GLOBAL INITIATIVE
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

ASSESSING RESILIENCE TO ORGANIZED CRIME AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

CDD.
CENTRO PARA
DEMOCRACIA E
DESENVOLVIMENTO

SUMMER WALKER | AMÉRICO MALUANA

APRIL 2022

ASSESSING RESILIENCE TO ORGANIZED CRIME AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

SUMMER WALKER | AMÉRICO MALUANA

April 2022

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Summer Walker is the GI-TOC's New York representative and a senior analyst. She leads projects and provides research and analysis on international policy, on issues ranging from drug policy to cybercrime. She has worked in international policy at the UN and with international NGOs, development agencies and research institutes. She holds an MSc in human rights from the London School of Economics and a BA in peace and conflict studies from Colgate University.

Américo Maluana is a researcher and programme manager at the CDD. He has extensive research experience in northern Mozambique. He has a degree in public administration and a master's in political science from Universidade Eduardo Mondlane. His area of research is political economy of natural resources, conflict and community resilience.

Please direct inquiries to:
The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime
Avenue de France 23
Geneva, CH-1202
Switzerland

www.globalinitiative.net

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The study found that involving women in security-focused programming strengthens community resilience.
© Shutterstock/Elen Marlen

The his report analyzes the findings from a six-month project to create and test a framework for analyzing resilience to organized crime at a community level in conflict and fragile contexts. This research shows the potentially transformative and sustainable approach that can be developed by joining up the local perspectives with national, bilateral and international priorities. There are three overarching takeaways from this research that will reinforce community resilience to organized crime.

Better align local and external needs when determining policy and programming. Surveying the community on how they view the problem and solutions can help identify where to target programming, and what the strengths and weaknesses for resilience are.

Resilience is embedded in community dynamics. The problems of organized crime were linked directly to very local community issues, such as mistrust among neighbours involved in groups, youth unemployment and lack of opportunity, and local institutional corruption. Some of the efforts seen as most effective by community members were not complex but required sustained effort and care – and with the local community at the helm.

Amplify the role of women. Women were highlighted as key actors. They are close to the ground, know what's going on and are willing to engage at the community level. Across the four locations of this study, the role of women varied from economic support groups to local political actions, like advocacy and door-to-door campaigns, to youth empowerment and rehabilitation. Identifying and involving women in security-focused programming nurtures and fortifies resilience at the local level.

INTRODUCTION

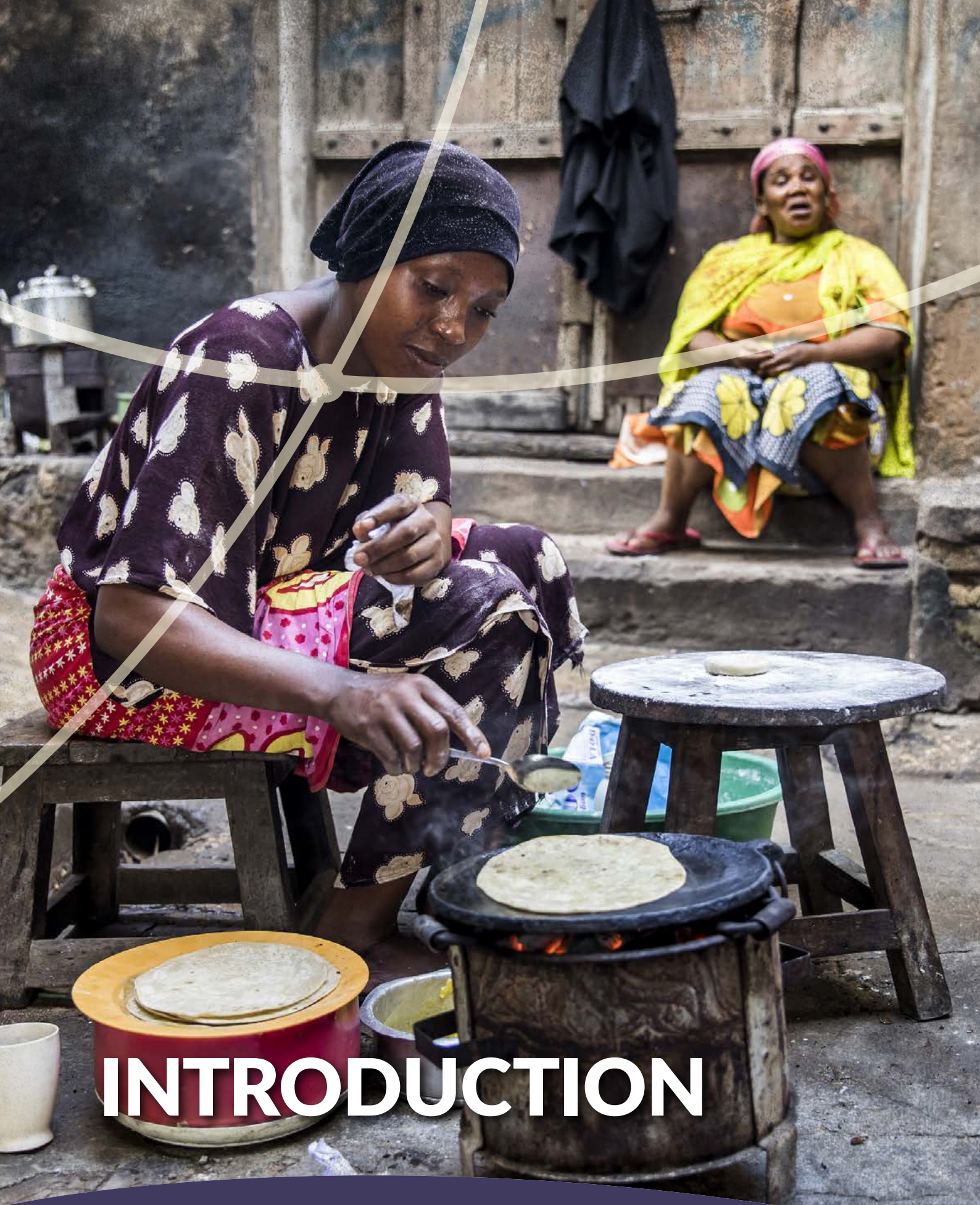A street vendor prepares food in Mombasa. *© Luis Tato/Bloomberg via Getty Images*

This report analyzes the findings from a six-month project to create and test a framework for analyzing resilience to organized crime at a community level in conflict and fragile contexts. This framework was used in four locations to test its efficacy. It provides a hyper-local interpretation of community leaders' understanding of what organized crime was in their communities, the biggest risks it brought and the soundness of their communities' building blocks to resilience. The research attempted to achieve a balance between men and women as respondents, which was not always achievable, and the research was disaggregated to provide gender-based analysis. The matrices provide a wealth of information, from education and justice systems to infrastructure. This report includes key findings from a cross-location analysis as well as summaries of the findings for each location. For more in-depth analysis, the matrices accompany this report.

Building the matrix

The first step was to design the matrix and the interview guide. A literature review was conducted of existing material on (1) measuring organized crime, using primarily the GI-TOC Organized Crime Index; (2) assessing community resilience; and (3) assessing community resilience in specific contexts: refugee communities, humanitarian crises, natural disasters and climate change.

From this review, we found the most common categories or indicator groupings for community resilience across these contexts included social capital, community capital, health and well-being, economic capital, political capital, infrastructure and natural environment. We prioritized factors that were transferable to the question of building community resilience to organized crime, which meant focusing in more detail on categories addressing society and community, economy and governance. This also meant de-prioritizing variables that were more relevant in the context of climate change or natural disaster, such as building infrastructure. The result was four overarching building blocks of community resilience, with subcategories:

- **State institutions:** effective state support; governance; education system; rule of law; safety and security
- **Social capital:** community cohesion; community capacity; media and journalism
- **Role of women:** political and economic power; organizing power
- **Local economy:** economic capital; youth empowerment; local infrastructure

Activists help a group of people arriving in Pemba displaced from their homes by extremist violence. © *www.kuendeleya.org/ Abudo Gafuro*

Using these building blocks, a matrix was drafted with a series of interview questions that assesses the situation in the community related to organized crime and the conditions for each building block of community resilience. Part A assesses community views of what organized crime and criminal groups are in the community and their impact on the community. For this, we did not provide an explanation of criminal markets or organized crime or attempt to guide the answers in any way. Thus, the answers reflect how community members interpreted the issues in relation to their experience. Part B assesses the current state of affairs for each category of building blocks.

Conducting the research

GI-TOC used its Global Organized Crime Index 2021 to select two countries for the research.[1] Kenya was chosen as a country with high criminality and high resilience to criminality. Mozambique was selected as a country where high criminality is coupled with low resilience to organized crime. The research in Mozambique focused on Cabo Delgado, where an insurgency has been active since 2017, introducing the issue of conflict into the context.

The project was jointly run by GI-TOC in Kenya and Centro Para Democracia e Desenvolvimento (CDD) in Mozambique. After consulting CDD and GI-TOC experts on Kenya and Mozambique and local Civil Society Resilience Fund (CSRF) advisers,

we selected four specific locations for research. In Mozambique, Pemba and Montepuez were chosen. Both are in northern Mozambique but not experiencing extensive fighting or occupation by the insurgent group. Pemba is known as a hub for trafficking by networks of local elites and international actors trafficking products such as heroin, cocaine, wildlife and ivory. Montepuez is a rural region known for its extensive ruby deposits and has been named a key trading hub for middlemen to buy gems and 'export or smuggle' them into the international market.[2]

In Kenya, Kisauni, a ward in Mombasa, and Nakuru were selected. Mombasa is known to be a link in heroin trafficking networks as well as having problems with human trafficking, including links to child sexual exploitation and child labour. Within Mombasa, Kisauni is an area that experiences significant gang activity. Nakuru is located in central Kenya. It is a small city surrounded by rural areas. It is known as a centre of Kenyan politics and an area that births and exports criminal gangs to different parts of the country. National elections are being held this year and, in each location, the links between gangs and the political process is a serious concern.

In these areas, local leaders from different walks of life were interviewed, including religious, business and local security actors, civil society and NGOs, journalists, human rights defenders and women's groups. In each location, over 20 interviews were conducted, including focus groups and individual interviews. The research was disaggregated by gender, which was done differently for each country. In Mozambique, the entire matrix was disaggregated, while in Kenya, the matrix analysis was comprehensive, with a specific gender analysis included in each section.

The resulting matrices provide an analysis of the building blocks to resilience against organized crime in four locations:

- Kisauni, Mombasa, Kenya
- Nakuru, Kenya
- Pemba, Mozambique
- Montepuez, Mozambique

This report summarizes key findings across the four matrices. Each matrix is attached to this report and provides a greater depth of analysis and information for the interested reader.

KEY FINDINGS: CROSS-SITE ANALYSIS

A view of Nakuru, Kenya. © Kay Ammon/Stockimo via Alamy

Introduction

Below are key findings of the analysis across the four sites, grouped in the building blocks of the analytical framework. In Kenya, the local concerns were squarely centred on gang activity; in Mozambique, it was on the insurgency. The idea of organized crime in these communities was centred on groups of people who threaten the security of citizens and cause harm to the community. In this way, people were more likely to identify the problems in terms of organized groups rather than illicit economic activity such as drug trafficking. The problems of 'organized crime' were linked directly to very local community issues, such as mistrust among neighbours related to group involvement, youth unemployment and lack of opportunity, and local institutional corruption.

Building blocks

Building block: Effective state support

Security and day-to-day safety are the main concerns for local communities. They define 'organized crime' and 'criminal groups' as the groups they see overtly harming others: in Kenya, the gangs and in Mozambique, the insurgency. In terms of 'criminal markets', for instance, local drug abuse and the violence caused by people who take drugs were highlighted, but drug trafficking or how it connects to a bigger picture was not a focus. Interviewees did not discuss international trafficking networks in large detail or list practices that are perceived to be illegal by people outside the community, such as undocumented ruby sales and exports.

This is a significant finding, ahead of discussing building blocks, because it raises the question of aligning local and external needs when determining policy and programming. People are much more likely to conceptualize organized crime by the groups carrying out violent activities or activities that directly impact the community, rather than illicit trade or trafficking.

State response is primarily understood as police and security forces. When asked about the state's responses, local people in each context narrowed in on police and security sector responses, showing a perception that this is the arm of the state charged with these issues. The state was seen as mostly untrustworthy in all four cases, yet some areas arose as positives. Major concerns raised were corruption, links between police and criminal actors, arbitrary violence, lack of response (feeling that nothing will be done after reporting a crime), lack of resources and responses that criminalize entire communities.

Some positive examples were noted, such as organized dialogues between gangs, police and community members. These have been organized by government officials like the county commissioner, local chiefs and civil society groups.

On issues **of political leadership and governance**, the Mozambican interviewees held that the state and civil society are seen as adversaries. In Kenya, cooperation was better yet still lacking and dependent on the issue. In Kenya, civil society is tolerated, if not supported outright. Yet when an issue gets close to political interests, there are risks involved.

People had more faith in political leadership at local levels. In Mozambique, distrust in leadership came from the government's slow response to the insurgency over the years and its inability to provide basic security. In Kenya, distrust derived primarily from the connections between politicians and the gangs – especially during election years, when gangs are activated to support politicians and provide muscle for events.

Education must link to opportunity. During round tables, participants emphasized the importance of education. Yet, it was noted that, while education is available, the quality was questioned, as was the link between completing higher-level schooling and finding employment. In Kenya, people said there is a strong education system but also that quality is lacking. In Mozambique, the issue of corruption was raised: in particular, that there are too many costs associated with continuing schooling and that people pay to pass rather than pass on merit.

One key point raised in Kenya was that, even with the option of school, many children choose to drop out to join gangs. A link needs to be made between education and whether it will lead to job opportunities. If teenagers feel they will make more money and have more status by joining gangs, then they choose this option. Participants in Nakuru raised the issue of young people learning information technology in order to learn to scam for money. For better or worse, this is an example of seeing a direct outcome of education, which may not be as obvious in general studies.

Local justice responses are key. Across all four locations, people pointed to local forms of justice administration and leadership as helpful and effective while viewing the formal justice system as largely ineffective. In both sites in Kenya, local forms of justice were seen as the most efficient and people saw evidence of justice or personally felt their issues were resolved. This included local chiefs as well as civil society groups who work as court advocates in the national system. In Mozambique, the same sentiments were reflected, relating to local community courts and neighbourhood offices.

Critiques of the formal justice system were similar across locations. The courts are considered too slow, cases are dropped and not pursued, the person bringing a case forward does not have protection from the accused and corruption and bribery lead to the dismissal of cases. In Nakuru, it was noted that, even for a criminal case, people are expected to pay a fee to 'open a file'. To help understand the formal court processes, advocates such as legal aid groups were highlighted as critical.

Building block: Community cohesion and community capacity

In terms of **social cohesion and community capacity,** all four locations were considered ethnically and culturally diverse. In Kenya, there was a feeling of peaceful coexistence among groups in both Nakuru and Kisauni, with few exceptions. However, people in both areas said there is a significant shift during election season when people retreat to ethnic bubbles and are distrustful of one another. These divisions are sparked by politicians rather than gangs but, as gangs support candidates, the issues are intertwined.

In Pemba and Montepuez, there was a sense that tensions are persistent. Coexistence was often stressed – between the Makonde and Macua ethnic groups in particular. Both Pemba and Montepuez have experienced significant inflows of internally displaced people, although opinions differed on their impact on community cohesion and tolerance. Some say petty crime has risen and there are no resources for recently arrived people while others say it has rallied people together and brought better cohesion.

In both Kenya and Mozambique, communities self-organize in a number of ways – through economic arrangements, religious, cultural, volunteer and community associations and groups, and many more. While there was a perception in Kenya that a number of these groups focus on tackling the harms caused by gangs, in Mozambique, it was felt that the ability of the community to self-organize has not translated to tackling issues of organized crime. In terms of the insurgency, participants noted self-organizing around providing assistance for newly arrived displaced people.

Building bock: The role of women in community responses to organized crime

Women were highlighted as key actors. They are close to the ground, know what's going on and are willing to engage at the community level. As women, mothers and leaders in the community, they talk to gang members and community members and mentor youth. In Kenya, women are very active in this space from a number of different angles, including community support groups, local security groups like Nyumba Kumi, raising awareness and the rehabilitation of former gang members. In Kenya, people noted many ways that women's groups counter the negative effects of organized crime, from awareness-raising, to reporting crimes to youth empowerment.

In Pemba and Montepuez, women had a less prominent role in public life in general and in issues related to organized crime. A key challenge in northern Mozambique was identifying female leaders to interview on this subject, particularly in Montepuez.

In Pemba, men and women had very different views about women's level of local influence. Men largely said that women do not have local political power and their influence is restricted to the family level. Women said they are very active politically, take part in local NGOs and have the ability to create a movement and stop certain events in Pemba.

In Mozambique, women's role in countering the negative effects of organized crime is less clear than in Kenya. This may be because of women's differing access to public life in northern Mozambique compared to Kenya, or because the smaller sample of women available for this research did not allow for sufficient detail.

Women's roles as community organizers shone in areas outside security in both Kenya and Mozambique. For instance in each location, people said women organize themselves into various economic support groups, *xitique* groups in Mozambique and chamas and merry-go-rounds in Kenya. In Kenya, this type of economic role was also mentioned in relation to providing young people with jobs and mentoring youth away from gang activity. In Mozambique, women were mentioned as humanitarian actors for recently arrived displaced people. These roles and processes for building local support systems can be transferrable to other areas of concern, such as local security.

Building block: Media and journalism

Radio, blogs and social media were key media in both Kenya and Mozambique. Radio in particular can be overlooked in the age of the internet. However, the Kenyans spoke of the cost of airtime for radio. In Pemba and Montepuez, radio is censored and under government supervision, providing little relevant information to the community.

Beyond the national media, social media – including blogs, Facebook, WhatsApp, online television and streaming platforms like YouTube – were highlighted as means to access information. People said these modes of communication are more trust-worthy and cover local issues. This follows a global trend towards the diversification of information sources, which comes with such benefits as space for more voices and avoiding censorship, but also the risk of disinformation and a lack of fact-checking.

Building block: Economic capital

Informal economic activity dominated all four locations, with a wide range of activities from fishing to hawking goods. **There was a strong feeling that there are insufficient economic opportunities for young people**. This was raised as a reason for youth joining gangs in Kenya and the insurgents in Mozambique. In Montepuez, people said job candidates are expected to pay a fee to access employment. In both locations in Mozambique, it is more common for people from other districts to be hired for local jobs, which isolates local youth. In Kenya, it was noted that even if one finishes high-school education, there is no promise of a job. It was much more common for people to say they 'make their own work' or are 'freelance' than to have a job. This suggests much untapped potential of entrepreneurs and hard-working individuals, but it has to be met by investment and increased opportunities.

A protester waves the Kenyan flag during a rally for gender equality on International Women's Day, Nakuru.
© *James Wakibia/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images*

Building block: Local infrastructure

Access to basic resources was available in all cases, although with challenges. Fair distribution was raised as an issue, as was cost. In Nakuru, for example, it was noted that electricity can be provided by secondary groups that splice cables, divert the electricity and charge for the service. Cell phones are widely available in each context, with ranging costs of service. It is the central means of communication in all four locations. A common joke in Nakuru is that it is easier to access a data bundle than water.

People across locations cited challenges related to **climate change impacts** on food production, water scarcity and long periods of drought.

When asked if people feel safe outside their homes, most answered no. In Mozambique, this was due to fear of the insurgency. In Kenya, it was fear of being attacked by gang members if they walked after dark or alone.

In Kenya, which is labelled as a highly resilient country in the GI-TOC Organized Crime Index, communities were more aware of the dynamics of criminal groups, and their linkages to other phenomena, such as election violence. Significantly more women were engaged in communities overall and in connection with resilience to gang activity. In Mozambique, by contrast, a less resilient country in the Index, respondents focused predominantly on impacts of the insurgency. It was more difficult for the research team to find women who were leaders in the community, and in particular on issues related to criminal activity. Women's role in humanitarian assistance for locally displaced people is recognized, however. Perhaps it is the insurgency itself that does not allow people to consider other forms of societal risks, given the obvious dangers posed. And it surely contributes to low resilience overall.

KEY FINDINGS: SUMMARIES OF THE FOUR LOCATIONS

Small shops line a main road in a Kenyan town. *© Broker/Alamy*

SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

UGANDA

KENYA

SOMALIA

■ Nakuru

■ NAIROBI

TANZANIA

• Mombasa

Nakuru, Kenya

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,[3] 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.[4] 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 theft, mobile money fraud, extortion, gang wars and disruption of public meetings.

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 over-whelmingly identified. Interviewees 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. The men pinpointed gang activities as cybercrime, robberies, home invasions, muggings and M-Pesa and online banking fraud and extortion. Women spoke of house fires, which are often caused by intergang wars; of the risks of being attacked by strangers, especially when 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. The most cited overall impacts on the community were general fear, panic, lack of trust and hopelessness. Almost all interviewees said that most of the conflict in the community is connected to gangs, citing territorial wars, revenge killings, fights with others from different tribes and attacks on people 'just for fun'.

Regarding responses to gang activity and assessing building blocks against organized crime, 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. Positive examples of what the state has done include community dialogues and the holding of *barazas* (public meetings) to caution gang members. The county commissioner has had dialogues with youth in gangs, and the polytechnics give bursaries to former gang members to return to school. Trust in government was very low, largely because the response is seen as ineffective or politicians are seen as empowering gangs. With regard to community cohesion, again people said that diverse communities co-exist well until campaign cycles when divisions are exacerbated by politicians seeking votes. It should be noted that people held more faith in local authorities, such as chiefs, local politicians and local forms of justice than in the national judicial system.

Participants reported that Nakuru has a diverse set of social networks – from economic support groups (*chamas*) to religious groups – but that the community as a whole is unable to organize. Many groups organize within their abilities to combat gang activity, including neighbourhood watch groups for security, civic organizations that host public *barazas* to bring stakeholders together to discuss solutions to community challenges and youth, religious and women's organizations that create awareness and run peace campaigns.

In terms of media, locally trusted sources included blogs, online streaming television, social media and radio.

Many people agreed that the local economy lacked opportunities for youth at multiple levels of education and that this can encourage youth to join gangs.

Women were identified as the eyes and ears of the community. Women's participation in government is increasing and local women's groups were identified as helping rehabilitate gang members, providing psychosocial support to victims, raising awareness and calling out authorities when they don't act.

Nakuru local perspectives:
What can improve these key building blocks?

Security and rule of law

1. Safe spaces for women: when women are attacked no one believes it will be followed up; this decreases faith in institutions
2. Legal aid at grassroots level to connect community to court system
3. Chiefs are essential because they know the community, have connections and protect the community
4. Support community groups that know the community and can identify issues

Social capital and community capacity

1. Local security initiatives should be inclusive of all members of community
2. Sports and arts should be used to bring the community together and raise awareness
3. Involve religious leaders more
4. Address mental health issues and drug abuse

Economy and education

1. Improve quality
2. Schools should provide mental health support
3. Identify the school years when dropping out increases and target this age for support
4. Needs should be determined by community, not by outside NGOs that create the wrong incentives

Women's role in resilience

1. Recognize the role of women as first responders: they are first on the scene and this can be helpful
2. Women's information and awareness of what is going on should be used as a resource
3. Let women define solutions and be part of policymaking
4. Increase educational opportunities for women

Youth Bila Noma, Nakuru

By Gregory Onyango

Resilience could be the defining aspect that ensures a community perseveres and continues to thrive even in problematic environments. A resilient community can put plans in place to handle disasters, adapt easily to change and develop strategies for recovery. Communities around the world had to exercise some form of resilience when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

For communities that live in crime-ridden areas, the ability to be resilient can keep families together amid the chaos. Resilience lets them keep their homes and sources of income and provide safe spaces for their young ones to grow up. Resilient communities can, over time, predict, mitigate or even avoid risks altogether. While resilience does not magically take away problems in the community, it does help people live through them.

In some areas of Nakuru, communities practise resilience with help from religious, community-based and non-governmental organizations.

Background

Nakuru City has been a hotspot for crime for a long time, especially in the mobile money sector. Low-income areas such as Kivumbini, Flamingo, and Bondeni are hotspots for petty crime and mobile money cons. 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 making their lives better, they engage in petty crime and advance into armed robbery as they grow older.

When crime becomes a defining part of these communities, gangs thrive as many youths join them. Nakuru is home to Gaza, Confirm, Wakali Wao, Mungiki, SunguSungu, Eastlando and other gangs. The members of these gangs are mostly teenagers and young adults who are looking for a quick buck, security and a sense of belonging. A documentary by Art 4 Rights revealed that some gangs recruit members as young as 8 years old.

In low-income areas where employment opportunities are informal, unemployment rates are high. This, among other factors, has largely contributed to insecurity and the formation of gangs. Such unsafe environments foster the introduction, continuance and spread of radicalization and violent extremism. Various interventions have shown results. One example was 10 young men from Nakuru who were on their way to Somalia to join al-Shabaab but surrendered in Thika.

To rehabilitate and prevent these young people from crime involvement, organizations have tried to create awareness and enable a resilient environment for them and their families. This case study will look into one of these organizations: Youth Bila Noma.

Youth Bila Noma is a registered community-based organization working in Nakuru. It is located in Nakuru East, Pangani Estate along Eldoret Road, just adjacent to Ndumu House in Lakeview Estate. The organization started after a training held by the American Embassy on counternarratives. Its focus was narratives that can be used in the prevention and countering of violence and extremism, which was thought to play a part in the 2017 election period. Some of those who were trained took the initiative to apply what they learned to their local community at the grassroots level.

To start, they carried out informal research in the most populated areas of the county, most of them being informal settlements. They then came up with a concept that encompassed both the need to address violence and the lessons learned in the training.

With support from the county directorate of social services under the 'Save the Boy Child' initiative, Youth Bila Noma partnered with members of the county assembly and other stakeholders to run projects at ward levels. Youth Bila Noma engages with other CSOs and chiefs through the Nakuru County Peace and Security Forum. This forum creates strategies and training for safety concerns in their neighbourhoods, bringing together security experts, community members and others in the security sector.

Youth Bila Noma works to strengthen community resilience against radicalization and violent extremism and to reduce the impact of organized gangs in Nakuru County. They build capacity for local youth groups in the implementation of the county's Rapid Countering Violent Extremism Action Plan. In most campaigns, participants include adolescents, seniors, youths, women and girls from the community as they are the most vulnerable and most affected by gang activities.

The organization has focused on job training for young people. After conducting a skills mapping of youth in their areas of interest, 30 people were enrolled in institutions to receive training to become plumbers, electricians and caterers.

They have also made use of local radio shows and social media for sensitization. They run online engagement forums called Youth Cafe and host tweet chats frequently.

Youth Bila Noma has also helped to train three youth groups who have received seed funding for their project implementation. The groups were supervised to ensure they reach their goals. Another group has been able to start a garbage collection business.

Challenges

Political interference during elections hampers the organization. Politicians spend a lot of money, which is a lucrative deal for young people, and Youth Bila Noma projects suffer from reduced attendance.

The COVID-19 pandemic also hindered projects. It stopped people from meeting in person, and most people did not have access to either a smartphone or the internet for online training. There were also limited funds available for the many projects planned for the year. As an organization supported by donors who were also affected by the pandemic, they could not afford to support activities.

Living in a crime-ridden area is a challenge for everyone. The constant feeling of anxiety and fear of being the next victim is unavoidable. Children lack positive role models in the community and face higher chances of experiencing or witnessing trauma earlier in their life, which can normalize criminal activity, compared to those who come from wealthy or better-off neighbourhoods.

Targeted interventions. Building resilience could ideally start at the school level to instil lessons on the effects of gang membership and engaging in criminal activity. Lessons delivered in schools could include real-life examples. Since children can comprehend and even be recruited into gangs at an early age, interventions that start early can help reduce their chances of being radicalized or recruited when young.

Recognize economic impacts. There is also a need to acknowledge that crime in these informal areas fuels economies that depend heavily on the continuity of criminal activities until another, legal, channel is provided. If this young criminal does not snatch a purse or con someone on M-Pesa, it means one less customer for the mama mboga (vegetable vendor) or the shopkeeper. It means sick parents cannot go to the hospital, their siblings can't pay school fees and they cannot afford necessities.

Cross-sector cooperation. Efforts to build resilience should ideally include the participation and open communication of all stakeholders: e.g. the community, the government and activist groups such as Youth Bila Noma. Reducing animosity between the law enforcers and the community could enable people to report crime without fear.

Structures already exist in the community that can be utilized. Elders, Nyumba Kumi members and religious leaders are trusted leaders. These structures could work better than the police, who are often viewed as a threat.

Building resilience against crime in communities requires input from everyone. As mentioned, resilience does not dissolve the criminal environment: it helps the community to live in an environment that most cannot leave.

Youth Bila Noma's platform enables communities in Nakuru to fight crime and create a safer environment for themselves and their families. Together with other groups, it has helped youths in these vulnerable areas to change the path they would have taken. Their efforts continue to provide relief for families and the community, who are assured that their youth have options, that they may not end up with the dead, the maimed or in jail. Changing the narrative is a long process, but they have dedicated their time and resources to ensure they will succeed.

Nakuru Town East Neighbourhood Association

By Emily Kimani

The Nakuru Town East Neighbourhood Association (NATENA) was established in 2017. Its long-term goals are to empower people, increase community participation, foster social cohesion, enhance cultural identity, strengthen institutional development and promote equity and fairness while treating human and social capital as irreplaceable resources. Membership is open to all adults in the area after the payment of a subscription fee of 300 Kenya shillings for individuals and 500 for corporates. Within NATENA, people form social accountability cells that address issues specific to their constituents and act as liaisons with relevant authorities. People turn to NATENA because of its involvement at the grassroots.

NATENA operates in a neighbourhood built in the 1950s by the colonialists, comprising one- or two-bedroom units with electricity and reliable water supplies. These old municipal estates are now in deplorable condition, resulting from population increases and poor maintenance by the county government. The areas have become vulnerable with overcrowding on the rise, lack of access to essential services, unemployment and insecurity. Residents highlight poverty, lack of job opportunities, greed and lack of contentment, peer pressure, availability of drugs and substance abuse, poor role models and a breakdown of the family unit as the root causes of thriving gangs.

With all these challenges, residents formed NATENA to pull their strengths together and build capacity that would upgrade their surroundings. They engage across a range of agendas, security being one of them.

Security issues

Security is a sensitive matter as the estate is said to be a hub of crime. Common crimes in this neighbourhood include cybercrime (Confirm gang), robbery with violence (use of daggers), rape and gender-based violence, drugs peddling and selling illicit brew, phone and purse theft, stealing and housebreaking, radicalization, corruption, pickpocketing, human trafficking, child labour (begging in the streets) and motorbike theft. Violence against women and girls is a serious

issue. Traditional and cultural patriarchal attitudes and machismo are deep-rooted in most men and transferred to boys. Some men and boys express anger if a girl rejects their advances and cases have been reported where schoolgirls 'who play hard to get' are held hostage for days and gang-raped.

Gangs are highly unpredictable, known to use drugs, steal at random, destroy people's things and sometimes will stab someone for the sake of it. When rival groups in the estate clash, their only way to sort out their differences is by stabbing each other with machetes, knives and swords, sometimes leading to death – including community members who get in the way. Older folks confess it is hard to know what the gang is organizing as they use coded sheng (slang) that is not understood by the general public, who can only pick one word or two. The same language is used when they notice police officers or a stranger in the slum.

Some gangs are alleged to have the backing of politicians who fund them to help with their elections. Since they are already an organized group, they can be summoned in no time and bring havoc during elections – especially during campaigns and party nominations. When the law catches up with them, the politicians bail them out.

Another dilemma faced by residents is that gang members are well known to them. Some are their siblings, their own children, children of their friends, their in-laws. Reporting them to the authorities will be surrendering their own flesh and blood.

To mitigate this, NATENA's secretary works with the chiefs, law enforcement agents, church groups, chiefs' barazas, Nyumba Kumi security clusters, women's groups and youth groups and often organizes public forums for residents to deliberate on security issues. A delicate balance is required as the secretary is well known by everyone, including the gang members, and a small misunderstanding or feeling of betrayal is life-threatening.

One specific step taken by NATENA was to pursue the county government's installation of floodlights in the estate to help curb crime, which reduced the cases but

did not eliminate it. NATENA engages in many other agendas that also support community resilience.

Economic empowerment and public-service employment advocacy

The group raised awareness of the unemployment of qualified persons, especially those living with disabilities, to the county government and pushed for their absorption in the public service. A few have been employed based on this. The vast majority of qualified youths are yet to get formal employment, but some get casual jobs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the group's officials ensured that most of the youths who were willing to work got the government-supported jobs.

NATENA's strategies include technical and vocational education and training for youths and reformed gang members. The group has been involved in following up government and NGOs grants, giving the youths opportunities to be trained in skills like hairdressing and mechanic courses.

Prevention and health promotion awareness

The association is involved in HIV and AIDS education and behaviour-change programmes, creating awareness among the youth and the residents of Nakuru Town East Subcounty. They raise concerns about teenage pregnancies, drugs and substance abuse and mental health services. NATENA has recently called for reproductive health services in all level-two health facilities in the area and for a youth-friendly health centre with mental health specialists. They also support health equity across the neighbourhood. When residents with chronic diseases like HIV and TB cannot access medication, community health workers and officers go the extra mile to deliver it to their doorstep.

Environmental disasters

NATENA is recognized as a source of local information and is evidently valued by government agencies. When there were floods, they formed an emergency rescue team. The association followed this up with the county government by asking for long-term mitigation measures.

Challenges

Focus on children. The community wants their children to be raised communally and to have their rights ensured, while responsibilities should also be taught and discipline instilled. Strategies for directing clear and continuous information, education and communication (IEC) to vulnerable residents, such as poor girls and women, orphans and those with physical or developmental disabilities, are needed.

Due to the vibrant mix of different cultures, the area is characterized by a range of artistic expressions. Youth can be given platforms to express themselves through artistic events like fashion shows, drama, poetry, dances, drawing and sports. This will go a long way to support cohesion and deter them from criminal activities.

Economic stimulus. Unemployment is identified as a root cause of rising levels of crime and there is a need for more opportunities for the youth. They can be empowered with skills that can help them start their own trades. Enterprises like garment work, solid-waste management and cottage industries are areas of opportunity.

Services like loans and credit, market information and safe and affordable energy are needed, especially to women. Economic surveys show that women typically reinvest up to 90 per cent of their income within their families, improving family health and nutrition and access to schooling for children.

Stigma. It is also of concern that some reformed gang members find it hard to integrate into normal society due to stigmatization.

Service provision. Urban service provision is linked to issues of corruption, organized crime and urban development. The issuance of licenses licences and funds to conduct legal trade should be made easy and not be an uphill task for youth who want to do it right.

Water and sanitation are not easily accessible. It can be risky to walk a distance to collect water for household chores or sanitation and hygiene facilities, especially when it is dark. This puts women and girls at risk of harassment, sexual assault and rape.

Kisauni, Kenya

Kisauni is one of the six sub-counties of Mombasa, Kenya. Mombasa is a coastal city and popular tourist destination, although it is marred by land disputes in which residents and police clash over resettlement cases.[5]

The proliferation of gangs is a major concern. There are 12 well-known gangs, some with multiple off-shoots that interviewees referred to as a 'family tree'. Gangs in Mombasa, as elsewhere in the country, are linked to local politicians and the election process, receiving support that includes some training, help with organization and protection from arrest after the election. Mombasa politicians have been linked to the creation of gangs, and some had served as representatives in Kisauni. Gang violence is not only linked to the election cycle but also to post-election periods when they lose their cyclical patronage and attack the public for money.[6] Violent extremism is another concern. Kisauni is a recruitment area for al-Shabaab, targeting youth in the same areas where gang activity is prevalent.[7]

The respondents defined illegal markets and organized criminal activity as gang activity across the area. They mostly focused on the criminal groups themselves – the gangs. They described gangs by pointing out what crimes they were involved in, citing illegal drugs, kidnapping, human trafficking and smuggling, destruction of property and killings. The role of politicians in the proliferation of gangs is a major concern. The gangs have political influence and are heavily financed by senior politicians, particularly during election periods, due to political patronage.

There was a consensus that children join gangs as a source of income or because of peer pressure. Respondents also agreed that many go to gangs for a sense of belonging, recognition and appreciation. This was similar to the perspective in Nakuru.

There was little difference between genders in respondents' description of illicit markets and gangs, their understanding of organized crime as the gang operations in the area and the gang names. Both men and women respondents had a difficult time defining organized crime but their descriptions varied. For women, it was criminal activity by gangs that harm people, or groups of people who harass others. Women looked at why people get involved, pointing out that it was mainly because of the lack of jobs or desperation. They were also quick to identify illicit markets that affect women: human smuggling, sex trafficking and drug trafficking. Women also showed an interest in tackling gang activity, even from a grassroots level.

Men defined organized crime and criminal markets in terms of strategies and the results of crime. They also identified different illicit markets, highlighting drug trafficking and sex trafficking. The men spoke about the complexity of fighting organized crime.

In terms of risks in society, respondents pointed to deaths (often as a result of gang fights), general fear, high levels of insecurity, general anxiety and poor economic growth as the impact of criminal groups. All respondents admitted that economic development is low in the areas where gangs operate, due

Respondents said the proliferation of street gangs in the Kenyan sites was a major concern. *© In Pictures Ltd./Corbis via Getty Images*

to high levels of insecurity that force investors away from long-term projects there.

Respondents had different opinions on the state's response to gangs, with some stating that the state went 'all in' while others said that they showed 'less interest and inefficiency'. There was consensus that the state has made many attempts to 'eradicate' gangs, through civilian officers and also by using force. For instance, respondents cited that the police apply a lot of force, including subtle threats like walking the streets with guns and tear gas.

In contrast, interviewees claimed that the security forces sometimes get it right, leading to the arrest and prosecution of gang members. Most of the people interviewed have faith in their county government, but little in national government. The Office of the County Commissioner was said to be open and approachable. Another approach is the Wazee wa Mtaa, village elders who report to the chiefs about children involved in gangs in their area. Collaboration between civil society organizations is very high, according to all the respondents, but not between the government and CSOs.

There were differences of opinion on the local justice system. Some respondents admitted that the system was efficient but very slow while others said it was marred by corruption. The majority had some experience with the justice system and claimed that cases are handled depending on how much cash one has.

On social cohesion, interviewees noted a diverse community with lots of integration of people from different cultures. The original inhabitants, the Swahili, are more accommodating to other people, although there are visible social lines. Yet, there is a very low level of trust between people because of the tension caused by the gangs, rising crime, terror, radicalization and violent extremism. Respondents listed a rich mix of social networks that reach out to members of different communities. Various groups help in counselling and raising awareness about organized crime issues. They create community watchdogs, facilitate conversations and host sporting events and seminars.

All respondents identified mainstream media as the main media, but the community does not support it as they do not trust it. Social media are the most popular platforms for highlighting issues around

organized crime. Popular blogs are now more trusted than television and newspapers.

It was felt that women are taking advantage of the political space that has opened up, as well as encouraging young girls. There has been a rise in women's organizations that counter organized crime, such as Sauti ya Wamamag (Women's Voices) and Sisters4Justice. Respondents expressed the general feeling that women are the best people to talk to children in the gangs.

On the local economy, men spoke of traditionally masculine casual work, including garage work, cart-pushing, peasant farming and car-wash attendants. They indicated the dominance of foreign companies in the export processing, transport and textile industries. Women referred to SMEs, food kiosks, shopkeeping, running M-Pesa outlets and casual labour in the textile industry as employment opportunities for people in the area. They said that the lack of jobs leads to depression and hopelessness, and to illegal activities like joining gangs or engaging in the illicit drug trade.

Kisauni local perspectives: What can improve these key building blocks?

Security and rule of law

1. More community awareness about the law, including how terrorism laws are applied to civilians
2. Periodically reshuffle security officers and investigate and charge officers involved in corruption scandals
3. Create more police posts across the area, which will ensure that many people can access police officers to report crime
4. Police recruitment should be done on a merit basis. This will encourage professionalism in the sector

Social capital and community capacity

1. Landownership and a stake in the community is important
2. Be persistent with initiatives – don't hold events once and move on
3. Empower civil society to work as an umbrella body. United initiatives could yield better results and have a united voice
4. Local community involvement is needed in activities geared to fighting organized crime. In most cases, CSOs that are not based in the area come and hold an initiative without involving people at the grassroots level. In addition, many CSOs are the ones who 'determine' what they feel are issues affecting the community, which is not often the case

Economy and education

1. Invest more in education, some schools are closing
2. Emphasize holistic training of teachers including how to handle the children's physical, emotional and social well-being
3. Remove bottlenecks in government-led initiatives like Kazi kwa Vijana, which offers casual labour for youth. Residents insist that officials who are involved in nepotism when it comes to such recruitment should be arrested and sacked
4. Encourage the residents to undertake soft-skills training in technical institutes. This will help create job opportunities for them and the community at large

Women's role in resilience

1. Women are natural caretakers who have a voice that should be used
2. Capacity building for women in different spaces – including the political – so they have a chance to influence issues that affect them at a policy level
3. Hold intergenerational forums for women to engage girls
4. Sustainable sources of income are needed to break poverty chain

Angaza Empowerment Network, Kisauni

by Jimia Yusuf Abdul

Traditionally, it has been assumed that the response to crime and illicit markets solely belongs to the state. Even though much responsibility and machinery do lie with the state, communities play a very important role in building blocks to resilience. In other words, the community's response and actions cannot just be swept under the carpet as they play key roles.

This case study reflects a community initiative that has stood the test of time in promoting harmony and coexistence among community members.

Angaza Empowerment Network is a non-governmental organization that was formed in 2015 and works along the coastal region around Mombasa. It works to empower communities and carries out a range of activities including dialogues, skill-building and youth empowerment.

Angaza Empowerment Network launched with a study to understand why there were so many incidents of insecurity and violence. From this, they started to engage with young people who were seen more as perpetrators, meeting them in the youths' hangouts known as *maskani* or *kijiweni*.

Starting with the youth

The youth are among Angaza's top priorities. Their approach is to think of young people as a solution rather than the problem. To ensure productivity, they offered practical mentorship to young people in forums using activities they are familiar with, such as sports and music.

This respectfully countered narratives that included radicalization and marginalization. Getting young people to speak was an important step because they have a lot to say.

Angaza also works to build community in ways that cut across age groups, ethnicities and religions.

Interreligious dialogue forums

Religious conflicts are among the most volatile in Kisauni and Mombasa in general. With al-Shabaab's radicalization of young people and acts of terror, gaps between religions widened and differences turned into violence. To mitigate potential conflict in the coming election period, Angaza Empowerment Network initiated interreligious dialogue forums that involved visiting religious worship centres.

These were intended to bridge the gap and bring harmony and diversity back into the community. Different religious groups in the communities have come together, demystifying the narratives and misconceptions that seem to encourage violence and violent extremism.

In one of the most successful activities, leaders of different religious groups across the county entered a mosque, prayed together and discussed issues affecting the community. Using the pulpit to counter the narrative of division has been a very strong act.

A youth football tournament arranged by Angaza Empowerment Network. © *Angaza Empowerment Network*

Interreligious mosque visit

The dialogue at Swahilina Mosque in Kisauni brought Muslim and Christian clergy together to discuss relations between the two leading religions and come up with solutions to strengthen cohesion. It took place under the auspices of Partnership for Peace, a project supported by Conducive Space for Peace and Civil Society in Development (CISU).

Interfaith dialogue has the potential to unlock the power of religious traditions and provide the inspiration, guidance and validation necessary for populations to move toward non-violent means of conflict resolution. Such dialogues have become an increasingly important tool for those who seek to end violent conflict worldwide.

Interethnic dialogue forums

Kisauni, like other parts of Mombasa County, is a cosmopolitan area. Interethnic dialogue forums address mistrust by bringing together different ethnic leaders and village elders known as *Wazee wa Mtaa*. The forums promote peace by countering the stereotypes and beliefs that work to scatter the masses.

Intergenerational dialogue

In the spirit of promoting peaceful coexistence in the community, Angaza brought together different members of the community for an intergenerational dialogue. Those who attended included gang leaders, youth leaders, village elders, business operators, women and local administrators.

The aim was to understand different challenges for the different generations and see how to address them.

After this, the community vowed to work together and promote harmony among the members. One of the most visible outcomes was that a local business sponsored a youth group to start a business.

Youth champions

Each sub-county in Mombasa is represented by two volunteer 'youth champions' who are appointed based on their influence, eloquence and charisma in the community.

The youth champions' main duty is to offer quick response and intervention to issues that are emerging in the community. They form the most important link in the Angaza Network as they are directly in touch with grassroots issues, mobilize communities for action and provide community leadership.

Challenges

Community perceptions. The community has a way of thinking that change is too difficult. This has resulted in overdependence on state responses and the expectation of external responses, e.g. from international organizations. These perceptions have commercialized peace-building initiatives in the community.

Support from the local administration. The local administration has occasionally offered some support, but their participation is generally limited or dependent on the political mood. This selective support from the state and local administration has aggravated the situation and, in most cases, earlier efforts are going to waste.

Links with other sectors, including business. Building on what Angaza already has in place requires better coordination, with multi-sector involvement in support of these types of initiatives. Apart from the state, local businesses also should work hand-to-hand to promote financial empowerment, especially for young people and women.

Scene from a peace-building forum. © Angaza Empowerment Network

Pemba, Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

Since October 2017, Mozambique's Cabo Delgado Province has been the theatre of a violent and destructive insurgency. Communities in the region have been caught up in an escalating conflict between the central government and a violent extremist organization (known as al-Shabaab, but unconnected to the eponymous group in Somalia), that seeks to secure increased socio-economic benefits, religious participation and inclusion in the governance of the territories they have influenced. The government, with support from regional allies, has sought unsuccessfully to maintain its control in a province that is geographically, politically and economically remote from the rest of the country.

The people in Cabo Delgado have suffered greatly from the conflict, leading to over 150 000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), mostly headed southward. Additionally, serious human rights abuses have been recorded, including arbitrary killings and detentions, kidnapping, human trafficking and violence against children (including rape and early marriages) across the province. The local economy has also suffered, thus undermining the already limited socio-economic opportunities available for the people of Cabo Delgado.[8]

Pemba is a port city and district in Mozambique. It is the capital of the province of Cabo Delgado and lies on a peninsula in Pemba Bay, a favourable position for navigation, which places it in an advantageous position in terms of access to the markets in the region. The municipality of Pemba covers 100 square kilometres and recorded 201 846 people in the 2017 census. Since the outbreak of the conflict, Pemba has been highly militarized, although no attacks have yet been recorded there. Currently, the already precarious economic conditions are exacerbated by the arrival of thousands of IDPs from the most critical districts across the province. For instance, over just two weeks in October 2020, at least 219 boats carrying 11 280 people arrived in Pemba, almost half of them children.[9] The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that, by February 2021, the population of Pemba had grown by almost three-quarters.[10] This situation leaves the city with a weakened capacity to deliver public services and exacerbates the security challenge.

Pemba has also been identified as a trans-shipment point for multiple illicit commodities. By 2016, the port was known as a key hub for shipping illegal ivory (which has subsequently declined), as well as products

such as restricted hardwood species and other illegal wildlife products.[11] It is a transit location for heroin and methamphetamine arriving by dhow and shipping containers from the Makran Coast or via Zanzibar, and for cocaine arriving by shipping container from Brazil.[12] These drug routes are known to be run by local elites in connection with overseas actors. The markets for environmental products operate through patronage networks and are fuelled by corruption, with low levels of violence associated with them.

Overwhelmingly, people spoke about the insurgency and the insurgents as the dominant 'criminal' group. Low levels of awareness of organized crime, its networks and impact on day-to-day life were evident, even though it poses a risk in Pemba. Both men and women respondents showed some difficulty in defining organized crime, yet responses show that numerous diverse activities related to organized crime worry the communities in Pemba, with an emphasis on drug trafficking and natural-resource trafficking, such as wood and minerals. Although the interviewees have not given further details, they have shown concern over the rise in cases of human trafficking in Pemba. Men said the most common organized crime-related activities in Pemba included drug trafficking, human trafficking, mining, murder, sexual violence and the current insurgency. Women named drug trafficking, weapons trade, human trafficking, and trading in other illegal goods and products.

Generally, the criminal economies are controlled by groups with links to government actors and these local criminal groups are mostly from Mecufi, Chibuabuara and Nacala. Criminal groups do not have the capacity to control territories, but they have political influence that allows them to operate in Pemba. These groups can easily access weapons, including knives, machetes and guns, but do not circulate with these weapons openly. Today, however, people are more concerned with conflict than with organized crime itself.

On risks to the community, men noted increasing school absenteeism and said the insurgency is causing an increase in drug use among young people, poverty, unemployment and sex work. Women felt that both the insurgents and the regular criminal groups create panic in communities and people do not feel safe as a result. Women and young people are the most vulnerable groups.

There was a general perception that the state fails to respond, and this makes conditions worse. The experience of insurgency in Cabo Delgado was frequently mentioned as one example of the state's failure to respond to the challenges of the community. Respondents said that government authorities, especially at the local level, abuse their power, intimidating and hampering the activities of civil society organizations in Pemba.

View of the harbour, Pemba. *© John Warburton-Lee/Alamy*

A woman prepares food at Pemba's market. *© Giampiero Gandolfo/Alamy*

There was a consensus that Cabo Delgado in general and Pemba in particular are culturally and ethnically diverse and this causes some tension, especially between the Makonde and Macua ethnic groupings. People noted competition among and discrimination between groups. It was felt this hinders collective community action. They spoke of a range of social networks and groups but felt they are not cohesive or strong enough. Although there are some local groups to promote gender equalities, youth inclusion and agricultural production, communities are not sufficiently prepared and organized to make a deep impact against crime. Both men and women highlighted the work of the Association for the Protection of Women and Girls (PROMURA) on these issues. Some communities create watchdog groups, as is the case in the Cariaco neighbourhood, as a way of fighting crime and continual robberies.

On media, respondents said that both TV and radio stations transmit censored information. Television and social networks such as Facebook and WhatsApp were cited as the most relevant sources of information. Women said that few people in Pemba have access to smartphones to access information from the internet and social networks, or even to share a neighbourhood event.

There was a difference of opinion between men and women on women's power. Men felt they are not empowered politically and more needs to be done while women felt they had power. Men felt women's power is restricted to the family level and is still a challenge in the public sphere. Women said they had very active political participation, with the ability to create a movement and stop a certain event in Pemba. Women organize themselves into savings and *xitique* groups (financing channels based on mutual trust).

Pemba's economy is linked to mining, fishing and commerce. While men are engaged in fishing and some work in mines, most women work in food markets and sell dumplings as a way of earning sustenance for their families. Employment is a challenge in this province. There are no jobs for young people, even if they finish their degree. A commonly held view was that it is easier to grant a job to someone who comes from other areas, such as Maputo and Beira, to the detriment of locals.

There are inequalities in accessing basic services and resources in Pemba. People are compelled to travel long distances to access public transport, education or healthcare. The escalation of the insurgency has put a lot of pressure on public services because Pemba has received so many displaced people.

Local justice is relatively weak and dependent on the government, which causes a certain distrust in its capacity to bring a helpful and effective response to the challenges of the communities. People have more trust in the community courts as their leaders are less likely to be corrupt.

Pemba local perspectives: What can improve these key building blocks?

Security and rule of law

1. Creation of organized crime response committees involving government, civil society and communities
2. Conducting community awareness-raising activities on organized crime
3. Create and reinforce the capacity of police posts

Social capital and community capacity

1. Involvement of communities in civic activities
2. Create local thematic groups and train local leaders

Economy and education

1. Economic empowerment of disadvantaged groups: women, people with disabilities, young people
2. Reinforce capacity of local technical and professional training
3. Create programmes to support small-scale agricultural and fishing activities
4. Create financing mechanisms for entrepreneurial initiatives

Women's role in resilience

1. Women's engagement in all decision-making spheres
2. Strengthen associative groups of women
3. Women's leadership oriented towards solving women's problems

Humanitarian assistance and resilience in the context of conflict: The case of Kuendeleya

By Américo Maluana

During the conflict in Cabo Delgado, Pemba has not been attacked, but has received many internally displaced people from the region. Displaced people arrive by land and small boats, which puts their lives at risk, while others die from hunger, thirst and injuries sustained during the attacks. The situation has triggered emergency humanitarian aid.

Some young people from Pemba organized and founded an association called Kuendeleya, meaning 'progress'. Kuendeleya, which is made up of young Christian and Muslim members, began as an amateur beach football team. In 2020, as the terrorist attacks were intensifying, the team was playing football on the beach in a neighborhood of Pemba when they spotted four boats arriving full of people. They alerted the local police. It turned out that the passengers were internally displaced people, including many women and children.

The idea was raised among the team to ask family and friends for bread and sugar to distribute. The displaced people continued to arrive, in increasing numbers each day.

After this food-provision initiative, the Kuendeleya members began fundraising campaigns and soon gained the trust of communities and local entrepreneurs, who supported the cause. They faced barriers in formalizing their organization, but this did not deter them. They believe in a 'youth of Cabo Delgado that aspires to a new order that overcomes the poverty and glaring injustices of their land and wants to act ethically, teaching it to the younger ones'. The target group is children, pregnant women, the elderly and young mothers.

Kuendeleya has a threefold impact. First, it provides psychological assistance and social reintegration, developing training sessions, teaching people how to contribute positively, such as creating small businesses for sustainability. It also provides humanitarian assistance for victims (by supplying food and other basic needs). There are thousands of displaced women and children without food, including vulnerable elderly people suffering from dehydration and weakness. Thirdly, it assists internally displaced persons in other ways (e.g. by contacting family members and creating shelters). One young activist, Anchinha Abdul, a member of Kuendeleya, cared for 17 internally displaced persons in her own home.

Even on occasion without the support of other entities, Kuendeleya has helped provide minimal conditions for survival during this humanitarian crisis. At the community level, these young people also promote inter-religious dialogue, gender equality, justice and peace. It carries out these functions in the face of numerous challenges, notably lack of funding, difficulty in collaborating with the international humanitarian organizations established in Pemba and lack of openness on the part of the local government authorities.[13]

Young activists in Pemba receive IDPs, prepare meals and offer food parcels. *© Abudo Gafuro/www.kuendeleya.org*

Montepuez, Cabo Delgado, Mozambique

The district of Montepuez is located in the southern of Cabo Delgado Province, 210 kilometres from the provincial capital, Pemba, bordering on the north with the district of Mueda, to the south with the districts of Namuno and Chiúre, to the east with the districts of Ancuabe and Meluco and to the west with the districts of Balama and Mecula, the latter in Niassa Province.

Agriculture is a dominant activity in Montepuez. It involves almost all households and is generally practised manually on small family farms. Montepuez also has the world's second-largest reserve of rubies, which was first identified in 2009. A large mining concession controlled by Montepuez Ruby Mining – a joint venture between Mozambican company Mwiriti (25 per cent ownership) and global gemstone-producing giant Gemfields (75 per cent ownership) – covers 33 600 hectares.

Montepuez has been a destination for people displaced by the insurgency. By mid-April 2021, the district had already received 10 000 IDPs from the conflict.[14] The ruby deposits have also caught the attention of the insurgents, who want to extort and then ultimately control mining operations, bringing associated risks of kidnapping, injury and death to mining staff and subcontractors.[15] GI-TOC's Eastern

and Southern Africa Observatory reports that insurgents have concentrated their recruitment efforts on economically marginalized informal miners and promises of mining-sector work for recruits.[16]

Criminal activity was identified in the district, but respondents had difficulty conceptualizing illegal markets or organized crime. They highlighted the current insurgency as one of the forms of manifestation of organized crime. Men listed criminal activities such as sexual violence, robberies followed by murders, as well as the burning of houses in the north of Montepuez, especially in Cuamba and Mandanindane. Men also mentioned that the circulation of stolen cars, minerals and other illegal products is common, which is considered illegal, and communities are aware of its existence.

The interviewees were unanimous in stating that most of the insurgents are local youth, frustrated by the lack of employment opportunities and social inequalities in the district. The regular crimes presented above are committed by local youth, together with people from other provinces, mainly from Nampula. One way to fight crime in communities has been through community policing efforts, which has often had an effect.

Both local criminal groups and insurgents destabilize communities by carrying out robberies and murders. These groups do not have a preference in targets: they attack everyone, regardless of gender, age, religion or ethnicity. Criminal activities in Montepuez increase poverty and cause problems and divisions among community members, mainly when some of them are involved in crime. The interviewees were unanimous that these criminal activities increase poverty. There is increasing homelessness and loss of goods in some Montepuez communities due to the burning of houses and constant robberies.

Corruption and bribery occur at all levels of governance in Montepuez. Interviewees gave the example of criminals who were arrested through the work of the community itself and handed over to the police but subsequently went unpunished. This situation not only worries the community but also supports the belief that the force of law can be escaped through corruption and bribery in Montepuez.

Respondents said there is a sense of community responsibility to fight against crime and that patrol groups in the communities support the work of the local police. However, the lack of collective action on the part of some community members, especially women, was seen to jeopardize the development and security of the community. There are different perceptions of the effectiveness of the state's response to criminal activities in Montepuez. While some claimed that the state is responsive to community challenges, others questioned its role, highlighting high unemployment rates and instability in the district.

Montepuez is culturally and ethnically diverse and this situation was accentuated by the displacement of people due to the insurgency. The feeling of belonging is not the same for everyone. Some people feel welcomed and do not find barriers to socializing while others, especially those displaced by war, suffer discrimination and are easily targeted by criminal groups. Nevertheless, civil society organizations have taken an essential role in promoting the development and well-being of the population, particularly those who are marginalized.

Respondents argued that local media is weak and dependent on the government and most people have access only to radio stations. People have access to mobile phones, which is the most common mode of communication, but only a few have access to the internet and social media.

While the women and men interviewed felt that women had political and social power, the researchers' inability to identify women to interview during the data collection phase calls into question the extent of local women's empowerment. In the focus groups, women were less likely to voice their opinions and tended to agree with men's positions. Whether this indicates a flaw in the research process or a structural issue, the prevalence of women in supporting communities against crime and gangs suggests that the women of Montepuez are valuable leaders at the local level. As in Pemba, women organize around weekly xitiques, which opens space for them to start their businesses and increase their income. Men said that there are small women's associations

Street scene in Montepuez, Mozambique. *© CKYN Shutterstock*

that, although weak, seek to contain organized crime through awareness-raising actions.

Generally, agriculture, fishing and commerce are the most common economic activities. Young people feel that there are no job opportunities for them in Montepuez, which can sometimes lead to a criminal life. Respondents said that there are no safe spaces in Montepuez and that going out for a walk at night is dangerous due to the activity of the criminal groups. People in Montepuez are still living in extreme poverty, without easy access to food, electricity, water, transport, education and healthcare.

Montepuez has been a destination for people displaced by the insurgency. © *Emidio Josine/AFP via Getty Images*

Montepuez local perspectives: What can improve these key building blocks?

Security and rule of law

1. Greater dissemination of laws
2. Fight corruption and create protection mechanisms for those who call attention to it
3. Create community policing posts in the neighbourhoods

Social capital and community capacity

1. Fight tribalism within the communities
2. Promote lectures to raise public awareness
3. Create community forums to solve community problems

Economy and education

1. Promote employment initiatives, especially for youth
2. Fight corruption in the education sector
3. Expand the number of public professional schools and improve the infrastructure and capacity of existing ones

Women's role in resilience

1. Engage women in all activities in the social, political and economic spheres
2. Promote entrepreneurial initiatives for women
3. Fight discrimination based on gender

Community policing in Montepuez

By Américo Maluana

Community policing in Montepuez has strong support from communities, and is part of the government's broader strategy to fight crime. Communities have established community policing groups and a Community Policing Council, whose structure falls within the neighbourhood secretariats. In 2019, community policing efforts started to receive support from the municipality, which provides training and uniforms. Community policing agents are volunteers, but they go through a selection process and are approved of by the community. For example, in the Nkoripo District, a commander was selected who is a former combatant from the liberation war and works with young people. When young people are selected, they are trained by the police.

However, there are no formalized selection criteria, although the process generally takes into account age and an evaluation of the behavior of the volunteers in the community. In principle, the process of selecting candidates for community policing is carried out by people in the community through popular consultation. Individuals identified as inappropriate because of their past activities are not admitted. The selection process excludes women because there is a perception that due to the high risk, community patrol activities should be carried out only by men.

In Montepuez, community police officers are present in the neighbourhoods. They carry out daily patrols and participate in neighbourhood meetings. They also interact with the police and report on incidents. At the police station level, there is a police officer responsible for coordinating community policing.

As well as providing a mechanism to combat crime in the community, community policing allows for strengthening relationships of trust between the police and the community, as it privileges community engagement in solving local problems. The exclusion of women in this raises the question of whether this disempowers them as actors at the local level in solving problems and building trust with police. The community police have given lectures and are involved in awareness-raising activities about crime and the need to report on it.

There are several challenges. The neighbourhoods to be covered by community police officers are large and their capacity insufficient. They also lack appropriate equipment, especially in a context where criminals often carry firearms. Finally, poor or almost non-existent training compromises the effectiveness of community policing.

In a context of scarce resources (e.g. fuel, cars and personnel), community policing has become essential because it improves response time to crime. Community police are always the first to arrive at crime scenes and have helped raise levels of community awareness about criminal activity. The relationship between the community police and the state police is positive because community officers provide information from the community to the police.

CONCLUSION: KEY FINDINGS FOR POLICYMAKERS

A school class in a village in the Diocese of Nakuru. *© Friedrich Stark/Alamy*

This research shows the potentially transformative and sustainable approach that can be developed by joining up the local perspectives with national, bilateral and international priorities. Below are three key findings that will reinforce community resilience to organized crime:

Better align local and external needs when determining policy and programming. Community members view the concept of organized crime in a unique and deeply personal way. People primarily identified 'organized' groups that threaten personal safety and community-wide security or people who organize to commit crimes that harm the community, like robbery or theft. It is also important to note that community members viewed sexual and gender-based violence as part of serious and organized crime. Surveying the community on how they view the problem and solutions can help identify where to target programming, and what the strengths and weaknesses for resilience are.

Resilience is embedded in community dynamics. The problems of organized crime were linked directly to very local community issues, such as mistrust among neighbours involved in groups, youth unemployment and lack of opportunity, and local institutional corruption. Some of the efforts seen as most effective by community members were not complex but required sustained effort and care. These included youth forums, sports events and dialogues organized by religious groups. They also offer solutions that require consistency and engagement by the community, but that are also small-scale endeavours and achievable, such as dialogues and mentoring young people. In this sense, resilience is built along a continuum and through many efforts and projects – and with the local community at the helm.

Amplify the role of women. Women were highlighted as key actors. They are close to the ground, know what's going on and are willing to engage at the community level. Across the sites, the role of women was varied, from economic support groups to local political actions, like advocacy and door-to-door campaigns, to youth empowerment and rehabilitation.

In contexts like Montepuez, where women are excluded from community policing, they are not being given the opportunity to offer their skills and unique perspectives on community safety. It was more difficult to find women to interview in both locations in Mozambique – done by locally based researchers. This indicates it will be even more difficult for international donors or those from the outside to access women's perspectives, particularly on security issues. Given the impactful role of women seen across both locations in Kenya, in areas where women are not as engaged, seeking out their perspectives and engagement should become a longer-term priority.

NOTES

1   Global Organized Crime Index 2021, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC), https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/GITOC-Global-Organized-Crime-Index-2021.pdf.

2   Marcena Hunter, Chikomeni Manda and Gabriel Moberg, Scratching the surface: Tracing coloured gemstone flows from Mozambique and Malawi to Asia, GI-TOC, November 2021, pp 27–28, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Gemstones-Report-Web.pdf.

3   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.

4   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.

5   Philip Muyanga and Brian Ocharo, Kenya: Kisauni, Likoni the land hotspots in Mombasa, AllAfrica, 13 July 2021, https://allafrica.com/stories/202107140180.html.

6   Simone Haysom and Ken Opala, The politics of crime: Kenya's gang phenomenon, GI-TOC, November 2020, p. 37, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/The-politics-of-crime-Kenyas-Gang-Phenomenon_GITOCESAObs.pdf.

7   Mohamed Ahmed, Kenya: Parents agonise as their children join al-Shabaab, AllAfrica, 13 January 2021, https://allafrica.com/stories/202101130274.html.

8   CDD, Conflict resolution in Cabo Delgado: Understanding violent extremism in Cabo Delgado, Lessons from multi-stakeholder dialogue, Vital steps towards resolving conflict in 2022, December 2021.

9   Relief Web, Mozambique Flash Update No. 2: Arrival of displaced people in Pemba, Situation Report, 1 November 2020, https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/mozambique-flash-update-no-2-arrival-displaced-people-pemba-1-nov-2020.

10 Emidio Jozine, Mozambique city overwhelmed by people fleeing Islamist violence, Reuters, 5 April 2021, https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-mozambique-insurgency-pemba/mozambique-city-overwhelmed-by-people-fleeing-islamist-violence-idUSKBN2BS0R4.

11 Alastair Nelson and Jacqueline Cochrane, Triangle of risk, GI-TOC, June 2020, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Triangle-of-Risk.-web.pdf.

12 Ibid., p 15.

13 To read more about more about Kuendeleya, see http://kuendeleya.org/pt/index.html.

14 RTP Notícias, Montepuez recebeu 10 mil deslocados do conflito no norte de Moçambique, 19 April 2021, https://headtopics.com/pt/montepuez-recebeu-10-mil-deslocados-do-conflito-no-norte-de-mocambique-19708415.

15 Eva Renon, Terrorism in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province: Examining the data and what to expect in the coming years, IHS Markit, 5 April 2021, https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/terrorism-mozambiques-cabo-delgado-data.html.

16 Julia Stanyard et al, Insurgency, illicit markets and corruption: The Cabo Delgado conflict and its regional implications, GI-TOC, February 2022, p. 32, https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/GITOC-ESAObs-Insurgency-illicit-markets-and-corruption-The-Cabo-Delgado-conflict-and-its-regional-implications.pdf.

ABOUT THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE

The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime is a global network with over 500 Network Experts around the world. The Global Initiative provides a platform to promote greater debate and innovative approaches as the building blocks to an inclusive global strategy against organized crime.

www. globalinitiative.net