



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

SHARED SECURITY PACT

RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE
THE URBAN SAFETY OF THE SOMALI
COMMUNITY IN EASTLEIGH, NAIROBI

JULY 2026



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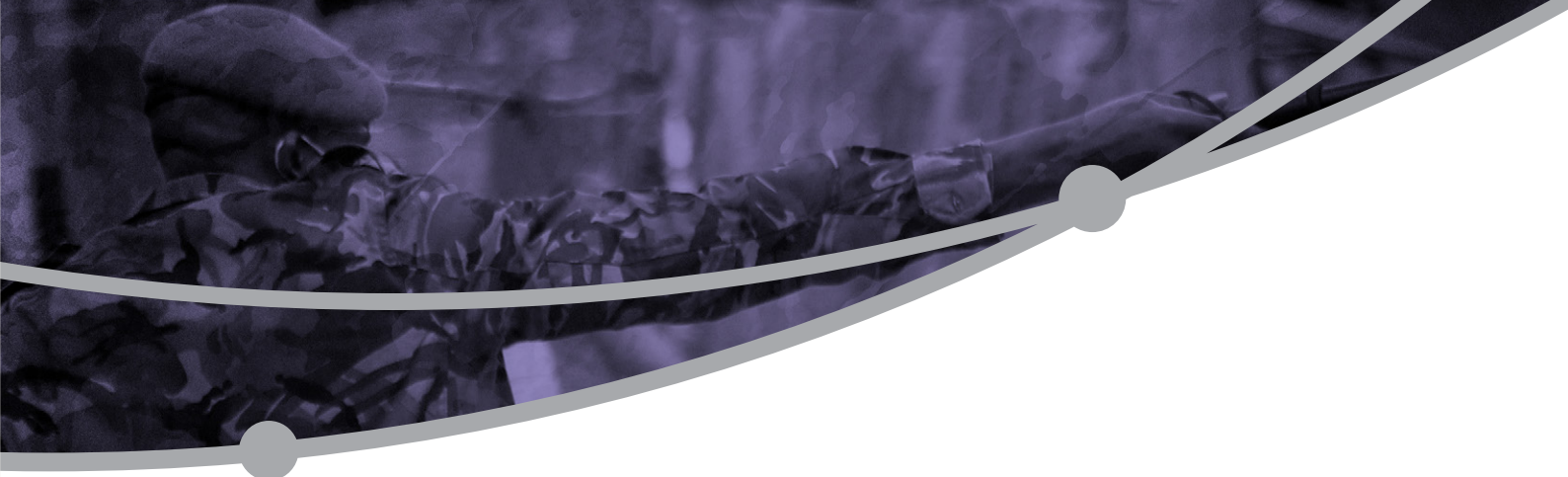


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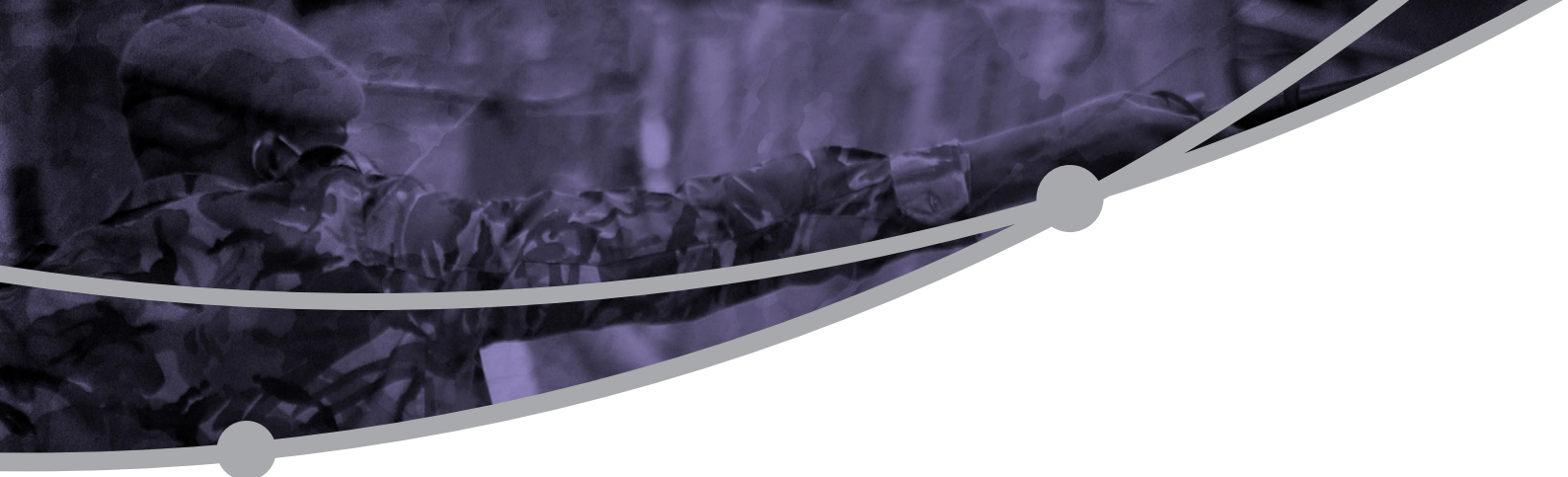


INTRODUCTION

Eastleigh, home to the largest Somali community in Nairobi, is a neighbourhood of contrasts. While it is one of the most prosperous business centres in the Kenyan capital, it is deeply affected by urban security issues, ranging from gang violence to land grabbing, human smuggling and trafficking, and strained relations between the community and the police.

This document, the Shared Security Pact, sets out recommendations to address these long-standing urban security challenges. These recommendations are based on roundtable discussions organized as part of the Shared Security Dialogues project, which was funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. The project brought together two groups that seldom interact and often approach security issues from very different starting points. Between November 2025 and February 2026, five roundtable dialogues were held to identify challenges and workshop solutions to promote urban safety and prevent violence in the community. Participants included law enforcement and government representatives, as well as members of Eastleigh's civil society, including community-based organizations, residents, and the Somali refugee and migrant communities. The policy recommendations set out in this document come directly from the community and the state representatives who participated in the dialogues.

This document accompanies the policy brief 'City of contrasts: Urban safety, migration and climate change and their impact on the Somali community in Eastleigh, Nairobi'. The brief outlines the specific dynamics of organized crime and insecurity in Eastleigh, as well as the particular vulnerabilities affecting Nairobi's Somali community. It identifies several core challenges, including gang-related violence, illicit drug markets, human trafficking (particularly for sexual exploitation) and smuggling, and predicate crimes such as document forgery. It also highlights strained community-police relations resulting from profiling, corruption and mistrust. The policy brief found climate change to be a risk multiplier, responsible for displacing populations to Nairobi and increasing their vulnerability to exploitation.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below respond to the current gaps in local government service provision, policing, community–government relations and civil society initiatives in Eastleigh, with the goal of improving security and countering the multiplier effect of climate change. The recommendations are grouped into five themes and are limited to those that received strong agreement from both community and government participants.

1. Government initiatives

Participants in the Shared Security Dialogues found that the frequent rotation of local government officials in Eastleigh undermines trust within the community; that corruption in document processing erodes the community's rights and trust in governance; and that forms of alternative dispute resolution (known among the Somali community as *maslaha*) lack accountability and should not be used in cases of serious crime. Recommendations to improve this situation fall into three categories:

Institutionalize anchors between the community and government

- Ensure continuity in government–community relations. Appoint dedicated community liaison officers (one county, one community) per sub-location, insulated from transfers. Formalize the roles of elders, building managers and religious leaders as consistent liaisons. Advocate for a minimum three-year tenure for senior national government administration officers in Eastleigh.
- Establish ward-level joint steering committees (including local chiefs, elders and youth/women representatives) to meet monthly and provide community input to government around security and service delivery issues.
- Create digital leadership-handover portals to preserve institutional memory.

Use digital systems to promote equity and transparency

- Accelerate the digitization of all county licensing, utility connections (electricity, water) and document issuance to minimize potential cases of corruption (including bribery) and other exploitative behaviours during in-person interactions with brokers.

Adapt traditional justice mechanisms

- Formalize a referral protocol by which *maslaha* councils handle civil disputes and minor offences but are mandated to refer cases involving human trafficking, sexual exploitation, drug trafficking or violent crime to the formal justice system.
- Train elders on human rights and evidence. There was strong agreement that *maslaha* should comply with national laws and formally document all of the cases it handles.
- Create a public record to track case referrals from *maslaha* councils to the police and courts, promoting transparency.

2. Policing practices and initiatives

Participants found that the negative profiling of Somali communities is a persistent issue in Eastleigh, as is the targeting of community members by corrupt officers. Community-policing initiatives such as Nyumba Kumi, while useful mechanisms, are under-resourced and tend to be reactive. Community members argued that police resources are misaligned with hotspots, and that limited investigative capacity hampers the effective prosecution of organized crime cases.

Reform and empower Nyumba Kumi to be more proactive and efficient

- Provide coordinators with tools such as smartphones and a secure reporting app for real-time incident reporting to the police.
- Introduce a community safety allowance for Nyumba Kumi coordinators, and create incentives such as recognition awards based on transparent criteria, to encourage participation.
- Promote formal collaboration between Nyumba Kumi coordinators and community health promoters to identify and report illegal activities.

Eliminate discrimination and enhance law enforcement accountability

- Implement mandatory cultural competency training for police officers on Somali culture, refugee rights and trauma-informed policing.
- Institutionalize community engagement (e.g. forums, open days, sporting events) as a routine part of police activity.
- Actively recruit and promote Somali-speaking officers and work towards a gender-balanced police force in Eastleigh.
- Pilot body-worn cameras with audits by the Independent Policing Oversight Authority and community representatives.

Adapt allocation of policing resources to increase crime prevention and investigative capacities

- Enhance CCTV networks with a centralized monitoring unit. This should be complemented by expanding public and private camera networks to overcome the current reality that most hotels in trafficking hotspots lack surveillance systems.
- Create an Eastleigh financial and organized crime cell within the Directorate for Criminal Investigations for 'follow-the-money' investigations.
- Implement hotspot policing (concentrating police officers in areas of high criminality) using foot or mobile patrols and predictive software.

3. Community relations with police and government

Participants found that, though efforts had been made to improve relations between the community and police, mistrust and corruption remain. Corruption is a critical enabler of trafficking, document fraud and protection rackets, destroying confidence in public bodies and institutions. It also enables these crimes to feed off one another – for example, document fraud facilitates human trafficking and smuggling.

Take measures to prevent document fraud

- Digitize document verification strategies, for example, by using digital watermarking or QR codes on all county-issued documents to prevent forgery.
- Invest in biometric systems and conduct periodic audits of issuance points.
- Investigate landlords and businesses suspected of housing criminal operations.
- Hold landlords responsible for documenting tenant details, including origin and background, to aid in identification.

Protect whistleblowers and victims

- Advocate for the passage of the Whistleblower Protection Bill.¹
- Guarantee support for whistleblowers, such as anonymity, legal representation and security.
- Operate a 24/7 confidential hotline with support in Somali and Swahili.

4. Civil society initiatives

Civil society organizations in Eastleigh are limited by project-based funding, which affects their sustainability and prevents strategic cooperation between civil society organizations and the government. Activists also experience harassment, intimidation and bureaucratic interference.

Institutionalize stakeholder forums

- Establish quarterly, high-level security forums – bringing together national government administration officers, the police, business leaders, Nyumba Kumi and civil society organizations – co-chaired by the County Commissioner and a community elder, with pre-forum agenda-setting by diverse representatives.
- Create thematic subforums on gender-based violence, youth employment and business security to delve deeper into sectoral issues.

Help ensure financial sustainability for civil society organizations

- Create an Eastleigh peacebuilding innovation hub to help civil society organizations develop social enterprise models to create sustainable revenue.
- Have Nairobi County provide matching grants for civil society organizations engaged in crime prevention.

¹ See: Maureen Kinyanjui, Whistleblowers to get stronger protection, rewards under new bill, *The Eastleigh Voice*, 11 July 2025, <https://eastleighvoice.co.ke/news/177516/whistleblowers-to-get-stronger-protection-rewards-under-new-bill>.

- Establish a community safety impact fund with contributions from private sector partners, offering low-interest loans to civil society organizations for scalable projects.
- Encourage public fundraising to implement activities, reducing donor dependency.

Implement more robust protection mechanisms for civil society organizations

- Sign a protection protocol between the police, the NGOs Coordination Board and a local civil society organization coalition guaranteeing freedom of movement and a rapid response to threats.
- Provide digital security training for activists, covering encrypted communication, secure data storage and anti-surveillance tactics.

5. Climate change and related insecurity

Climate-driven displacement increases the presence of vulnerable migrants, who face exploitation made worse by a lack of documentation, safe housing and social support. This renders them 'invisible' to the government and puts them at greater risk of victimization and exploitation by criminal groups.

Although civil society plays a crucial role in providing support to migrants, including those displaced as a result of climate change, community-based organizations should not bear the entire burden. The government should strengthen the capacity of existing social services to handle the influx of migrants and improve coordination between county and national agencies.

Implement measures for identification and immediate support to newly arrived migrants

- Support community-led awareness to identify new arrivals.
- Establish a welcome and screening centre at Eastleigh bus terminal – which can be coordinated by government agencies, international organizations and civil society – for vulnerability screening, shelter referral, and legal and health services.

Create integrated protection and livelihood support for migrant communities

- Develop a safe housing initiative. Partner with national housing programmes to build affordable units, with priority given to climate-displaced families; introduce rent subsidies.
- Partner with NGOs to create and support accessible, culturally sensitive services including mental health support.
- Create urban resilience hubs in community halls, offering language classes, digital literacy, psycho-social support and childcare.
- Deploy mobile legal clinics to informal settlements to provide assistance with documentation, labour rights and gender-based violence reporting.



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