Knowledge Gaps on Religious Literacy and Constitutional Rights in Kenya

Baseline Study Report

December 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Acronyms:

AEA	Association of Evangelicals in Africa
ATR	African Traditional Religions
CIPK	Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya
CICC	Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics Trust
CIPK	Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya
EAK	Evangelical Alliance of Kenya
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HCK	Hindu Council of Kenya
IRK	Islamic Relief Kenya
IRCK	Inter Religious Council of Kenya
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KII	Key Informant Interview
MUHURI	Muslim for Human Rights
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development
NRTP	Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAIC	Organization of African Instituted Churches
RMP	Religious Minority Project
SUPKEM	Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
WCRP	World Conference on Religion for Peace
WEA	World Evangelical Alliance

SUMMARY

This is a summary of the baseline survey, "Gaps on religious literacy and constitutional rights, especially on freedom of religion and belief, within Kenya. This baseline study was conducted in six counties, including: Mombasa, Kilifi, Garissa, Mandera, Kwale and Nairobi, in order to inform the implementation of the Norwegian Agency for Development-funded consortium project, "'Religious minorities in Kenya: Overcoming divides, respecting rights." (RMP). The project is led by Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) and implemented together with The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (NRTP), Islamic Relief Kenya (IRK), The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) and Tangaza University.

This two-year project seeks to overcome the human rights violations suffered by religious minorities and African Traditional Religious Communities. The objective of this project is to address the problems affecting the full enjoyment of rights by the Muslim minority and the African Traditional Religions (ATR) communities in Kenya, arising from mistrust and perceived repression by the State authorities, misunderstandings with other faith-communities, and limited knowledge of constitutional rights, including promotion of gender equality. Operational areas are Mombasa, Kilifi, Kwale, Garissa, Mandera, and Nairobi. The project supports dialogue between minority faith groups and state institutions, which are intended to positively influence the implementation of laws concerning minorities' rights.

The project's outcomes include, among others:

- Improving inter-faith working relationships locally and nationally.

- Enhancing awareness of decision-makers and public audiences on the common ground between faiths and constitutional rights, and on the relevant best practices in promoting minorities' rights at a local and national level.

Project activities are, among others:

- Development of training materials for schools, madrassas and women groups based on the findings of the baseline study

- Coaching and training faith leaders, teachers, national authorities and women groups on constitutional rights and freedom of religion and belief

- National workshop on interreligious dialogue

- Supporting the advocacy and messaging on freedom of religion and belief through media

NRTP commissioned ETC Consultants to conduct a baseline study on knowledge gaps on religious literacy and constitutional rights, especially on freedom of religion and belief, within key Kenyan state and county authorities, faith actors and communities.

The baseline study was conducted between November and December 2019, in above mentioned counties, with twenty six (26) FGDs conducted with 169 male and female participants. Additionally, KIIs were conducted with 36 male and female individuals as well as one observatory exercise.

The ETC consulting team appreciates the support granted to its team during the field assignment by the NRTP and all project partners. The support of the project partners made it possible to conduct field research in the six project counties and we specifically valued the facilitation of logistics and support for setting up the key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FDG) through the partners' links in the communities.

KEY FINDINGS

1. Most participants in the six counties were optimistic about their potential participation in the Religious Minority Project (RMP) in Kenya. The respondents said it would bring about unity, community co-existence and networking opportunities. Respondents from different stakeholder groups such as youth, women, religious leaders, teachers, business people and County Government staff expressed their willingness to participate in RMP and provide support and advice on how better to implement the activities based on their local knowledge and experience

2. Defining the underlying problems behind inter- and intra- religious tensions can help in countering the destructive narratives and address problems of religious misunderstanding and literacy. The common misunderstandings included: (1)the general belief and notion that "all Muslims are terrorists," (2) many Non-governmental organizations funded and run by Muslims, give refuge to terrorists and (3) that every activity organized by Muslims are suspicious and should be treated as such.

3. The state authorities, especially those in the judiciary branch and police, lack an understanding of Islamic doctrines. The lack of information possessed by these actors make it extremely difficult for them to engage Muslims without evoking emotional clashes and confrontations. Such fears could be allayed if religious harmony and dialogue were encouraged. Christian and Muslim leaders in Kenya should be seen as joint primary actors who can diffuse tensions and fears when ideological differences arise.

4. In regard to the level of awareness on religious literacy and the constitutional provision, results reveal mixed levels of awareness ranging from low to average with lack of detailed knowledge on the provision of the law and constitution on the same by the respondents. The provisions highlighted repeatedly include freedom of worship, freedom to gather, right to worship the way one wanted, right to learn religion and the absence of faith-based intimidation/compulsion in religion. Most respondents were not quite clear about the specific constitutional safeguards for both themselves and those of other religious groups.

5. Safeguards are critical for unfettered expression of religious beliefs cutting cross religious, social and economic spheres. Both Muslim and Christian respondents said they did not have sufficient safeguards for their religious rights. For example, Christians noted the lack of safeguards to freely worship in Garissa and Mandera, and Muslims highlighted that they constantly feel as though their actions are monitored by security officials.

6. Trust in government structures and mechanisms, more specifically towards the police and the courts, was low as most respondents said that they had little trust in the justice delivery system, with at least 80% of the respondents in Kilifi and Kwale counties expressing lack of trust in the judicial and national security actors. In Mandera and Garissa, respondents mentioned the inadequate security provided for both Muslim and Christian worshippers during Friday and Sunday worship. The biggest hindrance to trust in the Kenyan government was identified as rampant and open corruption. As a result, a significant number of respondents stated that they do not express their grievances to the authorities due to the fear of 'victimization' or counter accusation and being framed for offences and criminal acts that they did not commit.

7. Common sources of religious information were identified as mass media, social media, schools and universities, mosques and churches. While social and mass media were lauded for their extensive reach, significant short-comings were noted.

8. Islam as a religion followed at a distance by ATR, is the primary target of religious intolerance, especially in relation to state, education, access to state and social services (ID Cards, passports), cases of renditions and unexplained disappearances of youths from largely Muslim families and communities.

CHAPTER ARRANGEMENT

This report is organized in the following manner:

Chapter one: Introduction
Chapter two: Literature Review
Chapter three: Methodology
Chapter four: Findings
Chapter five: Conclusions and Recommendations

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

According to the Terms of Reference (ToR)for the study on the knowledge gaps on religious literacy and constitutional rights in Kenya, the primary objective of the study was to understand knowledge gaps on religious literacy and constitutional rights, especially on freedom of religion and belief within key Kenyan state authorities, faith actors and communities and school teachers in order to inform the project *"Religious minorities in Kenya: Overcoming divides, respecting rights,* funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD). The objective of this project is to address the problems affecting the full enjoyment of rights by the Muslim minority and the African Traditional Religions (ATR) communities in Kenya, arising from mistrust and excessive repression by the State authorities, misunderstandings with other faith-communities, and limited knowledge of constitutional rights, including the promotion of gender equality. The project particularly supports dialogue across faith groups, and between minority faith groups and state institutions, to positively influence the law and its implementation concerning minority rights.

Owing to the gap in public education on religious knowledge, most respondents were functionally illiterate about religious tenets and traditions (including their own). The degree to which religious knowledge gaps and illiteracy contributes to religious intolerance in Kenya is, of course, difficult to measure. In an era when religion plays a key role in shaping events at public realms and places, ignorance about religion can only deepen tensions among people of different faiths and beliefs. For example wearing religious clothing, such as Hijab, or teaching of religious subjects have become contentious issues in schools

The study found about recent cases and proposals in public and private schools to ban female student from wearing Hijab. .

The interaction and questions posted to the respondents allowed researchers to gauge their knowledge and understanding about key tenets and beliefs of other religions. Despite the fact that Kenyans claim to be a highly religious people—with nearly 98% of the Kenyans (KNBS, 2020) affiliated to and professing belief in God —that belief does not seem to translate into wholesome knowledge of their own faith or that of others. This gap has practical consequences that were revealed through:(1) a limited ability and understanding of the other religions (Muslims understanding Christians and vice versa, and a total lack of appreciation of ATR by respondents at community level), (2) a hindered ability to understand religious practices/tenets and claims by the state players, mainly the police, (e.g. cases mentioned the word al-Shabaab immediately linked one being sympathetic to the group, yet its original meaning is 'youth'), (3) a discriminatory view of religious symbols/clothing/events outside one's own religion (example of student boards in schools not allowing hijab wearing girls) and (4) a weakened capacity and motivation to analytically assess and question the claims of those preaching religious intolerance and hate among others. The findings demonstrated that respondents have much to learn about each other's practices and beliefs. For instance, judiciary and police actors coming from another faith, mainly Christianity, generally had very little understanding on Islam and its practices, while most of the other respondents of Christian orientation had a generalist understanding of the basic tenets of other faiths, primarily Islam., On the other hand, Muslim respondents in Mandera and Garissa (other than religious leaders), viewed non-Muslims largely as being on the wrong path of life.

Emanating from dismal answers, the importance for Kenyans to understand their own religious practices, beliefs, tenets as well as those of others came up strongly. Kenya as a multi religious nation —which is guaranteed in the Constitution in order to protect religious liberty—has encouraged a flourishing of religious belief and practice. Strong conclusions of the study was that across the religions, the religious institutions serve their communities and advocate for social justice. These institutions work to alleviate poverty and provide access to social

services, education, politics, environment, and more. They are highly influential in shaping views about social issues. However, religious institutions have had a tendency to be inward looking and neglecting to take into consideration other religious groups. Due to these factors, it is essential for Kenyans to understand their own religions as well as others'.

1.2   Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The primary objective was to conduct a baseline study in Mandera, Garissa, Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi and Nairobi counties on: i) knowledge gaps on religious literacy and constitutional rights, especially on freedom of religion and belief within key Kenyan state authorities, faith actors and communities and school teachers and ii) violations of constitutional rights, especially rights of women and freedom of religion and belief, as perceived by religious communities. .

1.3   Scope of Work

The baseline survey was conducted across the six project target counties[1]: (i) twenty six (26) Focus Group Discussions were conducted with total of 169 participants; and (ii) Thirty six (36) Key Informant Interviews were conducted with 36 male and female participants. In addition one observatory exercise was conducted in Likoni (Mombasa County).Field data was collected concurrently during November 2019 using mixed methods comprising of qualitative study,-focus group discussion and key informant interviews. The data collected were analyzed and forms the basis of this report.

The consultants reviewed project documents and relevant existing literature. From the literature review, three important aspects emerged: (1) the benefits of use of participatory approaches in gathering data, (2) diversity of approaches in gathering the data and (3) the need to reach out to diverse audience in data gathering. The baseline survey began with harmonizing understanding, expectations and processes with NORAD – funded consortium partners, followed by a detailed review of relevant documentation, development of tools and questionnaires and sampling of the population for enumeration.

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[1] The counties broadly divided into three regions – Nairobi, coast and north eastern. The common theme among the counties are the youths, with the latter two counties sharing Islam as a common religion and years of alienation

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Kenya's Contemporary Religious Demography

The total enumerated population of Kenya is 47,564,296, with the total male population at 23,548,056 (49.5%) and that of females at 24,014,716, making 50.5% of the population. Majority (85.5 per cent) of the population are Christians with Protestants, Catholics and Evangelical churches accounting for 33.4, 20.6, and 20.4 per cent, respectively. Muslims accounted for 11 per cent of the entire population. About 318,727 Kenyans are traditionalists, while 755,750 were reported as atheists.(KNBS 2020)

Table 2.1   Kenyan Population by Religious affiliation

Religion	Number	Percentage
Christianity	40,379,079	85.52%
Islam	5,152,194	10.91%
Hindu	60,287	0.13%
None	755,750	1.60%
Traditionalists	318,727	0.68%
Other	547,245	1.16%
Total	47,213,282	100.0%

Source: Kenya Population & Housing Census (KNBS, 2020)

Kenya is a multi-religious society, with Christianity and Islam being the dominant faiths. Religious co-existence in Kenya has been a commonplace, with churches, mosques and temples in one community. Religious co-existence has been enforced by communities sharing community activities including: education –weddings and funerals among others. However, over the past decade, Kenya has become target for terrorist attacks and subsequent counter-terrorism initiatives that have created an atmosphere of anxiety and suspicion, especially between Muslim and Christian communities. These factors have created a litmus test to the nation's longstanding religious harmony.

2.1.1 Landscape of Religious Freedoms in Kenya

In Kenya, the presence of diverse religious worship centers, religions, freedom of speech, expression and the ability to oppose others without violence denotes a country with a high degree of freedom of worship. The Kenyan Constitution states "There shall be no State religion" (2010b). Such a strong disavowal of religious establishment by the state effectively encourages the wide range of religious practices and thereby fosters unity in diversity - a prominent aspirational goal of the 2010 Constitution. Upholding unity in the country is especially challenging when Christianity, the majority religion, has long been associated with Kenya's political leaders and dominant social groups. Understandably, religious minorities, most notably ATR, Muslims and Hindus, have experienced marginalization at the hands of the state and fellow citizens. Among sections of Muslims, especially the youth interviewed in the Mombasa and Kilifi, the government is perceived as supporters and promoters of Christianity.

Resentment by Muslim communities against government entities has increased with reported terror bombings in Kenya as the police and military actions undertaken in the name of security have appeared to target populations on the basis of their Muslim faith. On the other hand, Christians fault government for not adequately supporting their religion, making reference to attacks against non-local teachers (not originating from the county in concern) and migrant workers in the North Eastern parts of Kenya.

Colonial legacy has resulted in different interpretation and practice of laws and traditions, such as Muslim Kadhi's courts, towards different religious communities[2]. This was brought to fore around provisions of the 2010 constitution, especially in relation to the family law. The constitution requires parliament to enact legislation recognizing a system of personal and family law, adhered to by persons professing a particular religion. It specifically treats the Kadhi courts, which, since colonial times, have adjudicated certain types of civil cases based on Islamic law—including questions relating to personal status, marriage, divorce, or inheritance, specifically in cases in which "all the parties profess the Muslim religion (Berkley 2017)." The secular High Court has jurisdiction over civil or criminal proceedings, including those in the Kadhi courts and accepts appeals of any Kadhi court decision. The 1967 Kadhi Courts Act allowed establishment of these courts in different parts of Kenya with their jurisdiction restricted to issues of personal law.

Figure 2.1 Commentary on religion and politics;

Source: Cartoon by Gado, gadocartoons.com, May 2016

In addition, literature suggests that the civil and human rights, and insecurity challenges of many communities are due to the changing roles of traditional institutions. Therefore, these institutions hold the key to the solution of these challenges[3].

There is growing interest in the development space for realistic and socially embedded actors to develop 'home-grown/locally based' solutions to human rights abuses, peace building and gender inclusivity. Traditional institutions and grassroots religious actors are a key focus in developing these solutions due to their importance with respect to local justice, land and community development activities.

2.1.2   Status of Government Commitment to Religious Freedom

Legal Framework

Records from Registrar of societies show that there are more than 4,000 registered churches in Kenya, belonging to an innumerable variety of denominations. These range from mainstream churches, to lesser-known evangelical and gospel offshoots. The current Kenyan Constitution provides for freedom of religion and belief, including freedom of worship, practice, teaching, and observance. It also states individuals shall not be compelled to act or engage in any act contrary to their belief or religion. These rights shall not be limited except by law, and

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[2]The jurisdiction of a Kadhi's court shall be limited to the determination of questions of Muslim law relating to personal status, marriage, divorce or inheritance in proceedings in which all the parties profess the Muslim religion and submit to the jurisdiction of the Kadhi's courts"

[3]Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia, 'The Role of Religious and Traditional Institutions during Conflict and in Peacebuilding', *Journal of Religion, Conflict & Peace*, 5.1 (2012) <http://www.religionconflictpeace.org/volume-5-issue-1-and-2-fall-2011-spring-2012/role-religious-and-traditional-institutions-during> [accessed 19 September 2019].

then only to the extent that the limitation is "reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society."

The constitution requires parliament to enact legislation that recognizes a system of personal and family law adhered to by persons professing a particular religion. Although there is no penal law referring to blasphemy, a section of the penal code states that destroying, damaging or defiling any place of worship or object held sacred with the intention of insulting the religion of any class of persons is a misdemeanor. This offense carries a penalty of a fine of up to two years in prison. Nevertheless, it is reported that this misdemeanor is reportedly rarely prosecuted. Crimes against church property are more likely to be treated as malicious destruction of property, which is also prosecuted as a misdemeanor.

Religious groups, institutions or places of worship and faith-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) must register with the Registrar of Societies. The registrar of societies is an officer working under the Attorney General's office. Traditional sects and groups are not required to register, and many do not. The registration process requires applicants to present valid national identification documents pay a fee and undergo screening. Additionally religious based institutions and places of worship may apply for tax-exempt status, including exemption from duty on imported goods. Under the law (Non-Governmental Organizations Co-Ordination Act Chapter 134), organizations dedicated to advocacy, public benefit, or the promotion of charity or research must register with the NGO Coordination Board. The national curriculum mandates mandatory religious classes. With the exception of private schools, most schools will offer religious education options, usually Christian or Islamic studies; schools are not required to offer both options.

State Security Measures and Practices

Kenya has experienced major terror attacks in the towns of Garissa[4], Mandera[5], Nairobi and Mombasa. The 1998 bombing of the United States Embassy in Nairobi is rated as the most significant terror attack to date (due to the massive number of casualties), given that it was a first major attack and since then Kenya has been a scene for a string of various terror related attacks. As a response to these attacks and UN actions and resolutions[6], the Kenyan government adopted counter-terrorism strategies comprised of legislative reforms, institutional building, trainings and bilateral and multilateral collaboration. There have been reports and concerns of reactive and discriminatory systematic counter-terrorism actions, challenges, and human rights concerns. It has been noted that counter-terrorism activities have disproportionately impacted innocent Muslims, specifically ethnic Somalis and people living in areas along the Somalia border. The States' actions have been cited to include: extrajudicial killings, unlawful interrogations, arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention without trial. Heightened counter terrorism measures have resulted in an increase in tensions between Muslims and Christians. Muslims and some Somali's have reported harassment or being treated as suspicious persons.

2.2   Religious Communities and Institutions[7]

2.2.1 Traditional Religions and Spirituality

Before the advent of Christianity and Islam in Kenya, the area was occupied by a diverse array of traditional tribal religions/faiths. However, many tribal religions or faiths are no longer widely practiced in Kenya and have been highly integrated in the two main organized religions.

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[4]On 2 April 2015, gunmen stormed the Garissa University College in Garissa, Kenya, killing 148 people, and injuring 79 or more. The militant group and Al-Qaeda offshoot, Al-Shabaab, which the gunmen claimed to be from, took responsibility for the attack. The gunmen took over 700 students hostage, freeing Muslims and killing those who identified as Christians. The siege ended the same day, when all four of the attackers were killed.

[5]2 December 2014 – Al-Shabaab militants attacked and killed 36 quarry workers, many of whom were non-Muslims, near the town of Mandera

[6]Resolutions 1373/01, 1377/01 and 1624/2005

[7]The Ubiquity of Religion in Kenya - Berkley Center for Religion

Traditional belief systems predominated Kenya long before Islam and Christianity came into being. Traditional leaders and elders, clan chiefs and spiritual leaders have performed a mediating and arbitrating role in intra- and inter-clan conflicts. Customary and informal traditional authority structures and conflict management systems have long existed to deal with land disputes, clan wars and pastoral violence. In the instance of the Kayas (traditional religious shrines in designated forests as places of worship), oral tradition[8] states that it was the Digo who were the first to migrate southward and establish the first *kaya*. The *Kaya* represented an important political symbol to the Mijikenda peoples, as well as being an important cultural symbol to the Mijikenda peoples. The political symbolism of the *kaya* also played a part in the resistance to colonialism for the Mijikenda peoples. The layout of the *Kaya* settlements usually had centrally positioned areas devoted to leadership and worship, with other areas devoted to initiation ceremonies, areas for developing magic and medicine, and areas devoted to burials and entertainment placed around them. The forests of the *kaya* surrounding the settlement acted as a buffer between the settlements and the outside world. Security increased as the populations of the *Kaya* grew, which lead to a period of stability. As a result, the Mijikenda people spread outwards along the coasts and southwards along the border of Tanzania. Over the last three decades, much of Kenya's land has changed from communal land tenure systems to a common law system based on individual freehold tenure. As such, many *Kayas* adjudicated as private plots and demarcated and individual title issued, rendering many areas "up for grabs" by unscrupulous individuals.

2.2.2 Christianity in Kenya

Since missionary activity was part of the colonial enterprise, Christianity and Kenya's colonial history is deeply entwined. Christianity was barely known and practiced in Eastern Africa before 1856; as earlier efforts to establish missions along the coast had failed. Missionaries came along with merchants, governors, soldiers, and philanthropists, all with different, but interconnected, interests. The Christian explorers were especially keen for opportunities for evangelization. Most of the well-established churches in Kenya have their roots in early missionary work, when Europeans first took an interest in the area as many Europeans saw this as an opportunity to spread their faith to a new audience.

Catholic Church: The concept of Catholicism first arrived in Kenya in 1498, when a Portuguese trader erected a cross on the coastal shore near Malindi, referred to as Vasco da Gama Pillar. Catholic missionaries began traveling to Kenya in the late 1500s, but the country didn't start to have an official church presence until the 1900s.By that time, there were a number of missionaries in the country and an increase in the number of Kenyans becoming ordained priests. The first Kenyan dioceses were established in 1953, for Nairobi, Nyeri, Kisumu and Meru. Today there are 26 dioceses throughout the country and more than 7 million baptized Kenyans.

Methodist Church: There are 900 Methodist churches throughout Kenya with membership of approximately half a million people. The church was established in Kenya by missionaries from the United Methodist Free Church in 1860. The Methodist Church in Kenya has expanded its works to include the Kenya Methodist University and Maua Methodist Hospital, among other commercial ventures.

Anglican Church: The first Anglican missionaries came to Kenya in 1844.Overthe years, the Anglican Church translated much of the Bible into the local languages to help spread their teachings to the locals. Today, the church has 29 dioceses and over 5 million members throughout Kenya. There are six Anglican theological colleges in Kenya as well. Their Uzima publishing house helps them provide Christian books for Africans (some titles are in Kiswahili, but most are in English).

Pentecostal Church: As with the other churches in Kenya, Pentecostalism came to Africa first through European missionaries in 1912. Compared to the other mainstream

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[8] Source –Joseph MwaranduKarisa, Prominent Kaya elder and lawyer

denominations already mentioned, this denomination is relatively new to Kenya. Pentecostal churches are growing quickly in popularity due to their charismatic approach to preaching, and their willingness to address Kenyans' more traditional beliefs. About 70% of the Protestant populations are a member of a Pentecostal church. In 2002, East Africa was home to around 5,000 Pentecostal churches.

Other Denominations: Besides these denominations, there are numerous others with a significant presence in Kenya. Baptist, Presbyterian, Gospel Revivalist, Reformed, Episcopal, Adventist and Lutheran are just a small example of the variety of Kenyan churches.

2.2.3   Islam in Kenya

As stated above, approximately 11 percent of Kenya's population is Muslim, with many living on the coast and in the north east regions. The vast majority of Kenyan Muslims follow Sunni Islam and the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence. There are, however, sizeable populations of Shia and Ahmadi adherents. Most Shias are Ismailis' descended from or were influenced by oceanic traders from the Middle East and India.

Previous government development policies and investment have left sharp inequalities that mark Kenya's contemporary geography. Regions that were relatively neglected during the colonial and post-colonial eras, including the Coast, North Eastern, and parts of Rift Valley Provinces, lack educational opportunities, infrastructure and agricultural production. It is in these areas that Kenya's Muslim populations are concentrated. This has contributed to a sense that Muslims were marginalized, a perception reinforced by the Christian dominance of politics and many social and economic institutions.

Incursions by group like Al-Shabaab[9] and the terrorist incidents in Nairobi, Garissa, and other regions, have both heightened attention about the roles of Kenyan Muslims –mainly of Somali descent and accentuated tensions between Christians and Muslims. It has also posed practical problems, including how to accommodate a growing and increasingly devout Muslim population in public schools founded and often funded by churches.

2.2.4   Other Religious Communities

Notwithstanding small in number, several minority religious communities play large roles in Kenya's economy and society. These groups include Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Goan communities of migrants from the South Asian subcontinent.

Hinduism is a religion mainly comprised of faithfuls from Asia and the Indian sub-continent. Indian Hindus have a strong presence and are well integrated into Kenyan society. The history of their migration and settlement is only known in a patchy fashion as many historical documents did not classify the Indian migrants to Africa by their religion. The earliest known Indian migrants came to Kenya during the construction of the Uganda railway between 1896 and 1901. An estimated 32,000 laborers were recruited from what was then British India. Many died during the railway's construction due to diseases such as malaria, and others famously killed by the Tsavo man-eating lions. After the end of the railway line construction, many opted to stay in Kenya and established businesses along the railway line, and were joined by their families. Most early settlers came from Gujarat and Punjab. Many also engaged in trade, especially in Nairobi. Unlike Africans, Asians were permitted to live legally in Nairobi, which was then a white settler town.

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[9] Al-Shabaab is perceived as a group that hides behind Islam. They have no immediate or local social legitimacy and are not a grass roots movement. Their two central strategies are the targeting for recruitment of vulnerable and typically invisible individuals at moments of weakness or crisis - and the deliberate manufacturing of division and conflict between two religions that is not felt at an individual level. For outsiders and the authorities, the picture – and the distinction – is blurred because al-Shabaab is using the same recruitment strategies and employing the same narratives as the illegal sects and gangs; they all exploit the same sense of abandonment and injustice.

2.3   Religious Umbrella Organizations

There are a number of Religious umbrella organizations in Kenya comprised of various mandates. The major organizations in Kenya include the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), Hindu Council of Kenya, Evangelical Alliance Kenya (EAK), all which are Christian based, and Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK).

2.3.1   National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK)

NCCK encompasses 27 member churches and 17 Christian organizations that work collaboratively to further the holistic development of Kenya. The organization was originally named the United Missionary Conference but underwent several name changes such as Federation of Missions, Alliance of Protestant Missions, Kenya Missionary Council, Christian Council of Kenya, and finally National Christian Council of Kenya, before taking up its current name in 1984. The National Council of Churches Kenya currently has nine regional offices. Membership to the NCCK is open to all Christian churches, regardless of denomination. It implements programs at the grassroots community level and works in close cooperation with its member churches and organizations. Its core functions are to promote unity, fellowship, and dialogue among its members and utilizes its networks to manage programs that meet the emerging needs of its regional communities. NCCK operates in two main areas: (1) capacity building for membership and (2) governance/social services. These broad categories include many specific program initiatives including refugee services, family and community health, education, environment, economic empowerment, peacebuilding and constitutional reforms.

2.3.2   Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)

Headquartered in Nairobi, the OAIC is a continent-wide organization founded in 1978.The OAIC is an important part of Kenya's religious history and is presently growing today with new OAICs emerging, including many calling themselves Pentecostal Churches (Pentecostalism is a Protestant Christian movement that emphasizes direct personal experience of God through baptism with the Holy Spirit).Before 1978, no specific organization had represented or supported Pentecostals as a group; and they still have minimum recognition by mainline Christian churches. OAIC's original objectives were to provide a forum for OAIC leaders to share their concerns and promote fellowship. OAIC initially kept a low profile but has become increasingly active and visible. Its focus is on theological and biblical education for its members, including promoting Sunday school. OAIC has been involved in direct project support, with a focus on participatory development at the grassroots level.

2.3.3   Evangelical Alliance Kenya (EAK)

Evangelical Alliance Kenya was established in 1975 as a national umbrella organization for Kenya's evangelical churches, originally using the name Evangelical Fellowship of Kenya, under the auspices of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA). EAK is a member of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), which has over 650 million members globally. EAK's vision is, "to empower the evangelicals to bring God's transforming grace to the people of Kenya and thus its focus is on evangelism, with a robust set of objectives that include providing a national forum for partnership, networking and fellowship among the members, as well as advocacy and leadership on issues that affects the spiritual, social, and physical welfare of the nation. It deals with these issues through training and capacity building; research, study, and assistance to member churches and groups; and facilitating conflict resolution and peacebuilding within and outside of EAK.

2.3.4   Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)

SUPKEM was formed in 1973 and it is one of the largest Muslim umbrella organizations in Kenya. It aims to enhance the political participation and amplify the voice of Muslims. Their board is distinctive among religious umbrella organizations in that it includes both Muslim religious leaders and Muslim professionals. SUPKEM hopes to build unity among Muslim

communities in Kenya, help coordinate the activities and networking of Muslim NGOs and community organizations and advocate on behalf of the Muslim community to national and regional leaders on matters that affect Muslims. SUPKEM regularly participates in national debates through news outlets and actively communicates with the government on a wide range of issues, including: peace and security, health, education and corruption. In addition to its advocacy programs, SUPKEM has several operational initiatives in the areas of health and education as well as integrating a faith perspective in order to better reach the Muslim community.

2.3.5 Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK)

CIPK was established in 1997 and has its headquarters in Mombasa, with regional offices across the country in Western, Eastern, North Eastern, Nyanza, and Rift Valley regions. It acts as a coordinating body for the Muslim scholars and religious leaders of Kenya. The council believes that religious leaders play a vital role in Kenyan society and should be involved in the promotion of constructive development in social, cultural and political sectors. CIPK seeks to encourage peace, cooperation and stability between the different religious, ethnic and political groups in Kenya through advocacy, capacity training and education initiatives. It uses existing Muslim networks to implement projects while bringing communities together to encourage cooperation and unity among Kenyans.

2.4 Interfaith Relations and Action

2.4.1 Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics Trust (CICC)

Coast Interfaith Council of Clerics Trust (CICC) is one of the interfaith groups that is dedicated to using intra- and inter-faith dialogue to promote peace, security, and development in Kenya. It draws its membership from Islamic, Christian, Hindu and African traditional faiths institutions. Senior religious leaders representing the African Traditional Religions (ATR), the Catholic Church, the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK), the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya (EAK), the Hindu Council of Kenya (HCK), the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC) and the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) form a board of governors that runs the affairs of the CICC.

2.4.2 Inter Religious Council of Kenya (IRCK)

The first major interreligious organization at the national level took form in anticipation of the fourth World Conference on Religion and Peace that was held in Nairobi in August 1984. The World Conference on Religions for Peace Kenya (WCRP- Kenya) was formed in 1983. Until 2001, WCRP- Kenya engaged through ad hoc dialogue, action, and conference participation. In response to the AIDS crisis and the growing number of orphans, WCRP-Kenya formalized a secretariat in 2002 to engage programmatically. During strategic planning for 2003-2004, the focus shifted, as the organization saw a need to act more deliberately on peace and conflict transformation. WCRP-Kenya became an independent interreligious network in 2004 with a new name, the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya (IRCK). This national-level interfaith mechanism is based on institutional representation of all of Kenya's major religious institutions. Its role is to deepen interfaith dialogue and collaboration among members and to address specific issues involving interreligious tensions. IRCK has links with the African Council of Religious Leaders and is affiliated with Religions for Peace (formerly WCRP), the international interreligious body (Berkley, 2017).

2.4.3 Christian-Muslim Relations

There is an emerging perception held by several Muslim communities that the Kenyan government is Christian dominated. This notion can be traced back to the legacy of colonialism and the influx of Christian missionaries. Political and socioeconomic issues such as land ownership often fall along ethnic and religious lines. Muslims in the coastal region, for example, face obstacles when "up-country" businesspeople are given preference. Muslim-majority areas along the coast and northeast Kenya have seen fewer benefits from economic

development and have significantly less schools in relation to the needs of the population. In the past, political leaders touted their Christian identity in public, accentuating the perception that political power supports Christian interests. Most Muslims face closer scrutiny in public spaces and in the media. They have also faced discriminatory policies based on name when applying for government posts, secondary school, identification cards and passports.

 As minorities, Muslims generally were less forthright in criticizing the government than Christian leaders in the 1990s. Those who did voice grievances tended to modulate their criticism. This changed with agitation from Muslims for inclusion in democratic spaces when in January 1992, following the announcement of a multi-party system, the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPK) was established[10]. The government denied registration of the party on the grounds that it was discriminatory and required specific religious beliefs of its members. The party's religious affiliation was clear from its methods of mobilizing support and spreading political views and the role of its main activist, Khalid Balala, a conspicuously charismatic Islamic preacher. Tensions boiled over in May 1992 with the arrest of seven Imams. Several IPK activists incited mass demonstrations in Mombasa that evolved into violent attacks. Those arrested were accused of incitement against the government.

An IPK goal was to focus on the needs of Muslims in Kenya. IPK's leaders claimed that all political parties in Kenya were led by Christians and did not concern themselves with Muslim welfare. IPK's initial popularity reflected long-standing concerns of the Muslim minority and provided an avenue for expressing frustration.

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[10] National Archives

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General approach

The baseline research methodology sought to map religious aspects of inclusivity, understanding, dialogue and relationships across six counties in Kenya. This study was enriched by parallel and linked research on religious dialogues, development and respect in societal cohesion, support and in conflict prevention, management, peacebuilding, addressing the challenges of exclusion, extremism and building social cohesion. The consultants worked with project staff from the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers and other project partners at each stage of the baseline survey. First, the team and the client held several discussions and reached a common understanding of the tasks and expectations of the study. In general, the consultants approached the baseline activity as summarized in Figure 2 below.
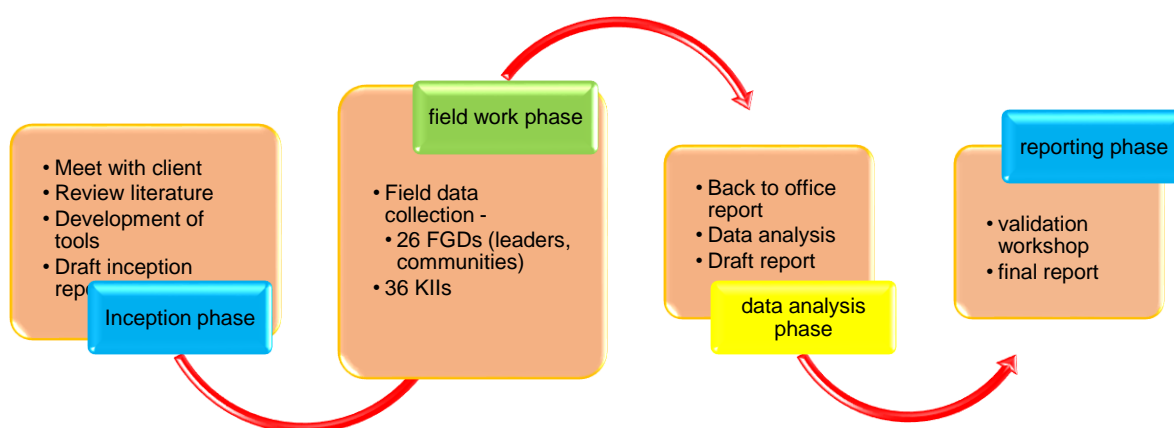

Figure 3.1   Diagrammatic presentation of the approach and phases used in the study

3.1.2 Sampling

The baseline survey was conducted across the six project target counties[11]: Primary data was collected from religious leaders (Christian, Muslim, traditional), teachers, youth, women, government officials and key informants from the target counties including: (i) 26FGDs conducted with 169 participants; and (ii) 36KIIs conducted with 36 individuals and one observatory exercise conducted in Likoni. Field data was collected concurrently during November 2019 using mixed methods approach including a qualitative study-FGDs and KIIs. The data collected was analyzed and forms the basis of this report.

Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were the main tools used for the study. The consultants and client had agreed to have at least 4 FGDs per county in addition to 4-6 KIIs to be interviewed. Table 3.1 above refers to the results in percentage terms of coverage and achievement for the FGDs and KIIs.

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[11] The counties broadly divided into three regions – Nairobi, coast and north eastern. The common theme among the counties are the youths, with the latter two counties sharing Islam as a common religion and years of alienation

Table 3.1   FGDs and KII Completion Table

County	Planned FGD	Actual FGD	% Achieved	Planned KII	Actual KII	% Achieved
Kwale	6	4	67	5	2	40
Kilifi	4	4	100	5	3	60
Mombasa	5	5	100	5	6	120
Nairobi	6	4	67	8	9	113
Garissa	5	5	100	7	8	114
Mandera	5	4	80	7	8	114
Total	31	26	84	37	36	97

Table 3.1 refers to the results in percentage terms of coverage and achievement for the FGDs and KIIs.

FGDs were selected as an effective way to capture information about social norms, behaviors, and the variety of opinions and views within a diverse continuum of the religious landscape[12]. The landscape included the religious leaders, teachers, youth groups, women leaders and opinion leaders. Interviews were conducted with single-sex sessions with women and youths as a key step towards inclusive and representative results. There is significant evidence that women speak much less in group settings when men are present. We therefore opted to work with the partners in Mombasa, Kwale, Mandera and Garissa to select women specific groups. The criteria included women who were activists and active in the society and/or have suffered religious intolerance selected. This was the case with Mombasa, where two FGDs were aimed at women whose son/relative had been accused, jailed or had disappeared as a result of being linked to extremist groups like al-Shabaab. On the other hand, we focused on youth configured FGD to enable them air their views without hindrance and fear of repercussions

The richness of the FGD data emerged from the group dynamic diversity in the groups. FGDs were used to help identify commonly held views among group members, including – at times – divergent views on religious dialogue, discrimination and rights. The average size of the groups was six. In some instances, the number was as high as ten, while in others low as three. The consultants paid great attention on the composition of the groups, depending on the socio-cultural setting. At times it seemed inappropriate to host mixed groups, e.g., women and men. Furthermore, age and gender were also important considerations.

For the baseline survey study the gender and age dynamics were as follows cumulatively across all the FGDs:

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[12] There was gap though in accessing the mainly government and high level civic leader primarily due to time constraints on the part of the potential interviewees. This was mitigated though with information from other interviewees, more so those with leadership position – religious leaders

Table 3.2   FGDs Data Disaggregation by Gender

County	Women	Men
Kwale	11	15
Kilifi	11	16
Mombasa	16	19
Nairobi	5	16
Garissa	11	17
Mandera	13	19
TOTAL	67	102

Table 3.3   FGDs Data Disaggregation by Age

County	< 20	20 - 35	36 - 50	50 >
Kwale	1	7	13	5
Kilifi	0	6	12	9
Mombasa	0	11	12	12
Nairobi	0	5	7	9
Garissa	0	5	13	10
Mandera	1	9	14	8

To get the right mix of the participants, the consultants sent out a note of the criteria for the selection to create a sample of participants based on a number of principles that included the following:
1. A range of geographical areas in the county
2. A gender balance
3. A recognition of the positive value of issues of diversity such as culture and faith
4. A diversity of ages
5. Special factors e.g. exclusion, widows, experience of or vulnerability for extremist recruitment

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Text Box 1: FGD and KII Criteria[13]

-Focus on individuals or groups directly concerned or affected by the issue under investigation (Christian, Muslim, traditional leaders, Hindu). This is fundamental
-The maximum number per FGD will be 7 -9 members
-Composition: at least 3-5 females:
-Age composition: a near equal spread in terms of age brackets 18-30; 35-45; 50 and above
-One per group must be a religious leader;
-Where possible if we can a practicing judicial/ teachers/paralegal / or government officials in law enforcement meeting above criteria to join the FGDs will be great
On KII: This we will require persons of either male-female with experience and knowledge on religious or rights issue

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Venues such as offices, common areas and homesteads, were carefully selected to host the FGDs for groups that were fearful of reprisals[14]. During the exercise, the facilitator initiated discussion and encouraged each participant to share his/her ideas or opinions about each

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[13] The selection criteria were largely informed by the literature review and the expected outcomes from the baseline.
[14] This was the case for youth accused of belonging to al-Shabaab and other groups perceived to be extremist

question. The consultants were assisted by all the partners. In a number of cases immediately after the FGD, the consultant facilitator arranged a debriefing session to discuss the main themes and other points that arose during the discussion. In one case, this led to follow up KII and FGD with a youth group in Likoni. FGD data consisted of written notes and notes from the debriefing session. Notes were either typed into computer and/or handwritten in notebooks, on the FGD guide.

Given the sensitivity of the subject, the FGD guide was designed to:

(1) Include questions that flew logically and cover interrelated topics (land, education and social life for instance),

(2) Avoided leading questions,

(3) Included follow-up and probing questions. Sensitive or negative issues were raised only after the discussion has progressed and the participants were comfortable in the interview situation

(4) Confidentiality was assured and assurances were made to participants that their names will not appear in the official report on the discussion. FGD participants were paid an honorarium and provided assistance with transport costs

From all the areas surveyed, FGD proved as an excellent way to develop an understanding of group consensus and/or points of disagreement within a short period of time on gaps, rights and knowledge of religious literacy. New and unintended information came up during the FGDs. This information is highlighted in the Box 3, and it can be used to refine the project objectives.

Text Box 2: Unintended, yet very useful information from the FGDs[15]

-The prevalence of usage and addiction to illicit drugs among youths in the coastal region
-Land and Religious dimensions in the coast
-Lack of skills and access to livelihoods as a major driver for religious conflict and alienation
-The emerging youth time-bomb in the coast that is driven by a lack of basic livelihoods and income
-A wealth of community stakeholders exists to help bridge religious differences.
-There are opportunities provided by the County Governments such as religious affairs departments like in the case of Garissa

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Key Informant Interviews (KII): the team gathered Key Informant Interviews (KII) from 36 participants. Those targeted were deemed to have extensive knowledge and/or experience on religion, peace, co-existence and topical information on the religious dimensions in Kenya. With simple topic guide, the consultants were able to elicit information from the KII individuals. The core of the KII interviewees were

i) Religious leaders – Imams, Bishops, Preachers, Youth Leaders, Ustadhs[16], Government officials,
ii) Government officials –Judiciary,
iii) Religious and Secular teachers
iv) Community leaders.

Tact and discretion were essential to developing and maintaining trust between the interviewer and the interviewee. Although guided by some general questions, it was helpful for the interviewer to be sufficiently prepared to ask additional questions in order to explore unexpected, but related, topics that arose during the discussion. It is important to emphasize that in interviews.

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[15] The unintended information had no direct correlation to the ToR, but their relevance is so crucial to the project implementation and success.
[16] (Islamic)Teacher. Honorific title of respect popularly assigned to those who are widely recognized for their learning

3.2   Survey Pre-Field Procedures

3.2.1   Development of study tools

  i.   Prior to conducting research in the field, the consultants developed a set of tools to carry out the baseline study, including:

 ii.   a checklist to guide the discussions;

iii.   a set of questions for in-depth interviews with Key Informants (KII) see Appendix 1.

3.3   Field data collection, data cleaning and analysis

3.3.1   Data Collection

Three consultants led the collection of data with assistance from the project partners. The field teams were instrumental in organizing focus groups and Key Informant Interviews.

3.3.2   Field Supervision

There were two levels of supervision during the data collection exercise. The first level was by the individual consultants in each of the counties and the second level by a designated baseline survey team leaders. Before the commencement of the study, the team leader, the consultants and the ETC management team had a meeting to plan the field work.

To prepare data for analysis, the study adopted a process of checking and detecting inaccurate, incomplete and unreasonable data at field level during field data collection. The process involved completeness checks, range checks, validation checks and review of data to identify outliers.

3.4   Data Analysis

KII and FGD qualitative data was collected using designed tool formats and was conducted using written notes. The data was grouped into respective themes as designed in the checklists and guides as well as the key project indicators. The grouped themes were analyzed for trends and important messages or information flagged out to enrich interpretation of quantitative data. Thematic and narrative analyses were used.

3.5   Limitations of the Study

Based on the review of literature and discussions with staff of The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, the following are limitations encountered during the survey:

- The study was qualitative and mostly open-ended, meaning the participants had more control over the content of the data collected. As a result, the consultants were not able to verify the results objectively against the scenarios stated by the respondents.

- In line with the above, apart from the study being qualitative, the limited sample of the respondents meant limited parameters to make detailed and more enriched conclusions and findings.

- Since the baseline was a perspective-based method of research, the responses given are not measured. This was mitigated through cross cross-reference the data obtained with the other sources available.

- The literature review heavily relied on external resources; there was significant reliance on literature from peer sources in the religious inter-relationships discourse. This included research authored by Search for Common Ground, National Cohesion and Integration Commission, Human Rights Watch and academic journals, among others.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The report on the findings have been organized into the three groupings of counties of analysis due to similarity of the thematic issues in the counties. This has also been made necessary for ease of consumption of the findings for programmatic intervention purposes since different client organizations have different programmatic interest in the locations under study.

4.1   Common findings across all the counties;

i)   Participation in the RMP project

The people across all counties were positive and optimistic about the proposed project. The respondents said the project would bring about unity, community co-existence and opportunities for networking. Respondents from different stakeholder groups such as youth, women, religious leaders, teachers, business people and county government staff stated their willingness to give support and advice on how better to implement the activities based on their grassroots knowledge and experience, if involved.

In the FGDs and the KIIs, there was overwhelming support for the project. We sought to find out about this by asking the respondents of the relevance, timeliness, target, objectives and potential project impact.
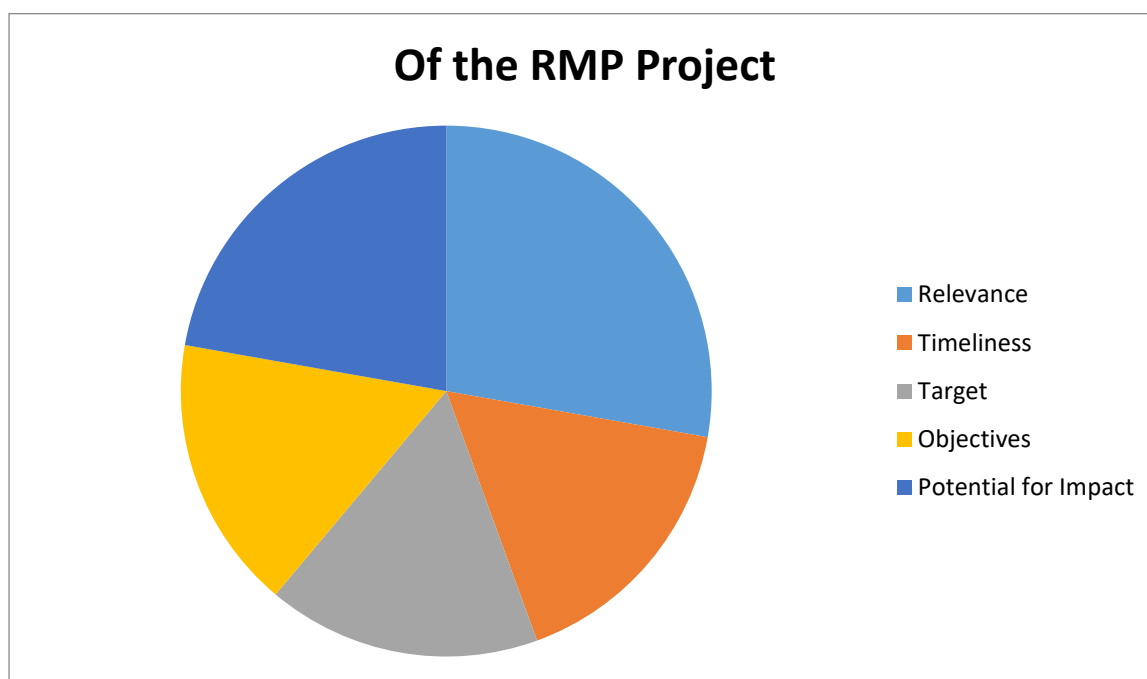

Figure 4.1   Potential Project Impacts

This project will address issues which we, as religious leaders have tried to address for a while, but limited due to resources – SUPKEM official, Kwale.

For most respondents, the project was critical to the understanding of religions and religious influences across various dimensions in the country, in context and as inextricably woven into all dimensions of their day to day life experiences.

Furthermore, stakeholders had varied views in regards to the exact nature of project focus areas. We deciphered three main areas: (1) assistance (rehabilitation, relief, mercy support etc.), (2) training and (3) outreach.
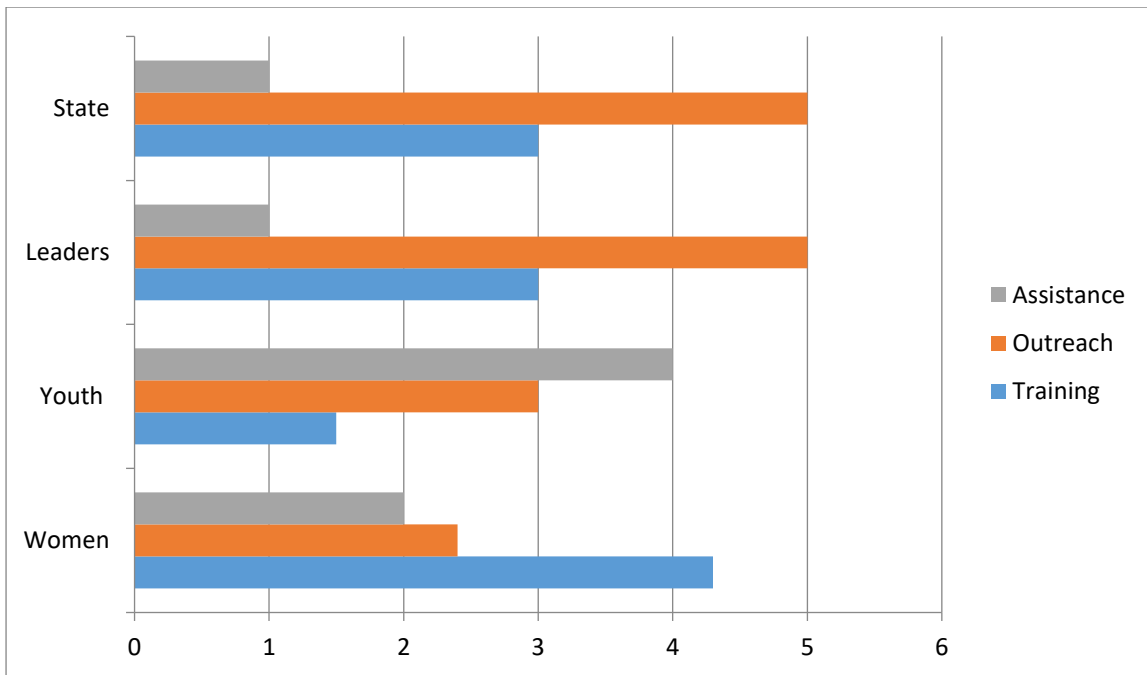
Figure 4.2   Perception of areas of focus the Project should have

The results of expectations reflected each group's interest and understanding of the project. For example, it was clear to religious leaders that training and outreach were most relevant parts of the project compared to the youths, who viewed assistance as the most relevant part.

ii) Awareness on religious literacy and the constitutional provision on religious rights.

The extent of interviewee awareness regarding constitutional provisions on religious rights was mixed ranged from low to average. The provisions highlighted repeatedly by respondents included freedom of worship, freedom to gather, right to worship the way one wanted, right to learn religion and the absence of faith-based intimidation/compulsion in religion. Most respondents were, however, not quite clear about the specific constitutional safeguards for themselves and those of other religious groups.

Though most respondents said they knew about their own religious teachings, they were open to acknowledge the lack of knowledge of the teachings of other religious groups. Interviewees also acknowledged they made no attempt to learn about the teachings of other religions. This created fertile ground for misinformation, potentiates interfaith misunderstanding and outright hostilities.

The pie chart below indicates respondent's preference on sources for information on religion, based on the trust they have in the source (

Figure 4.3). The religious leaders were the most trusted from the information gleaned from KIIs and FGD; other sources included media, social media, internets, schools and friends.
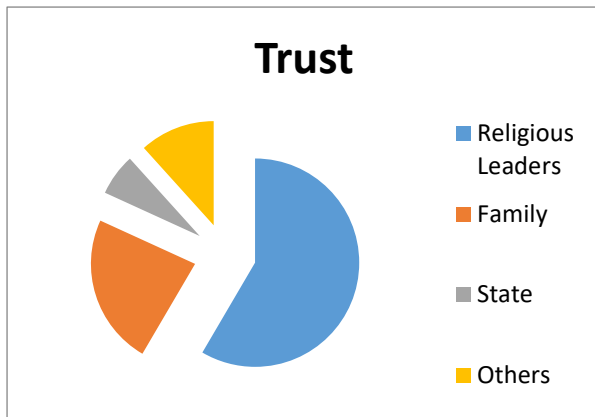
Figure 4.3   Preferences on sources of information

Awareness of Religious literacy is different from religious freedoms and expression. Literacy is the knowledge of, and ability to understand, religion. A sampled inference from FGDs across the following four counties highlighted that, whereas leaders were well aware of the literacy, youth lagged behind (Figure 4.4). This is presented below.
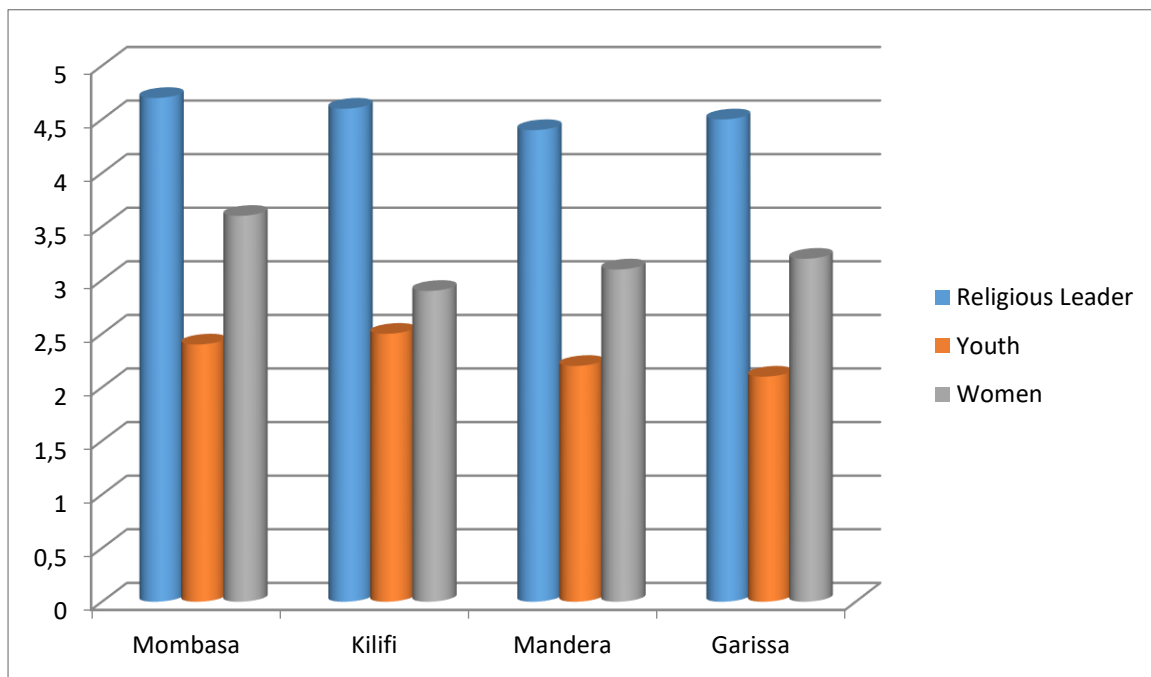
Figure 4.4   Awareness of Religious literacy

iii) Enjoyment of rights safeguards and marginalization

Both Muslims and Christians said they did not have sufficient safeguards for their religious rights; the groups acknowledged different reasons for the insufficient of safeguards.

Garissa and Mandera interviewees offered a more dichotomous insight on the matter. The Christian community, who are a minority in this geographical setting, mentioned concerns such as:

- Being compelled to recite the KALIMA (Islamic decree) during terror ambushes to conceal Christian identity. Muslim ladies had to donate their hijab to Christian counter-parts to protect them from terrorists.
- Inability to practice religion openly due to insecurity issues. Prayers and other church service activities are limited by security restrictions which creates an inconvenience.

- Locals hold negative perceptions of other religious groups.
- Non-tolerance of non-Muslim lifestyles and culture in the predominantly Moslem areas.
- Selective execution by extremist groups.
- Names of derogatory language including: Ukafir (unbeliever)or *Nywele-ngumu* (kinky-haired)
- Service delivery by both the county and national government are discriminatory.
- There is unequal resource distribution amongst religious communities. Madrasas are built with public resources at county level, but not churches or schools (case from Mandera).
- Employment opportunities appear to favour Muslims (Mandera and Garissa).
- There are unfair land allocation procedures. For instances Christians noted they are frequently denied land to build churches (Mandera and Garissa) .
- Many times, Christians are unable to congregate as one big group comprising of all denominations due to fear.
- Christians cannot pray in the houses because the landlords will take offence. This was particularly reported in Mandera. Residents also could not conduct night vigil prayers (*kesha)* because of insecurity.
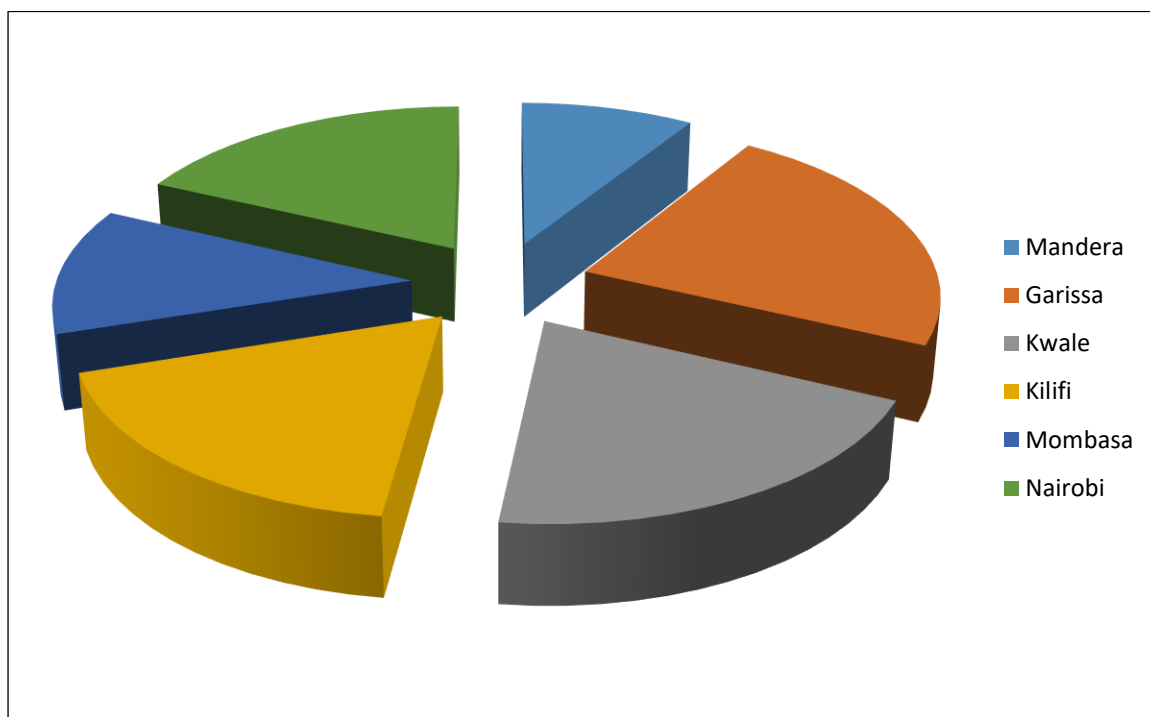
Figure 4.5   Safeguards

The questions regarding safeguards are reflected in the chart above, across six selected counties (Figure 4.5). It gauges respondents' perception on how their religious practices and faith are safeguarded. Garissa at 23%, had the highest number of respondents who felt that there was sufficient safeguards on their religious freedoms and rights. Kwale followed with 20%, with Nairobi and Kilifi tying at 18%, followed by Mombasa (12%) and Mandera closing at 9%

Consultants analyzed that counties in Kenya believed it was the responsibility of the state to do more to safeguard the rights of the people. For those counties, cases of arbitrary arrests, extra judicial executions, label of terrorism and state police operations are frequent.

The interviewed Muslims, including the Kilifi and Kwale, expressed their concerns as well. Their concerns derived not from the Christian community they live with, but rather from what they perceived as a "Christian state." These concerns include:

- Christian missionary schools and some government institutions have implemented a dress code that restricts Muslim students. One respondent observed that, 'In Kenya a court of law can accept a Rastafarian to keep dreadlocks but will not do the same for Muslim women to wear hijab. A 2018 Mwingi KMTC case was cited.
- Difficulty in accessing citizenship documents such as Identity cards, passports, birth certificates etc.
- Neglect of the Muslim community by the education sector, especially due to a shortage of school teachers... This particular sentiment was strongest in Mandera.
- The stereotyping of Muslims as terrorist has hindered their movement, association and businesses. Some people use terror branding to settle social/political/economic scores.
- Regular and detailed security checks along Mandera-Garissa -Nairobi road that are not found elsewhere in the republic. The respondents explained how Muslims in Garissa and Mandera have been asked to produce identification documents during travel between their home and mosque.
- Kidnapping of religious sheikhs by unknown agents.
- Kidnappings of youths by state agents.
- Mosque sessions/sermons are censored to prevent discussions on jihad. There are reprisals for individuals found to be discussing such topics.
- Muslims cannot do legal business as prescribed by religion across the border without harassment by the state, terrorists or both.
- Muslims have to conceal their religious identity to escape reprisals. A man from Beledhawa, a neighborhood inlanders, had to say he is not a Muslim to avoid harassment from Ethiopian forces. Youth in Kwale are less likely to state they are Muslims when seeking jobs. Muslim men have to shave beards to avoid being targeted during security crack-downs.
- State officer 'evangelism'; the respondents noted that there are some government officers, some of very high ranks who do not differentiate between state responsibilities and religious calling. This make some officials act as Christian evangelist/fundamentalist who affects their policies and personal judgment. However, when a Muslim leader or office bearer acts in similar manner, he/she is given a hostile notoriety and called a fundamentalist, jihadist, radical etc.

iv) Trust in Government structures in mechanisms

Both Muslim and Christian communities hold little trust in the justice delivery system, which is symbolized by the police and the courts. In Mandera and Garissa, inadequate security for worshippers during Sundays and Fridays was mentioned. The biggest hindrance to trust in the government systems was identified as rampant and open corruption. In Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa and Mandera, for instance, respondents said they go to court as a last resort for resolving issues due to the perception as opposing or working against the poor. This has direct negative implication on the enforcement of religious safeguards as provided for in the Kenya constitution. Although Muslims conceded that they had Kadhi' courts to address matters touching on their religion, they felt this was insufficient as it only which dealt with the basic issues of marriage and inheritance. This negative perception is further compounded by historical marginalization and injustices such as security crack-downs of the 1960s and 1981(Garissa). The Christian community noted there are common religious conflicts throughout the region and the police/courts have not acted amicably to resolve such conflicts.

v) Free participation in religious activities and decision making

Both religious groups stated they regularly participate in their respected religious activities. However, their participation rates fluctuate based on the security landscape. As one Muslim respondent captures, 'until an attack happens, Kenya Muslims are free to practice their regular activities'. The Christian community had also similar responses where they said they could no longer go crusade due to a lack of security and community fear.

Both Christian and Muslim respondents said they had the ability to participate in religious decision making. However, this ability was not translated to action because most decisions were made by individuals higher on the religious hierarchy. This scenario has particularly created exclusion of youth and women from the decision making strata of the various groups. Exclusion has far-reaching consequences on marginalized groups, especially on issues that has a direct impact on the groups, including extremism, security, co-existence, empowerment and stewardship.

vi) Opportunities available for enhancing religious literacy and tolerance

The respondents define a number of opportunities for enhancing religious literacy and tolerance. These include:

- Strengthen inter-and intra- religious platforms that already exist in the community.
- The Kenyan education curriculum should be made adaptive so it can be universally implemented throughout Kenya with the ability to make minor localized adaptations.
- Inter-faith committees should be provided for in the Constitution. The 'Religious minorities in Kenya project is encouraged to take advantage and use the opportunity granted by the constitution.
- Comprehensively address youth radicalization issues
- Mosque/church sermons can be utilized optimally to promote co-existence and religious tolerance and understanding.
- Madrasas and Dugsi can be utilized as a center for discussions to promote religious literacy and mutual understanding for youth populations.
- County/national governments can provide resources for religious activities.

vii) Existing religious engagement platforms

There are multiple religious engagement forums for addressing religious literacy and inclusivity issues in all the counties. These include:

- County Department of Religious Affairs that coordinates all religious activities. This is currently in place in Garissa County and is possible to lobby for the establishment of the same in other counties.
- Religious leader's forums, e.g. Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya, Pastors fellowship, etc.
- Islamic clubs in schools
- School peace clubs
- Mosque committees
- Interfaith groups
- Faith-based organizations
- Women groups
- Youth groups
- Business caucuses

Most respondents felt that these forums have no effective rallying center, resulting in these forums to be functionally fragmented and lack positive synergy from different actions. The Interfaith forums have particularly been reported to have become weak; efforts do not cascade to the grassroots levels.

viii) Sources of religious information and its adequacy

The common sources to obtain religious information include: mass media, social media, schools, universities, mosques and churches. Though the social and mass media were lauded for their extensive reach, significant short-comings were noted, including:

- These sources do not give opportunity for questions or further discussion, ultimately propelling misinformation.
- Access for all is not guaranteed due to limitations resulting from either illiteracy or lack of access to alternative and diverse information sources, especially in rural areas.
- Lack of universal network access.
- Limited ability to pay for access for the poor.
- Some electronic devices are not suitable for internet connection.

Presently, grassroots institutions, includingmosques, churches and madrasas, are strong tools for managing religious literacy and countering disinformation.

ix) Perceptions on religious preservation

The survey concluded that on several measures, many Muslims and Christians hold favorable views of each other. Muslims generally acknowledged that Christians are tolerant, honest and respectful of women. Similarly, in most of the surveyed counties, half or more Christians said that Muslims are honest, devout and respectful of women. In roughly half the counties surveyed, majorities noted they trust people who have different religious values than their own.

Sizable majorities in every county surveyed responded that people of different faiths are free to practice their religion, and most noted the freedom to practice religion or belief as a positive thing. Majorities in the county acknowledged their acceptance of political leaders holding a different religion than their own. Significant minorities (20% or more) of people who attend religious services said, that their mosque or church freely operates without interference or hindrances.

When asked about a religious ideological topic, such as 'defending religion', the Muslim and Christian respondents had very contrasting views.

According to the Muslim respondents, defending religion is important as it decreases immorality, crime, insecurity and promotes the role of model building. They further maintain defending religion will perverse religious respect and counter misinformation.

In contrast, the Christian respondents do not believe defending religion is important. They believe it is the *spiritually* that defines the person. They maintained the fervent defense of one's' religious freedom at the expense of opposite views could breed radicalism and cause conflict.

For ATR adherents, there was a feeling of desperation for their religious survival. The consultants got an impression that their religion is under siege and these individuals felt neglected and under assault.

For all religious adherents, they all agree that religion is a compass for morality as well as instilling discipline and social order.

x) Tolerance and coexistence

The survey has revealed there is an imposed conflict between Muslims and Christians, which is not felt or reality on the ground. Millions of Kenyans of different faiths are successfully living in harmony, while the picture derived from mass media often suggest there is a conflict between faiths. In all the areas of the study there were obvious evidence of interreligious tolerance and co-existence. This included:

- People living in same residential building
- Shared schools
- Shared workplaces
- Most of the skilled jobs and placements are done

- Most *BodaBoda* riders are Christians; they operate at all hours of the day, included in areas in Garissa and Mandera

Despite this evidence of co-existence, there were still signs of deep mistrust between members of the two communities. All citizens suffer from effects of the manufactured binary conflict between Muslims and Christians. The conflict constantly appears in media, public discourse and in actions of state authorities and terrorists. It is accompanied by an ever-present threat of violence from both the authorities (who use extraordinary violence to penalize both innocent and guilty) and the extremists (who are capable of highly personalized attacks as well as large-scale terrorism). For instance, respondents were extremely cautious in providing responses on the subject under study. In particular, the Christian respondents would express themselves openly by sharing their mistrust for the entire Muslim community, especially in the aftermath of repeated terrorist attacks targeting members of the Christian faith.

xi) Interreligious Harmony and Tensions

In all of the counties, majority of respondents say they trust people who have religious values different than their own. Consistent with this attitude, virtually none of the respondents perceive widespread anti-Muslim or anti-Christian hostility in their counties, and most gave government's generally high marks for treating both groups fairly.

The survey found, however, that Muslims are significantly more positive in their assessments of Christians than Christians are of Muslims. By their own reckoning, neither group knew much about the other. Significantly more people in most counties say the two religions are very different rather than commonalities of the two faiths.

Communities living throughout the five counties generally see conflict between religious groups as less of a problem compared to unemployment, crime or political corruption. A large number of people surveyed (upwards of four out of ten in most counties) expressed concern over religious extremism in their county.

In general, concerns about Muslim extremism outweigh concerns about Christian extremism. However, in four counties (Kilifi, Nairobi, Kwale, Mombasa), Christians say they are more concerned about Christian extremism than Muslim extremism. In all counties, sizable numbers express concern about both Muslim and Christian extremism.

xii) Perceptions of Government Treatment of Muslims and Christians

Overall, Christians and Muslims give their government's (National and County) high marks for treating both religious groups fairly. In all counties, majorities of those surveyed say that Muslims are never, or "not too often," treated unfairly by the government. Additionally, majorities in all counties say that Christians are rarely or never mistreated by the government. This perception was more so among Muslim youth groups in the communities; almost all youths interviewed saw that government specifically treats the Muslims unfairly.

xiii) Inter-generational relations

Healthy, functional relationship between generations is essential to stability and resilience in society; any decay therein is typically an indicator of risk. In Kenya, violent Islamist extremism has largely been a phenomenon of youth, predominantly male. More recently, there has been increased focus on recruiting young girls and women. This recruitment is still very subtle.

The arrival of newcomers into predominantly Muslim neighborhoods and the consequent increase in population in the urban areas of Nairobi and Mombasa have affected not only inter- and intra-community relations and state–citizens relations, but also inter-generational relations. In particular, newcomers accelerated struggles around access to resources and institutions of authority at the household and community level. In addition to the fast pace demographic growth common across five counties, the socioeconomic changes symbolized by, and related to, internal migration and urbanization have upset inter-generational relations,

just like relations between and within communities, resulting in an erosion of the legitimacy of traditional authorities.

Tensions between youth and older political and religious leaders are caused by frustrations at reduced economic opportunities for young people, specifically in relation to access to land, housing and employment. Young people consider elders unable to solve these problems, and see them as having contributed to them.
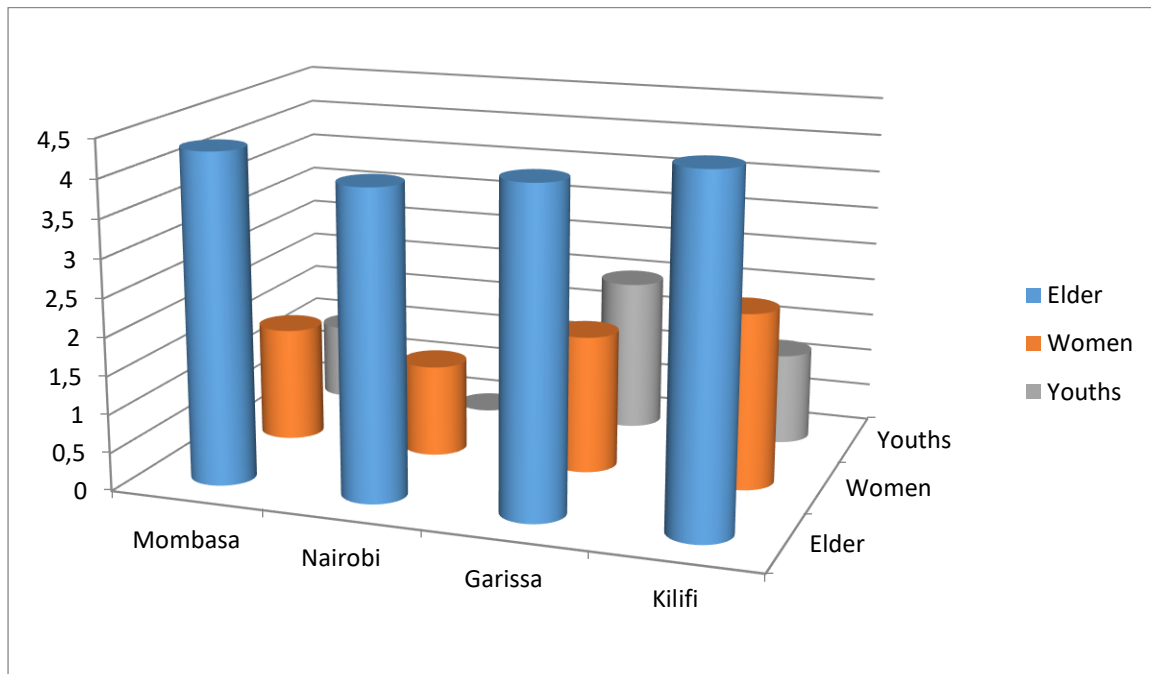
Figure 4.6   Youth presentation on matters touching them

The graph above shows clearly that youths, compared to other groups, are not well represented in matters relating to their issues, especially in the mosques. In the case of Mombasa, a youth focused FGD revealed that the youth felt they had very little room to express their views.

Women felt they would make more lasting impact if they were involved in promoting religious tolerance and understanding. In the case of Mombasa and Kwale, two women specific FGDs determined that women are valued and respected within their religions, concluding that these religions do not support extremism and violence. They discussed the role of women in their faiths, pointing out that women/mothers are highly respected and are seen as partners and support to men.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RMP PROGRAMME

The study demonstrated the Kenyan religious sector is broad, diverse and complex. It is common for people to conventionally equate religious influence and authority with publicly visible figures who hold formal titles (Imam, Pastor, bishop, Sheik, mufti etc), or with specific organized institutions (churches, madrasas, shrines). However, these are not always the most relevant religious interlocutors for a given community (especially youths and women). When thinking about effective engagement with religious players, it will be important to understand how the concept of 'lived religion' operates in that context in order to expand understanding beyond formal and official religious authorities and formal institutions. This is to discern a far more complex religious landscape populated by a far more complex array of actors and voices.

The religious inter-relationships and literacy landscape already developed a positive and negative understanding of the religious dynamics on the subject of religious dialogue. That experience needs to be systematically assessed to develop clearer guidelines and best practices for the RMP project in integrating state, public and religious actors into the practice of dialogue. The work of achieving better religious literacy and knowledge should not solely be restricted to the project and its partners. Improving training, resourcing and accountability measures for religious literacy in the workplace also has an important role to play.

There can be no straightforward solution of such complex situation where international and local, historical, geographical, social, economic, cultural, political and religious factors are all in constant interplay and flux. This baseline highlighted issues worthy of focus by the RMP project. Given that there was no quantitative data focus, this report should be read as an outline of the issues identified than as a compressed analysis. The core conclusion of the baseline is that given the level of disruption between various actors and communities are remarkably resilient. Communities and individuals feel disenfranchised, angry, victimized and hopeless even though only a tiny proportion actually rebel or turn against each other. The youth and elderly populations have a common understanding of what makes a good community; they can see the fault lines and the solutions; they are determined to maintain harmony.

Thus, the recommendations made below are all supportive of the remarkable resilience we discovered and are designed as a counterweight to marginalization and exclusion of minorities. These recommendations will help to strengthen the resilience and harmony between religious groups - but they will not work alone. In order for change to be sustainable and society to increase its resilience, all of the initiatives should be employed. Merely doing one or two recommendations will have little effect. It is the range of interventions recommended and the way that they support each other that is the critical element.

5.1   Recommendations

Outreach and Awareness

1. Religious Minorities Project to develop and support implementation of existing principles for promoting religious and religious freedom to promote a better understanding ***inter and intra*** faiths.

2. Deliberately plan for and organize exchanges on cultural/religious literacy among leaders, with focus on youth and women leaders. This is to build upon existing platforms, including interreligious platforms and associations. An excerpt below from a local daily paper reinforces this assertion for cross learning among religions.

> **2019, Nov 1st Standard Newspaper**
>
> The Jamia Mosque Open Day was marked with a series of activities including a guided tour of the mosque, open discussions, opportunity for non-Muslims to watch live Islamic prayers, Islamic exhibitions and Islamic literature.
>
> Sheikh Ibrahim Lethome led a heated question and answer session, and said the purpose of the event was to clarify various misconceptions that have given Islamic faith a bad name.
>
> He said among most common mistaken beliefs was the association of Islam with terrorism, idol worship, forced worship and disrespect of other religions.
>
> "Islam is a religion of peace but there are individuals who kill in the name of religion. What they do is purely personal," he said.
>
> With references from the Quran, Lethome illustrated how the religion condemns killing.
>
> "Quran teaches that taking one's life is equivalent to destroying the entire world. Killing is forbidden," he said.
>
> Visitors were taken through all sites of the mosque to confirm if there were idols in a bid to decipher claims of worship of other gods.
>
> "We respect other religions and we do not bother them as long as they do not interfere with our worship. We never force anyone to convert to Islam," explained the cleric.

3. Design participatory open dialogues and a learning spaces that promotes sensitivity to religions and religious freedom with a special focus on youth aspirations and needs. This is a promising practice as creating an interfaith meeting space is a clear and concrete action that brings together various religious and interreligious actors, both individually and organizationally. This kind of "co-working space" aims to make interfaith and/or interreligious organizations work together for a stronger interfaith network, for greater solidarity and a larger impact.

4. At grassroots level, collaboratively working with partners to develop a pool of trainers on religious or religious freedom literacy. These actors will be critical interlocutors and link with embedding religious knowledge, literacy and constitutional rights. The pool of trainers need not be religious people, but must include laypeople.

5. Ensure the understanding of the religious literacy and knowledge reflects the relevance of actors beyond formal religious authorities and official institutions. Women, youth, younger religious leaders and traditional faith practitioners are key players in the religious landscape and often more influential than their formal and titled religious counterparts.

Training & Capacity Building

A number of respondents addressed the need for, and benefits of, improved religious literacy, understanding and inclusion in the public including religious worship areas, homes, communities and workplaces and in the whole of life context.

6. Set a mantra, such as, '***education for interreligious dialogue***' that will employ interactive situational methods to educate trainees. Design relevant visual, theatrical and artistic tools as learning methods to reach broader audiences at the grassroots level. The focus to cut across key spectrum of society majorly government/state, educationists, businesses and religions. Such drive by RMP toward greater religious literacy, understanding and inclusion might naturally inspire organizations to consider educating employees/partners about religion, such as briefing them on specific beliefs, festivals or dietary requirements etc. There is no one-size-fits-all. This is where religious literacy – rather than education – is invaluable. Public place, officials, organizations etc. need to reach a position where individuals feel their beliefs are respected in order to ensure they are comfortable in openly discussing their views.

7. To address the gap in understanding and literacy, the RMP should focus on creating and fostering partnerships with learning/educational institutions, communities and denominations/sects to offer relevant and tailored workshops. The goal of the workshop is to empower people of diverse faiths and backgrounds in project areas with the development of knowledge and skills in the areas of religious knowledge, religious literacy and civil dialogue.

8. Design and develop a training discourse on education for inter-religious dialogue that will promote communication skills through interfaith dialogue.

Building Bridges

9. RMP can be used to build meaningful and fruitful operational dialogue partnerships with the faith-based, public entities, businesses and related actors through the partners on religious literacy and understanding.

10. There is need for the program to contribute meaningfully at local, regional and national level guided by religious literacy. Respondents noted that the purpose of religious literacy is to remove dangerous ignorance results to irrational hate.

11. The program should look at the following questions for further reflections: How to define tolerance? When and where do we draw the line between public and private spheres? What is the definition of religious literacy, where do we find training materials on religious literacy or religious freedom literacy?

12. Meaningfully engage with the relevant functions in the education, police, judiciary and public service provision sectors of the government to co-create strategies to address sustainably recurrent discriminatory and stigmatization issues affecting Muslims primarily.

APPENDIX

FGD Tool

Annex 1 - FGD
Guide-FCA.docx

KII Tool

Annex 2 KII Guide
FCA.docx

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