**INTER-COUNTY EXCHANGE**
**ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING**
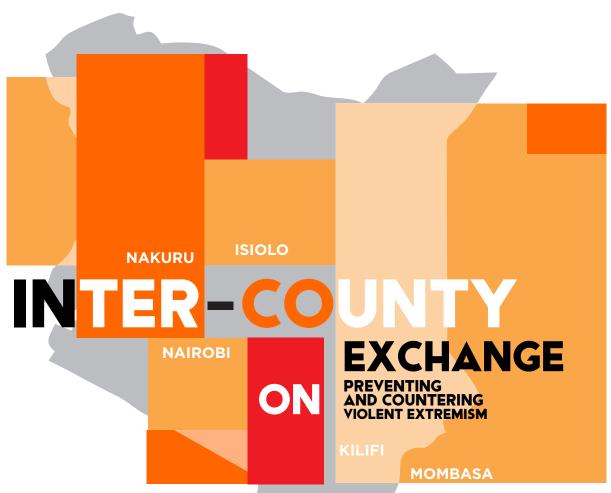**VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

STRONG CITIES

ISD | Powering solutions to extremism and polarisation

NAKURU

ISOLO

# INTER-COUNTY

NAIROBI

## EXCHANGE
## ON
**PREVENTING**
**AND COUNTERING**
**VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

KILIFI

MOMBASA

*Supporting community Based Interventions to Address Polarization and Extremism*

KWALE

NAKURU COUNTY
COUNTY OF UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES

## Background

In recognition of the continuous need for peer-to-peer learning and innovation around preventing and countering radicalization and violent extremism, HURIA convened an Inter-County Exchange forum in Kwale County on January 2022. The convening was supported by the Institute of Strategic Dialogue under the auspices of the PROACT Program. For the last two years, the PROACT program has been supporting community-based interventions to address hate, polarization, and extremism in Kwale, Isiolo, and Nakuru Counties. Participating in the Forum were representatives from the National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC), Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government, County Government, and CEF members from Kwale, Isiolo, Nakuru, and Kilifi Counties.

H.E. Governor Salim Mvurya officiated the opening of the 2-day Forum, where he reinforced the commitment of the County Government to support PCVE efforts. The Coastal Regional Commissioner, John Elungata, equally appreciated the efforts of the CSOs in Kwale in working to address VE issues and asked human rights groups to support government efforts of dealing with terror groups besides the criticism. He notably **raised concern over Violent Extremist groups operating within the County** and asked stakeholders to continue speaking boldly and emphatically against radicalization that leads to violent extremism.

In his opening remarks, HURIA's Executive Director Yusuf Lule highlighted that the Inter-County Exchange Forum sought to give a platform for PCVE actors to interrogate on whether we were winning the war against terrorism. Particularly since the launch of the National Strategy on PCVE and the subsequent development of the County Action Plans on PCVE. The Forum discussions, therefore, focused on two main issues, that is, **1) the future and strategic direction of the County Action Plan Model in PCVE; and 2) the efficacy of the Community Team Model in addressing hate, polarization, and extremism as proposed by the PROACT program**. Forum discussions took a hybrid style model that incorporated presentations, panel discussions, active plenary, and field visits.

On the County Action Plans on PCVE, stakeholders appreciated that the model had given room for coordination of interventions through the CEF and allowed for active participation of non-state actors in conversations on radicalization and violent extremism. **Despite these gains, some glaring challenges include; the expiration of most of the 1-year County action plans developed across the country, and what this means for sustainability, political and county government buy-in into the PCVE agenda amidst the changing political regime, purported donor driven-interventions that do not address the community needs and VE drivers as highlighted in the CAPs, as well as inadequate community knowledge and ownership of the County Action Plans as a model to preventing radicalization.**

The Forum also discussed the efficiency of the community team model in PCVE that is currently being piloted in Kwale, Isiolo, and Nakuru Counties. The community team model brings together community-level actors to engage in early-stage prevention of radicalization and building resilience to Violent Extremism. This is through engaging and, where appropriate, referring vulnerable/or at-risk individuals to available mentorship and psychosocial support. While stakeholders shared their commitment to support the roll-out of the community team model, they gave significant recommendations to enhance its efficacy. **This includes; managing safety and security risks, establishing clear linkages with the County Engagement Forums, and various mentorship and psychosocial support providers.**

The various stakeholders discussed sxtragic interventions to be taken forward to address the multiple gaps and challenges highlighted during the Forum. These recommendations include the National Counter Terrorism Centre on its role in coordination PCVE efforts, the County Governments, and the County Engagement Forums on PCVE. Key in the recommendations is the proposal for the inter-governmental coordination of PCVE work. This is through the proposal for a **Kenya Counties Network for Peace and Security**, anchored under the auspices of the Council of Governors.

**COMMUNIQUE AT THE END OF THE INTER-COUNTY EXCHANGE ON COMMUNITY TEAM MODEL ON PREVENTING AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM HELD ON 19TH - 20TH JANUARY 2022 AT JACARANDA OCEAN BEACH RESORT, KWALE COUNTY**

## Preamble:

We, the representatives of the County Engagement Forums (CEFs) from Nakuru, Isiolo, and Kwale Counties and civil society organizations, having participated in the Inter-County Exchange on the Community Team model in the Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) jointly convened by Human Rights Agenda (HURIA) with support from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD); the organization that leads the Strong Cities Network (SCN), in collaboration with the National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC), and the Kwale County Engagement Forum;

**Aware** of the evolving landscape of violent extremism in the country and the region;

**Conscious** of the vulnerability and propensity of our communities to hate, polarization and incitement during the electioneering period as we approach the 2022 general elections;

**Appreciating** the need for continuous cross-learning and innovation in preventing and countering violent extremism in the country;

**Premised** on the proceedings of the Inter-County Exchange Forum do hereby make the following resolutions (recommendations) towards doubling efforts in preventing and countering Violent Extremism;

**National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC)**

i.    That the NCTC shall double efforts to enhance coordination of the PCVE Donor Community to safeguard the interest and values of Kenyan Citizenry anchored on the principles of Human Rights, Transparency and Accountability during the design and implementation of PCVE initiatives;

ii.   That the NCTC as legally mandated reach out to more stakeholders to enhance coordination and harmonization of PCVE initiatives at the national and county levels to ensure that such initiatives contribute to the realization of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism and the corresponding County Action Plans (CAPs) on PCVE;

iii.  The NCTC shall take the necessary measures to strengthen structured Inter-Governmental relations on matters PCVE. These efforts will include the operationalization of the **Kenya Counties Network on Peace and Security** established under the auspices of the Council of Governors (CoG) as an Inter-Governmental Initiative to stem the rise of hate, polarization, and extremism.

iv.   To quickly roll out the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the CEFs that will clearly outline the Terms of Reference (ToR) and enhance the coordination of the CEFs across the country.

v.    Building on the gains from the Inter-County Exchange Forums, NCTC shall create more opportunities for mainstreaming PCVE initiatives within the existing state (national and county governments) and non-state (including private sector) stakeholders while encouraging the development of innovative strategies inclined towards shrinking the pool for radicalization and recruitment. This will be key in promoting the "whole of society" approach in implementing the CAP model.

vi.   To ensure continuous Monitoring and Evaluation of the CAP model, The NCTC shall quickly roll out the Fusion MERL system across the country.

**County Governments**

The participating County Governments of Kwale, Isiolo, and Nakuru counties affirm their commitment to PCVE. They will design and implement practical policies, strategies, laws, and regulations to support the implementation of the County Action Plans on PCVE, a model to be emulated in other counties. This could entail, but is not limited to the following;

i.  To develop County legislations to provide legal frameworks for the county governments to support efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism;

ii.  Mainstream PCVE in the design, resourcing, and implementation of the County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and the corresponding Annual Development Plans (ADPs) to support the performance of the County Action Plans;

iii.  Designate County Government Departments with the role of coordinating PCVE efforts through the County Engagement Forums;

iv.  Actively support the Kenya Counties Network for Peace and Security operationalization, anchored under the auspices of the Council of Governors as in Inter-Governmental Initiative, to challenge the rise in hate, polarization, and extremism.

## County Engagement Forums (CEFs) of the CAPs

i. That the Kwale, Isiolo, and Nakuru County Engagement Forums shall adopt and support the roll-out of the Community Team Model in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in their counties;

ii. That the respective CEFs will hold further consultations with the NCTC and the Law Enforcement pillars to fine-tune the community team model and ensure that it leverages on existing structures such as peace committees, nyumba kumi, and national government administrative structures such as Chiefs and the county government structures such as Ward and Village administrators;

iii. That the County Engagement Forums will take the appropriate measures to ensure the meaningful inclusion and participation of young people and women in PCVE efforts across the various counties.

iv. That The CEFs will utilize online social media platforms and offline spaces to create awareness of the County Action Plans on PCVE. This will include continuous sharing of case studies and success stories highlighting the gains, lessons, and best practices on implementing the CAPs.

v. That County Engagement Forums shall develop Advocacy and Communication plans to strategically engage the Private Sector as critical stakeholders in PCVE work.

vi. That the County Engagement Forums shall apply Research and Evidence-based approaches in designing and implementing PCVE Program