

# Community Engagement in Counter Terrorism Measures and National Security in Garissa County, Kenya

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1305000198>

Received: 10 May 2026; Accepted: 15 May 2026; Published: 09 June 2026

## ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effectiveness of community engagement in promoting national security analyzed the influence of intelligence-sharing mechanisms on the effectiveness of counter-terrorism efforts in Garissa County in Kenya. This study was guided by two theories namely; Deterrence and Human security theories. This study adopted an exploratory research design. The study targeted participants who included Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) personnel and National Police Service (NPS) officers and Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) staff members together with county officials and religious leaders and civil society members and residents who lived in terrorism-affected areas. This study employed stratified purposive sampling technique to identify the various categories of respondents. A total of 65 study participants were selected for field interviews. The research instrument used were interview guides, structured questionnaires and documentary analysis. Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended questions underwent thematic content analysis and was presented narratively to provide detailed perspectives from security personnel. The study observed that community engagement through public meetings, policing initiatives, and awareness programs was found to empower residents in detecting terrorist threats. The study found that intelligence-sharing mechanisms improved coordination, threat detection, situational awareness, and public trust thereby enhancing overall counter-terrorism effectiveness. The study recommended the need to promote sustainable community engagement for security resilience to contain terrorist attacks in Garissa County.

**Keywords:** Surveillance Technology; Intelligence Sharing; National Security; Terrorism

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Terrorism has transformed from being a local insurgency into a worldwide danger which needs more than one nation to combat it. Counter-terrorism operations serve as essential components for both national security and international security. The United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) and African Union (AU) organizations establish frameworks for nations to work together by sharing intelligence and conducting joint operations to fight terrorism. The initiatives combine military actions with humanitarian assistance programs to tackle the fundamental reasons behind social economic problems which include poverty and political instability and underdevelopment. Globalization has increased the worldwide distribution of extremist beliefs while it has allowed terrorist organizations to function throughout different countries. The modern counter-terrorism framework needs advanced monitoring systems together with intelligence networks and international partnerships which lead to human rights issues through their implementation of restrictions on individual rights. The United States created the Department of Homeland Security together with the USA PATRIOT Act because of the September 11 attacks which expanded their capacity for surveillance and intelligence sharing and military operations in foreign countries. The operational efficiency of these methods creates challenges because they need to address both ethical and legal issues.

Countries develop their own strategies based on specific needs of their respective situations. The Chinese government uses state-centered policies to implement surveillance and border control measures in Xinjiang because it believes these measures will help prevent extremist threats, despite receiving international condemnation for human rights abuses (Shan, 2023). The Nigerian military fights Boko Haram through

operations and programs that address radicalization, which the Multi-national Joint Task Force (MNJTF) uses to do its work, but the country needs to overcome three major obstacles which are poverty and corruption and weak institutions to achieve its goals (Ogunyemi, 2022; Akinola & Olumide, 2023). The examples of Libya and Sudan demonstrate how governance affects terrorism because terrorist groups thrive in areas with unstable governments and no official power while international partnerships and government reforms provide solutions to some extent (Zoubir, 2023; Tarek, 2022; Elhaj, 2023).

Al-Shabaab operates as the terrorist organization which promotes violent acts throughout Somalia and its border region with Kenya. The Kenyan government responds to Garissa County through military operations and intelligence-driven initiatives and border protection and community development programs (Mwangi, 2020; Wairimu & Gitau, 2022). The preventive approach uses education and employment and local community activities to fight radicalization but the process faces obstacles because of inter-community distrust and resource shortages and inadequate monitoring systems (Kassim, 2023). The presence of corruption and logistical difficulties and human rights violations creates extra problems for organizations that work to stop terrorism.

Kenya has improved domestic coordination and regional partnerships but faces technological and inter-agency challenges (Elhaj, 2023; Ogunyemi, 2022). Most assessments focus on national strategies and urban centers, leaving high-risk peripheral areas like Garissa under-evaluated, creating gaps in security understanding (Mwangi, 2020). Garissa's strategic location, frequent terrorist attacks, and socio-economic weaknesses make it a critical context for studying counter-terrorism effectiveness. Research is needed to assess how preventive measures, response systems, community involvement, and intelligence practices influence national security and inform policy improvements.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Terrorism continues to endanger national security despite dedicated efforts against terrorism which nations and regions and the entire world have implemented. The research at the continental level shows that extremist groups increase their presence because of socio-economic disparities and weak government systems and political unrest which prevent successful counter-terrorism operations (Akinola & Olumide, 2023). The majority of existing research focuses on large-scale social patterns while omitting to study the impact of counter-terrorism operations on local communities which experience the highest levels of terrorism.

The Horn of Africa studies show that counter-terrorism operations focus on military methods because they do not sufficiently involve community-based systems and they lack effective systems for regional coordination (Elmi, 2022; Kassim, 2023). The regional security studies provide valuable information about security systems but they fail to recognize how local political conditions and community attitudes affect the implementation of security methods.

Multiple studies have investigated national counter-terrorism systems in Kenya through their assessment of intelligence sharing mechanisms and military combat operations and institutional transformation efforts. Wairimu and Gitau (2022) demonstrate that security improvements in Kenya through stronger military forces face ongoing challenges because of corruption and human rights violations and reduced public confidence. Garissa County, located near the Somalia border, remains highly vulnerable to attacks by Al-Shabaab. However, there is limited empirical research examining how counter-terrorism measures operate in this context, including the effectiveness of preventive strategies, community engagement, and intelligence coordination. The absence of research studies in specific locations creates an essential knowledge gap which prevents the development of security and community resilience solutions based on evidence from local contexts. This research addressed these gaps by investigating the effectiveness of counter-terrorism operations in Garissa County, with particular focus on community-based programs, preventive measures, response systems, and intelligence-sharing practices, thereby contributing to more targeted and effective national security strategies.

## **Specific Objective of the Study**

To assess the effectiveness of community engagement in promoting national security in Garissa County, Kenya.

## Significance of the Study

The research study establishes essential elements needed to create effective counter-terrorism operations and security measures needed for Garissa County in Kenya which experiences attack risks because of its unsecured border with Somalia and its deficient defense systems. The study will assess existing policies and provide legislators and security agencies with evidence-based insights to develop more effective strategies, thereby strengthening local and national security. The research emphasizes the vital function of community participation in establishing peace and security, which traditional counter-terrorism methods fail to recognize as important. The study demonstrates how community members can bring about their desired results through public advocacy work in which they participate with government officials to create security measures that uphold their fundamental rights and personal freedoms. The study adds theoretical and practical knowledge to the field through its research, which develops new counter-terrorism methods needed in Kenya and settings that match its conditions. Study findings enhance regional cross-border security partnerships and inform public and academic discourse, integrating ground realities with best practices in counter-terrorism.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Li and Zhang (2021) examined China's neighborhood watch programs and digital and AI-enabled law enforcement technologies and the community's role in security surveillance. According to the research, community surveillance programs in China enhance security because communities can capture and relay changes in their environments, giving authorities quicker feedback to adaptive threats. However, concerns about privacy and surveillance overreach from authorities were also discussed. This project, unlike China's surveillant-centric approach, will be focused on grassroots in Garissa County, emphasizing human rather than technological community policing.

In the research by Adebayo and Yusuf (2020) on community policing as an aspect of crime prevention in Nigeria, in particular Lagos and Kano States, the problem of collaboration between the community and the security agents was the main focus. The research illustrated the collaboration of the community and security agents and the reduction of crime and the increased public confidence in the security agents. However, the problems of community policing, such as the corruption issues, lack of adequate finances, and the irregular implementation of community policing policies were highlighted. This project, unlike Nigeria, will focus on community collaboration in Garissa County and on the more broad national security aspects, such as counter-terrorism and border security, rather than the focus on crime in community policing.

El-Fitouri (2022) focused on the influence tribal alliances have on the governance of security on Post-Gaddafi Libya, where he discusses the mediation of conflicts, the provision of security, and the role of elders of the tribes in governmental stabilization initiatives. Studies have suggested that tribal networks serve as informal security agents in localities where governmental structures are weak. This does not mean, however, that their efficacy is not compromised due to conflicts among tribes and political ineptitude. Unlike Libya which is characterized by informal and tribal security, this research is going to assess formally organized community engagement activities in the case of Garissa County and specifically through programs like Nyumba Kumi and inter-agency collaboration.

Kabwe (2019) examined the effectiveness of community self-driven initiatives in sustaining peace as a means of addressing security challenges in the eastern DRC which is characterized by the presence of militias and armed groups within a high-risk environment. Their research found that Local Peace Committees and church peacebuilding initiatives have contributed to the alleviation of localized security challenges, particularly in the realm of ethnic conflict. However, the studies noted that these initiatives suffer a great deal of absence of the state, which negatively affects the initiatives' capacity to produce durable peace settlements. Unlike the DRC where community engagement is primarily conflict responsive, this project will focus on developing a proactive community security framework in Garissa County, which is highly characterized by radicalization and cross-border security threats.

Hassan (2021) focused on clan-based security strategies and their contribution to counter-terrorism efforts in Somalia, and specifically, Mogadishu. It was reported in the literature that clan elders are important in protecting

the community by sharing intelligence, preventing Al-Shabaab recruitment, and resolving conflicts. However, the research noted the problem of split clan loyalty and the potential to hinder cooperative security. This research will analyze Community Security Models in Garissa County, with particular focus on community organizational systems, rather than clan-based security systems. This is in contrast to Somalia where most security efforts are heavily reliant on clan systems.

Wanjiru (2021) investigated the impact of Nyumba Kumi on community security in Mombasa. The research showed that Nyumba Kumi system has advanced community watchfulness while increasing crime reporting and establishing better connections between residents and law enforcement. The study identified three main difficulties which included inadequate resources and inconsistent operations and political interference. The research will examine how residents participate in Garissa County which faces different security threats from terrorist activities and radicalization and border security issues while the earlier research studied security patterns in urban areas.

The reviewed literature shows multiple essential research areas which require further investigation. Li and Zhang 2021 examined Chinese security systems which used advanced technology and surveillance techniques yet the study failed to explore methods which prioritize human needs. The research on community policing in Nigeria demonstrates that police collaboration with communities helps to reduce crime yet the study shows that corruption and insufficient funding and weak policy execution remain ongoing concerns (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2020). The security situation in Libya and Somalia depends on informal tribal and clan systems which face challenges because of internal conflicts and insufficient government coordination (El-Fitouri 2022 Hassan 2021). In the DRC community peace initiatives operate but they function as response mechanisms which need government backing to expand their operations (Kabwe 2019). The research on Nyumba Kumi in Kenya investigates urban areas while it fails to study border territories (Wanjiru 2021). This study investigates existing security gaps through its assessment of state-backed community security systems which operate in Garissa County.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study was guided by Deterrence Theory and Human Security Theory, providing complementary frameworks for analyzing counter-terrorism in Garissa County, Kenya.

The theory of deterrence started in classical criminology through the work of Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham who stated that people make decisions based on their assessment of possible outcomes. Beccaria proposed that punishment should include three main components which must be delivered to offenders in a timely and proportionate manner. Schelling demonstrated that international relations use deterrence through credible threats which enable nations to create binding agreements that stop combat between them. Deterrence theory uses rational choice to assess three punishment elements which include certainty and severity and swiftness as fundamental elements of its framework.

General deterrence demonstrates consequences publicly to prevent potential offenders, while specific deterrence targets known offenders to reduce recidivism. Targeted deterrence in counter-terrorism operations investigates the rational decision-making process of operatives and leaders through its approach which combines penalties with rewards to decrease extremist recruitment activities (Price & Forbes, 2012; Kilcullen, 2006). Deterrence theory will explain how military actions and arrests and prosecutions and sentencing impact terrorist activities in Garissa County. The operational success of security operations depends on three key factors which include credibility and fairness and community trust together with counter-radicalization programs and education and regional intelligence sharing systems.

The Human Security Theory method of security analysis turns its attention toward the well-being of individuals and communities while it defines security through seven different types of protection (UNDP 1994). The theory developed from the work of Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq who established human capabilities and poverty reduction and empowerment as the primary elements of security (Sen 1999). Human security protection of individuals against immediate threats includes capacity-building efforts which create systems to handle future risks while decreasing grievances and stopping violent extremism (Tadjbakhsh and Chenoy 2007).

Human security in counter-terrorism operations demonstrates the need for active community involvement which brings people together while dealing with fundamental social issues through standard military tactics. This framework examines how policing, education, vocational training, economic opportunities, and civic participation influence resilience against Al-Shabaab recruitment. Protective and capacity-building measures improve trust, social cohesion, and access to services, while policies that ignore local contexts risk mistrust and persistent insecurity in Garissa County.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted an exploratory research design. The study targeted participants who included Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) personnel and National Police Service (NPS) officers and Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) staff members together with county officials and religious leaders and civil society members and residents who lived in terrorism-affected areas. This study employed stratified purposive sampling technique to identify the various categories of respondents. A total of 65 study participants were selected for field interviews. The research instrument used were interview guides, structured questionnaires and documentary analysis. Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended questions underwent thematic content analysis and was presented narratively to provide detailed perspectives from security personnel. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in tables and graphs. Respondents were distributed as follows;

	Category of Informant	Sampled	%
1	Security Personnel	5	7.7%
2	Local Administrators	5	7.7%
3	Community Leaders	10	15.4%
4	Religious Leaders	10	15.4%
	Experts	5	7.7%
5	Local Population	30	46.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Response Rate

This study attained a response rate of 92.3%. Social science research requires a response rate above 80% which serves as an essential standard for research involving key informants and community-based data collection. According to Baruch and Holtom (2008), response rates above 80% are generally excellent which reduces the chances of non-response bias while improving the study results' ability to reflect actual characteristics of the population. Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014) demonstrate that high response rates help improve both the validity and reliability of survey research and qualitative studies because they ensure that researchers obtain accurate data about the target population.

## Demographic Characteristics of Informants

### Gender Distribution

The study sample consisted of 71.7% male participants and 28.3% female participants. The gender distribution of respondents has several implications for the study. The research findings reflect male perspectives particularly about security matters and leadership qualities and expert knowledge. Research findings indicate that organizations need to create systems which enable better gender representation during their leadership positions and security work and professional duties. Women need to increase their presence in these fields so that communities will make decisions which address the needs and views of men and women.

### Respondents Age Distribution

Most participants belong to early to mid-adulthood which people associate with their active participation. The 41–50 years age group contains 25% of the total population which serves as the second largest category. People in this age group usually possess expertise because they have lived in their community for an extended period

while obtaining deep knowledge about local matters and upcoming developments. The 21–30 years age group accounts for 20% of the study population which results in moderate representation of younger adults who can provide new approaches to the research problems. The 60 years and older age group makes up 13.3% of the study population while the 51 to 60 years age group has the least representation at 5%. The two groups have less membership than others but their historical knowledge and community experiences make them essential for research purposes.

### Respondents Level of Education

The largest group of respondents held secondary education at 30%, which shows that many people in the study have completed basic formal education that teaches them essential reading and math abilities. The primary education level accounts for 18.3%, while diploma and university level education each are represented by 15%, showing a moderate number of respondents with higher academic qualifications. The study group contains 13.3% of post-graduate respondents because highly educated individuals who possess specialized knowledge

<b>Effectiveness of community engagement in promoting national security in Garissa County, Kenya.</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>SD</b>
Community policing initiatives have improved national security in Garissa County.	1830.0%	2542%	58%	712%	58%	<b>2.27</b>	<b>1.24</b>
Cooperation between local communities and security agencies has helped prevent terrorism in Garissa County.	2033%	2237%	610%	813%	47%	<b>2.23</b>	<b>1.23</b>
Public participation in security meetings has enhanced early identification of security threats in Garissa County.	1525%	2847%	712%	610%	47%	<b>2.27</b>	<b>1.14</b>
Community awareness programs have increased residents' ability to report suspicious activities in Garissa County.	1728%	2643%	610%	813%	35%	<b>2.23</b>	<b>1.11</b>
Trust between community members and security agencies has strengthened national security in Garissa County.	1932%	2338%	712%	610%	58%	<b>2.25</b>	<b>1.23</b>
Engagement of local leaders in security matters has contributed to improved safety and stability in Garissa County.	2135%	2440%	58%	610%	47%	<b>2.13</b>	<b>1.18</b>

and analytical skills and informed perspectives join the research team. 8.3% of participants lacked formal education but were experienced in traditional knowledge rather than through formal school training.

### Effectiveness of Community Engagement in Promoting National Security in Garissa County

The research findings on community engagement effectiveness to achieve national security goals in Garissa County received positive evaluations from the study participants. The six statements received Likert scores with a mean range between 2.13 and 2.27 which fell into the "Agree" category. The highest mean score of 2.27 showed that participants recognized community policing initiatives and public security meeting participation as methods to improve national security and detect threats. The standard deviations extended between 1.11 and 1.24 which showed participants responded with moderate response variability while they showed consistent patterns of agreement. The findings show that residents understand how essential it is for local communities to work with security agencies and local leaders while they also recognize how awareness programs help people report suspicious activities. The data demonstrate that community engagement functions as a successful method for enhancing national security throughout the county.

The findings of this study show that community engagement plays an essential role in strengthening national security efforts in Garissa County. Community members who actively participate in security programs help organizations to detect threats at an earlier stage while their involvement creates stronger social bonds between people and improves their ability to work together. The results of this study support existing research which shows that local communities must participate actively in threat detection and security efforts to create sustainable security systems that extend beyond formal state institutions.

The main findings shows that community engagement activities improve communication channels which connect citizens with security agencies. Residents use community meetings and public forums and local reporting systems to report their intelligence about suspicious activities and new developing threats. The Skogan (2006) community policing principles which Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1998) developed show that police officers and citizens who work together reduce crime rates and solve crimes better than they do when they work separately. Local residents maintain essential knowledge about their neighborhoods which security systems require to function effectively. Through their involvement in reporting systems residents become force multipliers who help agencies identify and solve security issues before they develop. The study shows that such engagement not only improves operational intelligence but also fosters a culture of vigilance and civic responsibility.

The study findings demonstrate that social networks create powerful community resilience which enables groups to solve their problems. Putnam 2000 shows that community members can work together through networks which build trust and enable mutual exchanges and communication. The security programs which Garissa County communities implemented create better systems that help enforce their security operations by sharing vital data with law enforcement agencies. Social capital protects public safety through shared social norms and responsibilities which create collective efficacy. The research proves that social trust together with community cooperation helps people identify security threats while they create protection strategies.

The study demonstrated that security agencies must establish trust relationships with local communities to build operational relationships. Security officers who attend public forums and dialogue meetings become more approachable to residents which leads to better information sharing between the two groups. Tyler's primary assertion about legitimacy and procedural justice as vital factors which enable effective police work receives support through this finding. Citizens are more likely to comply with laws and cooperate with authorities when they perceive fairness and respect and transparency in the actions of law enforcement. Sunshine and Tyler (2003) discovered that public trust in law enforcement directly determines citizens' willingness to support policing efforts.

The Garissa study demonstrates that engagement initiatives which include dialogue forums and community meetings. The Garissa study demonstrates that these initiatives lead to decreased public fear and mistrust, which helps security agencies build trust through transparent and accountable operations. The research observes that dialogue forums serve as essential tools for reducing social conflicts and establishing peaceful relationships between different groups. The three security forums function as organized platforms which enable local residents and security leaders to address their security issues while sharing their apprehensions and finding solutions for their disputes. Lederach (1997) explains that peaceful sustainable solutions develop through active community participation in conflict identification and resolution processes. The dialogue forums in Garissa serve two purposes they help prevent conflicts and they create a system of governance which enables citizens to take part in security operations while their social bonds with one another grow stronger.

The combination of youth engagement programs emerged as the essential method which successfully stopped both criminal activity and extremist movements. The youth population of Garissa County faces difficulties because they have few opportunities and experience social exclusion. The programs which use sports and mentorship and educational activities and awareness campaigns create positive opportunities which help people stay away from criminal and extremist groups. The discovery connects with Mercy Corps (2015) research which shows that youth unemployment together with social exclusion and marginalization drives people to engage in violent extremism. The research of Krueger and Malečková (2003) shows that social and political exclusion serves as a pathway which leads people to become radicalized. Youth energy transforms into useful activities when they participate in community development activities and mentorship programs and civic initiatives. The

youth develop a stronger sense of belonging which leads to higher social responsibility through their active participation in community activities. The development process creates a reduction of illegal activities while it establishes permanent social stability.

The traditional leadership system which includes both elders and religious officials creates community standards that validate security programs. The study found that their involvement increases community acceptance of security programs and mediates disputes which serve as a link between formal institutions and local populations. Albrecht (2010) emphasizes traditional leadership as a crucial element for achieving peace and maintaining social order in African communities. Religious leaders also serve as influential actors in countering extremist ideologies. Botha (2014) demonstrates how religious leaders use their authority to shape public perceptions while they combat radical beliefs through educational programs and dialogue. Community organizations can build their ability to face challenges through leader participation which also promotes social unity and increases public trust in security programs.

The study found that researchers successful to identify criminal and extremist threats needed to protect vulnerable populations. The process of identifying warning signs starts when teachers and youth mentors and religious leaders and community members' work together to support at-risk people who need help. Horgan (2008) emphasizes that early intervention, targeting social and psychological factors contributing to radicalization, significantly reduces the likelihood of extremism. The human security methods in Garissa which use mentorship and educational programs and active monitoring show that they function as essential support systems for traditional law enforcement methods.

The research shows that positive social connections between community members lead to better crime and extremism prevention abilities of the community. Communities that develop trust and cooperation through their social networks achieve better results in identifying and reporting threats to public safety. This theory supports the social disorganization theory of Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) which shows that community trust and social bonds between members lead to stronger collective efficacy among citizens. Social cohesion at high levels creates informal social control systems which work together with official police operations to establish solidarity networks as essential elements of complete security defense systems.

The implementation of educational programs together with awareness initiatives proved to be successful methods which helped build community ties that support security operations. The school programs together with activities at community centers and public events provide residents with information about potential threats and the correct methods for reporting those threats. The United Nations Development Program (2017) demonstrates how public educational programs help people build resilience while decreasing their chances of becoming violent extremists. The programs enable communities to establish their own security systems through knowledge advancement which decreases knowledge misunderstanding and produces educational security systems that protect human security.

Women's active participation in security operations turns out to be a critical element which helps organizations achieve better security results. Their family and community roles enable them to recognize both changes in human behavior and new potential dangers. The process of decision-making in security committees and public initiatives requires diverse perspectives which citizens obtain through participation in dialogue forums. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 juncture establishes women's essential role which they maintain for peacebuilding operations and security works. Anderlini (2007) notes that women often serve as mediators and early detectors of radicalization or criminal behavior. The Garissa study proves that women who participate in security programs together with their communities create superior communication systems which build resilience through gender-based security methods.

Security agencies need to work together with community structures for successful operations. Community security committees and neighborhood patrols and joint meetings create formalized platforms for cooperative information sharing. Bayley (2001) asserts that effective policing requires partnerships between law enforcement and community organizations. The partnerships in Garissa create shared safety responsibilities which enhance intelligence operations and establish community ownership of security responsibilities. The success of community engagement initiatives depends on cultural sensitivity as a vital element. The youth develop a

stronger sense of belonging which leads to higher social responsibility through their active participation in community activities. The development process creates a reduction of illegal activities while it establishes permanent social stability.

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The work of civil society organizations (CSOs) provides essential support to state security efforts. Social organizations which include NGOs and community-based groups work to solve social problems by getting community members involved in their peacebuilding activities. The Global Counterterrorism Forum (2015) shows how CSOs help prevent violent extremism by their work to solve security problems and build community resistance. The Garissa CSOs use their outreach programs to help communities speak out while they solve security problems by connecting official authorities with people who face discrimination. The process of engaging local communities enables communities to develop better protection against security threats.

The framework proposed by Norris et al (2008) shows that empowered communities can build capabilities to face challenges which they need to handle. Communities develop the ability to deal with security threats because of their strong social ties and their capacity to work together through their effective communication systems. The security measures should treat community health as their main goal while they undertake enforcement operations according to human security theory which focuses on safeguarding people and enabling their development.

The findings can be understood through two different theoretical frameworks which include deterrence theory and human security theory. Deterrence theory suggests that potential offenders are less likely to engage in criminal or extremist behavior if the perceived risk of detection and punishment is high. The community of Garissa establishes social accountability through its reporting mechanisms and public forums which enable partnerships with local leaders to create a deterrent effect. The establishment of youth engagement programs together with active participation from elders and religious leaders creates better monitoring systems which enable better prediction of outcomes thus improving law enforcement efforts to prevent crime. Human security theory establishes its security framework through the protection of people which includes their well-being and social unity as well as their empowerment.

The study shows that engagement programs lead to better trust between people while reducing tension between different social groups and building trust within the community. The programs which focus on youth and women together with programs for marginalized groups create solutions which protect against threats that extremist networks can use to target their victims. The community resilience building process uses dialogue forums and mentorship programs together with public education campaigns to create inclusive environments which improve communication while enabling early intervention. The human security mechanisms use empowerment and participatory methods to create security results which remain effective over time.

Deterrence and human security demonstrate that successful security outcomes require both preventive and protective measures. The process of deterrence protects against criminal activities and extremist activities which simultaneously enables human security programs to help communities build social connections and develop mutual trust and establish effective defense mechanisms. The case study of Garissa County shows that sustainable national security only succeeds when communities work together with security forces and civil society organizations and local government officials. The combination of youth and women and religious authorities and traditional leaders who participate in community activities creates legitimate community standing which both supports social standards and maintains community cohesion. The security efforts achieve greater success through early intervention which combines with educational initiatives that operate in harmony with cultural understanding.

The study concluded that community engagement serves as the fundamental element which supports national security in Garissa County. Communities create social bonds through their interaction between deterrence methods and human security methods while they also protect their residents from criminal activities and extremist threats. The research demonstrates how security systems should include community members because their active participation with state agencies creates essential security measures which lead to lasting peace and safety.

## CONCLUSION

The study found that community engagement plays a crucial role in promoting national security in Garissa County. The public security meetings and community policing initiatives together with awareness programs enable residents to improve their capability to detect threats and report them while maintaining overall safety. The process of building trust and social harmony through communication develops between local communities and security agencies and traditional leaders and religious authorities and civil society organizations. The participation of youth and women showed major positive effects because it helped identify threats early while their participation built social responsibility and kept them away from criminal and extremist activities. The three methods which create resilience and decrease social conflicts and develop group effectiveness were identified through dialogue forums and mentorship programs and public education campaigns.

The study showed that community engagement works together with formal security systems because it increases detection and punishment capacity which follows deterrence theory and human security systems empower residents to secure their communities while protecting their vulnerable members and establishing social bonds. The sustainable national security of Garissa County requires active community participation which security agencies and local leaders need to establish social connections and cultural awareness through participatory programs that lead to permanent peace and successful security results. The research discovered that community participation serves as an essential element for establishing both crime prevention and extremism protection strategies.

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