

Kenya Consolidated Report, January–March 2025

SUMMARY – KEY HIGHLIGHTS

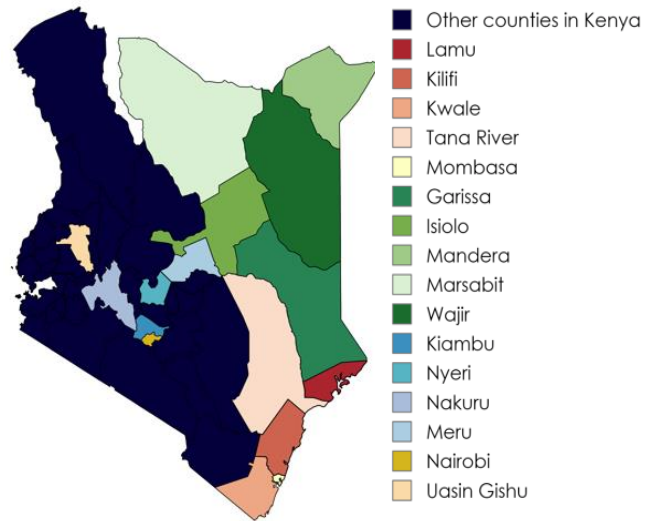
- **Grant kick-off meetings** for the three-year European Union (EU)- funded Kenya Community Engagement and Resilience Programme (KCERP) were conducted in March between the EU, the National Counter Terrorism Centre, GCERF and Act, Change, Transform (Act!).
- **The Accelerated Response Initiative to Violent Extremism (ARIVE II) closed after the conclusion of all activities** related to the development and validation process of the National Strategy for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (2025–2030) (NSPCVE). **ARIVE II supported the final stakeholder validation of the Counties’ PVE Model Bill.** The National Advisor contributed during the final stakeholder validation workshop of the Bill before it was presented to the Senate for further action. GCERF was the only donor invited to the meeting.
- Regional Pastoralists Peace Link (RPPL), which leads the Usalama Programme, was identified as the 2025 **Carol Bellamy Leadership Award (CBLA) Torchbearer.** The CBLA supports women's grassroots organisations at the intersection of women's empowerment and prevention and countering of violent extremism (PCVE). The Award was granted to the Pastoralists Women Agency for Sustainable Development (PAWA) from Mandera County.

CHALLENGES AND KEY LESSONS

- The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Stop-Work Order has impacted the Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism landscape in Kenya, making it more constrained in terms of resourcing. With fewer PCVE projects, there will be more demands for programmes such as KCERP and other GCERF-supported grants to intervene, especially at the community level. This may cumulatively slow down the momentum that had been established on PCVE, which was increasingly yielding results (fewer violent extremist attacks confined to areas bordering Somalia).
- Effective programme implementation requires flexibility and creativity. Participants' literacy levels often hindered the effective administration of pre- and post-assessment forms, limiting the programme's ability to measure outcomes quantitatively. To address this, facilitators adopted oral assessments, visual aids, and community-led feedback mechanisms, ensuring accurate data collection while maintaining inclusivity.
- A more structural challenge arose from the retention of fingerprint records in Kenya's criminal database, which barred rehabilitated individuals from obtaining Certificates of Good Conduct and accessing formal employment. To mitigate this, the programme advocated for policy exceptions, such as special reintegration certificates, while simultaneously partnering with private employers and vocational training centres to create alternative livelihood pathways. These measures aimed to decouple economic survival from bureaucratic hurdles, offering immediate opportunities while pushing for systemic change.

CONTEXT UPDATE

The threat from Al Shabaab remained persistent, particularly in counties along the border with Somalia, like Mandera, Garissa, Wajir and Lamu. A major development occurred in Lamu on 15 March, when an estimated 150 Al Shabaab militants raided Mangai village near the Boni Forest, delivering radical sermons and attempting to identify local security figures. Though no casualties were reported, the raid underscored the group's efforts to reassert influence in previously calm areas. In Fafi, Garissa county, six National Police Reservists (NPR) were killed and four injured during a 23 March pre-dawn ambush by militants. The following day, the NPR commander assigned to the Mandera Governor's office was shot dead in a separate attack, revealing gaps in intelligence response and coordination. Overall, Al Shabaab has continued to prioritise targeted killings and small arms assaults over mass-casualty bombings, showing tactical adaptation.



Kenya's political landscape remained highly dynamic. Raila Odinga's failed bid for the African Union Commission chairmanship reignited debate and discussion locally on international and domestic political manoeuvring. Meanwhile, President William Ruto and Odinga struck a parliamentary deal amid proposed constitutional amendments to introduce a Prime Minister role. Ruto's development tours had political undertones, while the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) faced internal divisions over alliances. Looking ahead, collaboration between ODM and Kenya Kwanza may persist but face internal resistance. An emerging opposition coalition and Gen Z activism could reshape politics in the medium term, potentially influencing ODM's 2027 prospects and national power dynamics.

In January, the High Court in Garissa ruled that, due to inaccurate data, thousands of ethnically Somali Kenyan nationals had been wrongly registered as refugees and denied access to education, employment and travel documents, violating their citizenship rights. This pronouncement by the High Court preceded a policy shift following President Ruto's four-day extensive development tour of the North Eastern region in February, covering Mandera, Wajir, Garissa and Isiolo counties, during which he also addressed security and infrastructure issues affecting the region. During the tour, the President announced the removal of vetting in the processing of National Identification Cards and passports, which he noted has discriminated against the people of North Eastern¹. This policy change is regarded as a significant step towards addressing systemic discrimination and fostering inclusivity. It is also crucial as it addresses key narratives which have been used for recruitment and radicalisation of youth from the region.

¹ Citizen Digital, February 4 2025, Security, infrastructure at centre of Ruto's Northern Kenya visit, Available at <https://www.citizen.digital/news/security-infrastructure-at-centre-of-rutos-northern-kenya-visit-n357069>

PORTFOLIO STRATEGY / ToC

WHAT: Strengthened capacities at county and national levels to implement Kenya’s National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism, including the disengagement and rehabilitation framework

<p>WHO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government entities at national and county levels, including the National Police Service (NPS) • Local and community-based CSOs/grassroots groups • Women, men, boys and girls in vulnerable communities • Individuals who have disengaged from VEOs, their family members or legal guardians, and host communities • Frontline workers • Influential individuals and groups relevant to PCVE, e.g. faith leaders 	<p>WHERE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coast (Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu, Mombasa, Tana River) • Northern and North-eastern (Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Wajir) • Metropolitan Nairobi (Kiambu, Meru, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nyeri,)
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HOW: Government, CSOs, communities, and individuals are supported with the skills, tools, and networks to sustain their efforts and operationalise Kenya’s National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism at the county level.

GRANTEE PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTCOMES

Accelerated Response Initiative to Violent Extremism (ARIVE)

Principal recipient: *Act, Change, Transform! (Act!)*

Sub-grantees: *Caritas Meru, FFD, HURIA, KYBI, Midrift Hurinet, SND, SOWED, TRPRD, VOPA, Worthy Vision, YADEN, YOWPSUD*

Counties of implementation: *Marsabit, Kiambu, Nakuru, Nairobi, Meru, Tana River, Kwale, Kilifi, Mandera, Lamu, Wajir, and Nyeri*

During the reporting period, the programme made progress towards the following outcomes:

CEFs have the knowledge and skills to improve performance and achieve their mandate.

Through the programme’s support, the County Engagement Forums (CEFs) contributed to the NSCVE Review process by validating the Draft Zero. The CEF contribution highlights the strategy’s inclusive approach as a promising framework for boosting community participation in PCVE activities. The CEF’s endorsement is crucial for tailoring strategies that address local needs and enhance community resilience. The CEF has also necessitated a coordinated approach among Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), government bodies and the private sector.

Key details of the activities:

- Two stakeholder roundtable meetings were convened in Lamu and Tana River counties with 59 participants (11 women, 48 men). These meetings served to disseminate findings from the ARIVE Endline Study and introduce the new Kenya Community Engagement and Resilience Programme (KCERP).
- Act! undertook a follow-up PCVE mainstreaming activity with 38 participants (15 women and 23 men) focused on advancing the proposed tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), the Council of Governors (COG) and

the County Assemblies Forum (CAF). This MoU seeks to establish a structured engagement framework between the three entities and support the development of a County PVE Model Law, which could be adapted by all 47 counties in Kenya.

- ARIVE supported the printing of 4,500 copies of the reviewed NSPCVE.
- A final capacity-building workshop was held for 33 NCTC officers (24 men and 9 women), who participated in a retreat to strengthen the skills of their community-facing team, with a particular focus on the Prevention and Resilience (P&R) branch.

Kenya Community Engagement and Resilience Programme (KCERP)

Principal recipient: *Act, Change, Transform! (Act!)*

Sub-grantees: *To be selected*

Counties of implementation: *Lamu, Mandera, Marsabit, Tana River and Wajir*

In the initial implementation quarter of the programme, Act! undertook preparatory activities, namely:

- Act! joined the EU, GCERF and NCTC for an official programme kick-off meeting in Nairobi. The main discussion points were to agree on the Expressions of Interest (Eols) for the five programme counties with minimal adaptation for each location tied to the operating context; the need to maintain consistency in selecting beneficiaries and for the process of onboarding sub-recipients to remain competitive and transparent; and planning towards a programme launch in Tana River county in Quarter 2 of 2025.
- Act! completed drafting the call for the Eols inviting community-based organisations (CBOs) based and working in Lamu (Lamu East and Lamu West) and Tana River (Tana Delta, Tana River, Tana North, Galedyertu and Bangal) counties to receive KCERP sub-awards.
- Finally, Act! developed the KCERP baseline survey budget, terms of reference for delivery and the survey. The baseline survey aims to determine the initial values of key result indicators, serving as a foundation for tracking progress during mid-term and end-line evaluations

Usalama Ni Uaminifu – Enhancing Trust Between the Community and the Police in Northern Kenya

Principal recipient: *Regional Pastoralists Peace Link (RPPL)*

Sub-recipients: *Action for Sustainable Change (AFOSC) and African Child Development Organisation (ACDO)*

Counties of implementation: *Garissa, Isiolo and Mandera*

During the reporting period, the programme made progress towards the following outcomes:

- Community policing structures are strengthened to be sustainable and better address community safety concerns, including terrorism
- Trust and relations between security organs and communities are improved
- Security actors are made more aware and can better address community security needs

Community policing structures are strengthened to be sustainable and better address community safety concerns, including terrorism.

Awareness campaigns in schools and madrassas (with a total of 775 students) and through radio sessions in Isiolo, Garissa, and Mandera have significantly improved communication and fostered direct engagement between community members and security actors. The CEF meeting in Mandera facilitated the reorganisation of pillar heads and the establishment of a new secretariat tasked to streamline the coordination efforts further. The discussions on community policing structures like *nyumba kumi* in Garissa County indicated a need to focus on enhancing their effectiveness.

Key details of activities:

- Five radio sessions (two in Isiolo, two in Garissa, and one in Mandera) brought together security actors and community representatives to discuss security concerns and disseminate campaign messages on crucial topics such as human rights in law enforcement, community-police relations, and countering misinformation. Community members, particularly those in remote areas, could voice their concerns and interact directly with security actors during the sessions.
- School and madrasa visits countered the influence of violent extremism and criminal groups by redefining the roles of security personnel in collaboration with community and faith-based leaders and enhancing community-security relations. A one-day visit to a madrasa in Isiolo reached 205 students (115 males and 90 females). In Garissa, a school visit targeted 228 participants (95 females and 133 males). In Mandera, the school visit engaged 342 participants (170 males and 172 females).
- Additionally, the consortium supported the security component of the CEFs. The Isiolo CEF met with their counterparts from Samburu County and addressed the critical security challenges persisting along their shared border. The programme also supported the organisation of a quarterly CEF meeting, targeting 30 members (21 males, 9 Females), which evaluated pillar implementation progress, mapped stakeholder activities, and identified priority operational areas to enhance security and community collaboration. Mandera SR, AFOSC implemented their first CEF engagement through the project, with the 30 participants (25 males and 5 females) engaged in improving coordination and collaboration among diverse stakeholders in the county's PCVE efforts

Trust and relations between security organs and communities are improved

The sporting cultural events (with 605 participants) and dialogue sessions (with 360 participants) continued to foster a more open and trusting environment between security actors and the community members, enabling candid discussions on sensitive security issues. A meta-perception survey on empathy, trust and inter-group perceptions between the community and the police who participated in the programme showed an improvement in their trust, empathy and perceptions of each other compared to control groups.

Key details of activities:

- Sport and cultural activities aimed at fostering trust, collaboration and mutual respect between communities and security officers were organised in the three counties. Two sporting and creative arts activities took place in Isiolo, bringing together 245 participants (174 males

and 71 females). In Garissa, sports activities engaged 120 participants (117 males and 3 females), and the culture & arts activity recorded 120 participants (45 males and 75 females). Two sessions of sporting activities and creative arts in Mandera were attended by 240 participants (148 males and 92 females).

- Dialogue forums between security actors and community members created platforms for direct engagement, also fostering trust and collaboration. In Isiolo, 120 Somali and Samburu communities and security actors (95 males and 25 females) participated in the dialogue. Two dialogue sessions in Garissa had 120 participants (49 males and 71 females). In Mandera, the two dialogue sessions also engaged 120 participants (100 were males and 20 were females).
- 45 security actors and community members (42 males and three females) participated in validation workshops on early warning, early response (EWER) mechanisms. 365 (196 males and 169 females) community members and 92 security actors (73 males and 10 females) across Mandera, Isiolo and Garissa were trained to enhance their capacity to implement the EWER mechanism. Finally, three coordination meetings with 180 participants (137 males and 43 females), including senior security actors, community leaders, and local civil society organisations (CSOS), discussed ways of improving the functioning of the EWER centres.

Security actors are made more aware and can better address community security needs

The community outreaches resulted in active community participation, including diverse representation from religious leaders, elders, youth, women, persons with disabilities and local leaders. The outreach engagement took place across Isiolo, Mandera and Garissa counties and aimed at enhancing trust and collaboration between the community and security actors through open discussions on key security concerns. The discussions addressed issues such as crime prevention, the importance of parental engagement in preventing youth delinquency and radicalisation, the need for legal mechanisms to resolve land disputes, the importance of regular meetings and structured feedback to strengthen community-security relationships.

Supporting Initiatives in Rehabilitation and Reintegration (SIRR)

Principal Recipient: *Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS)*

Sub-Recipients: *Centre for Sustainable Conflict Resolution (CSCR), Human Rights Agenda (HURIA), Rights Organisation for Advocacy and Development (ROAD) and Regional Pastoralists Peace Link (RPPL)*

Counties of implementation: *Garissa, Isiolo, Kwale, Lamu, Mombasa, Uasin Gishu*

During the reporting period, the programme made progress towards the following outcomes:

- Disengaged clients have improved mental health and well-being through comprehensive R&R services, safely and effectively
- An effective community support network for reintegrating the disengaged, including increased acceptance and awareness, reduced shame/victimisation
- Psychology professionals are well-capacitated and share a network to effectively, timely assist trauma- and violence-informed care (TVIC), rehabilitation of the clients

- Security actors, criminal justice system (CJS), and NCTC are sensitised and coordinated in rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) and preventing violent extremism (PVE) Efforts

Disengaged clients have improved mental health and well-being through comprehensive R&R services, safely and effectively

Psychosocial support and counselling sessions targeting 102 people to improve mental health and support community reintegration through comprehensive R&R services.

Key details of the activities:

- Six clients (one female and five males) participated in deep dialogue sessions, a structured one-on-one engagement that enables trained facilitators to engage with clients (former violent extremists or radicalised individuals) on various theological, ideological, political and socio-cultural topics. The objective was to deconstruct harmful ideologies and cultivate pathways for peaceful reintegration.
- Family empowerment sessions provided a foundational platform for healing, with 42 participants (32 female, 10 male) addressing stigma, trauma and systemic vulnerabilities. Youth participants emphasised economic hardships as a barrier to reintegration, while older adults, particularly in Lamu, highlighted intergenerational neglect and substance abuse as radicalisation risks.
- Psychosocial support sessions for survivors of terror attacks brought together 36 participants (15 female, 21 male) across Garissa, Lamu and Mombasa.
- Group counselling sessions further strengthened peer networks among 18 participants (eight female, 10 male) from Kwale and Mombasa. Youth in Kwale's arts programmes and Mombasa's small business initiatives demonstrated how creative and economic outlets can mitigate recidivism risks.

There is an effective community support network for reintegrating the disengaged, including increased acceptance and awareness, reduced shame/victimisation

Significant progress was made in this reporting period towards fostering effective community support networks that will be essential for sustainable R&R of disengaged individuals in all five counties. These gains were achieved through messaging development (involving 145 people) and community sensitisation activities (reaching 620 people) conducted during the reporting quarter. The initiatives aimed to generate grassroots resilience against violent extremism and cultivate a holistic approach toward acceptance and healing in affected communities.

Key details of the activities:

- Enhanced strategic communication skills to support R&R efforts, focusing on ethical messaging, CVE narratives and promoting inclusive reintegration. The training targeted 50 community and faith leaders (35 males and 15 females) in Isiolo, 27 (22 males, 13 females) in Mombasa, 35 (15 males, 20 females) in Garissa, and 33 (22 males, 13 females) in Kwale.
- Over 620 individuals participated in community engagements across the five counties (approximately 55% male and 45% female). This cross-section of faith leaders, youth representatives, local administrators and civil society actors contributed to a shared understanding of R&R.

Psychology professionals are well-capacitated and share a network to effectively, timely assist in the trauma- and violence-informed care (TVIC) and rehabilitation of the clients

Efforts to establish a robust and well-capacitated network of psychological professionals and paraprofessionals saw significant progress. The mapping exercises across Kwale, Mombasa and Lamu counties identified 153 psychosocial actors, comprising 47 professionals and 106 paraprofessionals. Among these participants, around 124 were youth, 88 were women, and 82 were men, highlighting a diverse and engaged group essential for effective psychosocial service delivery. The long-term objective is to equip these actors with the skills and systems necessary to support TVIC and the rehabilitation of survivors and individuals disengaging from violent extremism.

Security actors, criminal justice system (CJS), and NCTC are sensitized and coordinated in rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) and preventing violent extremism (PVE) efforts

Consultative meetings aimed to equip security actors with knowledge on R&R and foster discussions on preventing radicalisation took place across Kwale, Mombasa and Lamu. In Mombasa, the meeting brought together 26 participants (12 males, 14 females), 24 (13 males, 11 females) in Lamu, and 21 (17 males and four females) in Kwale. Key participants included Assistant/Deputy County Commissioners, Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Peace and Cohesion Chairpersons, members of peace and community policing committees and village elders. These actors now possess an increased understanding of R&R processes and are better positioned to champion community-based prevention efforts. The participation of influential local figures ensured that PVE messaging and R&R strategies were diffused through authoritative and trusted voices.

STORY OF CHANGE

Before November 2024, Tullu Roba village in East Division, Wabera Ward, faced a deteriorating security situation that impacted its social fabric. The residents reported a worrying increase in petty theft and a surge in drug and substance abuse. Compounding these challenges, the village witnessed a decline in school attendance, with many youth dropping out and spending their days loitering aimlessly. The cumulative effect was a community grappling with feelings of insecurity, eroding trust, and a sense of powerlessness regarding the future of the village’s younger generation.



Abdirahman Ali, a community leader in Tullu Roba village, giving his remarks in one of the programme’s dialogue

In response to these growing concerns, RPPL facilitated *barazas* (community outreach events similar to town hall meetings) in Tullu Roba. The *barazas* provided a vital platform for open dialogue, allowing community members to articulate their security challenges directly to authorities. The collaborative engagement led to the development of realistic, locally-owned solutions. Key commitments included: Implementing regular evening security patrols involving police and community members; holding local chiefs accountable for identifying and facilitating the re-enrollment of school dropouts; empowering *nyumba kumi* members with enhanced roles in intelligence gathering and proactive community safety initiatives; and encouraging parents and guardians to enroll out-of-school youth in vocational training programmes to build skills and reduce

idleness. The interventions yielded tangible results. The community members and local leaders reported a noticeable decline in incidents of petty theft. This is directly attributed to the increased visibility of security patrols and the heightened vigilance of the empowered *nyumba kumi* members.

A significant shift in the relationship between residents and security forces was realised. As faith leader Abdulrahman Ali noted, "We now feel more connected to the police. Before, we feared reporting cases, but now we are part of the solution." This improved cooperation is fundamental to sustained security. While long-term data on school re-enrollment and vocational training uptake is still being gathered, the initial security improvements have fostered a more optimistic outlook within the community. The feeling of helplessness is gradually being replaced by a sense of agency and shared responsibility. The Tullu Roba experience underscores the effectiveness of inclusive dialogue and community-led security initiatives.

PHOTOS



A group discussion on the role of community members in the R&R efforts (credits: CHRIPS)



Dialogue forums between security actors and Community Members (Credits: RPPL)



The County PVE Model Bill pre-validation workshop (Credits: Act!)



Local Radio Sessions to Disseminate developed campaign awareness Contents (Credits: RPPL)

THE WAY FORWARD

- The KCERP programme will select the first bunch of CBOs to be awarded grants aimed at PCVE.

Principal Grant Recipients:

- Act, Change, Transform (ACT!), Core Funding Mechanism Round 3
- Regional Pastoralists Peace Link (RPPL), Core Funding Mechanism Round 2
- Centre for Human Rights and Policy Studies (CHRIPS), Core Funding Mechanism Round 2