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

Objective– To assess the role of the community in 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: The study revealed that the community is a major stakeholder in the problem of kidnappings in Kenya. Most (48.3%) of the respondents argued that the community had participated in increasing cases of kidnappings in Kenya while 40.9% of the respondents indicated it had not. The majority (90.3%) of the respondents who said that the community is a contributing factor to kidnappings problems, indicated that it does so by its inadequate collaboration with security organs; lack of community cohesion and the 'don't care' attitude (87.7%); poor upbringing/socialization of children were among the other habits the community had contributed in the increased cases of kidnappings. Condoning corruption (13.8%) was considered the least way in which the community participated in the increased kidnappings.

Conclusions: The community has played both contributory role in increased cases of kidnapping and addressing kidnappings in Kenya. It has done this through inadequate collaboration with security organs; lack of community cohesion and don't care attitude; poor upbringing/socialization of children; engaging in retrogressive cultural practices; and apathy of community members towards crime and inadequate sensitization of children on kidnappings.

The best way the community could participate in addressing kidnappings would be by: fully embracing and increasing participation in Nyumba Kumi and Community Policing Initiatives; increased sensitization and awareness creation on kidnapping issues; increased community collaboration with security agencies; and establishment of a hotline for reporting kidnapping cases.

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