



Issue Brief on Emerging Crimes: The Case of Kidnappings in Kenya Report, 2017

Objective- To identify the challenges faced in preventing and combating kidnappings

Methodology- The study adopted a descriptive research design. The study was carried out in twenty (20) counties which were randomly and purposively selected. 1326 (727 males and 599 females) sample respondents (members of public) were conveniently sampled. Key informants were drawn from Judiciary, National Police Service, Office of Public Prosecution, Probation Services, Children Services Department, Civil society organizations interacting with issues of kidnappings and in general Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze the data. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used in this study. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and the information was presented in frequencies, percentage tables and figures. Qualitative data was analyzed by way of interpretation of responses obtained from key informants, victims, kidnappers and reporters from the institutions addressing kidnappings.

Counties of study: Nairobi, Nyeri, Muranga, Kirinyaga, Mandera, Wajir, Bungoma, Kisii, Siaya, Machakos, Embu, Meru, Nakuru, Migori, Laikipia, Baringo, West Pokot, Turkana, Kwale and Lamu.

Findings: From the study, majority (92.8%) of the respondents reported that there were challenges faced in the prevention and combat of kidnappings in Kenya. The most serious challenge reported by the majority (65.6%) of the respondents was inadequate resources within the security agencies involved in the fight against the crime. Other major challenges included: corruption in the society (49.6%), community reluctance to volunteer information (29.9%), inadequate awareness and sensitization on kidnappings (25.8%), inadequate cooperation among stakeholders (24.1%) and high levels of youth unemployment (22.8%). The least considered challenges were: use of unregistered mobile phone SIM cards (0.8%), infrequent transfer of some security officers (1.1%) and willingness by victims and their families to pay ransom (1.1%).

Respondents reported a number of possible solutions to the challenges faced in the prevention and combat of kidnappings in Kenya. The majority (60.6%) of the respondents emphasized on the need for provision of adequate resources to the security agencies. The other important possible solutions that were recommended were: enhanced sensitization and awareness creation on kidnappings (24.1%), eradication of corruption (20.4%), creation of employment opportunities (16.7%), enhanced collaboration among stakeholders (14.0%), instituting stiff penalties to kidnappers (12.0%) and embracing the Nyumba Kumi and Community Policing Initiatives (11.7%). Discouraging payment of ransom (0.2%), eradication of drug abuse (0.5%) and registration of all mobile phone SIM cards (0.7%) were the least considered solutions.

Conclusion:

There are challenges faced in preventing and combating kidnappings in Kenya that need to be addressed. These include: inadequate resources within the security agencies involved in fighting the crime, corruption in the society, community reluctance to volunteer information, inadequate awareness and sensitization on kidnappings, inadequate cooperation among stakeholders, and high levels of youth unemployment, use of modern technology by kidnappers and poor transport infrastructure and communication in some parts of the country. To address the challenges faced in preventing and combating kidnappings in the country there is need therefore to empower security agencies, enhance cooperation among security agencies and address youth unemployment.

References

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