around their chairmen, political leaders, and/or pastoralists/herding groups. This observed diversity in social organization is an opportunity for Search in mobilizing the community and rallying it around its VE transformative agenda. As captured in interviews with community influencers “….local leaders (community influencers) are the backbone of community decisions’ …even among pastoralists…a hierarchy is clear and herders respect each other…with a leadership structure”.

Participants said that community social organization may influence VE either positively or negatively. If applied positively, social structures may provide opportunities for structured sharing of information, support awareness, training and monitoring that can mitigate mobilization into VE. Conversely, the study also found that social structural divisions may breed discrimination, providing an entry point for VE proponents to introduce extremist rhetoric into the community. A strong voice from one of the community influences reiterated that “…since the clan structures are very distinct in Garissa and Tana River Counties …clannism encourages inter-clan wars and is often a reason for discrimination …each clan supports its youth in case problems arise”.

FGD youth participants said that these social structures provide social spaces for reducing stress, identifying violent extremists, and information sharing. Community-based organizations (CBOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as peer groups, peace committees, and religious leaders were found to be especially useful for information sharing. This is a critical opportunity for positive community-police collaboration to transform violent extremism.

“Elders do not involve youth in decision making . . . yet youth are mostly the implementers and beneficiaries of such decisions. – Youth Respondent
Community Influencers and VE

Youth were asked to identify the major influencers get them involved in VE activities. The majority of individuals identified sheikhs, political leaders, madrassa teachers, boda boda operators, business people, youth groups and WhatsApp Groups, but participants also identified clans, friends, and leaders. Due to the sensitivity of the issues discussed, participants were only asked to identify categories of individuals, not specific individuals.

Given the pastoralist nature of communities in Garissa and Tana River, a deliberate attempt was made to ask the youth the role of herders in VE. To achieve this, youth to what extent they agreed with the statement, “herders facilitate the exchange of information among VE groups.” Seventy percent of the youth respondents agreed with the statement. This echoes findings from the KIIs in which 63 percent of KIIs either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, while only 18 percent strongly disagreed.

4.4. Cultural Norms and Perceptions

This section covers the role of cultural norms and perceptions in relation to VE dynamics. Specific areas of analysis include community perceptions of VE, gendered vulnerability to VE, cultural influences, community influencers, stakeholder relationships, and youth perceptions of TVE actors’ effectiveness.

Community Perceptions of VE

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of cultural norms and perceptions of the Garissa and Tana River communities, the study asked youth to describe how people think about violent extremism. Youth respondents said that the community sees VE as extremely bad, something disgusting, and that they condemn it and also fear it. They went on to say that the community sees it as creating fault lines in the community. One religious leader respondent described VE as “an act which is against Islamic teachings.”

These responses were echoed by the key informants interviewed. KII responses also included that the community believes that VE is religiously motivated, that it undermines development, and creates fear. The KIIIs also emphasized that they believed that violent extremists were driven by hopelessness. When asked about VE in regard to Al Shabaab, some believed that it was an external problem from Somalia while others said it was a war sponsored by developed countries or that fighters were mentally ill. The most striking finding however was the condemnation of VE by respondents because it slowed development.
Gendered Expectations in Relation to VE Vulnerability

There are multiple narratives emerging from the study findings about women. Most respondents believed that women are mothers and homemakers, that they interact a lot with children, and have limited exposure with little formal education. Women were described as defensive, spoilers of their children, and ardent supporters of the youth. Women were also believed to be mentally and emotionally strong but physically weak. Others reported women to be fearful and careless. In fact, one youth FGD participant said that “…men can do what they want but not women…women should not own property and are only good for marriage.” Other narratives suggested that women are expected to be forgiving and unconditionally caring, while others see women as protectors of the family and of family secrets. One key informant said that women had to hide suspects in order to protect the family. The study learnt from the field that because of their desire to get certain promises from their husbands, women are also seen as an easy target for recruitment and may easily support their husband’s involvement in VE.

To the contrary, men were portrayed by the respondents to be brave and powerful, and that they must show their strength by defending their land, family, and sustain their herds. Findings from KIIIs and FGDs with not at-risk youth concur with quantitative survey results that men are typically heads of households. The perception among participants was clear that men are often more schooled than the women and perceived as wiser in their decision making. In fact, one respondent described this saying that “men are like kings and role models to the youths.” Thus, they are expected to fend for their families and the community. There were also negative perceptions of men as being violent, and that they are often the victims of injustice from the government who treat them as suspects for VE compared to women.

Cultural Influence on the Relationship of Stakeholders Involved in VE

The study found that culture was seen by respondents to have both positive and negative effects on VE. On the positive view, participants reported that culture promotes unity in society as people are able to identify and lend support to each other. In addition, participants viewed culture as a good source of resource mobilization as elders could call upon members to support certain community causes. One participant described this saying “it [culture] cements unity between its members and is a source of pride for the community.”

Describing the negative aspects of culture, participants said that culture can influence misconceptions that can lead to inter-clan and intertribal conflicts. Respondents said that this may lead to violent extremism as members can easily be mobilized along clan or tribal lines. FGD responses also the prevalence of discrimination on the basis of culture, which can be exploited to mobilize youth into VE. A respondent described this negative effect of culture saying that “culture burdens individuals.” Participants went on to describe how they saw culture as diminishing an individual’s expectations and autonomy as certain actions are forbidden or penalized, even if they go against one’s own personal beliefs. Thus, putting culture first in such situations may undermine peaceful coexistence.
Positive and Negative Community Influencers

In order to understand the dynamics in the community, youth respondents were asked whether there felt like there were individuals in the community that influenced them toward positive or negative solutions to address their frustrations. Positive solutions meaning those that involved nonviolent responses whereas negative solutions meaning those that promoted using violence or violent extremism as a response. Seventy-one percent of youth said that there were positive influencers whereas 42 percent of respondents said that there were negative influencers.

Knowledge of the existence of positive and negative VE influencers in the study area prompted the researchers to ask respondents about what the community expected from the VE influencers. Respondents said that since the influencers are both negative and positive, the response depends on the individual. Those working to transform violent extremism were seen by some as heroes and by others as simply agents of CSOs who are just doing their job. Participants identified the following specific expectations of positive TVE influencers: to provide basic needs and protect the community, to facilitate the provision of good jobs and a better quality of life, prevent VE recruitment, talk to violent extremists, to cooperate with the community members in mitigating VE, and above all, to eradicate VE. With regard to perception of negative VE influencers, one respondent described them saying, “…as enemies of progress…but it is expected that they will reform, that they will be arrested and punished by authorities.”

Respondents were also asked whether there were organizations that positively influence VE in Garissa and Tana River Counties. In Garissa, respondents identified several sectors of actors. Specific positive NGO peace actors included: Ijara Women Initiative, religious leaders, Kenya Ni Wajibu Wetu (NIWETU), Garissa Peace Forum, Women Peace Media, Ijara Women Peace, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), Brick Making Centre, Refugee Affairs Secretariat, Terre Des Hommes, Film Aid, and Kenya Red Cross. Positive governmental actors identified included the police, community policing, refugee camp security teams, Refugee Affairs Secretariat, and camp leaders.

In Tana River, key actors promoting positive solutions to VE included: the County Government, Tana River Peace Initiative, Nyumba Kumi, Women for Peace, Pastoral Girls Initiative, Kenya Red Cross, local administration, along with community peace committees, religious organizations,
clerics, clan leaders, women mediators, defense forces, and the police. There was no mention of organizations supporting VE.

These organizations were reported to be engaged in a wide range of activities to prevent youth recruitment into VEOs. These activities included training youth and building relations between the community and the youth, provide counter-narratives to misconceptions about VE, protection and advocacy of children’s rights, capacity building of youth and women on identifying early warning signs, creating livelihood opportunities, community TVE awareness and sensitization forums, supporting deradicalization and reintegration efforts, and facilitating public forums.

Further, the study went into establishing the category of community influencers who spread negative solutions to youth frustrations. Thirty-six percent of respondents said that religious leaders promoted negative solutions. Eighteen percent of respondents said that political leaders promoted negative solutions. Political leaders, especially those from high status clans, were reported to instigate clan violence and promote rumors and stereotypes of certain clans as hideouts for violent extremists.

Findings from KIIs agree with these observations of the youth and also identify herders and boda boda riders as also promoting violent solutions to frustrations. When asked what role these influencers play in VE, respondents said that they mobilize, promote violent ideologies, incite youth to be violent, and use social media to recruit youth. In addition, respondents specifically said that businessmen give advice and money to support VE activities. Respondents also noted that boda boda drivers were able to create and spread violence quickly due to their mobility.

When asked what positive influencers should do to respond to VE, respondents said that community influencers should encourage peaceful youth-police relations, help victims and provision of psychosocial support to the affected, develop youth databases and tracing missing persons, and mediate conflicts in the region. Community influencers also encouraged sharing of information between the community and security agencies, in addition to reporting perpetrators of VE.
Community guidelines and Relationship among Stakeholders Involved in VE

i) Gendered Roles and Barriers in VEOs and in VE Resilience

The study found that community relationships were regulated by cultural and gender norms. Similarly, the study also sought to understand whether cultural and gender norms played a role in shaping the relationship between individuals involved or at risk of being recruited to violent extremist organizations. Youth respondents in FGDs said that that within VEOs there is a clear division of labor. Men were reported to be used as combatants and women were used to gather intelligence.

In describing the ability to prevent or resist VE recruitment, KII respondents pointed to a harsh environment of inequality between men and women in which women do not have the resources, information, or voice needed to address VE. Respondents said that “there is a gender imbalance among family members,” that women are not allowed to speak before the men, and that since men are the decision-makers, they do not involve or expect input from the women.

These findings imply that even when women have been empowered to address VE, the gendered expectations may prevent them from achieving their full TVE potential. This was aptly summed up by one female influencer when she reiterated that “…there are cultural barriers within the community that bar women from either preventing violence or from not involving themselves as they are culturally bound to act.” Indeed, there are taboos in cultures such as when a woman or someone does not heed the call of traditions or elders invoke an affliction to the community. Such taboos and fears may lead to silence among women when communities sit to discuss issues related to VE. Similarly, husbands may also act ignorant of VE so that they do not raise suspicion with their wife. Overall, participants highlighted how the lack of inclusion of women in decision-making processes not only increased the vulnerability of women to VE recruitment, but that it also undermined their ability to lead or support TVE efforts.

ii) Role of Clan Affiliation, Family, and Community Influencers in VE

The study found that clans can have both a positive and negative influence on youth. Study participants said that clans were hierarchical, with some more favored than others because of their rank in the community. Participants also said that the favored clans can cause conflict as a result of competition among the clans for political power. Some felt that certain clans face discrimination in terms of jobs and businesses. Some clans were reported to not allow intermarriage, which respondents felt made it easier to radicalize youth along clan lines.

Similarly, families were reported to also have a positive and negative influence on whether youth turn to violent extremism. One participant said that “there is pressure due to a lack of recognition of certain families within the community or its members or certain children among siblings within
the framework of sibling rivalry.” Such pressure and struggle for recognition can be a source of frustration that may increase the likelihood of youth turning to VE. The study also found that there were sharp divisions between wealthy and poor families and that some families would not allow marriages across socioeconomic status. Such divisions can lead to thoughts of exclusion, discrimination and may trigger formation of a revenge mindset among the youth. Such frustrations and thoughts can make the at-risk youth more vulnerable to recruitment into VE. Through the KIIIs, the study found that there were also family disputes that escalate to inter-clan conflicts. While conflicts may originate on an inter-personal level, there is intense loyalty within clans if they escalate to the clan level. This reinforces an earlier finding that clans will hide or protect its members who are involved in VE. There is a paradox however. Almost all the KIIIs and FGDs agreed with the statement that “[families] cannot report a family member involved in VE nor would they want to be identified with a relative involved in VE.” The research team believes that this explains the survey results shown below. When asked if the respondents would possibly identify with relatives who are VE suspects, 34 percent said yes, but 51 percent said no, and 15 percent did not answer. The implication is that individuals do not want to openly identify with VE suspects but will not necessarily report a family member suspected of being involved in VE.

In regard to the community, KIIIs presented evidence that community influencers have both a positive and negative influence in regard to VE. Respondents said that they have a negative influence when they promote hate speech and violence in response to the many challenges faced by the community (i.e. poverty, unemployment, inequalities across the communities). Respondents also said that community influencers can have a positive influence by promoting awareness of TVE efforts, foster good relations between community-police relations, and by acting as role models to youth. However, serving as a positive influence is not without risk. One respondent described this saying “community influencers face challenges such as being branded as sell-outs on cultural and gender lines and can be soft targets for silencing voices against VE by the perpetrators, recruiters and sympathizers.”

**Youth Perception of the Effectiveness of Institutions in Addressing VE**

In order to better understand youth perceptions of TVE actors, youth respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of TVE institutions that were present in the target areas. Seventy percent of youth respondents said that religious leaders, followed by camp security (61%) and peace committees (60%) were the most effective institutions. Less than 50 percent of respondents saw county government, local administrators, Nyumba Kumi or camp leadership as effective in addressing VE.
4.5. Baseline Values and Theory of Change of Project Indicators

The baseline sought to understand and document various indicators prior to the implementation of the Search project with an understanding that these may be adapted during implementation. In order to establish baseline indicators, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to a set of statements on a scale of one to five (1: SD = Strongly Disagree, 2: D = Disagree, 3: N = Neutral, 4: A = Agree, 5: SA = Strongly Agree). These results are shown in Tables 4.1-4.4 below.

Table 4.1: Baseline Values and Theory of Change Indicators in Relation to the Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENTS ON BASELINE INDICATORS</th>
<th>Rating (as % of respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Baseline Values in Relation to the Family</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Parents are able to identify youth at-risk of recruitment into Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs)</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parents are able to identify youth at-risk of radicalization</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Parents usually hold dialogues with the youth</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parents are willing to promote positive expectations of youth</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parents promote nonviolent/positive forms of youth identity</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Theory of Change (ToC) Values in Relation to the Family</th>
<th>Rating (as % of respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If families gain the skills to identify early signs of radicalization in at-risk youth, then recruitment of at-risk youth in this county will be reduced.</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. If families gain the skills to respond to early signs of radicalization in at-risk youth, then recruitment of at-risk youth in this county will be reduced.</td>
<td>50.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If women are given an opportunity to support transformation of VE, then more non-violent solutions will be found.</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree
### Table 4.2: Baseline Values and Theory of Change in Relation to the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENTS ON BASELINE INDICATORS</th>
<th>Rating (as % of respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Baseline Values in Relation to Community Influencers</strong></td>
<td><strong>SA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Community influencers are willing to promote positive expectations of youth.</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Community influencers usually hold dialogues with the young people in this area.</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **D. Theory of Change Values in Relation to the Community** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. If community spaces address youth grievances to TVE narratives, then recruitment will be reduced. | 50.7 | 31.4 | 7.2 | 6.4 | 4.3 |
| 2. If community support structures collectively address youth grievances to transform VE narratives, then recruitment of at-risk youth will be reduced. | 42.8 | 31.9 | 12.3 | 2.9 | 10.1 |
| 3. If community influencers gain skills to respond to early signs of radicalization, then recruitment will be reduced. | 45.7 | 32.1 | 12.2 | 5.7 | 4.3 |
| 4. If community influencers gain skills to identify early signs of radicalization, then recruitment will be reduced. | 50.0 | 30.0 | 10.0 | 7.1 | 2.9 |
| 5. If opportunities are created for victims of VE trauma healing, then there will be less extreme violence. | 38.1 | 36.0 | 10.1 | 5.0 | 10.8 |
| 6. By creating inclusive structures for problem solving, then interaction between groups will be improved. | 36.2 | 37.0 | 5.8 | 8.0 | 13.0 |
| 7. If livelihood promotion is embraced, then the extent of core grievances in the region will decline. | 43.5 | 31.2 | 9.4 | 7.2 | 8.7 |

*SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree*

### Table 4.3: Baseline Values and ToC in Relation to Interventions for At-risk Youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements on Baseline Indicators</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baseline Values in Relation to Interventions for at-risk Youth</strong></td>
<td><strong>SA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. At-risk youth feel more valued as a result of their participation in small grant initiatives.</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Community influencers take steps to intervene when youth are at risk of being radicalized.</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community influencers take steps to intervene when youth are at risk of being recruited into VEOs.</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parents take steps to intervene when youth are at risk of being radicalized.</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parents take steps to intervene when youth are at risk of being recruited into VEOs.</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. At-risk youth are open to turning to support structures about their concerns of radicalization.</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. At-risk youth are open to turning to support structures about their concerns on recruitment into VEOs.</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. At-risk youth can be transformed through multimedia arts campaigns.</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to assessing baseline values for the project, the study sought to understand 1) the likelihood that community members would participate publicly in VE activities; and 2) the extent to which community members would support proposed project activities. Results in Figure 24 show that over 81 percent of male adults, 71 percent of male youth, 66 percent of female adults, and 64 percent of female youth responded that they would be likely to take part in addressing VE issues in public.

Respondents were then asked to what extent did they agree with the project activities aimed at the family level. Over 56 percent of respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed with each of the activities and less than 28 percent of respondents said they disagreed or completely disagreed with the activities. Overall, 75 percent of respondents were affirmative of the family and community based peace meetings; 65 percent on activities revolving around the know your child concept; 63 percent were positive of the peer to peer program on peace and non-violence; 61 percent in support of the Training of Trainers (ToT) among family and community influencers on peacebuilding; and 56 percent in support of family for peace cycles to strengthen the capacity of women. These findings were echoed in key informant interviews and show evidence that the project activities have the support of the majority of community members.
Similarly, respondents showed strong support of the proposed project activities aimed at the community level. Overall, 82 percent supported leadership training for youth in peacebuilding; 73 percent supported mass media (social media) campaigns on peace and non-violence; 63 percent supported the provision of small grants for youth for economic empowerment; 59 percent supported awards on peaceful community coexistence; and 58 percent supported youth creative arts competitions with messaging for peace and nonviolence. These findings were also supported with data from KIIs.

5. Risk and “Do No Harm” Assessment

This section identifies contextual and project-related risks that will require monitoring. It also includes measures that the project can do to ensure it is conflict sensitive and respects the “Do No Harm” principle. Recommendations to mitigate risk and ensure “Do No Harm” are included in the conclusion on page 40.
**Effects of VE in Garissa and Tana River Counties**

Understanding risks and “Do No Harm” principle in this baseline is geared towards protecting communities in Garissa and Tana River against the adverse effects of VE. Accordingly, the baseline investigated the effects of VE in the study sites with a view of establishing which groups are severely affected by VE. Respondents identified male youth and religious institutions as two of the most severely affected by VE. The groups identified as least affected by VE were children, female adults, and female youth.

![Figure 27: Degree of Effect of VE on Particular Groups](image)

**Potential Risk to Project Resources**

Search will deploy resources, physical and human, in the region to implement the project “Jamii Bila Balaa.” The study found that Search program staff, vehicles, and program donors were very likely or likely to be at risk of capture by VE groups in the region. Additionally, the study found that 43 percent of respondents believed that there would very likely or likely be risk to program participants.

![Figure 28: Level of Risk to Persons and Resources](image)
Potential Project Risk to Youth

Given study finding that a majority of the community members supported the proposed project activities, the study also sought to understand if there were specific risks to particular groups of potential participants. Seventy-one percent of youth respondents said that they thought the project may raise the risk of being targeted or killed by VE groups. This finding was bolstered with evidence gathered during KIIs and FGDs with not at-risk youth. When asked, 54 percent of focus group participants said that risk to youth would have a high negative impact on the project, and KIIs participants reported a moderate negative impact.

Potential Project Risk to Families

One of the key components of the Search project implementation is families. Forty percent of survey respondents said that family participation in the project may raise their risk of being targeted by VE organizations. Thirty-six percent of respondents said that families may be isolated as a result of their participation in the project. These findings were supported by feedback gathered in FGDs and KIIs with not at-risk youth. While a majority of respondents did not believe there was potential risk to families, it is worth noting that the enthusiasm for a new project may have distorted participant responses and led participants to downplay risks.

However, when probed over the likelihood of occurrence and impact of the Search project to families in case of the targeting and isolations as reported above, over one half (56%) and 55% were affirmative of the likely high negative impact of being targeted or isolated. These sentiments were shared by both not at-risk youth in the FGDs and KIIIs in the study.
Potential Project Risk to Local Culture and Women

One key objective of the baseline was to find out whether the project approaches and strategy as conceived are culturally appropriate. In this regard, the baseline measured the likelihood and impact of the Search project on the local culture. Survey responses showed that 56 percent of young people believe the project could damage culture and that 56 percent of young people believe that a negative impact is likely to occur. However, KII participants believe that there is only a moderate likelihood of the project negatively affecting culture. FGD participants identified specific risks saying that the project could lead to a misinterpretation of culture, a weakening or destruction of culture, a perception of the community being viewed as suspicious and as a result isolated or discriminated against as a cultural group. Accordingly, it is critical for Search to exercise caution in the way it will enter and engage communities in the project by being sensitive to local culture and context.

“... You know we are Somalis and those [Al-Shabaab] perpetrating violence are in Somalia...the name of our ethnic community may actually betray us.”
– FGD participant in Garissa

As regards women, 90 percent of KII participants said that the Search project has no risks for women in the community. The 10 percent who said the project did have risks for women said that these risks included negative branding and potential targeting of women by VEs. FGD participants elaborated on the potential risks to women and also said that they may be viewed as non-patriotic, targeted (as in KII), discriminated, disrespected, compromised, kidnapped/raped, exploited or even humiliated. When we asked the youth what is the likely level of occurrence and impact of this danger to women, over half (56%) and (55%) mentioned a high likelihood of occurrence and negative impact respectively.

Potential Project Risk to Inter-border Relations and Search

FGD and KII responses indicate that almost all participants agree that there was no major potential risk to inter-border relations when the study was conducted. Respondents did believe however that there could be potential risk in the future. Future potential risks identified included boundary and border disputes, strained relations with their neighbors, increased fear and suspicion, being targeted and/or attacked, closure of border and fear of isolation. KII participants rated the likelihood of inter-border issues as moderate and that they could have a moderate negative impact on the project. Fifty-six percent of youth respondents rated the likelihood of inter-border issues as high and 56 percent said that it would have a high negative impact on the project. that it would have a high negative impact on the project.

On potential project risk to Search, the majority of FGD and KII participants said that was no potential risk to Search during the study but did urge careful implementation in order to avoid misunderstandings with security agencies or the risk of being targeted by VE groups. Fifty-six percent of youth respondents said that risk to Search was likely and 55 percent said that this would have a negative impact.
6. Conclusion

The study sought to analyze the context, cultural norms and perceptions, establish baseline values and test the project theory of change, and assess the potential risk while establishing “do no harm” recommendations. The findings are based on the survey results of 112 youth, 112 key informant interviews, and focus group discussions with 140 stakeholders. The following sections summarize some of the key findings of the study.

Context Analysis

The study found that while security has improved in some areas of Garissa and Tana River Counties, the two counties are still insecure. Key areas of instability include the Boni Forest and community boundaries. Youth continue to be vulnerable to VE recruitment and few youth have knowledge of early warning signs of VE recruitment. Families and community members do have strategies to attempt to TVE, but the implementation is often limited due to fear of being targeted by VEOs. In analyzing channels of influence on youth, the study found that mothers are the individuals identified by youth as giving positive nonviolent solutions to their problems. Mothers are also one of the top individuals, second to fathers, youth turn to for advice in dealing with their frustrations.

The major forms of communication used in recruiting youth into VEOs in order of prevalence were phones and social media (Facebook and WhatsApp). Herders were identified as key individuals who transmit information to VE groups.

The local communities are organized around ethnic, religious, clan and social class structures, with clans taking precedent in the two counties. With regard to the family influence and power structure, authority flows from the father, mother and then the elder brother. Intergenerational relations were found to be positive and an underutilized TVE opportunity. Religious institutions, camp security teams and peace committees were seen by youth as effective in their efforts to address VE respectively. However, many respondents were not aware of any legal structures available that responds or could respond to VE issues and had little knowledge on the psychosocial support structures available to help VE defectors.

Cultural Norms and Perceptions

The study found that violent extremism is condemned by almost all study participants and seen as something that undermines development. In regard to gendered roles, most respondents believed that while women have strong relationships and extended periods of interaction with youth, women have limited exposure or formal education which often prevents them from being able to address VE. In addition, respondents said that cultural expectations of women both limit their ability to be peacemakers as well as increase their vulnerability to being recruited to VEOs. Gendered expectations also extend to roles in VEOs with men as combatants and women as intelligence operatives and caregivers.

Despite the culture of fear to support TVE efforts, respondents said that there were positive influencers in the community who were actively working to respond to TVE. These efforts included...
providing basic needs, protecting the community, mediating violent conflicts, and working to prevent youth from being recruited. Youth respondents also identified negative influencers. Politicians and religious leaders were most often identified as the top negative influencers. Politicians were seen to instigate violence along clan lines and encouraging stereotyping certain clans as VE perpetrators or protectors of violent extremists. Additional community and familial fault lines include socio-economic class, sibling rivalry, and rumored connections to extremists.

**Baseline Values and Theory of Change**

Overall, the study found that the project theory of change and proposed activities had strong relevance to the context and received strong support from community members. Baseline values for the project are outlined on page 35. The study also found that while there was fear to participate in TVE efforts, over 81 percent of adult male respondents, 71 percent of male youth respondents, 66 percent of female adult respondents, and 64 percent of female youth respondents said that they would be likely to take part in addressing VE issues in public. These findings indicate that the project is relevant to Garissa and Tana River Counties and that it will likely have buy-in from community members during implementation.

**Risk Assessment and Do No Harm**

The study found that the proposed project could create risk for project stakeholders. Key risks include targeting, killing, or isolation of community members, Search and partner staff, and donor staff. A robust and adaptive risk mitigation plan is needed to ensure do no harm to potential project participants. As previously stated, while project stakeholders are worked about potential risk, a majority of those surveyed said they would publicly support TVE efforts. Specific outlines to manage risk are outlined in the section below.

**Policy Recommendations**

1. **Develop inclusive risk management policies.** Significant risks to project participants were identified in the study, especially in regard to participants’ fear of being targeted or killed as a result of their engagement in the project. Still, the study also found that a majority of participants were still interested in publicly taking part in TVE efforts. Search should develop a robust and adaptive risk management policy in order to mitigate risk to participants.

2. **Expand inclusiveness of decision-making processes.** Women, youth, and nomadic herdsmen have historically been excluded from any decision-making processes within the family and within the community thereby undermining their potential to be peacemakers at both levels. Search should seek to facilitate discussions on how to integrate these groups in order to develop more robust TVE community policies.

**Implementation Recommendations**

1. **Ensure activities respect traditional authority structures.** Authority within a family is found to be a patriarchal hierarchy with the father at the top, followed by mother and then the eldest son. Activities should respect and utilize this pattern in activity implementation.

2. **Strengthen capacity to identify early warning signs of VE recruitment.** The study found that community members generally have limited capacity to identify early warning
signs of VE recruitment. Search should prioritize and/or integrate capacity strengthening opportunities into existing activities.

3. **Provide small grant opportunities during the dry season.** The study found that youth are especially vulnerable to VE recruitment during the dry season as resources are typically scarce and the money offered by VE groups becomes more attractive. Providing small grants during the dry season may help to counter these offers by VEOs.

4. **Support herders to share positive information to support TVE efforts.** Herders were identified by youth respondents as actors that regularly transmit information to VEOs. Search should develop innovative media programming that targets herders and supports them to share information that can prevent TVE efforts among herders.

5. **Raise awareness of existing legal and psychosocial support structures.** While there are governmental and nongovernmental institutions that provide legal and psychosocial support in many of the communities, community members are largely unaware of what services they provide or how to access them. Project activities should seek to raise awareness of the help available to support deradicalization and reintegration efforts and to strengthen capacity to develop these services where they do not exist.

6. **Harness strong existing intergenerational relations.** Intergenerational relations in the target communities are viewed as strong and positive by community members. This is an existing opportunity to strengthen and promote intergenerational learning by engaging in cultural meetings, inter-clan dialogues, elder counselling of youth and shared lessons on how the community has historically sought to address VE.

7. **Engage clan structures to support TVE efforts.** Clan structures were identified as both a cause of violent conflict but also as a social structure that may be able to promote VE resilience. Activities should seek to positively influence the role that clan structures have.

**Risk Management Recommendations**

1. **Adhere to conflict sensitivity and “Do No Harm” guidelines.** Given the sensitivity of the project, adhering to these guidelines throughout the project cycle will be critical to mitigate risk and ensure participant safety.

2. **Develop participant safety plan.** Given that participants fear that the project could lead to them being labelled a traitor, targeted, or killed by VE groups and that participants believe this is likely of occurring, Search should develop a participant safety plan and work with key family members and community stakeholders to implement it.

3. **Ensure activities are sensitive to the local cultures.** The social structures in both target locations are organized around ethnic, religious, and clan authority structures. Search activities should be sensitive to these local dynamics.

4. **Engage community members as activity leaders.** An overwhelming percentage of respondents said that they would be likely to take part in addressing VE issues in public. This is a promising opportunity for Search to engage community members not only as project participants, but leaders in carrying out additional activities.
Appendix

References


Hassan, M. 2012. Understanding Drivers of Violent Extremism: The Case of Al-Shabaab and Somali Youth. CTC Sentinel.


Additional Guidance on Conflict Sensitivity and ‘Do No Harm’

Conflict sensitivity in the context of this project means that the project team (both staff & influencers) understand the two counties’ specific potential sources of tension that could be exacerbated and or lead to conflict. It also means that the team should ensure that the project planning and implementation processes take into consideration these dynamics, to avoid either exacerbating existing tensions or giving rise to new tensions. The following framework has been proposed to help the project team understand the conflict sensitive and respects “Do No Harm” principles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to do</th>
<th>How to do it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the context in which you operate</td>
<td>Carry out a conflict analysis, and update it regularly (i.e. what drives conflict? When conflict occurs? Who is involved in conflict?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the interaction between your intervention and the context</td>
<td>Link the conflict analysis with the programming cycle of your intervention (i.e. project, conflict and interaction indicators)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act in a way to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive ones</td>
<td>Monitor and evaluate your intervention (i.e. adjustment strategies to redesign when necessary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>