



**GLOBAL  
INITIATIVE**  
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL  
ORGANIZED CRIME



# Resilience to organized crime at the community level

ASSESSMENT MATRIX

**NAKURU**

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# INTRODUCTION

Nakuru is a growing city in the Rift Valley in central Kenya. It is the capital of Nakuru County, with roughly 570 000 inhabitants in a county of 2.1 million. Nakuru is considered the de facto political capital of Kenya,<sup>1</sup> which will have national elections in August 2022. In 2013, the Jubilee Alliance was created here when politicians Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto (now president and deputy president) joined forces. They again announced a joint ticket in 2017 in Nakuru ahead of general elections.<sup>2</sup> 2022 is an election year and the city and county are staples of campaign tours, and the region is also a sought-after location for votes. The gang problem is not divorced from political needs and electioneering.

Nakuru has experienced high levels of crime for some time and multiple gangs exist across the city. Low-income areas such as Kivumbini, Flamingo and Bondeni are hotspots for petty crime and mobile money scams. Popularly known as 'slums', these areas are characterized by informal housing, lack of running water and poor sanitation. Many youths in these areas grow up experiencing crime and, in the hope of improving their lives, engage in petty crime and then advance into armed robbery as they grow older. Communities live with criminal activity such as snatching, mobile money fraud, extortion, gang wars and disruption of public meetings.

The following analysis is based on over twenty interviews and focus groups carried out in Nakuru town, focusing on areas where gang activity is prevalent. The participants come from a range of community-led groups, from NGOs to self-organizing neighbourhood groups to churches and mosques. Areas of expertise include journalism and media; youth empowerment, including a range of initiatives from IT training to arts to mediation; women's issues; community health and mental health, including reproductive rights and issues that affect girls; the arts; self-defence and community-led security initiatives (Nyumba Kumi); business; community activism; and anti-violence and human rights work.



# PART 1:

## THE SITUATION IN THE COMMUNITY

Criminal markets and organized criminal groups	Respondents
<p><b>What would you define as 'illegal markets' or 'organized criminal activity' in the community?</b></p>	<p>As stated above, respondents mostly referred to gang dynamics rather than illicit markets. Gangs are identified by name and it is known where they operate.</p> <p>Multiple types of gang crime were identified, not all of which relate to an illicit market, such as harassment and petty theft. More loosely, 'gangs run illegal goods and services in the neighbourhood'.</p> <p>The most often mentioned illegal activities include drugs (type unspecified), petty theft, harassment, sex trafficking of children and girls (local houses used as brothels), child labour (household labour), cyber scams or cybercrime (referring to M-Pesa scams), house break-ins, theft, robbery, mugging, harassment and extortion and the sale of unauthorized mobile phones, electronics and auto spare parts.</p> <p>Other crimes mentioned less frequently were fraud, gang-related murder, sexual and gender-based violence, rape, kidnapping and drugging women and selling sexually explicit photos of them.</p>
<p><b>What types of groups would you consider criminal groups in your community? How many different groups operate in the community?</b></p> <p><b>What illegal activities do they do?</b></p>	<p>Most respondents listed a combination of the gangs, depending on their area within Nakuru.</p> <p>The Confirm group was named as a network whose hierarchy and membership is not known but is widespread and mostly engaged in mobile money scams using the online banking app M-Pesa.</p> <p>Widely known gangs include Watzed, Kipyua, Kizazi, Wayz, Wakali, Wakali Wao, 47, Mauti and Gaza. Other gangs were identified by location: Kanyon, Kivumbini, Lakeview, Flamingo, Rhonda, Freearea, Kiratina, London, Kaptembwa and Gioto dumpsite.</p> <p>Respondents also considered politicians, rogue police, al-Shabaab informants, drug users and street boys as criminal groups.</p> <p>It is widely felt that most gangs are local and have a degree of territorial control, except for Mungiki and Confirm, which are more widespread. Some gangs include foreigners or operate with allegiance to foreign gangs or transnational links but are local, such as those who deal drugs. Some are connected to gangs in places like Nairobi, Mathare and Kayole. The local gangs are also connected to politicians at the national level.</p> <p>Activities related to al-Shabaab include foreign links.</p>
<p><b>Is the activity considered illegal by community members? Is there a parallel legal trade? Is it socially acceptable?</b></p> <p><b>Is there local demand, or is your area primarily a transit area?</b></p>	<p>Respondents said that gang activities like illicit drug use and dealing in stolen goods are generally not seen as socially acceptable – but also indicated that local demand is there. A local demand for illicit drugs was identified. There is also local demand for stolen goods and illegal 'backdoor services' that avoid paying taxes, licences and overhead. Or items are obtained illegally (theft) and resold. Illegal buying and selling of fuel is socially acceptable.</p> <p>Nakuru is not a predominant transit area, but gangs do hold inventory for others, such as stolen cars, illicit drugs and other goods.</p> <p>The community does not view mobile money scams as illegal, as there is no Kenyan law that directly addresses them. People are also made to believe that online money theft is 'clever' and, if someone is duped, it's their fault. The only time they consider it illegal is when Confirm gang members start killing each other.</p>
<p><b>How easily can groups access weapons? Do gang members carry arms openly?</b></p> <p><b>What kinds of arms do groups use: knives, handguns, automatic weapons or small arms?</b></p>	<p>Most said it is easy for them to acquire weapons, especially crude weapons. Knives and handguns were most noted, along with knives and crude metal weapons, screwdrivers, hammers, pangas, machetes, jembe sticks and pliers. One respondent mentioned syringes as a weapon.</p> <p>Gang members can get guns through illegal trade, which many are involved in, or they can rent weapons from other gangs or law enforcement. Respondents stated that gangs carry weapons openly when they want to intimidate but not otherwise.</p>



Criminal markets and organized criminal groups	Respondents
<p><b>Is a particular age/gender/ethno-linguistic group affected more than others?</b></p>	<p>Respondents said that young boys and men who join gangs are most affected, offering various age ranges between 15 and 35 years old.</p> <p>Others said that women and youth are the most negatively affected, noting that teenage girls suffer from sexual and gender-based violence and pregnancy.</p>
<p><b>Is there a livelihood (or other) benefit from engaging in the criminal market?</b></p>	<p>Most said that the gangs provide a sense of belonging, security and protection from other gangs.</p> <p>The second most common benefit cited was economic. The gangs ‘earn money easily’. Those involved have higher living standards, dress nicely and have motorcycles or can rent cars. ‘They have flashy lifestyles.’</p> <p>Others saw the economic benefit as needs-based: ‘Unemployed youth get daily bread here.’ Criminal income provides food and access to education by covering school fees.</p> <p>Second-hand dealers benefit by receiving stolen goods at very low prices and reselling them.</p> <p>There are conflicting opinions about how illicit trade affects local businesses. One person said that motorbike operators benefit from rentals but a motorbike shop owner said, ‘We are not able to offer our services because every motorbike rider is suspected of being a thief.’</p>
<p><b>To what extent do the groups control territory or the local economy?</b></p>	<p>It was widely stated that the gangs are territorial but some, such as Flamingo and Gioto, have stronger territorial control than others.</p> <p>All those who responded to these questions said that the groups take money from community members through ‘taxation’ or bribery and they have local political influence.</p> <p>Very few said the groups provide financial services themselves, play a role in providing services the government normally would, or that there are areas where the state cannot enter.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Every respondent identified organized crime in the community in the same way: gangs and their activities. No single illicit market, such as drug trafficking, was overwhelmingly identified. Respondents named gangs as the issue and then set out to explain the crimes that gangs are involved in, some of which could be categorized as illicit markets and others as criminal activity carried out by organized criminal groups.

Both genders pointed to the youth as most affected by criminal groups, noting that children as young as 12 are involved in gangs.

Many of the men interviewed understood the illegal markets, with some calling it a ‘micro-economy’. Men also recognized that there has been some normalization of illegal markets, such as buying stolen goods.

Many of the women referred to personal experiences when considering what is organized crime. They spoke of house fires, which are often caused by inter-gang wars; sexual and gender-based violence; of the risks of being attacked by strangers, especially on their way home; or being ‘taxed’ for using business spaces. Interestingly, the women added sexual and gender-based violence to the list of illegal gang activities. Women respondents reported that weapons can easily be bought on the black market or rented from other criminals or even from law enforcement.



Impact of the criminal market	Respondents
<p><b>What is the overall impact on the community of the criminal groups?</b></p> <p><b>Has it caused problems or divisions among community members?</b></p>	<p>The most cited overall impacts on the community were general fear, panic, lack of trust and hopelessness.</p> <p>Fear affects people in multiple ways. It limits freedom of movement, as they can't walk around after 8 or 9 p.m. Shops have to close early to avoid gangs. People are afraid to come out openly and report to the police. Thus, the community feels powerless because they can't take action.</p> <p>A number of economic impacts were identified, with some saying the economy has failed and many businesses have closed shop. Gangs have raised the cost of doing business, including by imposing 'taxes'. One person noted that there are areas where people cannot invest until given permission, usually with a hefty bribe. Some, like motorbike businesses, suffer financial losses because their business is associated with gangs.</p> <p>The respondents identified several divisions in the community related to criminal activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between those who benefit and those who do not. Some defend their family members in the gangs against others in the community. Some believe the gangs protect them, while others want them to go away.</li> <li>• Neighbourhood/territory divisions. Communities are divided by rival gangs due to accusations based on estates and areas of operation, what one person called a 'blame game'.</li> <li>• There are areas people can't enter because they will be accused of spying. There are gangs in identified areas where people don't feel safe visiting even in daytime.</li> <li>• A couple of people reported that it has led to ethnic fighting but did not elaborate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What are the greatest risks to you and your community?</b></p>	<p>The most common risks cited were related to personal security and violence. These include death; harassment; being targeted if identified as trying to counter gang activity; intimidation 'from community and government'; attacks at random, especially around nightfall; mugging, pickpocketing, robbery, house break-ins, auto theft; the restriction of communal and social life; threats to women by gang leaders and others.</p> <p>'Everyone in the community is at their mercy.'</p> <p>The social risks include dysfunctional families, the decay of morals and values, school dropouts, increased intake of drugs and the mental health of victims of abuse.</p> <p>Respondents spoke of the loss of young people to crime, losing future 'leaders, revenue creators and solution providers' for the community.</p> <p>They are afraid that family and friends are at risk of being recruited to gangs, whether by force or compelled for economic gains. One respondent mentioned 'radicalization'.</p>
<p><b>How do these groups behave in the community?</b></p>	<p>Most people described gang behaviour in terms of violence, public disturbance, human rights violations, harassment and intimidation. 'They want to control everything.'</p> <p>The gangs live together, separate from the community. The unmarried men live in groups in small, rented rooms. They act as if they are untouchable, but that's only until the police show up – then they scatter. They are disconnected, apathetic, don't want to work, look high.</p> <p>They put on flashy clothes, have motorbikes and nice phones when they have conned people. This lifestyle introduces most of them to the use of hard drugs. When they are broke, they use violence to get money. It forces them to engage in robbery and snatching.</p> <p>A couple of respondents disagreed, saying the criminals are ordinary members of society who intermingle well. Some said that many of them are not identified as gang members. Another replied that they are known, small groups on motorbikes who are very friendly. They are calm when not active and mix well unless harassed.</p>



Impact of the criminal market	Respondents
<p><b>How much and in what way do the criminal market and groups contribute to local violence and conflict?</b></p>	<p>Almost all respondents said that most of the conflict in the community is connected to gangs.</p> <p>They cited territorial wars, revenge killings, fights with others from different tribes and attacks on people 'just for fun' – when drugs are involved – as well as violence against community members such as muggings, attacks and murder.</p> <p>Criminal groups create the atmosphere for fighting. They are used during elections to destabilize communities.</p> <p>There are interpersonal conflicts when a person sees something in a shop that they think was stolen from them and they tell the shop owner, but the shop owner does nothing. Some people will avenge themselves.</p>
<p><b>What is the environmental impact of the criminal market (if applicable)?</b></p>	<p>Most did not answer the question of environmental impact. Those who did mentioned the theft of electricity poles and other infrastructure and the control of water supply. Or they mentioned general waste and garbage.</p>
<p><b>Is there corruption linked to local criminal activity? Are bribes to public officials common? At what level of government?</b></p>	<p>Corruption is rife. The police were mentioned most often as involved in corruption through bribery and extortion. This goes up to senior officials. Because of bribes, arrests are not made. The most widely mentioned type of bribery was for quick release after arrest. It was also said that gang members arrested or in prison are bailed out by politicians.</p> <p>Police officers take money for selling and renting weapons as well as for information and protection. Criminals 'buy their freedom'. 'Every time they are arrested, they come out after a few days.'</p> <p>Other respondents said that police extort gangs, with one reporting that 'gang members [are] on record saying they need money for themselves and the police'.</p> <p>The list of those involved in corruption is wide-ranging: police, chiefs, politicians, magistrates, local administration and prosecution officers, Nyumba Kumi officials and national MPs.</p> <p>'From police to chief to sitting members of parliament, they receive an incentive or weekly pay-off to leave them alone.'</p> <p>'This includes key government officials.'</p> <p>'Chiefs take bribes to hide gangs.'</p>
<p><b>Do local communities have a sense of local responsibility to combat organized crime?</b></p>	<p>Some respondents said communities feel strongly that they should get rid of gangs. In some cases, they have periodic meetings about how to address the issue. In the Nyumba Kumi initiative, everyone has to know the details of 10 neighbours, which helps to identify criminals.</p> <p>Others disagreed, saying that the people in the best position to combat gangs are the parents and they benefit from gangs. Another said many people do not feel responsibility or strength unless outside actors come in and then they will join.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both men and women respondents noted violence, theft and general insecurity as the greatest risks.

Men were more likely to cite death as the greatest risk, then financial costs, recruitment of children and the loss of a generation, as well as emerging crimes like cyber fraud.

Women noted the constant risk of being at the mercy of gang behaviour, including gender-based violence. One woman highlighted house fires and forced displacement.



# PART 2: BUILDING BLOCKS FOR COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

## Building block 1: Effective state support

General	Respondents
<p><b>How effective is the state in responding to challenges in your community caused by criminal markets?</b></p>	<p>Respondents felt that the state's response to crime and its consequences in their communities is minimal or absent. When it does try to intervene, it is neither effective nor adequate. The community raised the alarm on security, but the government is very slow to respond. '[The] state doesn't care about us. We take care of ourselves.'</p> <p>There were some positive views as well. The county commissioner has had dialogues with youth in gangs and the polytechnics give bursaries to former gang members to return to school. According to one respondent, a 'change of leadership in police stations helped curb gangs'.</p> <p>It also depends on the area. The state delivers to wealthy areas; in low-income areas, people don't report when they are affected by criminal networks.</p> <p>Others felt the state engages only when it is politically useful to do so, for PR purposes. 'It does only when the cameras are on. The moment they're off, things go back to normal.'</p> <p>On law enforcement specifically, one person noted that the state is building and equipping the police force, but most respondents said they are not very effective. They take too long to respond to calls and alarms, sometimes a whole day. They arrive after the criminals leave and pretend to follow them. Most often, people do not report when a bag or phone is stolen. Police response comes with a lot of profiling and harassing of community members, including arbitrary arrest and extrajudicial killing.</p>
<p><b>What challenges would you like the state to respond to? Is it doing so?</b></p>	<p>Although most respondents did not indicate what they wanted the state to respond to, those who did wanted measures to counter crime and the related insecurity and harassment in the community, as well as the lack of protection for witnesses. They wanted increased impartiality and attention specifically to cyber fraud and the drug and illegal weapons markets.</p> <p>Regarding unemployment and youth opportunities, respondents would like the state to promote job creation: 'People need proper jobs, not handouts.' They want programmes for life skills, positive parenting and youth empowerment, as well as probation centres or colleges.</p> <p>Others wanted the state to be stricter: everyone involved should be brought to book, big and small. 'Arrest these people and let them rot in jail.'</p> <p>Some respondents stressed anti-corruption and a response to human rights violations. The state should demonstrate immediate concern for citizens and not side with criminals.</p>
<p><b>Does the state response protect or threaten community members? In what ways?</b></p>	<p>Some respondents said that the state both protects and threatens, and it feels confusing. 'Sometimes they kill and sometimes they try to find dialogue with the community.'</p> <p>The state's inefficiencies may render communities insecure, but the little they do, when they do, does protect. Protection depends on who someone reports to and the level of connection. It protects by providing police vehicles and police stations. The police will investigate and arrest people. Sometimes the chiefs hold barazas (councils) to warn thugs.</p> <p>Those who responded that the state is a threat cited two reasons. The first is the violence and harassment perpetrated by the police themselves. During a reported crime surge, they threaten the peace of the area by breaking into houses and arresting anyone and everyone randomly. Because shoot-outs with police lead to killings, people fear that police involvement will result in more killings. The respondents said they cannot help because 'our system is about money and who can pay more'. In low-income areas, the police are a threat because they retaliate against the community. There is a lot of profiling of young people based on their clothes and hair.</p> <p>The second reason for seeing the state as a threat is its lack of proper mechanisms to protect communities. People fear retaliation from the criminals. This is related both to slow police response and to prosecution failures. The name of a person who reports a case can get out</p>



General	Respondents
	<p>and then the gangs come after them. And when reported cases are not prosecuted, victims and witnesses are in danger.</p> <p>Also, when police conduct a search and confiscate items from the gangs, the gangs double down to recover their losses, stealing from the community.</p> <p>'When they ask a community member to call out the gang members, which they do, then the state does very little to prosecute these gang members. Guess who's at risk of being attacked by the gang members when they are released?'</p> <p>'Their inaction scares the community.'</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Men claimed that the state is ineffective and acts only under pressure. They generally held that fighting organized crime doesn't seem like a big priority for the government. They wanted the state to respond to unemployment.

Women said that the state threatens community members by profiling young people and pointed to the laxity of state agencies tasked with dealing with organized crime. They spoke of perpetrators being released after paying bail and retaliations that affect people who are not even gang members.

Political leadership and governance	Respondents
<p><b>To what degree do people have faith in their government – national level, local level?</b></p>	<p>Respondents said they have very little to no faith in either local or national government, but perhaps more with the latter. Some believe the government empowers the gangs. Others aid that the government is not in control and, even if they report, they won't get help.</p> <p>MPs use 'plight of youth to play politics.'</p> <p>'Some of these criminal networks are entwined with law enforcement – so much so that people do not believe the government can or wants to win the war against criminal networks.'</p> <p>'If I constantly have to fight for my rights, mostly from its officers, how can I trust them?'</p> <p>Some said that good government policies exist, but they have to be implemented by people with clean hands.</p>
<p><b>How open is the state to fostering and promoting a strong and independent civil society sector including the media?</b></p> <p><b>What is the level of collaboration of government agencies and NGOs and private citizens?</b></p>	<p>Many respondents said that civil society doesn't seem like a big priority. The government talks positively about it but does not support and build CSOs. Some said this is improving.</p> <p>Others said the government ignores court orders and directives, attacks civil society and intimidates the media. When caught in the wrong by civil society organizations or actors, it tries to suffocate them. They cooperate with CSOs that are captured by the state, but not independent groups.</p> <p>They may collaborate in some programmes and not in others, depending on the programme and the topic. Good collaboration also depends on the specific government agency. Others said that, when the state joins, it no longer seems very collaborative.</p> <p>People felt that NGOs and civil society have good working relationships with private citizens and have worked hard to build the trust and confidence of the community, 'but the state keeps betraying the community trust'.</p> <p>'Conversation and exposés have been done from time immemorial; civil service groups, including human rights defenders, have raised concern about these organizations. But when it comes to the part where the government has to play its role, it fails. There are healthy collaborations that help people identify these criminal organizations, some that document them and some that have programmes and initiatives that help reformed gang members and those looking to leave the gangs.'</p>





Political leadership and governance	Respondents
<p><b>Does the community have access to resources, basic services?</b></p> <p><b>Is the distribution fair?</b></p> <p><b>Does the community have power to influence their distribution?</b></p>	<p>Most respondents said there is access to services, but it varies in quality and by sector. Some areas lack access to clean water, sanitation, good infrastructure, security or health services, with very expensive rates for basic services. Some people experience unfair distribution of resources in public housing.</p> <p>There is not much service provision in areas where gangs are active, which is why it is easier for them to operate there.</p> <p>Respondents believed that the inefficiency and unfairness of service distribution are due to nepotism, corruption, classism and tribalism. It is especially unfair for those people who can't get roles in government.</p> <p>Some reported that they have hospitals and schools, but the hospitals have no medicine, and they have to bribe the headmasters.</p> <p>Some felt that the community has no influence on the distribution of resources unless they have connections. Others said that, in some instances, communities do have influence, but people aren't aware that they have this power. When they unite, they can access services, or they can organize strikes or protests.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both genders agreed that there is a lack of access to services and that distribution is unfair.

Men spoke of areas with no access to proper sanitation, water or healthcare. And yet: 'Currently, there are three major hospitals in an area where a minority of the population lives, and who are these people? You guessed right – the rich!'

Women said that 'services have been made to look like a "favour"'. The poor are forced to beg for services and often look for alternative illegal connections to get them.

Education system	Respondents
<p><b>How strong is the local education system? What is the average educational attainment?</b></p> <p><b>(Have you and your family benefited from the local school system?)</b></p>	<p>Similarly, the education system was widely seen as sufficient and accessible, but the quality is questionable. Respondents cited issues with teacher–student ratios and schools that lack chairs, desks and clean water.</p> <p>Most people mentioned access to post-secondary schools and colleges and college diplomas. They thought that, on average, people attain secondary-school level education. In areas where gangs are active, the educational attainment is low, with students dropping out of primary and secondary schools. Also, there are costs that parents have to pay. Some people get bursaries and others do not.</p> <p>'The level of education we are getting from public schools is not good quality because these schools are not well funded and supported to implement the new competency-based curriculum.'</p> <p>'It is not the best, but my siblings have benefited from both the free primary and secondary education. I benefited from the free secondary education.'</p>
<p><b>Is there investment in early childhood education and care (ECEC)?</b></p>	<p>Most respondents said that investment in ECEC infrastructure and human resources is improving. Some cautioned that this was mainly as a business venture and not for its educational value. Others believed there was little or no investment in ECEC.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Men generally felt that the system is not very strong, pointing to ill-equipped schools and dropout levels in gang-dominated areas. One man defended the system, saying that there is now access from basic to higher levels of education.

Women said that many have benefited from the education system, but the quality remains low and people have to dig deeper into their pockets to keep children in school. Proper investment in schools should be ensured.



Justice system	Respondents
<p><b>What is the local justice system like? Do local courts or dispute mechanisms address the criminal activity outlined above? In what ways?</b></p> <p><b>(Do you have experience with the local or national justice system? What is your opinion of it?)</b></p>	<p>Most respondents said the criminal justice system does not work as it should. The general problems cited were its sluggishness, long delays in hearing cases, partiality, bribery and corruption.</p> <p>One person reported stolen belongings to the police, but nothing was done and they were attacked again: 'A waste of time.' Another was asked for a bribe to download a form at the local rent tribunal.</p> <p>There are also disconnections between agencies within the system: 'We cannot have judges who rule on a matter and enforcement officers who do what they want. That is not justice.'</p> <p>One person said the local justice system sometimes works: 'There are instances where some of the criminal members are caught in the act, when their parents surrender them or when they are about to be lynched by the public. Depending on their ages, some end up in the juvenile detention centre while some have gone to jail.'</p> <p>Local programmes like Nyumba Kumi lack the ability to address gangs. However, many respondents noted that chiefs were effective in settling local cases. One person described an experience with local chiefs related to child labour that was addressed well.</p>
<p><b>Do community members view the legal response as helpful? Ineffective? Harmful?</b></p>	<p>There is a lot of mistrust in the justice system. It is seen as helpful when cases are followed to the end, but not when the criminal networks drag cases 'on to infinity' or when clashes occur.</p> <p>The respondents again noted corruption, bribery and inadequate laws to combat cybercrime as causes of the system's ineffectiveness.</p>
<p><b>Is informal justice provided by criminal groups?</b></p>	<p>Sometimes, by virtue of their influence in society, gangs may have a way to punish those who have committed a crime. Some operate as vigilantes with the support of the community. They can also collect debts and recover stolen property.</p> <p>There are also harsh disciplinary measures within groups, and they punish those who go against certain rules, for instance, being kicked out of the gang, attacks, violence, and even murder.</p> <p>The gangs also harm and kill members of rival groups who do them wrong.</p>
<p><b>Has local government developed measures that address victim care and how effective are these measures? To what degree do witness protection programmes exist?</b></p>	<p>Most respondents are not aware of any government-led initiative that supports survivors of violence. The Witness Protection Act is not followed. There is a Witness Protection Agency, but it is not effective, and it is difficult to get protection.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Bribery was a big issue for men. They spoke of arrested people who are released after giving a bribe. Prominent people and gang leaders can get away, but their foot soldiers are treated to the letter of the law when they go to court.

Some women said they had tried to access the justice system, but nothing changed. Local chiefs have been able to resolve issues for them.



Law enforcement	Respondents
<p><b>What type of law enforcement exists in the community – military, civilian police, community-based armed groups, a combination?</b></p> <p><b>Has local law enforcement been adequately resourced?</b></p>	<p>In the community, there are police and community initiatives like self-defence groups and the Nyumba Kumi programme, which works with the local administration. Mostly the police are available, but sometimes the response to crime is civilian-led and vigilante in nature. The military is not present.</p> <p>The police are not well resourced in terms of capacity, infrastructure and equipment. They lack vehicles and their numbers are low.</p>
<p><b>What is the relationship between these groups and the community?</b></p>	<p>The relationship between the community and police is not viewed positively. Respondents variously described it as 'hostile', 'not good', 'mistrust', 'no trust', 'love/hate relationship', 'useless', 'stringent'. At one point they are good, the next they are fighting. Several people said the police are more interested in harassing them helping.</p> <p>'No one, innocent or not, wants to meet on the streets, especially at night. They really harass people.'</p> <p>People do not like the police because of corruption and because they are too harsh on citizens and too lenient on criminals. The police are seen to help when there is a bribe involved and not necessarily to enforce law and order.</p> <p>One person highlighted the Nyumba Kumi group as very respected because it brings some semblance of sanity to the community. One respondent said that they employ Maasai morans (warriors) to patrol their estate.</p>
<p><b>To what degree is law enforcement trusted and seen as reliable by local communities?</b></p>	<p>Overall, trust in law enforcement is very low to absent. If people have no other option, they report to the police. If they do have options, then they don't.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both noted the range of law enforcement from civilian police, Nyumba Kumi groups and community policing structures, to occasions where civilian-led response resembles vigilantism.

Men felt the community's opinions of law enforcement ranged from mistrust to a love-hate relationship. Men noted susceptibility to bribery as a reason for lack of trust.

Women's views varied. Many said there is a lack of trust and the relationship is hostile. One noted inefficiency, saying they hire their own security on her estate. While others said they can call on the police in their work, and that police are extended family members and part of the community themselves.

## Building block 2: Social capital

Community cohesion	Respondents
<p><b>Is the community culturally or ethnically diverse or homogeneous? Are there tensions along specific ethnic or social lines?</b></p>	<p>The respondents reported that Nakuru is culturally and ethnically diverse, with one noting that Nakuru town includes almost all of Kenya's 43 tribes. Tensions exist because of stereotypes or between tribal groups, but most arise during election cycles when diversity becomes more obvious. They said increased tribal tensions and demographic changes are caused by politicians, not criminal groups. Political influence leads to changes and economic gain.</p> <p>Fights between specific groups were noted, such as bad blood between South Sudanese and Kenyan members of the community and between Kenyan Somalis and other Kenyans.</p> <p>The introduction of the community-based disciplinary group has made things easier and reduced tensions.</p>
<p><b>Have there been any major changes in the local population? If so, has this affected the community?</b></p>	<p>A number of respondents said that population changes also happen during election time when politicians bring people in to vote and create entire villages. 'During elections, people are shipped in from other regions.' People who felt their area was homogeneous said that this changes during elections.</p>



Community cohesion	Respondents
	Other reasons for population changes include people moving from unsafe areas and post-election violence that caused people to move. Some people noted that population growth continues to strain resources.
<b>What is the feeling of belonging to and a sense of place about the community?</b>	Some respondents said that people feel strongly about community issues and have a strong sense of belonging and pride in being from Nakuru.  'With the political tension in the country, people don't trust each other that much. Apart from politics, there is no tension.'  However, the responses ranged from 'people live harmoniously' to 'most people feel marginalized'.
<b>What is the level of trust within the community?</b>	The question of trust within the community shed more light on these feelings. Overall, people felt there was little to no trust, with one person saying that this is because betrayal is common. Some people were a bit more optimistic, but expectations are low.  'Trust develops as we get to know each other; until then every stranger is treated with suspicion.'  'It is half-baked trust. After elections, everyone is a suspect.'  'It is not the best in the world, but it is there. People, however, are cautious and keep to themselves mostly.'  'It changes. Community gatekeepers will sell you out.'
<b>Is the community able to respond to crises in ways that strengthen community bonds and capacity to cope?</b>	This question also received divided responses. Some said yes. When they are fighting for a common cause, they are united and together. In some cases, the community has been very resourceful when responding to crime and other crises.  Others plainly said that the community is unable to come together in crises because economic conditions hinder this.

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Men and women largely answered similarly. Both felt the community was culturally and ethnically diverse, with people from all parts of Kenya, different ages and other attributes. However, they pointed to ethnic tension that is motivated by politics, and arises during election cycles, as well as conflict between cultures, tribes and ethnic groups.

## Building block 3: Community capacity

Community capacity	Respondents
<b>What is the ability of the community to self-organize? What are the means for this?</b>	There was a widespread belief that the community does self-organize.  Community facilitators and leaders and the council of elders can organize and fight for a cause. Nyumba Kumi groups, local elders and chiefs provide ways to address issues. There are also many welfare organizations that organize for specific causes.  The community comes together in times of grief and celebration.
<b>What types of social networks among groups and individuals exist within the community?</b>  <b>For instance: political organizations, volunteerism and civic organizations, religious organizations, women's groups, or youth groups.</b>	Many types of social networks exist, including political organizations, volunteer, civic, religious (churches and mosques) and community health organizations, chamas (women's table banking groups) and groups that focus on issues related to women, youth, welfare, self-help and disability.  The most frequently mentioned community groups that create cohesion and levels of protection were youth, religious, women's and self-help groups.  'We have groups and contribute money every week. When someone is sick, or a family member, we help them.'



Community capacity	Respondents
<b>Which of these groups respond to the harms caused by the activity explained in section 1? In what ways?</b>	<p>Peace cops talk to gang members and encourage them to stop crime.</p> <p>Nyumba Kumi officials respond to victims. Neighbourhood groups unite and will respond to an attack and welfare groups help to identify and mobilize people when crime happens.</p> <p>Civic organizations host public barazas that bring stakeholders together to discuss and find solutions to the challenges in the community.</p> <p>Youth, religious and women's organizations create awareness and run peace campaigns. Religious leaders guide youth leaders and religious groups by challenging their vices.</p> <p>Civil society organizations provide legal aid, counsellors and food in times of crisis. More broadly, they raise awareness, offer mentorship programmes, teach skills, offer advocacy and mobilize stakeholders. Respondents noted most groups help victims of crime rather than confronting the gangs directly.</p> <p>Bodaboda (motorbike) groups try to defend themselves from gangs.</p> <p>Prevention measures are slowly being picked up by organizations.</p>
<b>Are their safe spaces for women, men and youth at risk? Please explain.</b>	<p>Respondents either said that there are no safe spaces or that there are, but they are not safe. This includes several safe spaces for women. They feel that criminals can attack the safe houses or find people at any time. These spaces are 'one person or call away from being a danger zone to these individuals and putting them at a greater risk'.</p> <p>Girls who are raped and boys who are attacked are taken to Nairobi Women's Hospital in Nakuru and treated for free. In cases of pregnancy, there are homes that offer shelter.</p> <p>A couple of people noted that safe spaces can be found if people move off the estate or run away from the county.</p>
<b>Does civil society engage in treatment and victim support activities – e.g. running drug treatment facilities?</b>	<p>CSOs provide safe spaces, offer direct support and have some sensitization programmes to help victims cope or manage their situation. Some NGOs help community members who struggle with drug or substance abuse.</p> <p>Most clinics that deal with gender-based violence are supported by civil society.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both men and women agreed that a rich network of community groups contribute in their specific ways. Many people mentioned community self-help and local volunteer groups as important to society.

Men said that groups raise awareness, hold dialogues and provide mentorship.

Women mentioned community-level security groups like Nyumba Kumi as helping to combat organized crime. Women were also more likely to refer to religious groups as the first responders to gang activity.

Local media	Respondents
<b>Are there strong local media?</b>	<p>Most respondents said that media are national. When speaking of local media, they cited radio programmes, blogs, online television and social media.</p>
<b>Does local media provide a voice to both state and non-state actors combatting organized crime?</b>	<p>Strong local journalists and radio do provide them with a platform. Community radio highlights the negative effects of organized crime. However, there are airtime costs to access online media.</p>



Local media	Respondents
<b>Are there attacks against journalists or media houses, or other civil society activists (e.g. environmental defenders), by organized crime or the state? Have there been deaths?</b>	<p>The respondents who felt that there are strong media also said that journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders are threatened. They face both online harassment and physical attacks. They can be attacked for betraying gangs. Many hide their identities.</p> <p>Some journalists are robbed of their equipment, but not necessarily targeted as journalists.</p> <p>There are threats against CSOs and attacks by police officers. Deaths are uncommon, but human rights defenders can be in danger of losing their lives.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Men were less likely to say that there are attacks against journalists. They highlighted the importance of local radio.

Women consistently said there are attacks on journalists and highlighted the importance of blogs, radio and online television. They also noted the expense of airtime.

Obstacles to community responses	Respondents
<b>Do groups - beyond identified criminal groups - negatively affect community resilience?</b>	No specific groups were mentioned, but one person said that the 'community itself will be against projects'.
<b>Which factors act as obstacles to building community resilience to organized crime?</b>	<p>Family and community links to gangs perpetuate gang activity and diminish community support. People lack trust when they see neighbours as agents or relatives of the gangs. Families of gang members are viewed negatively as people who harbour gangs and do not report incidents of crime.</p> <p>Gangs intimidate and attack community leaders.</p> <p>The lack of police and government support also came up here: lack of state response, lack of information, police covering for their own. One respondent said that, when law enforcers take part in crime, they give credibility to this way of life for kids.</p> <p>Corruption, bribes and loopholes in the Kenyan law are obstacles to community resilience. Mistrust of the authorities does not give the community confidence that proper action will be taken against the gangs. Interference by politicians was again mentioned.</p> <p>Poverty and lack of resources are an impediment to resilience. The gang members bring much-needed money to this community. With their 'hard earned' money, they buy from local stores, pay rent and create income for businesses.</p>
<b>To what extent do local responses to organized crime possibly marginalize certain individuals or groups such as women, refugees, etc.?</b>	<p>Women feel marginalized by lack of freedom of movement. Women have limited movement, especially where gangs are known to live and cannot work past 8 p.m. Women who need special care may be harmed, intentionally or not.</p> <p>Business are also impacted as gangs hinder movement and disrupt business.</p>

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Men spoke of poverty and the importance of gang money in the local economy. They also connected the community's mistrust of authorities to their lack of confidence that justice will be done.

Women respondents also saw the problems related to law enforcement as obstacles.



## Building Block 4: The role of women in community responses to organized crime

Political and economic power	Respondents
<p><b>What type of authority do women hold in the community?</b></p>	<p>The overall response was that women know what's going on and talk about it, serving as the eyes and ears of the community. Many respondents said that women act as 'spies' and 'informers'. They are the 'grapevine', 'learning to speak up, but they are used as spies'.</p> <p>Women have some political power. They are representatives, senators and members of county assemblies. Some have been appointed as chiefs. There are women leaders in community policing and Nyumba Kumi.</p> <p>In organizations, women lead prayers in meetings, take part as treasurers, mobilizers and participants, and promote institutions, politicians and specific agendas.</p> <p>Women are mentors, provide job opportunities, create jobs through start-ups and serve as role models. As mothers, they shape children's character, giving them a moral compass.</p> <p>One gang leader is a woman.</p>

Women organizing	Respondents
<p><b>How do women organize in the local community?</b></p>	<p>Most respondents spoke of women belonging to 'merry-go-round' and table banking financial groups (chamas), as well as church and women's groups. Many take part in Nyumba Kumi.</p> <p>It was also noted that many civil society groups are led by women, so they organize that way.</p>
<p><b>Are their women's groups that counter the negative impacts of organized crime? What do they do?</b></p>	<p>Women's organizations are involved in the rehabilitation of reformed youth involved in crime back into society. Women fund youth groups, make merchandise and give young people skills for alternative sources of income. They talk to the young men who will listen about the danger of crime. They tell young girls not to hide gang members.</p> <p>Many women's groups call out the state agencies that do not respond when called upon to arrest gang leaders. They report to police and local human rights NGOs.</p> <p>Women's groups provide psychosocial support for victims who have lost family members. They educate community members about self-protection and help victims of sexual and gender-based violence</p> <p>At the grassroots level, women are very anti-crime. They campaign door-to-door against organized crime/gangs and preach peace.</p>

### GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both men and women recognized that women hold increasing political roles and power. They also agreed that women know what's going on in the community and talk about it with each other, but this was called different things by men and women.

Men said that women are 'spies' and 'used as spies'. They noted that women help youth to reform. Men also said that women don't have as much power as men, or that they have a voice but need encouragement to engage.

Women said that women are 'informers' and the 'grapevine'. They said women fight at grassroots level and serve as mentors. Women more often noted the importance of women's chamas.



## Building block 5: Economic capital

Economy of the community	Respondents
<p><b>What types of businesses and jobs exist in the community? How diverse is the local economy?</b></p>	<p>People had differing opinions on whether they would call the local economy diverse or not, but many types of work were mentioned, much of it informal and/or casual.</p> <p>There are <i>jua kali</i> (informal) jobs in open-air markets, hawking or selling vegetables. Many run small businesses like posho mills, grocery shops, makeshift hotel stalls, make homemade soaps and mats to sell, or offer tailoring, shoe repair or welding. There is work in transport, casual jobs for youth, mobile phone sales, work in hotels. There are also formal positions such as teaching.</p> <p>One respondent who said the local economy was not diverse referred to it as 'copy-pasted' because everyone does much the same thing; there is 'no creativity in the business, not enough circulation of cash. People adapt slowly to change'.</p> <p>Those who said it is diverse listed blue- and white-collars jobs, formal and informal businesses, a growing service industry, sale of goods, transport, agriculture, hair and beauty, entertainment, wholesale and retail, visual artists, banking, law practitioners, medicine, and casual jobs. And they noted it is diverse in terms of income. One respondent said it is diversified but strained economically.</p> <p>Most said that their families find work informally. They create their own opportunities, are self-employed or work freelance in a range of fields from the art scene to manual labour to driving to the digital space. They also spoke of family members who have graduated but cannot find formal work.</p>
<p><b>Can youth find jobs? What do they do if not?</b></p>	<p>The respondents who felt that youth can find jobs spoke of different conditions. Influential families get opportunities for jobs and loans. Creating self-employment requires personal initiative. Those who are diligent can also start service provision jobs. They suggested that young people can find jobs in sales and marketing, hawking or transportation, but acknowledged that corruption makes it difficult</p> <p>Other respondents it is hard for youth to find work, and many are jobless. Some opt to join gangs or go into crime. Young people in gangs learn IT and get involved in the rising cybercrime. Some wait for odd jobs in the government's Kazi Kwa Vijana youth programme, others indulge in betting or 'hustle' in other ways. Whatever they can do to put food on their table, they do it.</p>
<p><b>Are there foreign companies? What is their industry and what is their impact on the local community?</b></p>	<p>Some respondents were unaware of foreign companies. Others mentioned foreign companies in manufacturing, agriculture, mining, processing plants, production, insurance, banking and other sectors. Coca-Cola and flower farms were specifically mentioned. Some stated that foreign companies are mostly engaged in contracts with government, like infrastructure. They contribute to job creation and sometimes employ local people.</p>
<p><b>What is the local employment rate (compared with national level)? How are income levels compared with the national average?</b></p> <p><b>What portion of the community face food insecurity?</b></p>	<p>In the respondents' opinion, overall employment levels in the city are near the national average, but employment in specific areas is low and most people engage in informal work or are self-employed. They felt that income is low compared to the national average.</p> <p>Food insecurity is a problem for roughly half the community, particularly since the pandemic began, and many people rely on food assistance.</p>

### GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

Both groups agreed that it is hard for youth to find jobs and that this is a reason that they turn to gangs.

Men noted both the formal and informal economies and cited low employment. They more frequently said that the local community lacks diversity and that there are no foreign companies or that these have little impact on the community.

Women said the local economy is diverse, highlighting the many informal jobs, and identified more specific foreign companies and their impact. Women also highlighted food insecurity as a key issue.





Infrastructure	Respondents
<b>Is there access to food, electricity, water?</b>	Few people have tap water and food is very expensive. Several noted that water is scarce or unavailable. One person said there is access only in urban areas. Others reiterated that these basic services are accessible but not affordable – especially electricity.
<b>What are the local communications networks? Access to mobile phones, internet?</b>	Mobile phones and the internet are accessible, and coverage is about 70 per cent. Again, people noted that these are not easily affordable.  'There is this joke: it is easier to access data bundles than water.'
<b>Do people feel safe outside their homes?</b>	More respondents said they do not feel safe outside than those who said they do, and some caveats were noted. Mostly, people feel safe during the day but not at night, or only in numbers. Others said it depends on the area.
<b>Are the streets safely lit, open spaces safe and accessible?</b>  <b>Are there many empty buildings, unused spaces?</b>	The streets are not safely lit after dark, but empty buildings and unused spaces were not an issue. Open spaces are not safe after dark.  Some remarked that this is another difference between election season and other times. Streets that usually do not have good lighting are lit up during campaign season because they hold party banners and posters.
<b>What are the natural resource base and environmental conditions (local food supplies, energy use, water access)? Has climate change affected livelihoods?</b>	Respondents said it is easy to access produce because it is a farming area, with <i>mama mbogas</i> (produce vendors) on every corner. Charcoal and firewood are used for fuel and water is collected from the rivers.  A few respondents stated that climate change has affected food production, with hotter and drier seasons and farmers losing produce. In long periods of drought with unpredictable or low rainfall, people use irrigation, which is expensive. The seasons of drought and flash floods cause power outages and make food and water inaccessible to some in the community.  The swelling of Rift Valley lakes has displaced people and destroyed property.
<b>How is access to transportation: personal transportation access and public options?</b>	Most people have private means of transportation. Public transport is very accessible.

## GENDERED PERSPECTIVES

In this section, both men and women were most concerned with the questions on natural resources and the impacts of climate change.

Most of the men responded that there is access but it is limited by high prices. They did not go into much detail.

Women respondents said there was access to services, also without elaborating. One woman drew attention to the streets only being safely lit around election time.



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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Eric Matara, Kenya: Nakuru, bedrock of Kenyan politics, likely to play big role in 2022, AllAfrica, 26 July 2021, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202107270078.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Muyua Waiyaki, How Nakuru is shaping national politics, *The Star*, 6 October 2021, <https://www.the-star.co.ke/counties/rift-valley/2021-10-06-how-nakuru-is-shaping-national-politics>.





# GLOBAL INITIATIVE

AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL  
ORGANIZED CRIME



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