EVALUATION REPORT

Justice for Peace

Inuka! **Supporting vulnerable youth to participate in community peace and security efforts in Coastal Kenya**

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

CSO	Civil society organization
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
CT	Counterterrorism
CUC	Court User Committee
EU	European Union
HAKI Africa	Humanity Action Knowledge Integrity in Africa
HURIA	Human Right Agenda
J4P	Justice for Peace
KYBI	Kiunga Youth Bunge Initiative
MUHURI	Muslims for Human Rights
MRC	Mombasa Republican Council
NSCVE	National Strategy for Countering Violent Extremism
NPs	Non-participants
POTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
PPs	Project participants
TFFs	Terrorist Foreign Fighters
VE	Violent Extremism

Executive Summary

This report covers the findings from the final evaluation of the *Justice for Peace* (J4P) project and the mid-term evaluation of *the Inuka! Supporting vulnerable youth to participate in community peace and security efforts in Coastal Kenya* project (*Inuka* for short). The overall goal of J4P was to increase constructive engagement between criminal justice sector actors and communities at risk of violent extremism (VE) in Coastal Kenya. The project featured awareness-raising and dialogue activities in three counties (Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa) and it was implemented in partnership with Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) over two years (2017-2019). *Inuka*'s overall objective is to increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community peace and security efforts involving vulnerable and marginalized youth in Coastal Kenya. A three-year project started in 2018, it includes capacity-building and dialogue activities in four counties (the same as J4P, plus Lamu), and is being implemented together with MUHURI as well as Kiunga Youth Bunge Initiative (KYBI), Human Rights Agenda (HURIA) and Humanity Action Knowledge Integrity in Africa (HAKI Africa).

The objectives of the combined evaluation were: (1) to assess the extent to which the projects have changed social norms and institutions in a way that is enduring; and (2) to extract critical lessons learned around Search's specific approach. In line with these, the evaluation sought to assess the two projects' overall performance, including outcomes achieved, the quality of their theories of change, and the effectiveness of specific strategies employed. Findings were then used to identify lessons learned and articulate recommendations for improving the impact of Search's peacebuilding work in the future.

The evaluation used quantitative and qualitative methods, and gave particular attention to analyzing data through a gender lens. Activities included a document review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and a survey (179 respondents).

Context

The security situation in Kenya's Coastal region has remained relatively static over the last few years, with low levels of violence and cross-border attacks from Al-Shabaab and affiliated groups. However, there is still a concern in addressing and countering violent extremism in these areas. The causes of violent extremism can be identified as a series of 'push' and 'pull' factors. On the one hand, push factors include social, political and economic problems, such as social marginalization and poverty, which are contributing to violence seen around the country. On the other hand, Kenya's proximity to Somalia, and the increase in conflict there, have been regarded as pull factors driving the legitimization of extremist ideology that is being spread by groups such as Al-Shabaab.

The increase in violent extremism has not been helped by the Kenyan authorities' securitized approach to radicalization, which has reportedly involved human rights abuses and the criminalization of certain religions. The behavior of security forces have been seen as further eroding trust in the government. In the Coast, terrorist incidents have contributed in a decline in the tourism industry, which is a main source of livelihood. This is particularly true for youth, who have, as a consequence, become even more vulnerable to radicalism and recruitment through political and religious propaganda.

The Government's approach eventually changed through the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE), adopted in 2016. Compared to previous policies, the NSCVE had a stronger focus on prevention and partnerships. International and local NGOs are also continuing with efforts in addressing violent extremism and radicalization with softer approaches, including focusing first on understanding the root causes of the problem and addressing that problem by providing solutions that bring parties in conflict together, and build resilience in communities affected by extremism.

Theories of Change

Both the J4P and the Inuka projects featured a theory of change describing the logic behind the intended changes, and change mechanisms, pursued by Search. The J4P project's theory was that:

If criminal justice sector actors and at-risk communities in the Coastal Region have increased access to reliable information about the Kenyan counter-terrorism framework and community grievances that fuel VE, and if they have the capacity and opportunities to dialogue and develop collaborative relationships, then they will engage constructively in a conflict-sensitive manner, ultimately mitigating justice-related VE drivers in target counties.

Inuka's theory of change was:

If young men and women at risk of recruitment into gangs, extremist groups, violent political factions or other security threats, have the skills, confidence and platforms to mutually support each other and engage constructively in discussions and decision-making at the local level, and if communities (including community and religious leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors) recognize the positive potential of at-risk youth to contribute to peace and security efforts, then locally-led security efforts will be more inclusive and effective in addressing the root causes and mobilizing factors of violent extremism and other security threats, thus strengthening crisis preparedness and resilience to conflict in vulnerable communities in Coastal Kenya.

Both projects share essentially the same impact-level outcome. Beyond this, however, they remain conceptually separate, not just in terms of whom they intended to engage, but also in terms of logic: for J4P the main causal pathway to impact goes from increased understanding to strengthened structures for collaboration to accountability; for *Inuka* it starts with increased capacities, which leads to mutual support and collaboration (among young people specifically) and then to increased participation in decision-making processes.

The biggest similarity between the two theories of change is at the level of strategies. Three strategies are essentially common across J4P and *Inuka*: single-to-multi stakeholder engagement; access to information; and support to local initiatives, mainly via sub-grants. The analysis of the theories of change reveals, as such, that what distinguishes the two projects is mainly with whom they decided to engage. Overall, the two theories of change are appropriate and clear in how they represent the changes that projects sought to achieve, and also show interesting synergies. Yet, they can only be partly validated.

Progress towards Change

The evaluation found that the **J4P project** to a great extent was effective. To begin with, the project increased awareness of rights and responsibilities. In all communities where the project took place, justice actors, interviewed during the evaluation, all reported to have increased their knowledge about violent extremism from a community perspective. Many of them also admitted that this was knowledge that they did not have before the project. The project provided community members with knowledge and understanding of court and criminal procedures, including the role of criminal justice in addressing violent extremism. In this regard, the evaluation saw evidence that community respondents currently understood criminal and court procedures, which they did not understand before. The survey data confirms this change.

There is also clear evidence that the project was able to provide a platform for community and justice actors to develop mutual understanding and trust. On one hand, justice actors became aware of community grievances toward the justice sector and how their actions have been driving some community members, youth in particular, to violent extremism. On the other hand, the community had an opportunity to hear and learn directly from justice actors to understand criminal and court procedures, which were confusing to them.

Challenges were also recorded, however. Several interviewees mentioned that the knowledge gained by participants could not be spread fast enough and worried that it might fade over time because no supporting documents, such as leaflets or brochures, which they could refer to later, were provided to the participants.

Under **Inuka**, the evaluation found solid evidence that the training activities conducted by Search and partners were effective, contributing to improved skills and capacity of youth. Young interviewees agreed that they now feel that they have mastered skills in effective communication, consensus building, dispute resolution, non-adversary advocacy and leadership. More significantly, the evaluation also found that youth have increased confidence to participate in community activities, even beyond those related to peace and security.

Search's approach of engaging with adults was effective in increasing awareness about the potential that vulnerable youth have in influencing peace and security in the community. For instance, there is evidence that youth trained under *Inuka* were sought out by parents in their communities to offer guidance and advice to their children. Evidence also suggests that peer-to-peer problem-solving sessions and roundtable discussions—between law enforcement officials and young people—were effective in creating opportunities for youth to engage with their fellow peers and local leadership. Importantly, there were strong differences in terms of locations and gender: people in Kilifi recorded much more positive changes than in other areas, and women expressed, on average, a higher appreciation of the project's results. An area of improvement is represented, however, by the media component, as the radio program did not seem to meet desired reach and resonance.

Contribution to Impact

The contribution towards the impact of the **J4P** project was evaluated based on how community members engaged with and relied on the justice sector. The evaluation also sought to see whether there were examples to confirm structural and operational changes in targeted locations. Overall, the evaluation found strong evidence that the project had an impact in the communities where project was implemented, albeit with some limitations.

All of the project's impact indicators show significant increase from the baseline values. For example, the percentage of respondents who said that they had increased trust in the Government of Kenya's counterterrorism criminal processes increased from 41% at baseline to 55% at endline. The difference between projects participants and non-participants is, in this case as well as with other indicators, also significant: in remains largely unchanged in for non-participants (41% at baseline vs. 39% at endline); but it was much larger for participants (41% vs. 72%). Quantitative data is supported by qualitative data, as the majority of KII and FGD respondents confirmed that they felt free to engage and discuss justice-related issues with their fellow community members and also with justice actors themselves.

The evaluation also found that J4P was able to influence changes at the structural and operational levels within the justice sector, although at a low level. There is evidence that the CUC adopted new structures as a result of the project. Yet, the qualitative results also indicate that negative views continue to exist toward other justice system actors, specifically the police, which the project did not engage as effectively. Lastly, the evidence suggests that the project was not able to create sufficient benefits beyond project participants and target groups. This can be mainly seen in the discrepancy between the survey data for project participants and non-participants.

The starting point for assessing *Inuka*'s impact—i.e. the extent to which the project has created inclusive communities, where adults and youth collaborate in addressing peace and

security issues—was the analysis of impact grids[1] completed by participating young men and women during focus group discussions. These confirm that young participants were indeed empowered and felt that their situation changed as a result of the project. Before the project, young participants' feelings varied from "very unhappy" or "highly unsatisfied", only to turn to "very happy" or "highly satisfied" at the time of the evaluation. The quotes that accompany the grids indicate that young people saw the project's contribution to this change as very significant. Interestingly, the data gathered through the impact grids confirmed a trend that has already been mentioned: that women benefited more than men. For both groups, change was positive, but for young women, it appears to have indeed been radical.

Beyond these changes, however, the evidence of impact becomes weaker. Improvements in communities' sense of security have indeed increased over the implementation period. What is missing, however, is evidence of the project's contribution to this change. As such, *Inuka* seems to have suffered from the same challenge that J4P faced: it had difficulties in creating benefits for the wider community. Evidence of this can be seen, again, in the discrepancy between the survey answers from project participants, which are generally a lot more positive than those from non-participants.

Lessons Learned

The evaluation successfully identified a number of lessons learned: practices that are working and that Search and its partners should continue to rely on as they continue their engage communities to address violent conflict. They are:

- Lesson Learned 1: Combining single and multi-stakeholder dialogues works. Engaging with community members separately, then together, is a successful approach in addressing the challenges facing communities and justice actors.
- Lesson Learned 2: Engaging adults is necessary for impact. To get buy-in from adults, Search first introduced them to youth who participated in leadership trainings, which served to build a bond between the two parties. This paved the way to increase youth engagement and participation.
- Lesson Learned 3: Community sub-grants need to focus on sustainability. Sub-grants were useful, but not yet sustainable, as activities ended with funding. This limited the projects' benefits for non-participants. In the future, therefore, grants should be designed to be as self-sustaining as possible, possibly reflecting a more business-oriented model.
- Lesson Learned 4: Use already existing structures for project activities. Activities that were designed to rely on already existing structures, like CUCs, were well received, and also incentivized buy-in from stakeholders and communities.
- Lesson Learned 5: The use of art is effective to facilitate interactions between groups. The use of theater during the activities under both projects was relevant and proved to be effective to engage and build trust between adversary parties or groups in the community.
- Lesson Learned 6: Search's gender strategy is working. In both projects, each gender group was engaged separately and in a space where people felt comfortable and safe. The success of this strategy is obvious from the readings of the results presented in previous sections.
- Lesson Learned 7: The theories of change work, but only up to a point. Linkages between short-term and intermediate results are valid; the problems start with the linkages to longer-term results. One issue appears to be with scale, and the assumptions that Search makes about influencing communities at large, which should be carefully reviewed under *Inuka*.

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[1] Impact grid is a method to enable researchers to identify and discuss the difference that participation in the project has made to target group members. Participants were asked to think about what has changed in their life in relation to the project and then, through a visual exercise, to identify the major changes occurred and the impact of the project, if any.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In general, both the J4P and *Inuka* projects were able to increase collaboration and inclusive engagement between stakeholders and at-risk and marginalized communities in addressing violent extremism in Coastal Kenya. And while they also faced challenges, their contributions to impact are noteworthy. The following recommendations are as such offered to inform Search and its partners in their future work and programming:

- **Continue engaging different stakeholder groups and creating bridges between them.** There is clear value in what Search and its partners are doing, and these efforts should be continued.
- **Continue implementing the gender strategy.** Search's gender strategy is working. As such, the organization should mainly continue to implement it.
- **Conduct an in-depth assessment of local partners.** Understanding partners' strengths and weaknesses will ensure Search can leverage the partner's strengths while supporting them with capacity building to address their weaknesses.
- **Collaborate with and empower grassroots CSOs through more tailored sub-grants**. Search should find a way to engage directly with these local CSOs including building their capacity, technical and operational.
- **Engage with the police as a key partner in peacebuilding.** For peacebuilding projects to be effective and able to address conflict and violent extremism in communities in Kenya, building the relationship between the two is necessary.
- **Ensure sub-grants incorporate a financial sustainability component**. Search and partners should provide a business-oriented type of grant, where the grantees can use part of the grant to generate profit.
- **Develop a strategy to engage government at multiple levels.** Search should proactively engage with the Kenyan government also at the national level, to influence those policies, for example on police practices, which are decided in Nairobi.
- **Supportive materials should accompany activities aiming to provide knowledge and skills for communities.** Materials (brochures, etc.) should be created and disseminated to ensure the necessary information reaches the largest number of people possible.
- **Invest in an assessment of the media landscape.** Search should better understand the way in which it can diversify its media programs.
- **Develop a learning agenda.** Finally, Search should develop a learning agenda and a reflection space to take advantage of what it is already doing in terms of monitoring and evaluation.

1. Introduction

This combined evaluation report covers the findings from the final evaluation of the Justice for Peace (J4P) project and the mid-term evaluation of the *Inuka! Supporting vulnerable youth to participate in community peace and security efforts in Coastal Kenya* project (*Inuka* for short). Justice for Peace was funded by the US Department of State's Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism; *Inuka* is funded by the European Union (EU). While Justice for Peace was implemented in three counties of Coastal Kenya, including Kwale, Mombasa, and Kilifi; *Inuka* is being implemented in four counties, the same three targeted under J4P plus Lamu.

Search commissioned the evaluation with the overall purpose of determining the performance of these two projects, specifically assessing how effective they were in relation to the intended outcomes, understanding the impact they had on targeted communities, and providing lessons learned for Search and its partners.

The evaluation team started their work in September with a literature review, data collection in Kenya, and production of a first draft report in mid-November 2019, as was planned during the inception phase. There were some challenges, including the fact that the evaluation took place over a very short time. The team, in collaboration with Search and its partners, were able to mitigate this and other challenges by planning ahead and working extra hours to make sure every identified respondent participated in the evaluation.

The report is organized as follows: after the introduction, the methodology section follows, providing details about the evaluation methodology, including sampling choices and data collection activities. Subsequently, the background section provides a context analysis and a description of both projects. The section after that then presents the findings and the analysis based on the lines of inquiry. Lastly, the report presents lessons learned and recommendations for Search and its partners for future programming and work.

2. Methodology

The objectives of the combined evaluation for Justice for Peace and *Inuka* were: (1) to assess the extent to which the projects have changed social norms and institutions in a way that is enduring; and (2) to extract critical lessons learned around a specific approach, particularly the online platform for information sharing, Court User Committee (CUC) sessions and CUC small grants. The following lines of inquiry represented the evaluation's starting point:

1. Did the projects ensure that both understanding of justice-related drivers of violent extremism (VE) and counterterrorism criminal justice processes and awareness of the potential of at-risk youth to positively contribute to peace and security increased among targeted communities?
2. Did the project activities change the way at-risk communities of the target counties access to and trust in justice systems?
3. Did the project strengthened the capacity of and coordination among community based youth and youth groups to be more active and effective in peace and security efforts in their communities?
4. Are there any institutional and structural changes in the way criminal justice sector actors and communities at risk of VE in Coastal Kenya engage with each other and in the way at-risk youth engage with youth peers and with local leadership in support of community peace and security efforts that can be observed as a result of the project activities?

5. Did the project increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community peace and security efforts involving vulnerable and marginalized youth in Coastal Kenya?

6. Which are the critical lessons learned to draw in respect to the different approaches implemented for achieving enduring changes? What worked and what didn't and why?

Based on the above, the evaluation sought to assess the overall projects' performance, including outcomes achieved by each project, the quality of the theories of change, and the effectiveness of specific strategies employed by either or both projects. These findings were then used to look at critical lessons learned during the implementation of the two projects, that can provide Search and its partners with recommendations for future improvements of their peacebuilding work in Coastal Kenya. Notably, the evaluation used both quantitative and qualitative methods as an effort to address all lines of inquiry.

2.1. Evaluation Activities

Evaluation activities, which included a review of the existing literature, a data collection phase, and the final report writing, took place from September to November 2019 as is presented below:

- **Document review.** The evaluation team reviewed and analyzed documents from the two projects, as shared by Search. In addition, the consultants reviewed current literature on peace and security in Kenya, including government policies, third-party reports and articles identified through open-source searches.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).** The evaluation team conducted interviews with a number of informants as agreed with Search. These included project staff, participants, and other stakeholders in all targeted communities. KIIs were done using semi-structured questionnaires. A total of 31 interviews (13 women and 18 men) were held in all targeted communities, as per the table below.

Informant type	Kwale	Mombasa	Kilifi	Lamu
Search and partner staff	1	2	2	2
Young Influencers (men and women)	3	1	2	2
Adult Community Influencers			2	1
Justice Actors (magistrates, etc.)	3	2	2	1
Media Representatives	1	-	-	-
Inuka Grantees (youth)	1	1	-	1
CUC Grantees (CUC member)	1			
TOTAL	*10*	*6*	*8*	*7*

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).** The evaluation team conducted group discussions using the impact grid approach. Impact grid is a method to enable researchers to identify and discuss the difference that participation in the project has made to target group members. Participants were asked to think about what has changed in their life in relation to the project and then, through a visual exercise, to identify the major changes occurred and the impact of the project, if any. A total of 56 youth participants (22 young women and 34 young men) participated in 7 FGDs, per the table below.

- **Survey.** The evaluation gathered quantitative data through a survey with the primary purpose of assessing attitude and behavior change and measuring key project indicators. The survey featured both a control and a treatment group, which allowed

the team to measure changes from the baseline to endline, as well as between project participants and non-participants. A total of 179 respondents participated in the survey, but only from Kwale, Mombasa, and Kilifi (89 women, 90 men, 1 not available), as per the table below. The choice of respondents was done purposively and not through statistical methods.

Respondent type	Kilifi		Kwale		Mombasa	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Project participants	15	15	15	15	15	15
Non-participants	14	15	15	15	15	15
TOTAL	59		60		60	

2.2. Challenges

There were some challenges and limitations during the evaluation activities. The first was the limited timeframe for data collection and analysis. Evaluation activities took place over a very short period of time, resulting in the team having to plan and do some activities simultaneously. The literature review had to be done at the same time as data collection and the preparation of tools, which limited the identification of specific evidence. Because of the short timeframe, the literature review was also done with a more limited scope than originally intended. Similarly, the team was not able to complete a few activities as planned. In particular, the team was unable to conduct a FGD with young women in Kilifi. The choice to conduct a FGD with males instead of females was made because the evaluation gathered information about a significant conflict between youth males from Shella and Maweni. Secondly, there were some methodological limitations. Specifically, the evaluation team was not able to rely on all the results from the project's combined baseline assessment, as some of these were obtained through parameters that made the baseline to endline comparisons unreliable.

Overall, these challenges did limit some of the findings, making it difficult to assess in detail the reasons behind some of the observed changes. To an extent, this limitation was overcome by using multiple tools, and the findings, overall, remain of good quality, reliable and useful for future programming. However, a different methodological approach might yield better results in the future, as discussed in the recommendations section.

3. Background

This section details relevant research in order to better understand and substantiate the findings of the evaluation. Specifically, the first part of the section provides a context analysis on the security situation in Kenya, including identified push and pull factors for violent extremism and terrorism. Likewise, the section also highlights the approach to preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) of the Government of Kenya and other stakeholders to shed light on current P/CVE efforts in Kenya. The following sub-section provides detailed descriptions of both projects.

3.1. Context Analysis

The security situation in the coastal counties of Kenya, including Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa and Lamu, has remained relatively static over the last few years, with low levels of violence and cross-border attacks from Al-Shabaab and affiliated groups.[2] However, there is still a concern in addressing and countering violent extremism in these areas, and across Kenya in

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[2] This view is based on the level of violent extremist and terrorist activities and attacks according to ACLAD database (Accessed at: https://www.acleddata.com/data/).

general, judging from the horrific attack at the DustitD2 in Nairobi this year.[3] Attacks of such kind and the continued increase of terrorist foreign fighters (TFF) joining Al-Shabaab, of which an estimated 10% of militants are Kenyan nationals[4], not only highlights the threats of extremist ideology, but also signals that drivers of violent extremism, radicalization and recruitment are far from being adequately addressed. These dynamics suggest that there is a need for continuing robust efforts in addressing violent extremism and radicalization in Kenya, and on the Coast in particular. This can best be done, according to the growing body of literature on P/CVE, by tackling two sets of drivers: push factors and pull factors.[5]

> ### Box 1 – Push and Pull Factors
>
> Also referred to structural motivators, **push factors** create the conditions that favor the rise or spread in the appeal of violent extremism. For instance, push factors could include grievances, oppression, corruption, unemployment, inequality, a history of hostility between identity groups, etc. Sometimes referred to as enabling factors or individual incentives, **pull factors** are a sense of purpose, revenge, adventure, status, material enticements, and fear of repercussions by extremist groups. Pull factors could include, *for examples*, the presence of radical mentors, access to radical online platforms, or social networks with VE.

3.1.1. Push Factors

Push factors include social, political and economic problems, which have continued to be substantial challenges for Kenyan security and are contributing to some of the violence seen around the country. While Kenya is formally regarded as a middle-to-low income country[6], it has an estimated poverty rate of 46%, and governance challenges that translate, concretely, in a poor or unequal distribution of services.[7] These issues have continued to hinder the development and security of the country, and, in the Coast in particular, they have also contributed to the emergence of long-held narratives that the Government of Kenya has marginalized certain groups, mainly Muslims and Somali descendants. Politically, this has given rise to grievances that, unaddressed, have soured the relationship between the government and some local communities. This is nothing new, as the enmity between the country's Northern and Southern regions has existed since Kenya's independence. Until 1992, the Coastal Region had indeed been under martial law, involving intensive control by military forces, which have regularly been accused of violating human and civil rights.[8]

These social, political, and economic grievances have been the push factor driving violent extremist activities in Coastal and Northern Kenya, including the targeted communities of Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale and Lamu. Extremists groups have been using these long-time narratives to capitalize on recruiting, radicalizing, and mobilizing community members to act against their government.[9]

3.1.2. Pull Factors

While marginalization of the coastal area, Kenya's proximity to Somalia, and the increase in conflict in Somalia have been regarded as push factors driving violent extremism, the emergence of extremist ideology spread by extremist groups such as Al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) has been pulling some Kenyans toward radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism. These extremist ideologies have effectively tapped into local grievances and inspired Kenyan citizens to be radicalized and conduct both

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[3] "DustitD2 hotel attack death toll rises to 21". *Daily Nation*. 16 January 2019.
[4] "Special Report: In Africa, a militant group's growing appeal", McLean, William et al., *Reuters*, May 2012.
[5] For definitions, see: "Transforming Violent Extremism", *Search for Common Ground,* August 2017.
[6] "Poverty Incidence in Kenya Declined Significantly, but Unlikely to be Eradicated by 2030", *World Bank*, April 2018.
[7] Ibid
[8] "Ibid
[9] "Radicalization in Kenya Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council", Botha, Anneli, *Institute for Security Studies*, 2014.

coordinated and so-called 'lone wolf' attacks in the country.[10] Research shows that a high number of Kenyan nationals have been pulled to joined Al-Shabaab,[11] for instance, as a result of this ideology and propaganda. Additionally, the invasion of Somalia by Kenyan military forces in 2011 not only resulted in direct retaliation by Al-Shabaab, but also led many Kenyan Muslims and ethnic Somali communities to sympathize with extremists.

The rise in terrorist attacks has led to responses by the Kenyan government, which, at first, largely focused on force and securitization. These arguably worsened the situation and contributed to further radicalization.[12] The authorities' securitized approach has, in fact, reportedly involved human rights abuses, extra-judicial killings, and the criminalization of certain religions through "guilt by association."[13] Rather than addressing legitimate grievances, this approach thus moved communities further away from trusting their government, and provided opportunities for extremists to continue to spread their propaganda and recruit more community members along Coastal Kenya.[14]

Importantly, pull factors can in turn contribute to increased push factors. In the Coast, terrorist incidents have in fact resulted in a decline of the tourism industry, where a number of hotels had to shut down for fear of Al-Shabaab and MRC activities[15]. Because the Coastal Region depends on tourist activities, the economies of the counties were negatively impacted. Reflecting the statistics of youth unemployment nationwide, a majority of youth in coastal Kenya were impacted as a result of the tourism industry shrinking.[16] These youth have consequently become even more vulnerable to radicalism and recruitment through political and religious propaganda.[17]

3.1.3. P/CVE Approach in Kenya

As already mentioned, the initial approach by the Government of Kenya in countering the rise of violent extremism activities was to emphasize the use of force and the need to securitize communities. Reactions to any incidents related to VE were heavy handed. As such, the actions of the national security forces in many ways increased mistrust between local communities and authorities, affecting how community members engaged in public life, including in the criminal justice system[18], and confirming the same narratives used by radicalized groups. The approach eventually changed, however. In 2016, Kenya's government approach has shifted with the adoption of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE), which, compared to previous policies, had a stronger focus on prevention and partnerships. International and local CSOs are also continuing with efforts in addressing violent extremism and radicalization with softer approaches, including focusing first on understanding the root causes of the problem and then addressing that problem by providing solutions that bring parties in conflict together, and build resilience in communities affected by extremism. The effects of these efforts have started to be seen in most at-risk communities, however more work still needs to be done.

3.2. Description of Projects

3.2.1. Justice for Peace

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[10] "Setbacks and Realignments: The Continuing Evolution of Militant Islamist Groups in Africa", *Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, June 2017

[11] "Special Report: In Africa, a militant group's growing appeal", McLean, William et al., *Reuters*, May 2012.

[12] "African governments, not religion, are pushing their young people into extremism", *Quartz Africa*, September 2017.

[13] "Violent Extremism and Instability in the Greater Horn of Africa: An Examination of Drivers and Responses," Kessels. E, et al, *Global Center on Cooperative Security*, April 2016

[14] "African governments, not religion, are pushing their young people into extremism", *Quartz Africa*, September 2017

[15] "*Violent Extremism and Instability in the Greater Horn of Africa: An Examination of Drivers and Responses,"* Kessels. E, et al. *Global Center on Cooperative Security*, April 2016.

[16] Ibid.

[17] "Radicalization in Kenya Recruitment to al-Shabaab and the Mombasa Republican Council", Botha, Anneli, *Institute for Security Studies*, 2014.

[18] "How Kenya Cleaned Up its Courts", *Foreign Policy*, July 2016.

Search collaborated with Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) during implementation of the Justice for Peace Project, which was funded by the US Department of State, Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism. The project started in October 2017 and was completed on October 2019. The overall goal of the Justice for Peace Project was to increase constructive engagement between criminal justice sector actors and communities at risk of VE in Coastal Kenya. It pursued two objectives supported by five results:

1. Increase access to information on and understanding of justice related VE drivers and counterterrorism (CT) legislation and processes in Kenya.

   1.1. Result 1: Key actors in the criminal justice sector have increased understanding of grievances and concerns of communities at risk of VE.

   1.2. Result 2: Key actors in at-risk communities have increased understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the framework of counterterrorism legislation and processes in Kenya.

2. Enhance dialogue and collaborative relationships between key actors in the criminal justice sector and in at-risk communities towards joint, effective solutions to mitigate VE drivers in target counties.

   2.1. Result 1: Mutual understanding, respect, and trust are increased between key actors in the criminal justice sector and those in at-risk communities.

   2.2. Result 2: Key actors in the criminal justice system and in at-risk communities have acquired the skills to use new or existing structures (e.g. court user committees) to jointly address justice- related VE drivers in a conflict-sensitive manner.

   2.3. Result 3: Feedback loops are created between criminal justice sector actors and at-risk communities (and those who represent them), increasing accountability.

3.2.2. *Inuka*

In collaboration with Kiunga Youth Bunge Initiative (KYBI), Human Rights Agenda (HURIA), Humanity Action Knowledge Integrity in Africa (HAKI Africa), as well MUHURI, Search is currently implementing the *Inuka! II* Project, funded by the European Union (EU), which started in January 2018 and is expected to end in January 2021. The overall objective of this project is to increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community peace and security efforts involving vulnerable and marginalized youth in Coastal Kenya. It pursues three objectives supported by seven results:

1. Strengthen the capacity of and coordination among community-based youth and youth groups to be more active and effective in peace and security efforts in their communities

   1.1. Result 1: Young men and women in targeted youth groups have increased skills and confidence in their problem solving, conflict resolution, leadership, and communication skills.

   1.2. Result 2: Participating young men and women are more aware of the sensitivities and risks involved in certain security challenges and are better prepared to mitigate them and protect themselves.

   1.3. Result 3: Vulnerable and marginalized youth have a more coordinated voice and approach to make their concerns heard and considered in peace and security issues at the local level.

2. Increase awareness of target communities of the potential of at-risk youth to positively contribute to peace and security

   2.1. Result 1: The voices and concerns of vulnerable youth relevant to peace and security are amplified in the Coastal region.

2.2. Result 2: Adults in communities (including community leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors) become aware of the positive role that vulnerable youth can play in peace and security in communities.

3. Create opportunities for at-risk youth to engage with youth peers and with local leadership in support of community peace and security efforts.

   3.1. Result 1: Young men and women at risk of radicalization engage with community leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors, actively participating in local decision-making on peace and security issues.

   3.2. Result 2: Young men and women at risk of radicalization lead initiatives to support one another, problem-solve, and build resilience to VE.

4. Theories of Change

Both the *J4P* and *the Inuka* projects featured a theory of change describing the logic behind the intended changes, and change mechanisms, pursued by Search. A critical element of the evaluation was, therefore, to review these two theories with the aim, first, of assessing whether and how they fit together, and, second, of better understanding the extent to which the two projects really contributed to the changes that occurred in project locations and among targeted communities, which are discussed in more detail in Section 6.

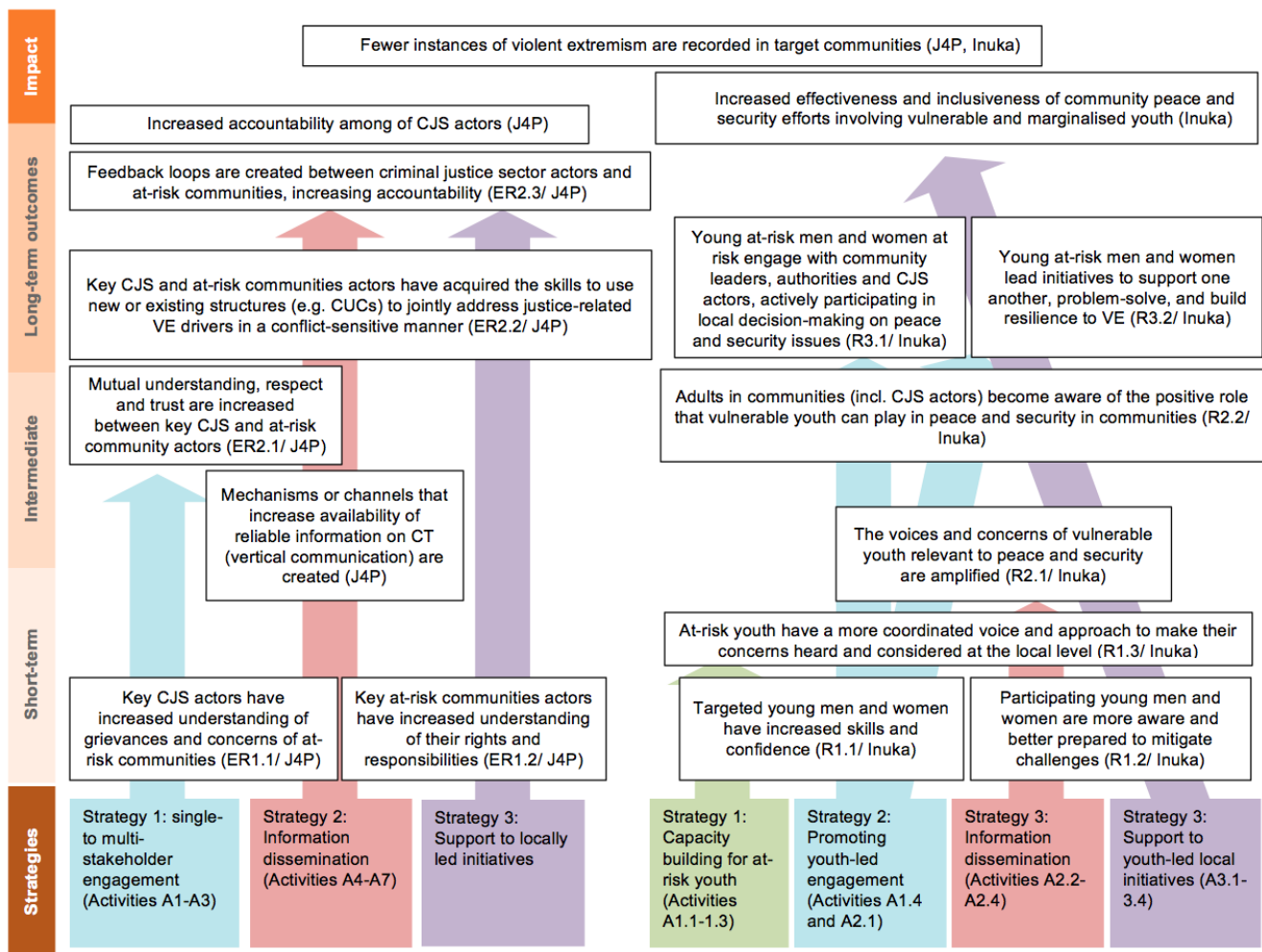| Box 2 – Projects' Theories of Change	
J4P	If (1) criminal justice sector actors and at-risk communities in the Coastal Region have increased access to reliable information about the Kenyan counter-terrorism framework and community grievances that fuel VE, and if (2) they have the capacity and opportunities to dialogue and develop collaborative relationships, then (3) they will engage constructively in a conflict-sensitive manner, ultimately mitigating justice-related VE drivers in target counties.
Inuka	If (1) young men and women at risk of recruitment into gangs, extremist groups, violent political factions or other security threats, have the skills, confidence and platforms to mutually support each other and engage constructively in discussions and decision making at the local level, and if (2) If communities (including community and religious leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors) recognize the positive potential of at-risk youth to contribute to peace and security efforts, then (3) locally-led security efforts will be more inclusive and effective in addressing the root causes and mobilizing factors of violent extremism and other security threats, thus strengthening crisis preparedness and resilience to conflict in vulnerable communities in Coastal Kenya.

The table above presents the two projects' original theories of change. The first aspect to note is that the target groups are quite different as the J4P project targeted criminal justice sector actors and at-risk communities, whereas Inuka engaged young men and women; also, J4P has a strong emphasis on increasing understanding of rights and responsibilities (in the criminal justice sector) and working across stakeholder groups, whereas *Inuka*'s focus is more on building capacities, and on providing platforms and safe spaces for young people's engagement (albeit some activities also targeted adults and community leaders). The extent of these differences made it impossible to synthesize the two theories into a single one: the two projects remain, conceptually as much as practically, different entities.

In order to better assess the quality and validity of the theories, however, a more nuanced analysis was required. This was done by breaking down the theories of change into their constituent elements (outcomes and strategies[19]), in an effort to define the individual change mechanisms within each theory of change, as well as the relations between them. The result of this analysis is presented in the diagram below, which shows the results separated by

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[19] For the purposes of the analysis in this report, strategies are intended as sets of actions.

project (on the left for J4P and on the right for *Inuka*), but orders them according to the logical level of change. Importantly, both projects share essentially the same impact-level outcome: while the phrasing varies between the two projects, in fact, both are ultimately aiming to reduce violent extremism by tackling some of the root causes of marginalization and conflict. Beyond this, however, the projects remain conceptually separate, not just in terms of whom they intend to engage, as already said, but also in terms of logic. For J4P, in fact, the main causal pathway to impact, as envisioned in the theory of change, goes from increased understanding to strengthened structures for collaboration to accountability. For *Inuka*, instead, the pathway starts with increased capacities, which leads to mutual support and collaboration (among young people specifically) and then to increased participation in decision-making processes. These are two distinct ways of looking at change, each starting at different entry points.

The two theories of change also include some similarities. At the level of outcomes, the first one is the focus, shared by both projects, on raising the voice of marginalized groups, and bringing these in touch with duty-bearers. In both projects, this is supposed to start happening in the medium-term, only after key actors have achieved greater understanding (in the case of J4P) or acquired needed capacities (under *Inuka*). A synergy is clear in this regard, and emphasized indeed in the project documentation: Search wanted to use the two projects to bring together at-risk youth, as a key demographic group within targeted communities, and criminal justice sector actors. A second important similarity is in relation to the long-term outcomes: while these are defined differently (as feedback loops promoting accountability under J4P, and as more inclusive and effective peace and security efforts under *Inuka*), they both imply the creation of greater trust and a reduction of violence, that should be felt by community members more widely, and not just by project participants. It is

in this logic that indeed the media activities (mainly under *Inuka*) and the sub-grant schemes (under both project) make the most sense.

Yet, the biggest similarity between the two theories of change is at the level of strategies. Three strategies are essentially common across J4P and *Inuka*. The first one is single-to-multi stakeholder engagement: Search and its partners chose to work with individual groups first, preparing them to meet others, and only then organized dialogue sessions. The people involved varied by project (criminal justice actors and at-risk community members under J4P, young people and adults under *Inuka*), but the approach is essentially the same. The second one is access to information, whereby Search and partners wanted to make sure all participants had similar information about the challenges to be tackled. The third and last strategy was support to local initiatives, mainly via sub-grants: the focus and target groups under this strategy varied by project (in particular, under *Inuka* initiatives were supposed to be youth-led), but the aim was similar.

The analysis of the theories of change reveals, as such, an interesting aspect: it is not the strategies that distinguish the two projects, but rather, it is with whom they decided to engage. Yet, given the shared impact-level outcomes, this points to a number of critical assumptions in the way that Search seems to have so far understood the relations between criminal justice actors, young people and communities at large. Linked to this, both projects work on issues that are by and large defined by the Government of Kenya, and it remains unclear how Search saw that activities with local criminal justice actors would affect their practices without similar efforts being taken with relevant ministry officials. This notwithstanding, the two theories of change remain appropriate and clear in how they represent the changes that projects sought to achieve, and show interesting synergies in terms of how, working with different target groups, greater impact might be achieved. The analysis in the next sections will then show the extent to which the theories can be validated, and also how they be integrated more effectively across the two projects.

5. Progress towards Change

This section looks at the results achieved by the two projects, using data collected from all evaluation activities, qualitative as well as quantitative. It further presents and discusses findings in relation to the evaluation's lines of inquiry under the first objective, which are mainly concerned with changes in participants' understanding, capacities, attitudes and practices. Findings are discussed for each project separately, and in line with their respective objectives.

5.1. Findings under Justice for Peace

Findings Related to Objective 1 (*Increase access to information on and understanding of justice-related VE drivers and counter-terrorism legislation and processes***)**

Under this objective, two intended results were pursued: first, key actors in the criminal justice sector have increased understanding of grievances and concerns of communities at risk of VE; and second, key actors in at-risk communities have increased understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the framework of counterterrorism legislation and processes in Kenya.

The challenges of the justice system in Kenya in handling terror-related cases include the inability of the court to hold fair trials for terrorist suspects by denying them open court trials, legal bail and bond, the right to legal representation, and unfair treatment during pre-trial cases,[20] to mention a few. Community members also had limited to no knowledge on how the Kenyan justice system operates, not only regarding how to proceed with terrorism cases

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[20] "Criminal Justice System in Kenya: An Audit". NCAJ and LRF, 2016.

under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), but also other proceedings under the Criminal Procedure Act of Kenya. These multifaceted challenges represented a holistic picture of why justice actors and community members on many occasions collided and also contributed to the justice-drivers of violent extremism in Coastal Kenya.

The evaluation found that the J4P project to a great extent was able to address the challenges described above. To begin with, the project increased awareness of both justice sector actors and community members. In all communities where the project took place, justice actors, interviewed during the evaluation, all reported to have increased their knowledge about violent extremism and terrorism from a community perspective. Many of them also admitted that this was knowledge that they did not have before the project. For instance, a majority of the justice actors interviewed suggested that now they understand how some of their actions have contributed to violent extremism and terrorism in Coastal Kenya. In an interview with one key justice actor, she mentioned:

> "…Search activities were able to connect justice actors and the community to understand one another. For example, the training on violent extremism, the thing which stood out for me was that we from the justice sector do not realize how negatively our decisions affect the community and contribute to violent extremism…"[21]

Looking at communities, the project provided participating members with knowledge and understanding of court and criminal procedures, including the role of criminal justice in addressing violent extremism. In this case, the evaluation saw evidence that community respondents now understand relevant criminal and court procedures, which they did not understand before. In many interviews, it was reported that there were many challenges and misunderstandings between justice actors, such as police and youth in key criminal issues including the interpretation of words such as "maeneo." Youth were often charged by justice actors for being in "maeneo", but they did not understand what this meant. Several of the people interviewed said that this was one of several aspects that the learning sessions for key community influencers and town halls helped to clarify: in them, youth had the opportunity to get clarifications from justice actors on the legal definition of "maeneo", which not only cleared the confusion, but also allowed youth to use this knowledge thereafter.

Similarly, community members appear to have increased their understanding not only of their rights, but also their duties in addressing peace and security and obeying laws as community members. Youth in particular were found on many occasions to have fallen on the wrong side of the law because of a lack of confidence and understanding of laws and procedures. Interviewed participants all agreed that, through the project, they were informed on issues such as POTA, the pre-trial and full trial process, and the right to bail and bond, which were unclear to them before. The quote below, from a female respondent, is representative of the learning many participants felt they gained.

> "Community members were informed about terrorism, the ramifications of being involved in terrorist acts, and other related issues. During the sessions, community members were asking many questions to get more detailed answers from justice actors. This shows that their level of understanding was improving as the time went by, because each time they came with relevant and important questions for their communities…For instance, parents also wanted to know what should be done if they see some signs of radicalization, and what will be the ramifications to their children if they reported those signs…"[22]

The quantitative data, from the survey, confirms that the level of understanding on the role of the criminal justice system in addressing terrorism has improved, as is shown below. The table above shows that more than half (64%) of the surveyed community members reported that their level of understanding of the criminal justice system in addressing violent

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[21] Personal communication with author, KII, October 11, Kilifi-Malindi
[22] Personal communication with author, KII, October 6, Kwale

extremism was average or high (58% and 6% respectively). Asked the same question as part of the project's baseline survey, respondents who answered 'average' or 'high' was 59%. This is a small change, which, however, becomes more significant when one looks at the answers of project participants (PPs) versus non-participants (NP): the number of respondents in the former group who said 'average' or 'high' is in fact 86%, while for the latter it is only 41%. The fact that qualitative and quantitative data are so aligned suggests that the project was highly effective in this regard.

Box 3 – Answers to the question, "How would you describe your level of understanding of the role of the criminal justice system in addressing terrorism?"
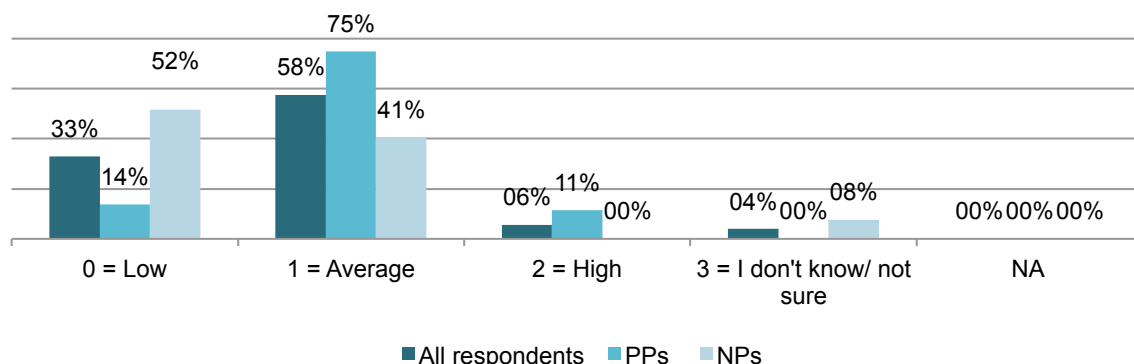
Importantly, in relation to this same question, there was no significant difference in how men and women responded, but significant differences by location were detected, with Kilifi standing out among all target counties. This is likely because of the specific security situation there, coupled with a lower level of understanding of the justice system.

Box 4 – Answers to the question, "How would you describe your level of understanding of the role of the criminal justice system in addressing terrorism?" (By county)
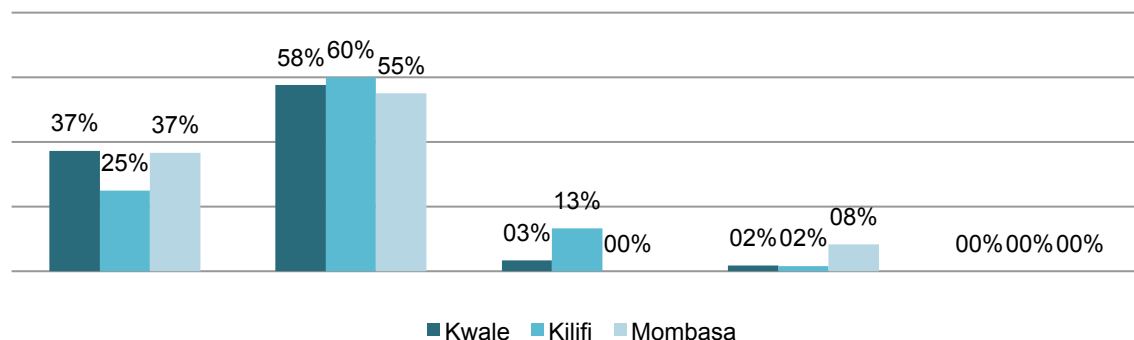
Evidence suggests that the community members in Kilifi now understand their rights, and when and how to use them. This, in turn, changed the way they react when faced with legal issues. *Bodaboda* drivers, for example, did not know what to do when dealing with criminals and often took action into their own hands, leading to criminal charges. After being trained and understanding their rights, criminal procedures and the rights of accused persons, they now take those accused to the appropriate authorities instead of taking the law into their hands. This, according to those interviewed, has contributed to a decline in the number of crimes by bodaboda drivers in Kilifi.

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"…Before the project, the community, especially youth and bodaboda drivers, tended to take action into their hands when something happened in their community. But now you can see community members report issues to the justice sector and follow-up to make sure the right thing has been done. As I mentioned before, Bodaboda used to take action into their hands and even sometimes kill people who have been accused of stealing from them. But after the training, the number of such incidents went down tremendously, showing that now they proceed with the legal channel to look for justice …"[23]

Findings Related to Objective 2 (*Increase dialogues and collaborative relationship between justice actors and at-risk community to mitigate to justice drivers of violent extremism*)

Under this objective, three intended results were pursued: first, key actors in the criminal justice system and in at-risk communities have acquired the skills to use new or existing structures (e.g. CUCs) to jointly address justice-related VE drivers in a conflict-sensitive manner; secondly, mutual understanding, respect and trust are increased between key actors in the criminal justice sector and those in at-risk communities; and lastly, feedback loops are created between criminal justice sector actors and at-risk communities, increasing accountability.

Before unspooling the results achieved by the project, it is worth highlighting the level of mistrust that exists in justice actors in Kenya, and coastal Kenya in particular. A study by Ipsos, conducted in 2015, suggested that more than 85% of Kenyans did not trust the justice system, including the courts.[24] Another study also showed that heavy handedness and bias of police on terrorist-related events had contributed to the justice-related drivers of violent extremism in coastal Kenya.[25] Against this backdrop, the evaluation found that it was crucial for the project to engage with both community and justice actors through dialogues to develop a collaborative relationship to mitigate justice drivers of violent extremism. Understanding the tension existing between the two groups, Search deployed its Common Ground Approach (CGA), engaging with each actor separately (through single-stakeholder meetings) and then together (through multi-stakeholder meetings).

Specifically, Search and MUHURI first engaged with justice actors through learning sessions. During this engagement, they first provided these actors with the knowledge of violent extremism and how their decisions in some cases caused a grievance from community members. In the second phase, Search and MUHURI engaged with at-risk community members through similar sessions. In their engagement with at-risk community, however, MUHURI aimed to equip key community influencers with the counterterrorism legislation framework and process, and conflict transformation through the CGA with the idea that these influencers would pass down the knowledge gained to fellow community members. After engaging with each group separately, Search and MUHURI then brought at-risk community and justice actors together through joint planning workshop for community outreach activities. Justice actors and at-risk community members used joint legal information sessions and town hall meetings to reach the grassroots community members and provide them with information on issues related to the criminal justice system.

There is clear evidence that through these activities, the project was able to provide a platform for community and justice actors to develop mutual understanding. On one hand, justice actors became aware of community grievances toward the justice sector and how their actions as justice actors had been driving some community members, youth in particular, to violent extremism. On the other hand, participating community members had an opportunity to hear and learn directly from justice actors to understand criminal and court procedures, which were confusing to them, some of which contributed to their
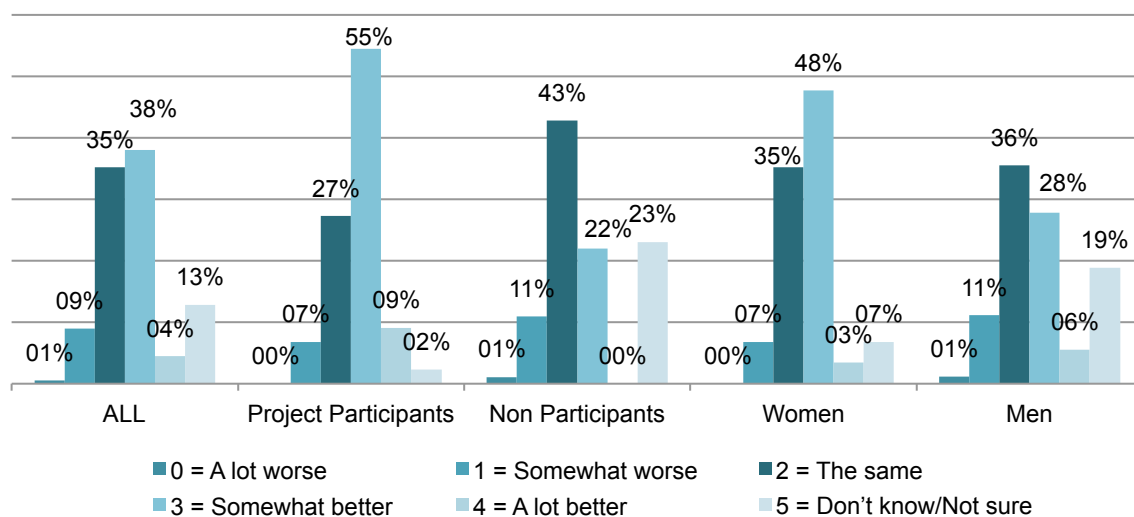
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[23] Key informant Interview, Lamu, October 2019.
[24] Criminal Justice System in Kenya: An Audit". NCAJ and LRF, 2016.
[25] "Violent Extremism and Instability in the Greater Horn of Africa: An Examination of Drivers and Responses," Kessels. E, et al. *Global Center on Cooperative Security*, April 2016.

misperceptions of the justice system. This, in turn, contributed to a change in the perception of the community toward the justice sector in a positive way, as, for example, on the collaboration between communities and criminal actors. This has improved, as evidenced in data from the survey, presented in the table below, which shows that 55% of all PPs said that they saw collaboration is somewhat better now, compared to only 22% among NPs.

Box 5 – Answers to the question, "How would you describe the level of partnership or collaboration that exists now between communities and justice actors (magistrates, prosecutors, etc.) compared to the past two years?"

Legend:
- 0 = A lot worse
- 1 = Somewhat worse
- 2 = The same
- 3 = Somewhat better
- 4 = A lot better
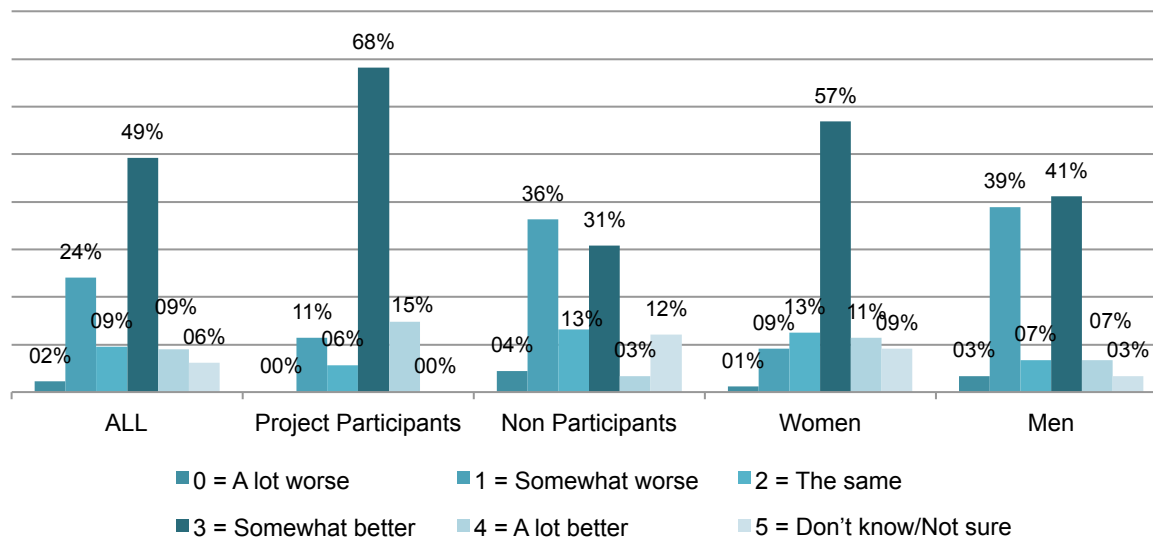- 5 = Don't know/Not sure

During the evaluation, both justice actors and at-risk community members, youth included, confirmed that there has been a positive shift in perceptions, and trust of community members toward justice sectors seems to have improved. A majority of youth did not understand the justice system and most of the time they blamed it because they didn't have enough information on how it worked. For instance, youth claimed that when they saw someone arrested in the morning and out later before going to court, they thought the police or court was corrupt. They did not know that people could post bail, as long as they meet their bail conditions. Their attitude towards justice actors changed after understanding these laws and procedures, which were initially very confusing to them. Likewise, justice actors noted the improvement in community trust of the justice system through constructive dialogues. A justice actor from Kwale noted this in his interview, as quoted below.

"…I noticed during the town meetings, youth were more engaged and asked very constructive questions. They asked other justice actors for more explanations and very challenging questions to question their previous decisions on certain issues …"[26]

The effectiveness of the project in relation to outcomes under this objective finds further confirmation in people's perception of justice-related drivers of violent extremism. Notably, in the survey, respondents were asked if they thought that justice-related drivers of violent extremism decreased in their community compared to two years ago. As the table below shows, 49% of respondents thought that the situation was somewhat better, already a positive finding. This number rose to 68% for PPs, compared to 31% for NPs. This suggests that while the J4P project might not have been the only intervention trying to address justice-related drivers, most participants attribute quite a bit of success to it.

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[26] Personal communication with author, KII, October 6, Kwale

Legend:
- 0 = A lot worse
- 1 = Somewhat worse
- 2 = The same
- 3 = Somewhat better
- 4 = A lot better
- 5 = Don't know/Not sure

The tables in Boxes 4 and 5 also show an interesting and important difference between the data from women and men. In both cases, female respondents seem to have much more positive views than their male counterparts. Reflecting on the level of collaboration between communities and criminal justice actors, for example, 48% of all women responded that it was somewhat better, compared to 28% of the men. Similarly, when asked about the decrease of justice-related drivers, 57% of female respondents said that this was somewhat better, compared to 41% of men. This data suggests that outcomes for women have been different than those for men, and more positive. This was indeed partially confirmed by a government representative, who, when interviewed, mentioned that women have become more vocal in engaging with the government and justice actors. The survey findings seem to suggest the same, with the data pointing to greater effectiveness for women participants.

Challenges were also recorded. Several people interviewed mentioned that the knowledge gained by participants could not be spread fast enough and worried that it might fade over time because no supporting documents, such as leaflets or brochures, which they could refer to later, were provided to the participants. The CGA and the information shared on criminal and court procedures, which were provided at the *maskani* meetings, could indeed have been accompanied with other materials, as a reminder to the participants, but also to be able to reach people who did not attend these sessions. This was flagged on a number of occasions during the interviews and focus group discussions, especially with youth and some project implementers suggesting it.

5.2. Findings under *Inuka*

Findings under Objective 1 (*Strengthen the capacity of and coordination among community-based youth and youth groups to be more active and effective in peace and security efforts in their communities*)

Under this objective, three intended results were pursued: first, young men and women in targeted youth groups have increased skills and confidence in their problem solving, conflict resolution, leadership, and communication skills; secondly, participating young men and women are more aware of the sensitivities and risks involved in certain security challenges

and are better prepared to mitigate them and protect themselves; and thirdly, vulnerable and marginalized youth have a more coordinated voice and approach to make their concerns heard and considered in peace and security issues at the local level.

The evaluation found solid evidence that the training activities conducted by Search and partners under this objective were effective, contributing to improved skills and capacity of youth. These activities equipped youth with skills, awareness, and confidence aligned with Search's CGA. Young people interviewed for the evaluation generally agreed that they have mastered skills in effective communication, consensus building, dispute resolution, non-adversary advocacy and leadership. Likewise, also suggests that youth in all targeted communities have come together to form community-based youth groups to support peace and security efforts in their communities, as one youth pointed out in the quote below.

> "…Youth have been empowered with the capability and skills of reasoning and addressing conflict in their community. For example, after being trained by the project, when I went back to my village, I started a peacebuilding group with my peer youth. Later, some other youth started to form their own groups with the same purpose in the community neighboring us. So, now many of us have been involved in the peace and security of our community through these youth groups we are forming…"[27]

More significantly, the evaluation also found that youth's confidence to participate in community activities, even beyond those related to peace and security, has improved as a result of the skills gained from the *Inuka* project. During interviews and group discussions, many young people were able to cite examples showing that now they are comfortable to challenge the status quo for the better of their community, as per the quote below.

> "…After youth were trained by the project, now when they see issues in their community they raise their voices to question. In Gombato, for instance, when the Member of the County Assembly (MCA) was about to build a road in the area where the community did not agree, youth joined together and filed a petition to disagree with the decision of the county representative (Bunge) and in the end they won because the road was not built as planned by MCA…"[28]

Search's gender strategy, which aimed to go beyond equal gender representation, was also noted as important, and might explain, at least in part, the more positive outcomes for women compared to men, which were noted under the J4P project, but also *Inuka*. Search's strategy was to engage vulnerable youth, men and women, in their comfort zones. For example, while young men were engaged in *maskanis*, young women were engaged in the marketplace or through women's associations. This was effective because women not only participated during the project activities, but evidence also suggests that they felt they benefited more compared to males. It was also observed during evaluation activities that participating women were indeed more vocal than before. The way they engaged during interviews, group discussions, and how have been supporting the project, suggests that they are now more confident than before the project. One woman during an interview talked about her life before the project: when she was unable to join university, she was frustrated and did not engage in any productive activities for herself or her community; however, after participating in *Inuka*, she became a peace ambassador in her community, advising her fellows to not engage in criminal and drug activities. She credits the project for this change.
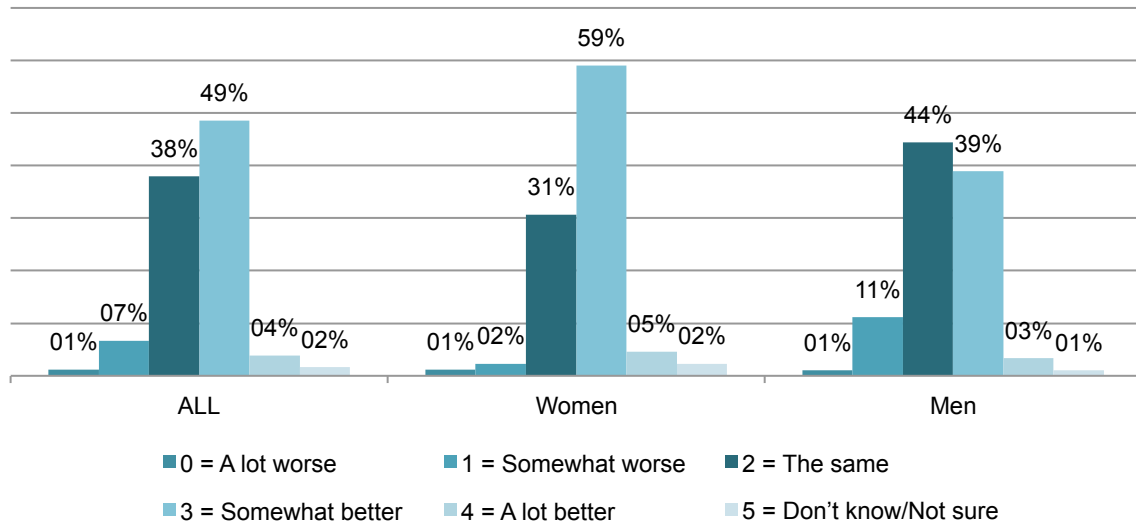
The survey confirms this. The table below shows that when asked to describe the level of engagement that exists now between local leadership and at-risk youth, 59% of all women said somewhat better, compared to 39% of men. Overall it is clear that Search intentionally engaged women separately, and this might have indeed contributed to such strong results for women. At the same time, the change in women's perception could also be because prior to the project, engagement of women with local leadership was very limited, so any increase

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[27] Key informant interview, Lamu, October 2019.
[28] Key informant interview, Kwale, October 2019.

in engagement could be perceived as significant for women.

Chart showing responses for ALL, Women, and Men groups:

ALL: 01%, 07%, 38%, 49%, 04%, 02%
Women: 01%, 02%, 31%, 59%, 05%, 02%
Men: 01%, 11%, 44%, 39%, 03%, 01%

Legend: 0 = A lot worse; 1 = Somewhat worse; 2 = The same; 3 = Somewhat better; 4 = A lot better; 5 = Don't know/Not sure

Findings under Objective 2 (*Increase awareness of target communities of the potential of at-risk youth to positively contribute to peace and security*)

Under this objective, two intended results were pursued: first, the voices and concerns of vulnerable youth relevant to peace and security are amplified in the Coastal Region; and secondly, adults in communities (including community leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors) become aware of the positive role that vulnerable youth can play in peace and security in communities.

Recognizing the fact that only engagement with youth would not be effective in building an inclusive and collaborative society able to address peace and security challenges, under this objective Search and partners also engaged with adult stakeholders, through outreach workshops. Through this, Search aimed to empower adult stakeholders to understand the potential that vulnerable youths have in peace and security in their community. Recognizing the sensitive nature of the engagement, Search's approach with adults was first to start by building a connection between adults and youth. Through art and performance theater, youth and adults were invited to take part by assuming different roles during the play. Thus, Search was able to build a bond between the two, and while vulnerable youth started to feel comfortable engaging with adults, adults also started to realize the potential youth can play in peace and security. Search then carefully introduced dialogues through town hall meetings for both parties to discuss peace and security issues in their communities, including the disadvantages of not involving vulnerable youth in efforts to address them. After the dialogues, Search also provided selected adults with training on how to engage and positively include youth in the decision-making process in the community.

The evaluation found that these approaches of engaging with adults were effective in increasing awareness about the potential that vulnerable youth have in influencing peace and security in the community. For instance, there is evidence that youth trained under *Inuka* have also been sought out by other parents in their communities to offer guidance and advice to their children, because the parents were concerned that their children could be engaged in criminal activity. In some instance, authorities also were directly engaging and working with youth to address peace and security thanks to these efforts, as the following quote reflects.

"...After we recognized youth potential in addressing violent extremism in our community, we as the government, for instance, created a committee in Witu to address the conflict between herders and farmers. In this committee with other stakeholders we included youth to make sure they were also represented in decision making on the issue. More importantly, we also decided to use these youth in a livestock counting exercise which will help the government to plan on the issue of land..."[29]

This was also confirmed by youth themselves, a majority of whom felt that compared to before the project, adults now have started to realize and understand the potential they have for their community. In particular, youth indicated that they were now more respected and being recognized as important for peace and security. For example, several young participants noted that they were called upon to participate in peace and security meetings by local authorities and security actors, which previously had not been the case. The quote below is representative of this achievement, and the general feeling that exists among youth involved in the project.

"...Adults, especially leadership, now recognize the role youth can play in the community. We are now used as people who can convince the community to be on track. Now in our community there is the challenge of early marriage. Leadership has already asked us to engage with the community through our plays to address this challenge..."[30]

Data from the survey confirms that the result has been achieved. Asked if engagement between local leadership and at-risk youth was useful, nearly two-thirds (63%) of all respondents answered yes, with no major differences between participants and non-participants (66% vs. 60%). The data is a lot more interesting, however, when broken down by gender and location, as the table below does.

Box 8 – Answers to the question, "Do you think that the opportunity for engagement between local leadership and at-risk youth is useful and helps them to understand one another?"
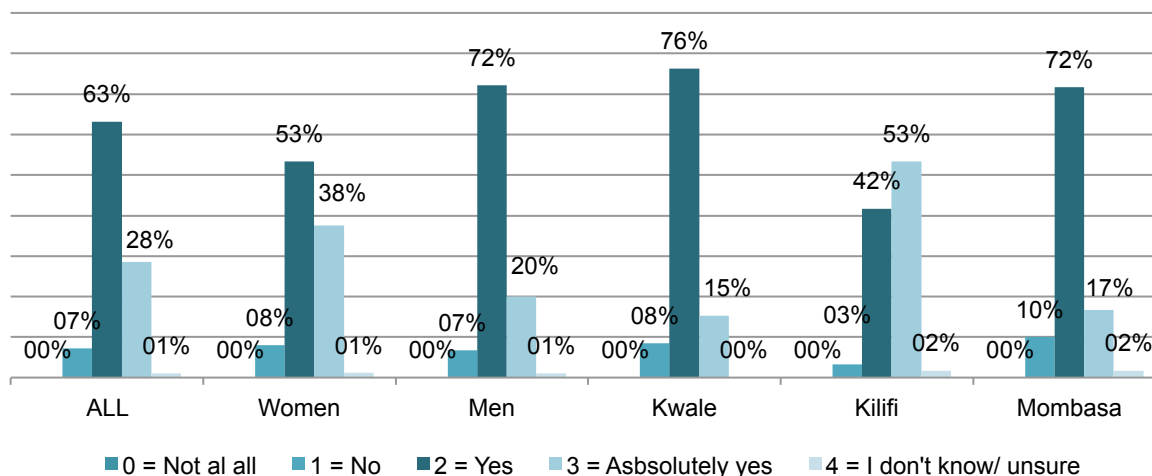
In the box above, one can see significant differences between women and men, with the former having a much more positive view: 38% of them, in fact, answered absolutely yes, compared to 20% of men. This seems to confirm what already identified under the J4P project—that the results of *Inuka* were positive overall, but more positive for women then for men—and thus lend force to the argument that Search's approach to engaging women has

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[29] Personal communication with author, KII, October 14, Lamu
[30] Personal communication with author, KII, October 9, Malindi-Kilifi

been very effective. At the same, there are some indications that the positive results might be due to other actors. Specifically, the evaluation identified at least another important initiative, titled "Kuhusisha Wanawake ni Kudumisha Amani", which was vigorously promoted by both the Kenyan government and other stakeholders, and centered on promoting Kenya's National Action Plan (KNAP) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. It may be that these efforts were as important as those by Search and its partners, although a definite answer could not be reached based on the available evidence.

Another important aspect to note here is the difference between locations, with Kilifi standing out with 53% reporting an absolute yes, compared to only 15% in Kwale and 17% in Mombasa. This significant difference could be because of the wider coverage and presence of MUHURI in that location. It could also be due to what already discussed in relation to the J4P project—namely, that activities in Kilifi targeted a specific issue, involving *Bodaboda* drivers, which, once addressed, served to change people's perspectives more significantly than in other locations. This aspect would still need to be further explored, before any definite conclusions are reached.

Lastly, there was a media component implemented under this objective as well, which included training media professionals and creating and disseminating a dedicated radio program. Specifically, Search engaged with Radio Kaya, Lulu FM, Radio Rahma and Sauti Ya Pwani, all local media outlets, to air the pre-recorded program targeting youth. This represented a key component of the project's theory of change; yet, the evaluation could not find much evidence for its effectiveness, as activities were not designed to get reliable data about reach and resonance. In an interview with the producer of Radio Kaya, when the evaluation wanted to know how the program had been measuring listeners' reactions, he reported that the program had a platform where the listeners could give feedback, and that, through this, about 10 text messages were received per episode. This does indicate some level of listenership and engagement of the community, and while this could arguably be a good number for a local radio station, the evaluation was unable to confirm it, and hence to draw any conclusions on its overall effectiveness.[31] This is clearly an area for improvement in the future.

Findings under Objective 3 (*Create opportunities for at-risk youth to engage with peers and with local leadership in support of community peace and security efforts*)

Under this objective, three intended results were pursued: first, young men and women at risk of radicalization are engaged with community leaders, government authorities, and security sector actors, actively participating in local decision-making on peace and security issues. Secondly, young men and women at risk of radicalization led initiatives to support one another, problem-solve, and build resilience to criminal activities, including political, extremist and gender-based violence.

One new activity implemented by Search under this objective was peer-to-peer problem solving sessions, which were designed to respond to the findings from recent research suggesting that a majority of youth, when they are frustrated, tend to reach out to their fellow peers.[32] Activities therefore included the engagement between already trained youth and vulnerable youth through peer-to-peer and round table discussions. This engagement provided an opportunity for vulnerable youth not only to air their frustrations, but also to learn a number of skills, from conflict resolution to non-violent approaches, from their peers, who had been trained by Search under Objective 1. Also related to this, Search and its partners hosted roundtable discussions on UN Security Council Resolution 2250, which recognizes the critical role of youth in peace and security. The activity brought together over 100 male

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[31] The evaluation noted that Search has recently conducted a study to assess the radio program's reach and to find out the level of awareness of the radio program. This study focused only on the project participants, however. Results from the study showed that while more than half of surveyed project participants (59%) suggested that awareness of the program, only 22% of them actually listened to the program.

[32] "Meet Me at Maskani: Mapping of Influencers, Networks, and Communication Channels in Kenya and Tanzania", *Search For Common Ground*, 2017.

and female youth from youth groups and networks in all targeted communities to discuss issues related to violent extremism, and other crimes with experts, including, as evidence of synergy between the two projects, government leaders and CUC members.

Evidence suggests that peer-to-peer problem-solving sessions and roundtable discussions were effective in creating opportunities for youth to engage with their fellow peers and local leadership. Various youth interviewed during the evaluation reported starting to implement their peace and security initiatives in their respective counties as a result of discussions had during these events. A few activities were particularly notable, including one by a Kilifi youth who organized friendly soccer matches between *bodaboda* drivers and the police; or a youth in Kwale who started to visit schools to sensitize students to take frontline roles in maintaining peace and harmony. In Mombasa, youth engaged under *Inuka* started visiting police stations to organize clean up activities as a way of reducing the social distance between the youth and security actors. And youth in Lamu formed groups in their communities responsible for security and engaging one another to make sure they did not break any laws. Feedback from nearly all youth interviewed suggest that the project has indeed led to increased youth engagement, both with peers and with communities more broadly, as per the quote below. Yet, it is also important to note that, in the survey, asked whether they had heard of any initiatives implemented by vulnerable and marginalized youth to address peace and security in the community, more than half (55%) of non-participants—i.e. people with no connection to either the J4P or Inuka project—said yes.

"…Before the project, the majority of youth did not know one another in their community. So, it was difficult for youth to hold one another responsible because we did not know who did what. But now after organizing into groups and participating in peace and security and other livelihood activities, it is easy to hold one another accountable because we all now know one another…"[33]

Under this objective, Search and its partners also sought to implement ICT activities to address violent extremism in target communities. Despite limited data on these efforts, monitoring reports and interviews with project implementers and participants suggest some level of effectiveness, in line with similar efforts done in the past. For example, the evaluation found that the Mvuvi Cards initiative in Lamu, which Search had supported already under a previous project, has continued to strengthen the relationship between the community and the government in that county. In particular, *Inuka* allowed Search and its local partner to build stronger collaboration with the government, a challenge that had hindered the initiative's impact previously. This collaboration suggests that the impact the Mvuvi Card initiative has achieved so far will be amplified, as through the government many more community members will be reached. This observation was also validated by a government representative in Lamu, as per the quote below.

"Organizations should find a way to engage more with the government. Mvuvi card is a good example, showing how organizations can get government buy-in. In the first phase of Mvuvi, Search and its partners did not consult the government and security actors. That is why there were so many security concerns for the program, which forced the government not to back it. However, after reviewing the program and accepting the government's conditions, including the ownership of the data server and the vetting of the fisherman, we now feel that we own the program, and we are fully participating in each stage. Actually in the near future, the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior will be here in Lamu to launch this program officially …"[34]

Lastly, Search also implemented a grant program to support youth-led initiatives in targeted communities and the evaluation found that the grants were very effective in achieving results under this objective. Interviews with grantees from all targeted communities suggested that through the grants, vulnerable youth had opportunities to address peace and security in their

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[33] Key informant interview, Lamu, October 2019.
[34] Key informant interview, Lamu, October 2019.

community effectively. In Mombasa, for instance, the grantees were able to address long-standing challenges facing *bodaboda* drivers in Changamwe sub-county. There, a grassroots youth organization, called Stretchers, organized trainings for *bodaboda* drivers and a *bodaboda* stage show. Both of these activities provided a platform for *bodaboda* drivers to engage and understand their role in the community, and also opportunities for community members, including community leaders and justice actors such as police, to see the potential of *bodaboda* drivers in promoting peace and security in the community. In Lamu, a sub-grantee group, called Pride of Lamu, engaged with youth at the grassroots. The group sought to address conflicts related to religion, herders and farmers, and gangs. They went around to those areas with conflict and preached about peace by using plays: in several instances, they reported having been able to resolve many of those conflicts.

Notably, the evaluation found that the benefits of the grants cut across genders, whereby some grantees specifically engaged with vulnerable young women to make an impact. In Kwale, for instance, the grantee engaged with mothers to sensitize them about the role of good parenting in preventing their children from joining gangs and extremist groups.

> "…we as youth have a community-based organization called *Tuamke Sasa*. After receiving a grant from *Inuka* we engaged in a number of projects such as visiting moms in their female organizations and other places they tend to gather and discuss parental guidance as the key way of making sure their children would be in a good track, hence helping them avoid joining VE groups, gangs and/ or use of drugs. We also engaged with youth at *maskani* and informed them about their role in security, and consequences of joining VE groups or threats posed by VE to their community members and themselves…"[35]

Grantees had mostly positive feedback, indicating that the activity was well received. The recipients felt that after learning from Search and its partners, they had a duty to spread that knowledge to their peers. With the grants provided by Search, they were able to do so. Nevertheless, the evaluation found that these grants could have been more effective than they were if they would have been more business oriented, a strategy where grantees could have used some part of the grants as capital to run businesses to generate profit, and in turn the grantee could use some of the profit to expand the business or save, and some to continue with peace and security activities in their community. This kind of approach could have a larger multiplier effect than the current grants have.

6. Contribution to Impact

This section looks at the higher-level outcomes achieved by the two projects. It further presents and discusses findings in relation to the evaluation's lines of inquiry under the second objective, which are mainly concerned with the quality of strategies, the challenges faced and how they were addressed, and whether causal mechanisms can be validated in line with the projects' theories of change.

6.1. Justice for Peace

Box 9 – Impact Indicators under Justice for Peace				
Indicator	**Baseline**	**Endline**		
		All	PPs	NPs
Key actors in at-risk communities have increased understanding of their rights and	58,2%	68,2%	86,4%	50,5%

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[35] Key informant interview, Kwale, October 2019.

responsibilities within the framework of counterterrorism legislation and processes in Kenya				
Increased engagement of criminal justice actors on mitigating justice-related VE drivers	18,7%	69,3%	85,2%	53,8%
Increased understanding of court procedures for terrorism-related issues by CUC participants	23,8%	57,0%	75,0%	39,6%
Increased trust in the GoK counterterrorism criminal processes by targeted communities	40,8%	54,7%	71,6%	38,5%

The overall goal of the J4P project was to increase constructive engagement between criminal justice sector actors and communities at risk of violent extremism in Coastal Kenya. The contribution to the impact of the project therefore was evaluated based on how community members engaged with and relied on the justice sector. The evaluation also sought to see whether there were examples to confirm structural and operational changes in targeted locations, which might have occurred as a result of the project, representing examples of feedback loops and increased accountability.

The evaluation found strong evidence that the project had an impact in the communities where project was implemented, albeit with some limitations. This is first and foremost evident in the analysis of the project's impact indicators, as presented in the table above. All four indicators show significant increases from the measurements made at baseline. Importantly, the quantitative data is supported by qualitative data. The majority of respondents from interviews and focus groups in targeted communities confirmed in fact that, by the end of the project, they felt free to engage and discuss justice-related issues with their fellow community members and also with justice actors themselves. Likewise, respondents mentioned that they are now using the justice sector, including police and court, to address their challenges including when they get into conflict with their fellow community members, as it was pointed out with one of the youth from focus group in Kilifi.

"…We now trust the justice system. A good example of this is our decision to stop fighting with our fellow youth from Maweni and using the court. The court handled our cases seriously and as we speak, some of the perpetrators during the conflict are behind the bars…"[36]

The evaluation also found that J4P was able to influence changes at the structural and operational levels within the justice sector, although at a low level. For example, a majority of representatives from the justice sector, interviewed during the evaluation, were able to mention some structural and operational changes their departments had adopted as a result of the project. These included the change of approach in dealing with violent extremism and terrorism incidents involving more stakeholders other than just the police, such as the department of probations or health. Yet, these changes could not be corroborated any further than this, and it remains an open question whether they will remain after the end of the project.

More significant is that there is strong evidence that the CUC adopted new structures as a result of the project. Before the start of activities, neither CUC nor its sub-committees were in fact dealing and addressing violent extremism issues when they arose. After the project, however, CUC at the lower level adopted and established sub-committees that will be responsible with dealing with violent extremist issues as these arise in communities. For example, the evaluation found clear evidence of the establishment of such a sub-committee within the CUC in Kilifi, as both community members and justice actors often mentioned it during the interviews.

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[36] Personal communication with author, FGD, October 10, Malindi-Kilifi

> "…Here in Kilifi, our CUC now adopted a violent extremist strategy by adding a sub-committee that deals with violent extremism. This adaptation has come as a result of Justice for Peace activities and improvement of the understanding of the community by justice actors. This included discussing the issues of violent extremism and making some decisions and recommendations which would help the community and build a good relationship between justice actors and community members…"[37]

These achievements, notwithstanding the qualitative results, also indicate that negative views continue to exist toward other justice system actors, specifically the police. This was possibly caused by the project's limited engagement with police, as engaging with police officers during implementation was contingent on them obtaining a clearance on human rights violations from their office.[38] Because this was difficult, their participation in activities was often delayed or limited. However, leaving out the police during this process to some extent had a negative impact, because despite the positive outcomes that came from the project, community members still complained about the police and felt that there was a need to engage with police officers more.

Lastly, the evidence suggests that the project was not able to create sufficient benefits beyond project participants and target groups. This can be seen in the discrepancy between the data for project participants and non-participants. For example, the table above reports that, whereas 72% of project participants trusted the Government of Kenya in relation to its counterterrorism processes, the number of among non-participants was only 39%, basically unchanged since the baseline.

Box 10 – Evidence of Impact: A successful story about youth from Malindi

There have been several reports of clashes among youth in Malindi sub-county. In two areas, Shella and Maweni, for instance, there were long-lasting tensions between youth from the two communities, which was in part caused by a historical antagonism between communities in Malindi. A few months before the Justice for Peace project started, these long-lasting tensions turned violent, as some youths suffered serious injuries and others almost lost their lives. During this period, community members, and youth in particular, had little to no trust in the justice system. The tension was also exacerbated by the use of revenge as a means for men to resolve conflict. Youth from both sides started to hunt one another instead of using the justice system to address these tensions. During this period, no youths from Shella would dare to visit Maweni, and vice versa. Despite the intervention of community leadership, by engaging with youths through community structures such as *Balozi Nyumba Kumi*, village elders and community policing, and a series of security forums, youth from both communities showed no signs that they would use the justice system to address these tensions, rather they vowed to continue seeking revenge.

Recognizing these tensions during the engagement in Kilifi, Search and MUHURI invited youth from these communities to participate in project activities. Through these, young participants learned and understood the Common Ground Approach to addressing conflict. Likewise, through these activities, youths also had opportunities to meet and engage with justice actors including magistrates, police and probation officers, and better understand legal issues. This interaction increased the level of trust that youth had in the justice system, and hence also their confidence in using it as a means of safeguarding their rights. As a result, youth from Shella and Maweni, after engaging with the project, decided to turn to the justice system to address their problems, and also decided to put their weapons down. At the time of the evaluation, two youths who had indeed been responsible for some of the violent incidents between the two communities had decided to go to court, and their case is still pending. Youth themselves have confirmed that they are following up about the case to make sure justice prevails. More importantly, presently young people from Shella and Maweni are engaging together in peace projects and anyone can visit each other's community without fear. Furthermore, these youth are now influential figures in their community. They have become ambassadors for peace and security and the community has recognized them and engaged with them to address violent extremism ever since.

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[37] Key informant interview, Kilifi, October 2019.
[38] The State Department, during Justice for Peace, allowed only police officers with human rights clearance, as obtained from the police service, to participate to the project.

6.1.2. Inuka

The overall goal of the *Inuka* project was to increase the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community peace and security efforts involving vulnerable and marginalized youth in Coastal Kenya. Given the fact that *Inuka* is ongoing, the evaluation did not focus on indicators in the same way it did with the J4P project. Rather, the starting point for assessing the project's impact—i.e. the extent to which the project has managed to create inclusive communities, where adults and youth collaborate in addressing peace and security issues, including decision making processes—was the analysis of the impact grids completed by participating young men and women during the focus group discussions.

Box 11 – Impact Grids from Focus Group Discussions

**Impact grid from FGD with young women in Kwale:**
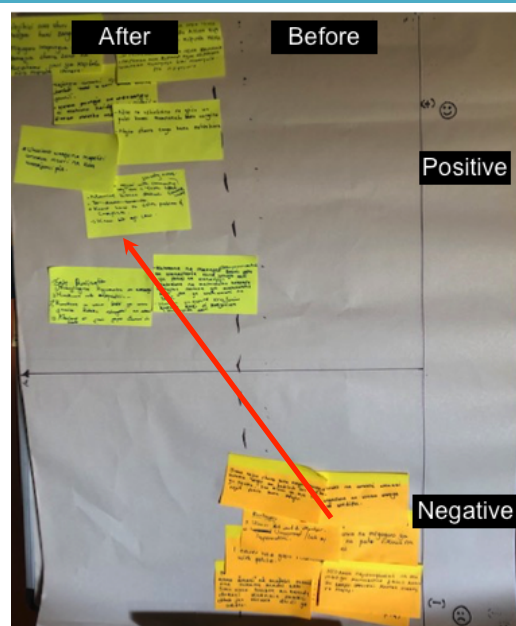
Before the project:

"The environment for youth was not conducive. Our relationship with police was very hostile. We were like enemies. As a youth I was unable to freely walk by myself to the convenience store to buy supplies because of fear of being taken by the police patrols."

After the project:

"Even us, young women, after the project have been actively involved in peace and security activities. We have been invited by the chief to participate in community *baraza* to contribute to issues related to security. We have been peace ambassadors in our neighborhood, helping to resolve day-to-day conflicts. Very recently, my two neighbors who are sharing a house had a misunderstanding. Because I was trained on the Common Ground Approach, I listened to each party separately and brought them together to discuss their differences and find a solution. As I am speaking now, the conflict between my neighbors has been resolved and now they have a good relationship."

Impact Grid from youth Male from Mombasa:
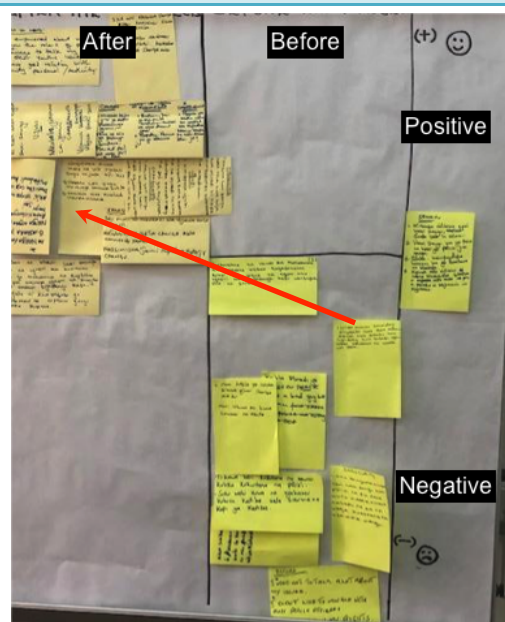
Before the project:

"When I recall three years ago, the relationship between youth and police was very hostile. We did not understand police's duty in providing security for our community, on the other hand police did not respect our rights…."

"I used not to talk about my issues with anybody. I did not like any interaction with police, and I did not know my rights…"

After the project:

"The project provided me with skills including leadership and self-reliance."

"I have the courage to engage with my fellow youth and now my relationship with police and authorities has also improved."

The impact grids in general confirm that young men and women who took part to the project were indeed empowered and felt that their situation, their conditions, changed as a result of the project. The pictures above, which are two examples, depict youth's self-assessment, with their feelings ranging from "very unhappy" or "highly unsatisfied" at the bottom left of the pictures to "very happy" or "highly satisfied" at the top left. The grid also shows how youth felt before the project in the right-hand column of the picture, and the way they feel currently after being part of the *Inuka* project on the left hand column of the picture. The grids are clear evidence that the lives of youth and the situations of their community have changed positively during the life of the project so far. Furthermore, and crucial for the purposes of assessing impact, the quotes that accompany the grids indicate that young people very much see the project's contribution to this change as very significant. The majority of youth in all targeted communities suggested, in fact, that they gained new skills, particularly around the Common Ground Approach. Most respondents suggested that peace and security have improved because of the project.

Interestingly, the data gathered through the impact grids confirm a trend that has already been identified under both projects: that women benefited more than men. This is visible, in the pictures above, in the steepness of the changes (as shown through the red arrows). With men, their indications are that the situation changed positively, but only slightly compared to before the project. With young women, instead, the change has been radical. Needless to say, these results should be treated with care, as the impact grid approach, done retroactively, is likely to have amplified the positive bias of participants. However, the fact that this data is perfectly aligned with that collected through other tools should also give high confidence about the fact that women have indeed more positive feelings after the project compared to men. In the survey, for example, asked to describe the level of engagement that existed now between local leadership and at-risk youth compared to two years ago, 59% of women respondents said yes, compared to 39% of men (a twenty-point differential).

There is also evidence that *Inuka* strengthened collaboration between youth and other community stakeholders, which in turn improved the involvement of vulnerable and marginalized youths and the effectiveness and inclusiveness of peace and security efforts. Both vulnerable youths and other stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation mentioned that the community has now recognized the potential that vulnerable youths have in peace and security. According to several informants, some youth are now included in decision-making processes, and have even been appointed to hold key security positions in their local communities. Examples of this change are in Lamu and Kwale, where a number of youth have been appointed as head of *Nyumba Kumi*, which are community policing initiatives working to improve security at the neighborhood level. The quote below is indicative of the kind of impact that young participants felt the project had on their lives and communities.

"…. The situation has changed compared to before. Adults used to think that youth cannot make wise decisions and that is why we were not involved in decision-making processes. But the project was able to first empower us and build our capacity in addressing conflict and other issues around our community. Secondly, it provided a platform where we engaged with adults so they could understand how much potential we have in peacebuilding issues. Now youth have been appointed to sit in community *baraza* during the meetings and our opinions have been valued… In my village, myself and my fellow two youth have been appointed to be *Nyumba Kumi* leaders…."[39]

Beyond these changes, however, the evidence of impact becomes weaker. According to the project's theory of change (see Section 4), an increase in engagement and participation on the part of youth is supposed to lead to more inclusive and effective peace and security efforts. As already discussed, improvements in communities' sense of security have indeed increased over the implementation period; what is missing, however, is evidence of the project's contribution to this change. For example, most young people, when talking about

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[39] Key informant interview, Lamu, October 2019.

the project's achievements, mention trainings and peer-to-peer sessions; town halls were sometimes said to be important; yet, the radio program and other efforts at reaching a wider audience were hardly mentioned. This could be due to gaps in data collection, but there are also indications that the media components of the project were not as effective as other activities.

In general, *Inuka* seems to have suffered from the same challenge that J4P faced: it had difficulties in creating benefits for the wider community. Evidence of this can be seen, again, in the discrepancy between the survey answers from project participants, which are generally a lot more positive than those from non-participants. In the case of *Inuka*, however, there is an additional when trying to understand impact: as a project with a wide scope, the evaluation found it difficult to identify the relations between it and other initiatives also aimed at contributing to peace and security, some also targeting young people. For example, the evaluation noted strong efforts by local authorities to put in place county-level P/CVE strategies, aligned to Kenya's national P/VCE strategy. These processes have often been done in a participatory manner, featuring the involvement of civil society organizations, including Search itself and many of its partners. These initiatives could undoubtedly be responsible for some of the impact identified in this report, but because their relations with *Inuka* remain unclear, it is presently impossible to further define Search's contribution specifically. This is an aspect worth exploring in the future.

7. Lessons Learned

This section uses the findings elaborated in the previous ones to draw critical lessons learned that should provide insight for Search and other development partners as they continue working to support peacebuilding in Kenya's Coastal Region.

Lesson Learned 1: Engaging with justice actors and communities through combining single and multi-stakeholder dialogues works. Engaging with community members separately, then together, has proven to be a successful approach in addressing the challenges facing community members and justice actors. This is not a new finding, but it certainly remains worth highlighting, as it continues to be crucial to address existing misunderstandings between different groups (justice actors and communities under J4P, young people and adults under *Inuka*) and build the kind of consensus that contributes to people's perceptions of trust and security. In the future, therefore, Search and partners should continue to use this approach.

Lesson Learned 2: Engaging adults is likely necessary for impact. Most youth projects have low engagement with non-youth actors, and this often leads shallow results. In implementing *Inuka*, however, Search made a concerted effort to engage and influence adult stakeholders through specific outreach workshops. More importantly, to get buy-in from these adults, Search first slowly introduced them to youth who participated in leadership trainings, which served to built a bond between the two parties and helped adults learn and understand the potential that these vulnerable youth have for peace and security in their community. In particular, the use of theater performances, where adults and youth were invited to take part in plays, assuming different roles, helped to build connections between adult stakeholders and community members. Then Search slowly introduced dialogues where adults and vulnerable youth discussed security challenges facing their community and the importance of involving vulnerable youth. In turn, now in all targeted communities, youth and adults have been collaborating in addressing peace and security of their community. Engaging with non-youth clearly works, and as a strategy it should be consistently applied.

Lesson Learned 3: Grants should support community-owned initiatives, but focus more on sustainability. Sub-grants given to support community initiatives under both projects proved very effective and were generally well received by the community. The CUC sub-grants, for instance, extended project activities by hosting activities such as open courts,

bringing all justice actors to the community to listen to grievances, answering questions, and resolving challenges facing the community on the spot. All of the activities implemented as part of sub-grants were designed and implemented by community groups, building on the learning promoted by the projects beforehand. The grants also promoted creativity among community members and built their capacity in terms of running activities. Yet, there was also a challenge, in that the grants provided were not sustainable: after the grant money ran out, the activities ended with no follow-up efforts planned. This certainly also contributed to the finding, common across projects, that the benefits created for non-participants were still very limited. In the future, therefore, grants should be designed to be as self-sustaining as possible, possibly reflecting a more business-oriented model.

Lesson Learned 4: Use already existing structures. Activities that were designed to rely on already existing structures or well-established institutions were well received and incentivized buy-in from stakeholders and communities. For example, Search designed the CUC sessions to reflect the already existing CUC structures, which enabled the organization to automatically get buy-in from key CUC members. Because of this approach, justice actors felt that they owned the initiative, and this resulted in structural changes being made to the CUC. This is a winning model with a greater potential to produce institutional change, compared to efforts that try and create new, *ad hoc* structures.

Lesson Learned 5: The use of art is an effective way to facilitate interactions between different groups (but likely not sufficient to build relations). The use of theater performances during the activities under both projects was relevant and proved to be effective to engage and build trust between adversary parties or groups in the community. The approach of using participatory theater performances where both parties, the community and authorities, were invited to take part in the plays, helped to build a connection between them, which in turn opened up the channels of communication. The evaluation found that this approach played a key role in building trust between adult stakeholders and vulnerable youth during *Inuka*. The activity was also relevant during J4P because it provided opportunities for discussion around key issues, which were sometimes regarded as taboo in the presence of justice actors. Learning from these activities, Search should continue to use art and performances, as they were able to open the door for the community and authorities to discuss peace and security issues, as well as violent extremism, openly and honestly. These kinds of activities provide a platform for the parties to discuss issues, which they would not discuss otherwise.

Lesson Learned 6: Search's gender strategy is working. In implementing these two projects, Search employed an approach in engaging with community members, where each gender was engaged separately and in a space where people felt comfortable and safe. While vulnerable young men were engaged in the *maskanis*, young women were engaged directly in spaces where they gathered, such as women groups or mosques. Different figures were also used to reach out to different groups. The success of this gender strategy is obvious from the readings of the results presented in previous sections. Importantly, it appears to be having different results compared to Search's previous efforts: under a previous phase of *Inuka*, for example, findings suggested that women still felt unsafe and had negative views about security even after participating in project activities. This was definitely not the case with the current phase of the project, and it is possible that the main difference, between those previous results and the current ones, is this new gender strategy. At the same time, it will also be important to monitor gender mainstreaming efforts more accurately in the future, to really understand where the strategy is being effective and where it can still be improved.

Lessons Learned 7: The theories of change work, but only up to a point. Taking the findings about impact (from Section 5) and linking them back to the theories of change (presented in Section 4), it becomes clear that many of the causal mechanisms underpinning Search's efforts can be validated. In particular, increased understanding (under the J4P project) and greater capacities (under *Inuka*) do lead to better collaboration and, for those

involved in activities, also greater levels of trust. This suggests that the linkages between short-term and intermediate results are valid. The problems start, however, with the linkages between the latter and longer-term results, as the evaluation found that the projects' impact waned at the level of communities: very positive results for project participants did not, in other words, translate to equally positive results to non-participants. One issue appears to be with scale, and the assumptions that Search makes about influencing communities at large: both projects engaged a high number of participants, but these still represented a relatively small sample of community members. In this regard, it is also important to note that the dissemination and mobilization strategy, common across the two projects, appears not to have been effective; nor did Search seem to have a cohesive strategy to engage national level stakeholders. This is a challenge that continues to limit the impact of initiatives like J4P and *Inuka*, and which should be further considered in the future.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

In general, both the J4P and *Inuka* projects were able to increase collaboration and inclusive engagement between stakeholders and at-risk and marginalized communities in addressing violent extremism in Coastal Kenya.

On one hand, J4P brought key justice actors and communities together to address grievances and concerns that were seen as drivers of violent extremism. The project was able to increase the understanding of justice actors on violent extremism from the community's perspective, and also provide communities with the opportunity to learn and understand criminal procedures, which were confusing to them before the project. Indeed, the evidence gathered through the evaluation suggested that the project was able to promote mutual understanding between justice sector actors and the community, which in turn increased the trust between the two groups. Participants now freely and with confidence engage with the justice system to address misunderstandings in their communities. There was also evidence of some institutional changes brought about thanks of the project, albeit still at a relatively lower level. Despite the positive outcomes, the evaluation also found some limitations. Among these, the project was unable to fully engage with the police, which are among those actors the community tends to have the most grievances about. More importantly, communities themselves suggested that police should be part of the activities implemented under the project.

On the other hand, the *Inuka* project was able to create inclusive communities, whereby adults and at-risk youth collaboratively could address peace and security issues. In all targeted communities, evidence suggests that now county leaders involve youth, for example by appointing them to hold key decision-making positions in their communities. It is also evident that the project equipped at-risk youth with new knowledge and skills to address challenges facing their communities. The sub-grants that were provided under *Inuka* improved youth collaboration and engagement with their peers in grassroots communities. They also benefited at-risk women specifically. Overall, there is no doubt that the project had positive outcomes and impact, however, all changes in the community and community perceptions cannot be fully attributed to the project. There are, in particular, indications that efforts to disseminate information and engage youth through media might not have been as effective as hoped.

Lastly, it is worth noting how Search was able to seize opportunities to create synergies between the two projects, and thus amplify the projects' results. Linking young people and criminal justice actors, for example, supported the pursuit of both projects' objectives effectively. This said, it is also important to highlight that conceptually and practically, the projects remained separate, in particular around the engagement of institutions and also in the development of media-focused activities. This might have been a missed opportunity in hindsight.

With this conclusion, observed limitations and lessons learned in mind, the following recommendations are offered to inform Search and its partners in their future work:

● **Continue engaging different stakeholder groups and creating bridges between them.** Search has by now gathered a solid record in the target locations. The effects of this work, as seen through different evaluations, have been positive and are slowly building up to impact. While the specific contributions of these efforts ought to be better understood, there is clear value in what Search and its partners are doing, with all four target groups (criminal justice actors and at-risk communities under J4P, and youth and adults under *Inuka*). These efforts should be continued, with support from donors, under an understanding that what is now at stake is not whether such initiatives can have an impact, but how much impact can be generated.

● **Continue implementing the gender strategy, and focus on monitoring.** As amply discussed, Search's gender strategy is working. As such, the organization should mainly continue to implement it. At the same time, why and how it is so effective remains less clear, so Search should try and invest more in monitoring its efforts under the strategy. This should include disaggregating data, as indeed is already happening; it should also include a more concerted effort to analyze and understand the identity of the women engaged, and the effects that the projects might be having on different groups (e.g. younger vs. older, educated vs. uneducated, etc.). Collecting such data should provide Search with additional information to ensure that its strategy continues to be effective.

● **Conduct an in-depth assessment of local partners**. During project implementation, Search engaged with several local partners. In each targeted community, they engaged with each of the partners separately. The evaluation found that there were some differences in effectiveness and impact of the project by location, which could be indicative of differences in partner capacities and strategies. Search, therefore, should conduct an in-depth assessment of potential partners before designing sub-grants and activities. Understanding partners' strengths and weaknesses will ensure Search can leverage the partner's strengths while supporting them with capacity building to address their weaknesses.

● **Collaborate with and empower grassroots CSOs through more tailored sub-grants**. Expanding on the above recommendation, Search should also focus on collaborating with and building capacity of grassroots organizations. Despite the positive outcomes of sub-grants, the likelihood of supported CSOs continuing their initiatives after the end of the project remains small. In the future, therefore, Search should find a way to engage directly with these local CSOs including building their capacity, technical and operational, for them to effectively collaborate as local partners, and also to ensure they can locate their own funding streams to widen peacebuilding efforts in Coastal Kenya.

● **Engage with the police as a key partner in peacebuilding initiatives.** During the project, the evaluation noted that police were not fully engaged due to unforeseen challenges. Yet it was the communities that specifically called for more involvement of police. In the future, Search and its partners, including donors, should focus on developing new approaches to engaging the police, for example around national training programs on human rights that could directly target law enforcement agencies. Such training also should go hand-in-hand and with the provision of certificates for officers who have successfully finished the training. These officers could then be later engaged during the implementation of peacebuilding projects.

● **Ensure peacebuilding grants incorporate a financial sustainability component**. Financial sustainability can ensure the activities implemented will continue after the end of the project. In implementing future grant programming, Search and partners should provide a business-oriented type of grant, where the grantees can use part of

the grant for investment in a business or to run an activity to generate profit. Part of the profit can then be directed toward the intended initiative. Later on, some of the profit coming from the business or activity can be saved for expanding the business and some can be used to continue to implement peacebuilding initiatives. This strategy could be more effective in terms of sustainability and impact by enabling communities to continue to implement activities after the end of the project.

- **Develop a strategy to engage government at multiple levels.** Search and partners should focus on engaging with the government, not just at local level, but also at the national level, possibly using the models established with the CUC sessions or the Mvuvi Cards. What authorities do at local level, in fact, is closely tied with the work of national policy-makers. This remains true despite the decentralization reforms currently ongoing, and even more so for security issues, which are the domain of security agencies reporting directly to government ministries in Nairobi. It is essential, for impact and sustainability of such initiatives to be increased in the future, that Search is also working with national officials through a coordinated set of actions that can help.

- **Supportive materials should accompany activities aiming to provide knowledge and skills for communities.** To empower communities with knowledge and skills, activities should be designed to be accompanied with materials such as brochures, posters, and billboards. This form of documentation not only helps in spreading knowledge and skills faster, but also prevents them from fading over time. Future programming should therefore take this approach into consideration for more sustainability, wider reach, and deeper impact.

- **Invest in an assessment of the media landscape**. Search should assess the media landscape to understand the way in which it can diversify its media programs (under *Inuka*) to tailor them to the local context. Search could also consider engaging more with social media platforms to promote awareness of the radio program, which the evaluation found was a missing piece. Search should also consider a live segment to the show to attract more listeners than a pre-recorded show. Lastly Search should work with local media outlets to consistently monitor their audiences – both to determine how their content resonates with communities and to expand listenership.

- **Develop a learning agenda.** Finally, Search should develop a learning agenda and a reflection space to most effectively take advantage of what it is already doing in terms of monitoring and evaluation. This should require a shift away from project-based approaches and towards more countrywide efforts. It should also be accompanied by an exploration of more appropriate approaches to evaluate impact for this type of interventions, including, for example, Contribution Analysis or Process Tracing. Through these approaches it is in fact likely that Search will be able to get the evidence that this report was not able to identify, and thus make better and more accurate claims about the success of its work.