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**Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism: A Case Study of Faith-Based
Organizations in Isiolo County, Kenya**

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Dedication

People with special needs in one's life are a gift worth profound insights about life. Their determination and progress define success while their uniqueness serves as a reminder of the great gifts of life which we often take for granted.

This work is a dedication to such a wonderful gift in my life; Mohammad Al Amin.

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Abstract

Generally conflict prone, Isiolo County currently grapples with radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism by violent extremist organizations such as Al Shabab and Al Qaida. As part of a wider response to violent extremism and terrorism in Kenya, civil society organizations in Isiolo implement preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE) programs with the aid of local and international donor funding.

Motivated by a gap in literature on the involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs, this study involves an examination of the motivation, challenges as well as the nature and level of involvement of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in PCVE programs in Isiolo County. Six organizations were involved in the study and data collected through interviews, focus group discussion and archival research. Other than mapping the involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs in Isiolo County, the study also reveals the existence of a link between the age of a faith-based organization and the nature and level of its involvement in PCVE programs.

With regards to the gap in literature on the involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs, the study shows that FBOs are mostly involved as partners or participants in PCVE programs implemented by secular organizations. Since existing literature mainly focuses on the activities of organizations directly involved in the implementation of these programs, the activities of FBOs have thus received little coverage. However, this study reveals that FBOs continuously undertake activities that may amount to yet not officially labelled as PCVE activities.

Key words: preventing and countering violent extremism, faith-based organizations, violent extremism, civil society organizations, radicalization

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

CSOs	–	Civil Society Organizations
CVE	–	Countering Violent Extremism
DANIDA	–	Danish International Development Agency
FBOs	–	Faith-Based Organizations
GIZ	–	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IFNK	–	Interfaith Network of Kenya
IIN	–	Isiolo Interfaith Network
IRCK	–	Interreligious Council of Kenya
IWFN	–	Isiolo Women of Faith Network
NCTC	–	National Counter Terrorism Centre
NGOs	–	Nongovernmental Organizations
NSCVE	–	National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism
OSCE	–	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OSCE	–	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PCVE	–	Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism
PVE	–	Preventing Violent Extremism
RUSI	–	Royal United Services Institute (UK)
UN	–	United Nations
UNODC	–	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSCR	–	United Nations Security Council Resolutions
UNSOM	–	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSOM	–	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
USAID	–	United States Agency for International Development
USAID	–	United States Agency for International Development
VE	–	Violent Extremists
VEOs	–	Violent Extremist Organizations

1.0 Introduction

1.1. Problem statement

Isiolo County in Kenya is the gateway to the North and is in close proximity to both Somalia and Ethiopia through Marsabit, Garissa and Wajir Counties. Mostly inhabited by pastoralist communities and conflict prone due to competition over limited natural resources, Isiolo County currently grapples with radicalization and challenges of being the recruitment ground for violent extremist organizations such as Al Shabab and Al Qaida (Miriri, 2019; RUSI, 2020; Turi, 2020).

For Kenya, violent extremism is not only a global security concern but also a national one. There have been loss of lives and disruption of livelihood because of terror related incidences. This has prompted responses in forms of legislations as well as activities aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE) funded locally and internationally and implemented by the state actors as well as civil society organizations. Several civil society organizations have received donor funding to implement intervention programs aimed at preventing and countering violence extremism in Isiolo County. Existing literature shows not only the involvement of civil society in PCVE activities but also the training of religious leaders as part of the initiative (USAID, 2019).

However, there is little or no literature on the involvement of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in PCVE activities. Examining the motivation, challenges as well as the nature and level of involvement of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in PCVE programs in Isiolo County is what this study set out investigate.

1.2. Relevance to peace and conflict studies

As a field of social sciences, peace and conflict studies seeks to identify, analyze and study violent and nonviolent behaviors as well as the structures, mechanisms and dynamics involved in social, political and economic conflicts (Dugan, 1989). It is an interdisciplinary endeavor that encompasses, amongst others, aspects such as conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as peacemaking and peace building initiatives.

Extremism, more so violent extremism, has a bearing on violent behavior. It signals a willingness to use violence to support or further certain beliefs which may be of social, religious or political ideology in nature (Van Zyl & Mahdi, 2019). There have been violent conflicts and interventions around the world to confront violent extremism and terrorism. In addition, financial aid and bilateral and multilateral agreements have been established between countries as well as military alliances built to counter violent extremism as a way of building sustainable peace. Therefore, a study of the dynamics involved in this phenomenon is relevant to peace and conflict studies.

On the same note, an examination of the patterns of behavior in social movements, such as those undertaken by civil societies, that are geared towards understanding with a view to enhancing peace and addressing conflict within local communities, is within the realms of peace and conflict studies. This study is an examination of the role of civil society organizations, specifically the faith-based organizations, in programs that seek to establish and sustain cohesion and peace in the society.

My intention to pursue this topic is motivated by my own experiences from the field. Prior to undertaking this postgraduate course, I was involved in an education project that was implemented in three counties in Northern Kenya. The three counties are conflict prone and were mainly inhabited by nomadic pastoralist communities. Other than conflict over natural resources such as water and pasture, two of these counties were also in the news for being recruitment grounds for violent extremist organizations. I observed and read reports on students dropping out of school to join Al Shabab, a terrorist organization in Somalia. As an educator and someone who has worked with the civil society organizations, I was interested in finding out the role civil society organizations play in helping to address this phenomenon. I am also more specifically interested in examining the role of faith-based organizations who are often either accused of being enablers or perpetrators in terrorism related conflicts.

1.3. Research objectives

The objectives of this study included the following:

- i. Examine the motivation or lack of it for involvement in PCVE programs or activities by faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Isiolo County, Kenya.

- ii. Identify the PCVE programs or activities implemented by FBOs in Isiolo County, Kenya.
- iii. Examine the level and nature of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs or activities in Isiolo County, Kenya.

1.4. Research questions

The proposed study aimed to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the motivation for involvement or lack of it in PCVE programs or activities by FBOs in Isiolo County, Kenya?
- ii. What PCVE programs or activities are implemented by FBOs in Isiolo County, Kenya?
- iii. What is the nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs or activities in Isiolo County, Kenya?

1.5. Significance of the study

This research study makes four significant contributions to academic research:

Firstly, there is a gap in literature on the involvement of FBOs in PCVE work in the County in focus. Literature exists on terror related incidences in Kenya. There is also literature on radicalization of young people in Isiolo County and their recruitment by violent extremist groups (Miriri, 2019; USAID, 2019; RUSI, 2020; Turi, 2020). In addition, there is literature on involvement of the civil society in general in PCVE activities as well as training of religious leaders on the same (USAID, 2019; Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020; Agade & Halakhe, 2016). However, there is little or no literature on the involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. This could either be due to their lack of involvement or lack of documentation of their involvement in PCVE. This is what this study sought to investigate and consequently the gap that it seeks to fill. The study provides data on not only the level and nature of involvement of FBOs in PCVE activities but also on the challenges they faced as well as their motivation in engaging in PCVE programs.

Secondly, the data and recommendations generated by this research study can be used to inform policy on civil society's, specifically FBOs', role in peace work.

Thirdly, the study shows concrete synergies in the practical and theoretical fields of peace work and peacebuilding.

Fourthly and finally, the research study provides new empirical data that can be used as basis for further research in the same or related fields.

2.0 Literature review

This chapter serves to clarify terminology and define the key concepts driving the approach of the study. However, aspects of related literature have also been integrated into other chapters in this study. What is contained herein only serves to highlight the most significant information in literature related to this study.

2.1. Preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE)

States have often resorted to use of heavy-handed military approach to violent extremism and terrorism with mixed achievement (Desta, 2016). The shortcomings of the military approach in its inability to resolve the violent extremism (VE) and terrorism problem as well as the accusations of human rights infringements; however, prompted the adoption of a softer alternative that would be instrumental in addressing the phenomenon holistically (Khan, 2015; Desta, 2016; Neuman, 2011).

As a shift from a purely military approach, preventing and countering violent extremism brings together two important components in addressing VE and terrorism or VE that leads to terrorism. These components are preventing violent extremism (PVE) and countering violent extremism (CVE). Although they are often used interchangeably, PVE refers to addressing the conditions that lead to the rise of VE and terrorism thus hindering them from materializing while CVE entails engagement in strategies that deconstruct VE or terrorist narratives in a bid to promote healthy alternatives (OSCE, 2019).

The UN Secretary General's 2015 Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism visualized PVE as broad measures geared towards tackling drivers of violent extremism and conditions conducive for terrorism (United Nation, 2015). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) shares similar sentiments. OSCE (2018, p. 6) considers CVE as "proactive actions to counter efforts by violent extremists to radicalize, recruit and mobilize followers to engage in violent acts and to address specific factors that facilitate and enable violent extremist recruitment and radicalization to violence".

Stephens et al., (2018), also posit that PCVE has been used to bring together not only the upstream preventative approaches outside of a security-driven framework but also the

approaches that extend the security agenda into social work, care and education field. PCVE, therefore, adopts a multidisciplinary approach. It aims to limit the traction of violent extremist groups on individuals, communities and the society at large (UNSOM, n.d.).

In the context of this study, therefore, PCVE, brings together all the activities variously named as 'preventing violent extremism', 'countering violent extremism' or 'preventing radicalization to violent extremism'.

2.2. Evolution of PCVE in Kenya

Countries experiencing or affected by armed conflict encounter various shades of extremism. Extremism may be linked to politics, religious radicalization, identity, nationalism, as well as inequality and injustice. Subedi & Jenkins (2016), argue that there is a reciprocal relationship between conflict and extremism and that extremism affects peace and conflict dynamics at both local levels and across borders.

Kenya is surrounded by countries that have experienced or are currently experiencing violent armed conflicts such as Somalia, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. Kenya is affected by the violence in these countries through several ways. It plays host to refugees from these and other East African countries as well as perform mediation and peace keeping missions in these countries (Burns, 2010).

In addition, Kenya has been affected directly by the conflict in the neighboring countries through proliferation of small arms as well as terror related activities (Lamb & Dye, 2009; Lyman & Morrison, 2021, Rabasa, 2009). On the other hand, it has also experienced cycles of violence during general elections as well as spates of tribal clashes over natural resources in various parts of the country (Burns, 2010).

Although Kenya experienced a major terror attack in 1998 which involved the bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi, the 9/11 attack was a major turning point in counterterrorism strategies not only in Kenya but all around the world. The US and the western countries took an interventionist approach in the form of military intervention, surveillance, policing and the introduction of anti-terror laws (Subedi & Jenkins, 2016). This form of intervention came to be known as the 'hard' approach to violent extremism and terrorism.

Kenya, as a strategic US ally in Africa in War on Terror campaign, was no exception in adopting similar 'hard' strategies. Strategic partnerships with the US and its allies, implementation of Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2012, the formation of a special Anti-Terror Police Unit (ATPU) as well as military intervention in Somalia to fight Al Shabab, a violent extremist organization (VEO) that ruled parts of Somalia, formed part of the initial counter-terrorism efforts by Kenya (BBC, 2011; Branch, 2021; Rabasa, 2009; Aronson, 2012). Although the VEOs were mainly foreign entities, Kenyans formed a sizable number of their recruits for terror related activities in Kenya thus ushering in the phenomenon of 'homegrown terrorists' (Burns, 2010; Presthold, 2011; Aronson, 2012). The hard approach mainly targeted thus stigmatizing the Muslim community leading to an outcry. Other than excluding crucial actors such as the CSOs and the media, it was characterized with arbitrary arrests and detention, unsuccessful prosecutions as well as extrajudicial killings (Presthold, 2011; Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020).

However, Kenya's approach to violent extremism changed as from 2014. All around the world, the limited success of the hard approach and the phenomenon of homegrown terrorists had prompted a shift in approach towards a softer multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary approach to extremism. This was also in line with the international instruments such as the UN Security Council resolutions that encouraged members states to enact measures aimed at tackling the roots and drivers towards radicalization (OSCE 2018;2019; United Nations, 2021).

Kenya launched the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism (NSCVE) in 2016 which recognized the significance of involvement of the public, business and religious sectors in the fight against radicalization and extremism (Sharamo and Mohamed, 2020). The NSCVE proposed the adoption of nine pillars which included 1) media and online, 2) psychosocial, 3) education, 4) legal and policy, 5) arts and culture, 6) training and capacity building, 7) political, 8) faith-based and ideological, and 9) security. All government ministries, departments and agencies were also tasked with undertaking functions relevant to their mandates and proposed in the nine pillars contained in the NSCVE.

In addition, the NSCVE also directed the county governments to develop five-year strategic plans called County Action Plans (CAPs) to support the national PCVE efforts at the local devolved government levels (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020). At the county government level, the CAPs provide for the establishment of CVE County Engagement Forums which bring

together officers from the national and county governments, the CSOs, the business and religious communities as well as elders and people living with disabilities (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020). The implementation of the NSCVE is coordinated by the Kenya National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC).

Other than government and the local efforts, the PCVE programs in Kenya also enjoys support from partners such the US and its allies as well international organizations. The US and its allies have provided funding for the various counterterrorism projects and training of government personnel (Presthold, 2011; Aronson, 2012). International organizations such as USAID, DANIDA and GIZ have also funded PCVE projects run by CSOs (Van Zyl & Mahdi, 2019; USAID, 2019).

2.3. Preventing and countering violent extremism and faith-based organizations

The attempt to define violent extremism is difficult partly due to not only political and ideological reasons but also the effect of the contribution of multiple disciplines to the study of the subject (Sinai, 2007). However, the effect of violent extremism is felt worldwide in terms of fatalities or infringement on human rights no matter the perpetrators. This makes initiatives aimed at preventing and countering violent extremism indispensable.

Violent extremism and terrorism are not new phenomena and have a long-protracted history in the world and is as old as government and armed struggle (Falk, 1990; Duyvesteyn, 2007). However, countering terrorism efforts gained momentum especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks and involved mainly the employment of heavy-handed approaches to tackling the phenomenon (Desta, 2016). This led to greater international cooperation which reflects the international nature of terror related activities (UNODC, 2018). Most of the focus has; however, been on ideologically motivated violent extremism - specifically against Islamist groups.

The military approach, though effective at addressing immediate threats of violence, was not only expensive but also insufficient in handling increasing terror related activities (Desta, 2016). This called for embracing softer alternatives that would also be useful in addressing the root causes of violent extremism (Khan, 2015; Desta, 2016; Neuman, 2011). These 'softer'

initiatives came to be known as preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE). Hence PCVE, as explained earlier, brings together all the activities variously named as 'preventing violent extremism', 'countering violent extremism' or 'preventing radicalization to violent extremism'.

This approach, therefore, integrates preventative approaches outside the security framework and those that extend security agenda into social work, care and education field (Stephens et al., 2018). As such it is a multidisciplinary approach that strives to limit the traction of violent extremist groups on individuals, communities and the society at large (UNSOM, n.d.).

Van Zyl & Mahdi (2019), note a shift in global trend towards placing the PCVE work on local actors with the support of international donors. The local actors not only understand local conditions that foster violent extremism but are also instrumental in enhancing the sustainability of PCVE programs. There has been increased funding from donors to states and local civil societies, especially in East African countries for PCVE endeavors (Van Zyl & Mahdi, 2019). These countries include Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda. For instance, USAID funds PCVE activities through a PCVE program, *Ni Wajibu Wetu* (NIWETU), that not only funds but also builds the capacity of local actors (USAID, 2019). On the other hand, violent extremist groups are not only reportedly active but also continue to pose security threats in Kenya. Isiolo County specifically features prominently as a recruitment ground for the VEOs (Miriri, 2019; RUSI, 2020; Turi, 2020). However, the involvement of FBOs in the PCVE work in Isiolo County seems obscure with little or no reference in literature.

Interest in the FBOs gained momentum in the academic research and international development agenda in the 1990s (James, 2011; Olarinmoye, 2012). This could be due to a combination of several factors ranging from the realization of the failure of the assumptions of the secularization theory, to the rise of identity politics, as well as issues related to neo liberal policies, and the adoption of more holistic approaches to the development (Olarinmoye, 2012). In the US, this can be seen in legislations such as the 1996 'Charitable Choice' as well as executive orders by the former presidents George Bush and Baraka Obama (Olarinmoye, 2012).

The engagement of the FBOs in development work is not a new phenomenon. FBOs have been active, especially in developing countries, during the colonial periods in social, economic and political life of the people. Their recognition only suffered a setback when religion got problematized and relegated out of public life while secularization took center (Lunn, 20009; Olarinmoye, 2012). Although, statistics on whether the civil society organizations offer greatest returns on development compared to the state is contested, the civil society organizations, and especially the FBOs, have offered and continue to offer services in health, education and development (Clarke & Ware, 2015; Koehrsen & Heuser, 2020).

The FBOs occupy a unique position in the context of development. According to Koehrsen & Heuser (2020), FBOs uniquely operate as boundary agents and development entrepreneurs. Their uniqueness lies in their ability to not only generate unique perspectives on development as they seamlessly navigate and transition through different discursive fields such as national and international development discourses, theological discourses, and their specific religious constituencies; but also, in expressing alternative views on development (Koehrsen & Heuser, 2020).

Connected to this, Muslim FBOs', since the study mainly focuses on them, clearer sense of identity and a lack of hierarchical Islamic religious institutions allows them some autonomy in accommodating and fitting into recipient societies (Khafagy, 2020; James, 2009). With an explicit religious teaching on funding societal services through a regulated obligatory charity, they also enjoy significant financial independence and devoted volunteers.

2.4. Gap in literature

Literature exists on terror related incidences in Kenya. There is also literature on radicalization of young people in Isiolo County and their recruitment by violent extremist groups (Miriri, 2019; RUSI, 2020; Turi, 2020). In addition, there is literature on involvement of the civil society in general in PCVE activities as well as training of religious leaders on the same (USAID, 2019). However, extensive preliminary online and print literature search revealed there is little or no literature on the direct involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. This is what this study sought to investigate and consequently the gap that it seeks to fill.

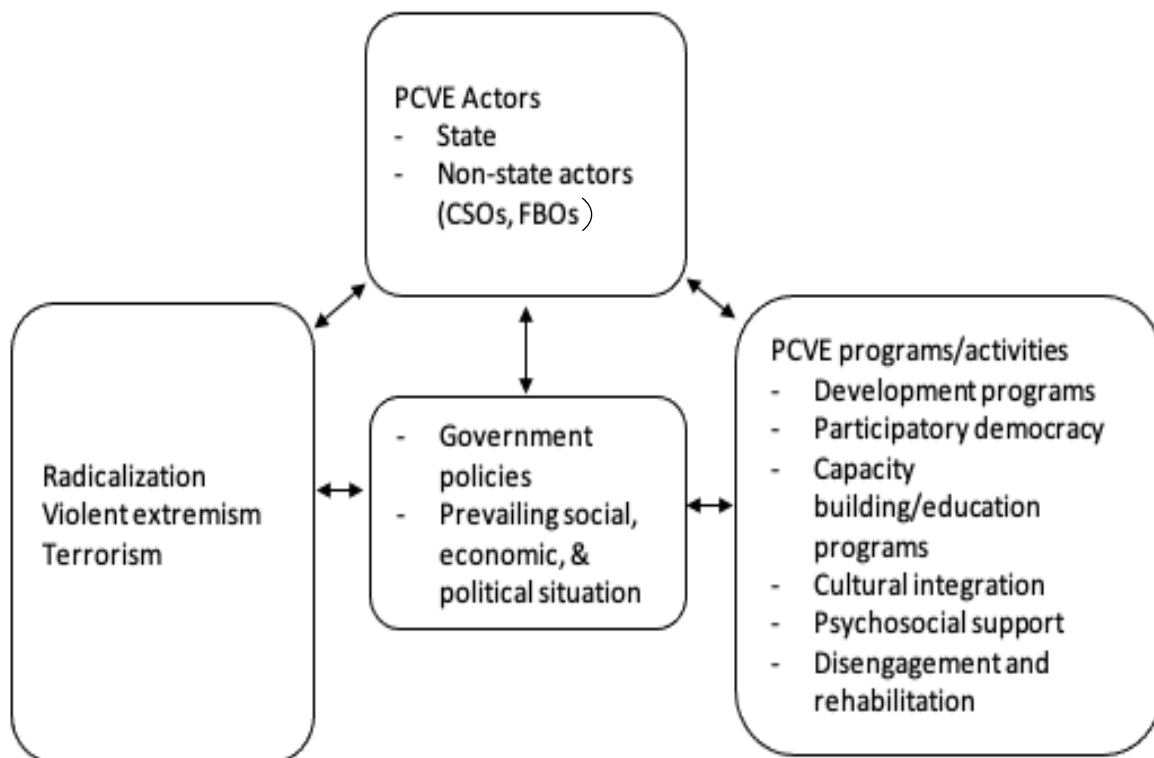
3.0 Theoretical and conceptual framework.

3.1. Conceptual framework

Key concepts: *civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, radicalism and radicalization, violent extremism, terrorism, preventing and countering violent extremism*

Several theories can be used to provide a framework that is helpful in exploring issues related to radicalization, extremism as well as the assumptions around which PCVE programs are implemented. For instance, theories such as relative deprivation, structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism may be helpful in exploring the reasons or motivations for radicalism and extremism. While theories of change may be helpful in shedding light on the assumptions underlying PCVE interventions, social capital theories can also be helpful in exploring the suitability of civil society organizations in initiating and sustaining change. However, since the goal of the study is to investigate the nature, level and motivation for or against involvement in PCVE programs by FBOs, the preferred choice was to develop a list of key concepts specific to the case of Isiolo county and PCVE, and define the hypothesized interrelationship between them from what was apparent during fieldwork and data collection.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



The above conceptual framework represents the interrelationships between the various concepts and elements in the PCVE work explored in this study. Since this is a qualitative descriptive study, I do not conceptualize the design in terms of variables as would be the case in a purely quantitative design. Rather, the key ideas or constructs in the study are looked at in terms of their interrelationships and the processes that structure the PCVE process. I describe these in terms of actors (PCVE actors), mediators (radicalization, violent extremism, terrorism), contextual factors (government policies, socio-economic factors) and outcomes (PCVE programs) and further explain these below.

3.1.1. PCVE Actors

In a general sense, the environment and context within which PCVE programs take place herein referred to as 'PCVE space' brings together a number of actors and processes. Space can be conceived as being both physical and relational; the programs and activities are implemented in specific geographical locations and coordinated through the network of relationships actively pursued, established and sustained between the actors, concepts and processes.

The actors in the PCVE programs include, among others, the intervention providers which includes the state and non-state actors such as the civil society organizations, financiers of the intervention, the target group as well as the media. In this study, the civil society organizations (CSOs), specifically the faith-based organizations' (FBOs) role in PCVE was the subject of investigation. As a result, only a description of the concepts of the CSOs and the FBOs shall be explored in more detail below.

a. Civil society and the civil society organizations

Carothers and Barndt (1999) note that the term civil society goes back to ancient Greek though the term was mainly equated with the state. However, the modern concept of the civil society as a domain not only parallel to but also separate from the state, they add, emerged in the 18th century (Carothers & Barndt, 1999). Ever since, the civil society has grown immensely.

Defining civil society is not easy. There have been debates on what it encompasses, its purpose as well as the norms it should incorporate in a bid to arrive at suitable definitions (McLaverty, 2010). Characterized by a complex interconnected network of people and groups, the civil society concept has evolved to embrace a wide variety of organic groups of varied sizes, form and functions (VanDyck, 2017). However, I shall not delve into an exploration of these debates on the definitions. I am more motivated in identifying a few possible definitions before settling on a more suitable one for this study.

Scholars and practitioners have attempted to offer definitions based on their research and experiences. Gramsci (“As cited in Islam, 2021”), suggests that civil society as an arena which is separate from the state and the market and in which ideological hegemony is challenged. On the other hand, Jezard (2018), posits that as a public voluntary associative activity, the civil society brings together a group of people that form a form of ongoing multilateral communication, physical or digital, with the aim of providing a forum for public expression and raising awareness as well as meeting some social needs or providing some public service (Jezard, 2018).

Similarly, CIVICUS, a global alliance of civil society and activists defines civil society as the arena outside of the family, state and the market which is created by individuals, groups, organizations and institutions to advance common interests (CIVICUS, 2011). According to CIVICUS (2011), their definition encompasses nongovernmental organizations, coalitions and civil society networks, social movements, voluntary associations, charities, faith-based groups, trade unions as well as campaigning organizations.

On the same note, according to the World Bank, the civil society is a term used to refer to a wide range of organizations, community groups, non-governmental organizations, labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations and foundations (World Bank, 2007).

All of the above definitions recognize the civil society as not only voluntary and associational but also as distinct from the state, family and the market. There is only a slight variation in the expression of its role. For instance, while Gramsci feels it was meant to challenge hegemonic ideologies, Jezard and the others envisage more broader roles.

The World Bank and CIVICUS definitions are similar in scope. For the purpose of this study, I use their definition because of its simplicity, clarity and inclusivity.

Finally, this study also assumes that the civil society organizations comprise the organizations located in the civil society, and that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and FBOs are a component of these organizations. No wonder civil society is often confused with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) because they seem to be more vocal and visible component of the civil society.

b. Faith-based organizations (FBOs)

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are part of the civil society. A big question in defining or identifying FBOs is their relationship to religion (Jeavons, 1997). As a result of this, terms such as faith-related or faith-based have come into use. This is compounded by the fact that some members or founders of secular organizations do profess some religious faith, too.

Jeavons (1998) gave seven key areas that define how faith-based an organization is. These seven areas comprise: 1) self-identity, 2) religious conviction of the members, 3) the role of religion in resource acquisition, 4) its influence on interorganizational relationships, 5) the impact of religion on decision making, 6) the religious authority and power of the leaders as well as 7) the influence of religion on goals, products and services. Jeavons' work is helpful in highlighting the features to consider in identifying the role played by religion in an organization. However, this would present a tricky situation where one would be forced to classify organizations on a spectrum based on the extent of faith in their operations.

On the other hand, Smith and Sosin (2001) ask whether the link between faith and the organization is at the institutional level with regards to resource dependency, authority and organizational culture. Having seen the intricacies involved in defining FBOs, for the purpose of this study, a slight modification of the simple but comprehensive definition advanced by Noor and Nawi (2016) shall be adopted. Noor and Nawi (2016) define an FBO as a community service agent that has its identity and missions consciously derived from the teachings of certain religious faiths or traditions and may be related to a religious organization or community. To this definition we add reference to relationship the community service agents

have to religious individuals to encompass faith-based organizations that are formed by individuals such as those found mostly amongst Muslim communities.

3.1.2. Mediators

In the framework above, radicalization, terrorism and violent extremism are seen as mediated through intervention in the form of PCVE programs and activities by the actors within the PCVE space. The range of activities undertaken by the PCVE actors include, among others; development programs aimed at promoting participatory democracy and improving living conditions, educational and capacity building programs, psychosocial support as well as disengagement and rehabilitation programs. These activities are aimed at preventing or countering radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism.

In this section, therefore, I briefly explore the concepts of radicalism and radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism.

a. Radicalization and radicalism

The concept of radicalization used in the framework builds on Bötticher's (2017) work, which traces radicalism to the 17th century when it was associated with the enlightened liberal left-wing political tenets that involved opposition to reactionary political establishments. Since then, it has come to be used, lately, to refer to not only revolutionary but also subversive religious forces (Bötticher, 2017). Other than acknowledging that this takes place over a period of time, Striegler (2015), also agrees that radicalism, radicalization and getting radicalized are the prevailing social labels when debating violent extremism and are seldom understood by the vast majority outside of terrorism context.

Bos (2018), defines radicalization as a process characterized by a growing willingness to pursue or support changes that are often seen as extreme or radical through, if needed, undemocratic means, which is not only in conflict with but is also a threat to the prevailing democratic legal order. According to Porta (2018), this term has now come to be seen as adoption of extreme beliefs and propensity towards violent behavior.

From the above definitions, radicalism is a kind of deviance from the existing norms. In addition, there is implication that the extreme beliefs can involve any aspect of life ranging from politics, economy or religion. However, though sympathetic to violence, it does not necessarily lead to violent action. Radicalization is often seen, as implied in the above definitions, as the gradually progressing stage preceding engagement in actual violence, the act of violence against the lawful authority and order. It is both a cognitive and behavioral transformation process where individuals develop and espouse extreme extrinsic view of the world around them (Striegheer, 2015).

Given this background, the conceptual framework includes radicalization as mediator in the gradual process of adopting extreme beliefs or opinions and the willingness to consider supporting the implementation of the same if needed through violent means against the prevailing legal order. In the context of this study, the focus is mainly on radicalism and radicalization with regards to religious beliefs.

b. Violent extremism

Definitions of violent extremism often make it susceptible to being used interchangeably or confused with radicalism and terrorism (Striegheer, 2015). The Attorney-General's Department in Australia (as cited in Striegheer, 2015) regards violent extremism as describing the beliefs and actions of people who support or use violence to achieve ideological, religious and/or political goals. The definition encompasses terrorism and all other forms of violence aimed at seeking change through fear and intimidation. On the same note, the Crown Prosecutor Service in the United Kingdom (as cited in Striegheer, 2015), also define violent extremism as comprising the demonstration of unacceptable behavior that expresses views which not only seek to foment or glorify terrorist violence and provoke other terrorist acts but also foment other serious criminal activity and foster hatred which might lead to intercommunity violence. Neumann (2011), on the other hand, suggests that violent extremism refers to ideologies that oppose the prevailing societal principles, norms or values and justify the use of violence to prompt change or advocate alternative racial, religious or political beliefs. These definitions establish violent extremism as not only involving a support for but also advocating for violence to reach certain ideological, religious and political ends. In addition, they establish a direct and close links between violent extremism and terrorism.

Consequently, for the purpose of this study, we shall adopt the definition advanced by Neumann (2011). However, violent extremism in the context of this study shall mainly be related to religious ideologies and mostly aligned to violent extremist organizations that either claim to be or are associated with Islam.

c. Terrorism

Although violent acts that may qualify as terroristic is old in history, the concept of 'terror' in politics can be traced back to practices of the French government after the 1798 Revolution (Sluka, 2008). Just like radicalization and violent extremism, terrorism is also a concept that is highly contested and has defied the adoption of a universal definition (Stuurman, 2019). In addition, just like it is the case with radicalism and violent extremism, the definition of the concept of terrorism is not only dependent on the context but also the subjective perspective of the definer (Sluka, 2008). Some scholars dismiss it as a political myth used to manipulate public fears for political ends (Herman & Sullivan, 1989; Chomsky, 1986). In fact, attempts to define terrorism have been so problematic and complex that some scholars advocated for recognition of terrorism by observers when they see it and using their own explicit subjective definition (Weinberg et al., 2004; Witbeck, 2004). However, this would not solve the original complexity problem and would make coordination between different actors dealing with the matter difficult.

In one of their university modules, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) posit that terrorism can be understood as a coercive method that uses or threatens to use violence to intimidate and induce fear as a way of attaining political or ideological goals (UNODC, 2018). They refer to the classic 'terrorist triangle' that involves a party attacking another in order to convince a third party to change their position as desired by the attacker. In this way, innocent victims become a bargaining tool for terrorists. The United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1566 also concurs with this in its articulation of the purpose of terrorism (UNSCR, 2004).

On the same note, the United States Department of Defense (As cited in Hoffman, 2006, P. 31), defines terrorism as "the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful

violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”

For the purpose of this study, I adopt the definition by UNODC. It is clear on the deliberate and calculated threat of or use of violence against a wide range of victims for a wide range of motives. It is also broad enough to embrace state and nonstate perpetrators. The use of ‘unlawful violence’ makes the definition by the US Department of State problematic as this can be contested.

3.1.3. Contextual factors

The Prevailing socio-economic and political situation as well as the existing government policies moderate the activities of the PCVE actors and all other stakeholders as well as the environment within which PCVE programs are undertaken. The interaction between the actors or stakeholders in this space not only has the potential to produce positive as well as negative effects but also affect the quality of the PCVE programs undertaken. The contextual factors are not treated as concepts in this study but rather as variables interacting with the concepts.

Government policies and legislation regulate and limit what possibilities and options are deemed legal and permissible. The activities undertaken as part of PCVE programs need to conform to these policies and regulation to be regarded as legal and constitutional. The prevailing socio-economic and political situation has a tremendous impact on availability of the resources as well as the feasibility of intervention programs. Marginalization and standards of living which is closely related to the prevailing socio-economic and political environment may be a cause of radicalization and violent extremism. As such, this may not only hinder success of PCVE programs and interventions but also make the program necessary.

3.1.4. Outcomes

In a general sense, this refers to what emanates out of the interaction between the PCVE actors, target groups, the PCVE programs, government policies as well as the prevailing socio-economic and political situations.

For instance, the actors (state or non-state) in PCVE programs have an influence on the factors that influence violent extremism and can in turn get affected by these factors. Other than bringing in their expertise and attitudes to help prevent or mitigate prevalence of violent extremism, the actors can also in turn be affected positively or negatively in the process of this interaction. The PCVE actor may undertake activities that help rehabilitate or reintegrate a perpetrator of violent extremism into the larger society. However, the contact and interaction may or may not be successful based on the nature of the program or the biases and attitudes harbored by both parties. On the other hand, the PCVE actor may not only get brainwashed by the ideas of the former extremist but also may turn into an enabler or an accomplice. The range of possibilities is numerous in this interaction. The interaction between all the actors (PCVE promoters or recipients) and their aim to establish control over the prevalent conditions which either enable or mitigate violent extremism may lead to the desired outcome of nonviolent conflict resolution and the promotion of narratives alternative to violent extremism. Therefore, the anticipated change from the PCVE activities results from this interaction or lack of it between all the actors and the prevalent conditions.

3.2. Faith-based organizations, radicalization and PCVE

Preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE), as discussed earlier, is a departure from the practice of military intervention which dominated the counterterrorism initiatives in the aftermath of 9/11/2001 attack on the New York City's World Trade Center in the United States of America. The shift was instigated by, among other factors, the phenomenon of 'homegrown' terrorism in Western countries (Harris-Hogan, Barrelle, & Zammit, 2016).

PCVE programs and activities involve a combination of both the 'hard' and 'soft' approaches in counterterrorism initiative. The 'hard' measures which include military, legal and financial incentives are combined with the 'soft' public sector approach which include, among others; capacity building, democracy, human rights, psychosocial support, and cultural integration and rehabilitation (Haugstvedt & Sjøen, 2021). This involves the acknowledgement of the role of the public in aiding the state in not only promoting peace but also in preventing radicalization and violent extremism. It also implies granting the public or communities some responsibility for their own security. However, this has also not gone without criticism. Mesok (2022), criticizes PCVE programs as involving a form of coercion of the communities and

organizations into participating in a mode of civil counterinsurgency implemented through peace-security-development nexus. Coerced or not, communities and their organizations play a significant role in PCVE programs.

According to Jezard (2018), the CSOs are a crucial part of the public and the private sector and play a role in providing a forum for public expression, raising awareness as well as meeting some social needs or providing some public service. As such, they are critical stakeholders in the PCVE programs (Barzegar, Powers & El Karhili, 2016). However, Barzegar, Powers & El Karhili (2016) acknowledge the existence of mistrust between governments and the CSOs who seem to perceive the government initiatives as duplicitous. During the Obama administration, this mistrust motivated about 27 organizations, which included both faith-based and secular organizations in the United States to request for assurance that CVE programs would not be used to curtail and infringe on the rights of citizens (Omar, 2016). On the same note, Omar (2016) also opines that local Muslim groups around the world perceive the CVE programs as a tool for imposing western values and beliefs on Muslim nations.

Despite challenges such as those mentioned above, the departure from the 'hard' to 'soft' approach which gave birth to PCVE is, therefore, seen as an evolving process that aims to harness the energies of all stakeholders in preventing and countering violent extremism. This evolution which recognizes the significant role of the civil and the religious society is captured in the UN Security Council resolutions 1624 and 2178 as well as the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism A/70/674 and Ankara Memorandum on Good Practices for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Countering Violent Extremism (United Nations, 2021).

Although it is not the purpose of this study to investigate the link between faith-based organizations (FBOs) and radicalization, it is important to briefly explore the nature of the relationship between FBOs, radicalization and PCVE.

In the aftermath of 9/11/2001 attack on the New York City's World Trade Center in the United States of America, there was a crackdown on several Muslim charities and faith-based organizations. Some were shut down while others have had their funds frozen or activities scaled down by the US and its allies on suspicion of aiding or abetting terrorism (Morris, 2010).

Without getting into a discussion on the merits and plausibility of the evidence behind the above measures by the US and its allies, it is clear that this is an indictment of FBOs as complicit in violent extremism and terrorism. This has reinforced the stigma and suspicion that FBOs, specifically Muslim FBOs, face in counterterrorism and PCVE space. On the same note, Haugstvedt & Sjøen (2021), note that PCVE programs have faced scrutiny as well as criticism for raising and reinforcing the notion that frames Muslims as risk groups.

However, although violent extremism may not be solely tied to religious ideology, studies have shown that religion may be one of the factors, among many others, that are used to incite, recruit, legitimize, or justify violence (Omar, 2016). As a result of this link between religion and violence as well as the unique role the CSOs, specifically FBOs, play in the society as discussed earlier, it becomes prudent to involve them in PCVE programs and activities.

This study assumes that FBOs as actors in PCVE programs have significant influence, local acceptance and ability to instigate change (Clarke & Ware, 2015; Koehrsen & Heuser, 2020). This comes about through the interactions with the local conditions and community they operate within and within which the PCVE activities are undertaken.

4.0 Methodology and methods

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a discussion of the study area, research design, and sample and sampling procedure is undertaken. In addition, a detailed discussion of the research methodology and the research instruments as well the ethical consideration in this study is provided. On the same note, there is a description of the challenges I encountered as a researcher in the course of conducting the study. The discussion on methodology and methods adopts a specific pattern. A description is provided followed by an exploration on relevance and suitability to this study before concluding with a description of how the same is applied in the context of this study.

4.2. Study area

Isiolo County in Kenya is the gateway to the North and is in close proximity to both Somalia and Ethiopia through Marsabit, Garissa and Wajir Counties. It is one of the 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya and is inhabited by mostly nomadic pastoralist communities. With the standard of living low and conflict prone, tribal clashes and cattle rustling is prevalent (Sharamo, 2014). Radicalization and recruitment into violent extremism is an additional challenge linked to Al Shabab violent extremist organization in Somalia (Miriri, 2019; Turi, 2020).

This study involved an examination of PCVE work vis-à-vis the faith-based organizations (FBOs) in Isiolo County; however, two secular nongovernmental organizations implementing PCVE programs have been included for triangulation purposes and to obtain richer data. In addition, out of all possible motivations for violent extremism, it is extremism related to religious ideology that has been the concern of this study.

Isiolo County was chosen because it serves as a recruitment ground for violent extremist groups such as Al Shabab. In addition, it serves not only as a transit point for recruits traveling to Somalia from other parts of the country but also as a transit point for extremists getting into the country from Somalia to carry out terror attacks in Kenya (Miriri, 2019; Turi, 2020). On the same note, there are active PCVE programs run in Isiolo County with donor funding

(USAID, 2019). Therefore, it is a combination of these factors that made Isiolo County a suitable place for carrying out this study.

4.3. Research design

This research is a qualitative study based not only on the relativist ontology but also on the interpretivist constructivist epistemology and research paradigm respectively. Constructivist research paradigm acknowledges the active role played by social actors in the continual process of creating truth and meaning about the world while the interpretivist epistemological perspective seeks the “culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). Interpretivism thus acknowledges that knowledge is understood as not only subjective but also encompassing the subjective views of the actors involved. The PCVE programs implemented by organizations in Isiolo County not only takes place within a specific geographical and evolving social context but is also shaped and its quality continuously influenced by the interactions between all the actors and by their shared meaning of the program activities.

This study employed an exploratory case study design. A case study design is relevant as it enables detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. It also allows for an inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 1984). This was my intention in the present study. The case study design helped in understanding the practice of PCVE programs with regards to its practice or lack of it by faith-based organizations in Isiolo County thus extending experience or adding strength to what is already known through previous studies and research. It enabled a critical analysis of the situation because FBOs occupy a unique role in violent extremism related to religious ideologies. This emanates from perceptions of the relationship between religion and violence.

Conferences and studies have been conducted to explore the relationship between religion and violence. For instance, In April, 2016 a conference that brought together researchers government officials and civil society leaders was held at Wilton Park in the United Kingdom to deliberate on the policy and practice in CVE. With regards to the relationship between religion and CVE, the participants acknowledged that although there is no neat account of

direct causation between religion and violence, religion could serve as either a contributing factor or be part of the solution to conflict (Wilton, 2016).

This relationship between religion and violence or extremism has also been seen to impact on intervention programs and strategies. According to Bjørgero & Gjelsvik (2015), preventive dialogue or conversation intervention implemented by the Norwegian Police Security Service was quite successful in countering right wing extremist youths. However, they add, the same could not be replicated with the Muslim youths who were radicalized and joined violent extremist groups. The Norwegian Police Security Service (PST) attributed this to their lack of enough trusting relationship with the youth positing that the outcome would have been different had the same been implemented by, among others, religious leaders or organizations (Bjørgero & Gjelsvik, 2015).

After identifying the organizations to be involved in the study, I constructed their profiles through internet searches, using their official websites where available such as of Isiolo Peace Link Organization and SCORES, corroborating this by requesting for their actual official organization profiles filed and kept by the organizations. Thereafter, interviews, archival research and focus group discussions were carried out to discover the practice of PCVE by these organizations.

4.4. Sample and sampling procedure

The nature of a study dictates to a large extent not only the research methods but also the types of participants (Hycner, 1999). Generally, researchers use either probability or non-probability sampling methods. Whereas, probability sampling seeks to ensure every case in the population has equal and non-zero chance of being selected, non-probability sampling operates on reasons other than mathematical probability (Bloor & Wood, 2006).

For this study, I used purposive sampling, which is a non-probability kind of sampling useful in identifying primary participants (Welman & Kruger, 1999). Purposive sampling is utilized where detailed and in-depth analysis is considered more significant and there is less concern with statistical accuracy such as in research that adopts an interpretive and constructionist paradigm (Durrheim, Painter, & Blanche, 2006). In addition, I used snowball sampling which

entailed asking participants to recommend other relevant participants to the study (Babbie, 1995; Crabtree & Miller, 1992).

Since this study is specifically interested in FBOs and a few secular NGOs engaged in PCVE activities in Isiolo County, I used telephonic inquiries and internet searches, as well as referrals to identify the FBOs active in the county. I then narrowed down to their program coordinators and managers who are responsible for their PCVE or other related projects. Interviews were then organized with the program managers, who are responsible for implementing PCVE activities within these organizations. The organizations served as the units of analysis. The FBOs involved in this study are all local organizations that operate mainly within the county.

It was easy to narrow down onto the following organizations as the number of FBOs was few. The secular organizations involved in this study were identified on the basis of their active involvement in PCVE work in the county based on internet searches, telephonic inquiry as well as a visit to the department of social services at the county which is responsible for registering and keeping records of community-based organizations and self-help groups and associations.

I established contact through email for those whose emails were available requesting for their participation in the study and the contacts of the program managers tasked with either PCVE activities or outreach programs. However, for those whose emails addresses were unavailable, I sent an emissary who helped establish contact. The table below summarizes the names and number of respondents from each organization

Table 1. Organizations involved in the study

	Organization	Nature	No. of respondent
1	Isiolo Peace Link Organization	Secular	1
2	SCORES	Secular	1
3	Merti Holy Qur'an Center	FBO	1
4	Isiolo Inter-Faith Organization	FBO	1
5	Isiolo Women of Faith Network	FBO	1
6	Al Falah Islamic Centre	FBO	1
7	County Interfaith Advisor	Key respondent	1

Other than the organizations, I also purposively identified the County Interfaith Advisor as a key respondent. This respondent was useful in triangulation purposes. The Interfaith Advisor's office keeps records and coordinates the activities of FBOs, specifically those that were aimed at promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The department was useful in confirming the participants in PCVE programs and the nature of their activities.

4.5. Reflexivity

According to Dodgson (2019), who the researcher is plays a big role in the findings of their study. It involves understanding the researcher's positionality in relation to what they are studying and goes beyond their name and professional affiliations (Dodgson, 2019). It is an awareness of the position of the researcher in the study and the role he plays in the construction of the situation of the investigation (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Reflexivity is one of the ways rigor and quality in qualitative research is established and trustworthiness determined (Dodgson, 2019; Teh & Lek, 2018). Berger (2015, p. 220) captures the significance of reflexivity thus

“Researchers need to increasingly focus on self-knowledge and sensitivity; better understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge; carefully self-monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs, and personal experiences on their research; and maintain the balance between the personal and the universal.”

I am a resident of the county within which the proposed research study was conducted. In addition, the PCVE interventions studied in Isiolo County mostly target religious groups and Muslims in particular. As a Muslim resident of this County, I was cognizant of possibility of bias. However, to ensure a high degree of objectivity and trustworthiness of the research process, I kept a diary and field notes and held some debriefing sessions with the research supervisor. In addition, I did not only check back with the respondents with the interview transcripts to ensure accuracy of information captured but also sought clarifications on issues and questions that arose out of interviews with other respondents or from written interviews. For instance, I noted that the organizations could be classified into old and young based on their formation before and after 9/11 attacks. Since this seemed to have influenced the

difference in their level and nature of involvement, I had to check back with the respondents to explore this.

On the other hand, the residence status and familiarity provided an opportunity to easily establish rapport with the FBOs and their program managers. In addition, the familiarity also was helpful in helping establish and identify the FBOs to involve in the study.

On the same note, I hold an opinion that violent extremism that emanates out of a religious ideology can best be handled through engagement of faith-based organizations. The need to discover why there was little literature on engagement of FBOs in PCVE programs was part of the motivation to undertake the study. To ensure credibility in spite of this opinion, I strived to involve both FBOs and secular organizations in the study. In addition, after the initial oral or written interview with respondents, I employed a focus group discussion that brought together respondents from both kinds of organizations for an in-depth discussion on the topic.

On the same note, triangulation was used to track validity and reliability of the study. For instance, where data from archival research and interviews on similar elements were compared for consistency or discrepancy. The same was applied with data from secular NGOs against data from the FBOs. Hence, archival research in documents as well as the data from FBOs vis-à-vis those from secular NGOs was mainly helpful in these triangulation efforts.

4.6. Ethical considerations

This study deals with a sensitive topic. It generated some suspicion and trust issues as well as involved some degree of security risk. I sought informed consent from every respondent, and assured them confidentiality. I explained the purpose of the study to each interviewee, explained how the data would be handled, stored and archived. The respondents were then provided with the consent form for signing. The consent forms were kept in a locked cabinet at home both in the country of data collection and study in Tromsø. The forms shall be kept in a locked cabinet and destroyed as soon as the research is submitted and approved.

I also strived to prevent exposing the respondents to harm by keeping all personal data anonymized and kept in secure storage. In addition, the respondents were given the choice

to agree or disagree to audio or video recordings of interviews and face-to-face meetings. In this case none of the respondents consented to audio or video recordings of the interviews or discussions. Therefore, I had to take notes during all proceedings.

4.7. Methods/Research instruments

As part of the study, I collected both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was obtained through archival research while primary data was obtained through oral and written interviews.

4.7.1. Interviews

An interview is a face-to-face interpersonal situation in which the interviewer asks the interviewee questions designed to elicit responses significant to the research problem (Ngaroga, 1996; Dilshad & Latif, 2013). The questions used in interviews help the researcher not only gather data but also gain insight into the thoughts, feelings, beliefs and experiences of people. Interviews used in qualitative research such as this one, not only strives to appreciate the world from the perspectives of the respondents but also explore their experiences (Dilshad & Latif, 2013).

In this study, I used semi structured interviews, written interviews as well as a focus group discussion (FGD). Since all the respondents could speak English, it was the language used and no translators were needed.

4.7.1.1. Semi structured Interviews

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher sets the outline for the topics to be covered in the interview. However, the interviewee's response determines to some extent the direction of the interview (Bryman, 2001; Stuckey, 2013; Rowley, 2012).

In this study, the semi-structured interview was based on an interview schedule that had around 12 questions delivered in a set order but with flexibility in the way they were asked as well as in the depth of probing. The interviews were initially planned to be conducted online due to Covid-19 travel restrictions on platforms such as Zoom, Teams, Skype or any other

suitable online meeting platform. This plan also provided for the possibility of using ordinary telephone calls should the respondents be out in the field or are in areas with limited internet connection.

However, the easing of the travel restrictions enabled traveling to the field for data collection. Except for one respondent, all the other respondents were available for face-to-face interviews.

In total, about five (5) face-to-face interviews were conducted between December 2021 and January, 2022.

4.7.1.2. Written interviews

A written interview is quite similar to a questionnaire and contains a number of questions administered to individuals to obtain useful information about a given issue (Muthee & Wambiri, 2010). The written interview as a research instrument is valuable in collecting information from multiple individuals especially when they cannot be reached for a face-to-face or online interview due to restrictions, poor network and connectivity or other challenges.

I administered the written interview online through *Nettskjema* forms which captured the responses in a quick and timely manner. The written interview contained open-ended questions which were similar to those in the semi-structured interview and therefore permitted a great depth of response.

Since only one respondent couldn't be reached for a face-to face interview, I administered the written interview on this respondent. A link which enabled the respondent to access the interview was shared through email. This was done in January 2022. After the respondent filled in the written interview, I checked it for completeness. Thereafter, a phone call followed for some clarifications. The clarification mainly centered around the nature of collaborations with other organizations on PCVE programs as well as on sources of funding.

4.7.1.3. Focus group discussion (FGD)

A focus group discussion is a kind of interview that involves a researcher engaging a group of respondents who possess certain characteristics in a discussion on a certain issue or topic (Dilshad & Latif, 2013). Focus group discussions are different from individual interviews because, just like in everyday life, participants influence and are in turn influenced by others (Casey & Kruger, 2000). In addition, not burdened by the need to be neutral, the moderator provides a prompt that triggers a discussion where the collective opinion is given more significance than the aggregate view (Dilshad & Latif, 2013).

During the onset of the study, I aimed to bring together online all the respondents together in a focus group discussion (FGD) for a more in-depth discussion on the nature, motivation and challenges faced by FBOs with regards to engaging in PCVE programs. However, when Covid-19 related travel restrictions were lifted, I was able to travel to the field.

After conducting face-to-face interviews, I began preparations for an FGD. Only three out of the seven respondents agreed to the discussion. The responses to the interviews to some extent also provided the topics to explore in the FGD. Hence, the FGD explored, among others the following issues:

- The relationship between the age of the FBO and their level of involvement in PCVE programs.
- The case for the suitability of FBOs in implementing or participating in the implementation of PCVE programs.
- The challenges FBOs face in implementing PCVE programs as compared to other organizations
- The funding challenges experienced by the FBOs in implementing PCVE programs.

Only one FGD was conducted in January, 2022. The discussion approximately took an hour. On this occasion, other than acquiring and setting up the venue for the FGD, I served as the moderator and took notes as the discussion progressed.

4.7.2. Archival research

According to Mohr and Ventresca (2002), archival research involves a wide range of activities involving the investigation of documents or texts developed by an organization or about it. Although, originally applied in the study of historical documents or texts, archival research has come to be used in qualitative research to supplement other research methods. It also includes the study and analysis of digital or electronic documents and databases (Mohr & Ventresca, 2002).

Through archival research, I intended to conduct a systematic review of documents in form of relevant annual reports, plans, email correspondence and other suitable documents provided by the organizations involved in the study. The documents would be useful in not only providing useful official information but also for triangulation purposes. Data obtained from archival research would supplement as well as corroborate the data obtained through interviews.

Archival research involved a study of a variety of documents. The exercise started with the scrutinizing of the profiles of the organizations for those that have an online presence as well as those filed by the others. Thereafter, the annual reports filed and/or submitted to donor agencies by organizations implementing PCVE programs through donor funding was included. Other than annual reports from these organizations, I also obtained and analyzed donor reports on PCVE programs implemented within the county. In addition, the Isiolo County Action Plan (CAP) which serves as the basis for coordinating the stakeholders' efforts in PCVE work was also part of the documents analyzed.

However, it was not possible to gain access to email or correspondence related to the organizations' involvement in PCVE programs and activities. The organizations were uncomfortable with sharing access to such internal documents. All in all, the documents available had all information required and so the lack of access to data related to organizations' correspondence did not compromise the quality of the study and data collected.

4.8. Data storage and security

As part of ensuring credibility of the study as well as in line with the ethical considerations of my research, I stored and ensured security of the data collected through the following ways:

- i. Storing data on a secure encrypted external computer hard drive that was kept in secure lockable cabinet.
- ii. Storing the copies of informed consent forms in a lockable cabinet.
- iii. *Nettskjema* platform provided by the university for data collection purposes provides for secure encryption of data in the case of administering written interviews.
- iv. All data will be destroyed immediately after the research study is submitted and approved. Personal data shall be anonymized through use of codes.
- v. Since all respondents were uncomfortable with any audio or video recordings of interviews or discussions, there were no audio or videos of recordings to store or protect.

4.9. Challenges

The initial challenge cropped up at the stage of identifying the FBOs and other organizations to be involved in this study. Internet searches occasioned limited success especially with FBOs. Most of the FBOs in the county have no official websites, social media pages or maintain online presence. A few could only be identified where other organizations, often secular ones, made reference to them when reporting on participants in their events or about collaborations on projects with other organizations. However, it was quite easy to identify the secular organizations. They had official websites and maintained online presence through their social media pages or online publications. To overcome the challenge of identifying the FBOs, I made a list from these mentioning online of some of these FBOs as well as through asking those identified in this way for names of other FBOs in the county. In addition, being a resident of this county was helpful. Some FBOs were familiar and it was therefore easy to reach out to other FBOs through referrals from the familiar ones. On the other hand, in the absence of online presence, constructing the profiles of these FBOs also required relying solely on them for the information.

Since covid-19 pandemic had restricted travel to the field to collect data, physically accessing the respondents was also a challenge at the initial stages of the study. As a result, I planned mostly to rely on the use of online meetings and interviewing to overcome this. However, unreliable internet and telephone network issues was expected to pose a challenge whenever respondents were out in the field and out of urban centers. As mitigating strategy, in such case, I made arrangements to have the meetings scheduled when the respondents were back in the office. Although seemingly a viable solution, there was a great amount of uncertainty on when they would be available. As part of the initial plan, where accessing the respondents for an online interview proved too difficult, I planned to rely on the use of a written interview. To supplement this, I had to also wait for an opportunity to conduct a focus group discussion when 3 or more of the respondents were available. This was meant to ensure high quality data was captured in spite of the challenges experienced.

Attempts to put the above plan into practice at the initial stages of the study, revealed those risks and uncertainties were real. It was difficult to access any of the respondents. On the same note, the respondents sometimes appeared to ignore calls or fail to attend online meetings which they later explained was due to interruptions from work related matters or unforeseen travels. I had to, therefore, patiently wait for the opportune time. Fortunately, when the Covid-19 travel restrictions were relaxed, I was able to travel to the field for data collection.

There was fear of some respondents withholding some useful information or documents that may be useful for archival research and documentary analysis. To make up for this scenario, I strived to establish trust with the respondents through expressing the academic purpose of the study, assuring confidentiality, as well as providing assurances not only of anonymization of any personal data and its secure storage but also by sharing a copy of the research study report at the end of the study. In addition, I had a backup plan to widen the pool of respondents to compensate for respondents that may be uncooperative or drop out of the study. Other respondents within the same organization would have been contacted. The use of a person familiar to the respondents and active in the PCVE space in the county as an 'entry point' made cooperation a reality and interaction successful.

Finally, there was always fear of some risk from violent extremist organizations. In this study, although this risk existed, it was minimal. The study involved engagement with the implementors of PCVE programs which was a public as well as a common conversation. No interaction with victims or recruits of VEOs was undertaken. As a result, this minimized the risk involved.

5.0 Data analysis – Results, findings and discussions

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a discussion on the data collected is undertaken. As earlier stated, the analysis process is thematic and mostly based on a set of pre-established themes. The choice of the themes was guided by the research questions and objectives. However, a few more emerging themes were integrated into the analysis process.

On the same note, the section contains brief profiles of the organizations involved in the study. The profiles are meant to provide a background that would be helpful in understanding the data collected and the discussions ensuing from its analysis and conclusions.

5.2. Data analysis procedure

The data collected was mainly qualitative although it had some aspects of quantitative data; for instance, such as the count of organizations or proportions of FBOs engaged actively in PCVE as opposed to those that are passive.

After data collection, I transcribed all the interviews then checked the transcripts for completeness and consistency by ensuring that information captured were those given by the respondents. This was done by ensuring that respondents got the opportunity to confirm accuracy of what was transcribed before the analysis process commenced.

The raw data was then organized systematically to facilitate analysis. I used thematic analysis. The themes were pre-established based on the research questions and objectives. However, there was flexibility in integrating other themes that emerged from the data collection process. For instance, the relationship between the age of an organization and the level of engagement in PCVE programs.

The interview transcripts and notes from the archival research were sorted into meaningful units based on the pre-established codes or themes and those with similar focus integrated to make sense of them.

The research questions and objectives provided guideline for the analysis of the data. Quantitative aspects of the research data are presented in tables, graphs and charts. However, descriptive narrative based on key elements of the research questions plays a more dominant role in the analysis.

5.3. The cases – A brief profile of the organizations involved in the study

In this section, brief profiles of the organizations involved in this study is provided. This is meant to provide a background to the study and an overview of the activities they are engaged in. These profiles are constructed from those presented online on their web pages where applicable, the interviews as well as from those filed and kept by the organizations.

5.3.1. Isiolo Peace Link

Isiolo Peace Link (IPL) was established in 2006 as a community-based organization aimed at engaging in Peace-building and Reconciliations activities in Isiolo County and other counties in Northern Kenya.

Since its inception, it has helped in resolving various pastoral and urban conflicts. The organization coordinates the use of traditional conflict resolutions mechanism as well as other conventional structures in its conflict management and resolution activities.

Peace Link Organization also offers auxiliary services such as providing alerts on possible conflicts to the law enforcement agencies and other actors in peace-building and conflict prevention.

The organization has collaborated with local and international donors in implementing projects related to local governance, countering violent extremism and preventing resource-based conflicts (Isiolo Peace Link, n.d.).

5.3.2. Isiolo Women of Faith Network (IWFN)

The Isiolo Women of Faith Network (IWFN) is based in Isiolo County. Inaugurated in 2009 as a local chapter of the Kenya Women of Faith, the Isiolo Women of Faith Network (IWFN) was

formed to tackle widespread gender-based violence and agitate for the rights of women. Since then, IWFN has ventured into peace-building and promotion of cohesion in the county.

The Kenya Women of Faith Network (KWFN) to which IWFN is affiliated is linked to the Interreligious Council of Kenya (IRCK). The IRCK offered members of the KWFN training as conflict mediators. Members of the KWFN are drawn from diverse religious affiliation which includes; Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Hindus. About 30 members of the IWFN also received training from the IRCK on alternative conflict resolution techniques (World Faiths Development Dialogue, 2017).

IWFN collaborates with the local security agencies, to actively create awareness on inter-community conflicts and violent extremism through initiatives such as the neighborhood security watch nicknamed *Nyumba Kumi*, peace committees, and various women solidarity and interfaith groups (IRCK, 2020).

The women interfaith network works with families whose sons or daughters were recruited by VEOs. They equip them with knowledge and skills to identify signs of radicalization, offer them counselling services as well as information on how to contact the relevant institutions by cooperating in order to combat the problem.

5.3.3. Merti Holy Qur'an Centre (MHQC)

Merti Holy Qur'an Centre (MHQC) was established in 1985 as a non-profitable organization that operates in Merti District of Isiolo County. The Organization was initially funded by international Islamic nongovernmental organizations; however, these funding sources have been disrupted. Hence, currently relies on volunteers, endowment funds and local donors.

MHQC aims to offer religious and humanitarian services to the community thus promoting the social, economic and moral well-being of the society.

The organization offers support to education through setting up physical facilities for local institutions and providing bursaries to needy students. In addition, it offers capacity building programs to the youth and women through workshops and seminars. In addition, it has

provided subsidiary medical services, drilled boreholes to boost water supply as well as other forms of humanitarian aid. With the advent of violent extremism challenges in Isiolo, MHQC collaborates with the government and other organizations such as the interfaith networks in raising awareness and countering the violent extremist narratives mainly through the use of the pulpit.

5.3.4. Isiolo Inter-Faith Network

The Isiolo Interfaith Network was established 2012 (UNICEF, 2015). Affiliated to the Interreligious Council of Kenya (IRCK), the network brings together Islamic and Christian clerics to advocate for religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence amongst the diverse communities in Isiolo.

The organisation participates in carrying out conflict resolution interventions as a neutral and trustworthy arbiter. It anchors its approach of interventions on religion and spirituality which appeals to the largely Muslim and Christian communities in Isiolo. The pulpit is their main platform in promoting religious tolerance, peace and dialogue.

Isiolo Interfaith Network closely with the county government and organizations such as Interreligious Council of Kenya, Isiolo Peace Link, and Sensitization of Community on Radicalization and Empowerment Solutions (SCORES) among others. The network collaborates with these actors in implementing a number of PCVE programs. For instance, they collaborate with SCORES in delivering PCVE programs that involves deploying imams to speak to secondary school students on religion and violence (CHRIPS, 2020).

In addition, they also participate in the provision of an alternative counter-narrative to those used by the violent extremist organizations to prevent misrepresentation of religion as condoning extremism and terrorism. Moreover, the organization also participates in programs aimed at promoting education, human rights, as well as environmental conservation.

5.3.5. Sensitization of Community on Radicalization and Empowerment Solutions (SCORES)

Established in 2016, Sensitization of Community on Radicalization and Empowerment Solutions (SCORES) is a community based organization based in Isiolo County. The organization was formed not only to address the recruitment of youths from the Isiolo region by Violent Extremist Organizations such as Al Shabab and ISIS but also the increased tension between the government counter terrorism apparatus and the members of the public (SCORES, n.d.).

SCORES is a member of Isiolo CVE engagement forum headed by Isiolo County Commissioner. The organization is run by an executive board of council comprising six volunteers and a membership of ten youths in each of the ten wards in Isiolo County.

The organization partners with local and international organizations such as UNDP Kenya, HORN Institutions, Amani Club and County government of Isiolo. It focuses on activities aimed to support quality sustainable livelihood by promoting suitable empowerment solutions, socio-economic development, sustainable advocacy against violent extremism and community integration.

5.3.6. Al Falah Islamic Centre

The Al-Falah Islamic Centre is an organization based in Isiolo, Kenya. The center was established in 1972 under the sponsorship of the Islamic Foundation of Kenya. The center undertakes a number of charitable activities. These include; a children's home, an elementary secular and religious school, a community clinic and a farm. Other than these programs, the center also undertakes other activities as determined by the mother organization. For instance, it performs youth seminars and workshops on radicalization aligned with the CVE programs implemented by the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM). SUPKEM implements a PCVE project referred to as Building Resilience against Violent Extremism (BRAVE). The project aims to mobilize religious leaders and other community members to develop a counter-narrative to combat extremism.

Other than Islamic Foundation, the center enjoys sponsorship of some of the children at the school or orphanage from international organizations such as the Helping Hand, USA and the ICNA Relief Canada.

5.4. Demographics of the respondent

The respondents in this study were seven in number all purposively selected. There were more male respondents than female ones. However, there was no motivation to achieve any sort of gender balancing. It was more on who occupies a position in the organization that is responsible for PCVE programs implementation.

On the same note the education level was to give a rough assessment of the academic ability to grasp and keep up with the current trends and developments in the PCVE programs and intervention. In addition, the experience in PCVE program was geared towards identifying the length of time the respondents had either directly or indirectly interacted with the PCVE programs as overseeing implementation or taking part as participants. The response would be useful in assessing familiarity with PCVE programs on a query to the respondents on their understanding of the concept of PCVE.

Summarized in the table below is some of the key information regarding the respondents in this study.

Table 2: Demographic information

Gender		Education		Experience in PCVE program	
Male	Female	Below college level	College and above	Below 2 years	Over 2 years
6	1	0	7	0	7

5.5. Nature of the organizations

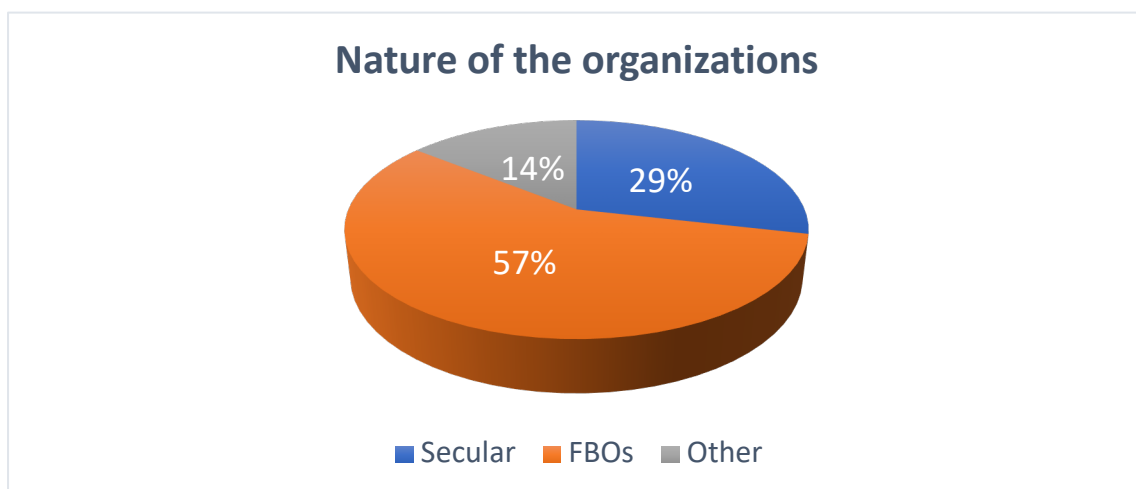
There were six organizations involved in the study. There were two (secular) organizations, four (4) FBOs and a respondent from the County Interfaith Advisor’s department listed as other. Although the study’s focus was the FBOs, the addition of the secular organizations and the county interfaith advisor’s department was to serve two main purposes.

Firstly, it was to help in triangulation and therefore a means to ensure reliability and quality of the data collected. The inclusion of the secular organizations would help corroborate aspects of data collected from the FBOs since they all operate within the same PCVE space. This effect was observed and utilized in this study. For instance, the response by respondents from the FBOs on nature and level of involvement of the FBOs in PCVE was corroborated by the data on collaborations in PCVE by data from both the secular organizations and the county interfaith advisor’s department.

Secondly, the inclusion of the secular organizations and the county interfaith advisor’s department in this study serves to provide a richer background information and knowledge of the PCVE space and actors in Isiolo county.

The chart below summarizes the information on the nature of the organizations involved in the research study:

Figure 2: Nature of the organizations in the study



5.6. Understanding of the PCVE programs

All the respondents expressed understanding of PCVE which aligned with the definition of PCVE provided in this study. They expressed understanding of the activities undertaken both as preventative of radicalization and those aimed at countering actively radicalized individuals and situations.

The FBOs were able to link the activities that are usually undertaken as part of their daily programs as having a bearing on, complementing or as constituting part of PCVE though not yet officially labelled as PCVE activities. For instance, the use of the pulpit to deliver sermons that aim at delivering alternative ideological narratives that discourage radicalism and extremism. In addition, they were able to map out the various actors or stakeholders in a PCVE program.

5.7. PCVE programs and activities

PCVE programs and activities may be categorized in a number of ways. A common categorization in most literature reviewed has been based on type and function (OSCE, 2018). However, in this study and section, no such attempt at such categorization has been made. The main aim was to provide a coherent description of the activities.

Through questions on PCVE programs and activities implemented in the county, this theme enables the exploration of not only the PCVE programs implemented in the county in general but also those implemented by the faith-based organizations. The description of this component is provided below.

5.7.1. PCVE programs implemented in Isiolo County

The following is a summary of the PCVE programs implemented in Kenya whose components are also being carried in Isiolo county. The summary also provides examples of the activities involved in each of the program.

It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list as the situation in the PCVE space in the country and county is fluid and ever changing. Other than this, there is also a challenge in getting information on all the programs and implementors either in literature or on the ground. Some organizations do not readily disclose information on PCVE programs they implement and the donors funding their programs. This could, in part, be attributed to reasons cited in the discussions under passive involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs (*see section 5.8, iii*).

Table 3: Summary of PCVE programs and activities in the county

	Program	Organizations involved	Sample activities
1	Building resilience against violent extremism (BRAVE)	CSCR/BRAVE, SUPKEM, Al Falah Islamic Centre, Council of Imams & Preachers of Kenya	Awareness creation, capacity building of religious leaders, development and dissemination of counter narratives
2	Leveraging Interfaith Mechanisms for conflict mitigation	Interreligious Council of Kenya, Isiolo Interfaith Network	Tackle ethnic violence by training IIN members on conflict resolution skills, trust building among stakeholders
4	NiWajibu Wetu (NIWETU)	DAI, national & county governments, Isiolo Peace Link, Isiolo Women of Faith Network, Isiolo Interfaith Network	Awareness creation, capacity building, trust building between state and CSOs and communities, improve community & government responsiveness
5	PROACT	Isiolo Youth Innovation Center, Interfaith network	Capacity building, awareness creation through visual and performance arts, trust building amongst stakeholders
6	East Africa Preventing Violent Extremism (Civil Society working to prevent radicalization in Kenya)	Isiolo Peace Link, Interfaith Council of Clerics	Capacity building, trust building amongst stakeholders
7	Reducing Insecurity and Violent Extremism in the Northern and Coastal Regions (RE-INVENT Programme)	Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Coffey International Development (Tetra Tech Company), Mercy Corps	Peacebuilding, Police Reform, Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Election Security, Conflict Sensitive Development and Countering Violent Extremism
8	Strengthening Resilience to Violent Extremism	RUSI	Capacity building of law enforcement officers

5.7.2. PCVE activities implemented by the FBOs in Isiolo County

Described in this section are some of the PCVE activities undertaken by the FBOs in Isiolo County. This is mainly based on the feedback from the respondents; however, results from

the documentary analysis emanating from the archival research also helped supplement this data as well as aided in triangulation of data from the interviews. These PCVE activities included the following:

i. Capacity building

This included equipping their staff as well as their clients with knowledge on radicalization and violent extremism. Their staff attended trainings offered by other organizations, among others, such as Isiolo Peace Link, CSCR/BRAVE, DAI, and Arigatou International/GNRC Africa. The FBOs also in turn imparted this knowledge to the members of their faith communities and the public through workshops and seminars as well as the pulpit in mosques and churches and on local community radios.

Most of the respondents mentioned holding most of these workshops and trainings for the youth and other at-risk members of the society. This capacity building programs also targeted parents who were equipped with the skills recognize signs of radicalization for timely reporting and intervention.

On the other hand, the members of the FBOs at times served as resource persons in trainings organized by other organizations. So, in this way, they contributed to building the capacity of the collaborating organizations and their clients.

ii. Trust building

Countering violent extremism and terrorism in the country, at the onset involved the employment of heavy-handed approach which marginalized a section of the community (*refer to the section on evolution of PCVE in Kenya*). The Muslim community bore the brunt of this 'hard' counter-terrorism approach to countering radicalization and violent extremism. As a result, there was mistrust not only between the security agencies and a section of the Kenyan community but also amongst the population. Thus, the trust building component of the PCVE program undertaken by the FBOs aimed to promote peaceful coexistence amongst the population and the diverse faith communities through use of interfaith dialogues.

iii. Development of counter-narratives

Studies have shown that, one of the ways in which violent extremist organizations carried out their recruitments in Isiolo was through the use of religious narratives which involved misinterpretation of verses of Holy Qur'an (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020). Combating this, therefore, required provision of a counter-narrative. The FBOs were the most suitable candidates to develop and implement this campaign. Consequently, the FBOs undertook this activity according to the respondents.

For the FBOs, this component of the PCVE program not only useful in serving to sensitize the members of their faith communities on the misinterpretation of verses from the holy books by the VEOs but also in portraying the peaceful, cohesive and tolerant image of their religious faith. The FBOs used the pulpit, the local community radio and workshops to implement this activity and deliver their messages.

iv. Sensitization and awareness creation

A bulk of the PCVE activities undertaken by the civil society organizations centered around sensitization of the communities on the significance of peace, cohesion, tolerance, and on the dangers of radicalization and violent extremism (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020; USAID, 2019; OSCE, 2018). This may be attributed to the perception of most NGOs and CBOs as local grassroots organizations that draw their membership from and in touch with their local communities.

The faith-based organizations involved in the study, and this could be the same for all the others, were quite actively engaged in sensitization and awareness creation campaigns through a variety of platforms such as public meetings, places of worship and in the mainstream media such as the local radio stations. In some cases, according to the respondents, this formed part of their normal activities and outside the labeling of these activities as constituting the formal PCVE programs.

v. Psychosocial support

All the organizations in the study acknowledged offering some form of psychosocial support to the family of victims or to those they felt were at risk of radicalization. This came out strongly both in literature and during the interviews with the respondents (IRCK, 2020). Two of the FBOs involved in the study; Isiolo Women of Faith Network and Isiolo Interfaith Network confirmed they mainly offered psychosocial support to parents whose children either disappeared or were recruited by Al Shabab to join their fight in Somalia and carry out terror-related activities in the country or abroad. Other than the missing children and stigmatization by the members of the local communities, these parents also reportedly receive considerable amounts of harassments and intrusion into their privacy through heightened surveillance from the security services (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020; IRCK, 2020).

On the other hand, all the organizations in the study acknowledged the reluctance of the security services to let the organizations engage in the disengagement and rehabilitation of the returnees or victims of recruitment. This was because there was a feeling within the security services, according to the respondents, that the FBOs were not well equipped to carry out the rehabilitation of returnees who were deemed to pose security risk should they be part of a sleeper cell. On the same note, for Muslim FBOs there seemed to be fear of the suspicion of being labelled sympathizers and enablers of violent extremism. However, the organizations felt with relevant and adequate capacity and trust building, they may be well suited to participate actively in the rehabilitation programs.

5.8. Nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs

Based on the face-to-face interviews and the FGD, the respondents expressed varied degrees of involvement of their organizations in PCVE activities in the county. This data was also supplemented by data from archival research on partnerships and collaborations by the various organizations working in the PCVE space. The data from archival research mainly came from annual reports organizations keep or submit to the donor or funding agencies (USAID, 2019; SCORES, 2020; IPL, 2020).

Based on the data collected, the nature of the involvement of these organizations in PCVE programs and activities can be categorized into the following three main ways:

i. Direct involvement

This refers to a situation where the set of activities engaged in are officially labelled as being part of PCVE. It involves direct involvement in the PCVE programs and activities as a main implementor or takes the lead role in the implementation of these programs and activities. In addition, it involves instances where the organization either utilizes its own or donor funding in conducting these activities.

Isiolo Peace Link, SCORES and Isiolo Women of Faith Network have all had either internal or external funding to carry out large scale PCVE programs and activities. They were the main implementors and took the lead role in these programs and activities.

Although the other organizations which includes the remaining FBOs engage in some activities that may be construed as serving the same purpose as those implemented as part of PCVE programs, that has not been regarded in this study as constituting direct involvement in PCVE due to the absence of such labelling.

ii. Indirect involvement

This refers to involvement in the PCVE programs and activities as either collaborators and partners or as participants. The form of collaboration in this case involves a kind of partnership where the partner organization is in the lead role in the program.

In this study some FBOs confirmed collaborating with their mother organizations in carrying out PCVE programs. For instance, Isiolo Interfaith Network was initially affiliated to the Interfaith Network of Kenya before becoming autonomous. While affiliated to Interfaith Network of Kenya (IFNK), it used to carry out PCVE programs or components of it as part of the mother organizations bigger project with their facilitation and funding. Other than collaboration with IFNK, respondents mention that Isiolo Interfaith Network has also partnered with other organizations such as Isiolo Peace Link, SCORES, IRCK as well as Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI).

Alfalah Islamic Center also implemented some components of PCVE programs implemented by its mother organization, Islamic Foundation of Kenya in collaboration with the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims and other organizations such as Arigatou International/GNRC Africa.

In addition, indirect involvement in this study has also been used to refer to instances where members of an organization took part as participants in a PCVE program implemented by another organization or the state. Members from these organizations have taken part in PCVE activities and programs as participants. According to the respondents, this by far seemed to be the most prominent mode of involvement by the FBOs as seen in this study. This was also the kind of involvement of FBOs that was captured prominently in the literature reviewed (*refer to problem statement and gap in literature sections*).

As part of their participation in PCVE programs in these ways, members of the FBOs have also served as resource persons; especially where drafting, and delivering of alternative narratives to counter the violent extremist organizations' narratives are concerned. In addition, they have been involved in awareness creation about PCVE and peacebuilding related programs using the pulpit or radio stations as part of some official PCVE programs.

Based on feedback from the respondents, all the organizations involved in this study have been involved indirectly in PCVE programs and activities at some point in time.

iii. Passive involvement

This refers to cases where an organization or members of the organization take part in activities that may as well be described as constituting a PCVE program but without it being labelled as such.

All FBOs have engaged and continue to engage in such activities. For instance, this includes activities such as giving sermons related to conflict, moderation, or workshops and seminars that aim to build capacity of the youth and vulnerable members of the society.

In addition, passive involvement comprises situations where an organization neither expresses support nor opposition to PCVE programs and activities implemented within their locality.

Two of the FBOs in the study were passive about the PCVE programs at the onset of the state driven and externally donor funded CVE and PCVE related activities in the county. Responses from respondents across all the organizations, both FBOs and secular, on why this was so yielded varied data.

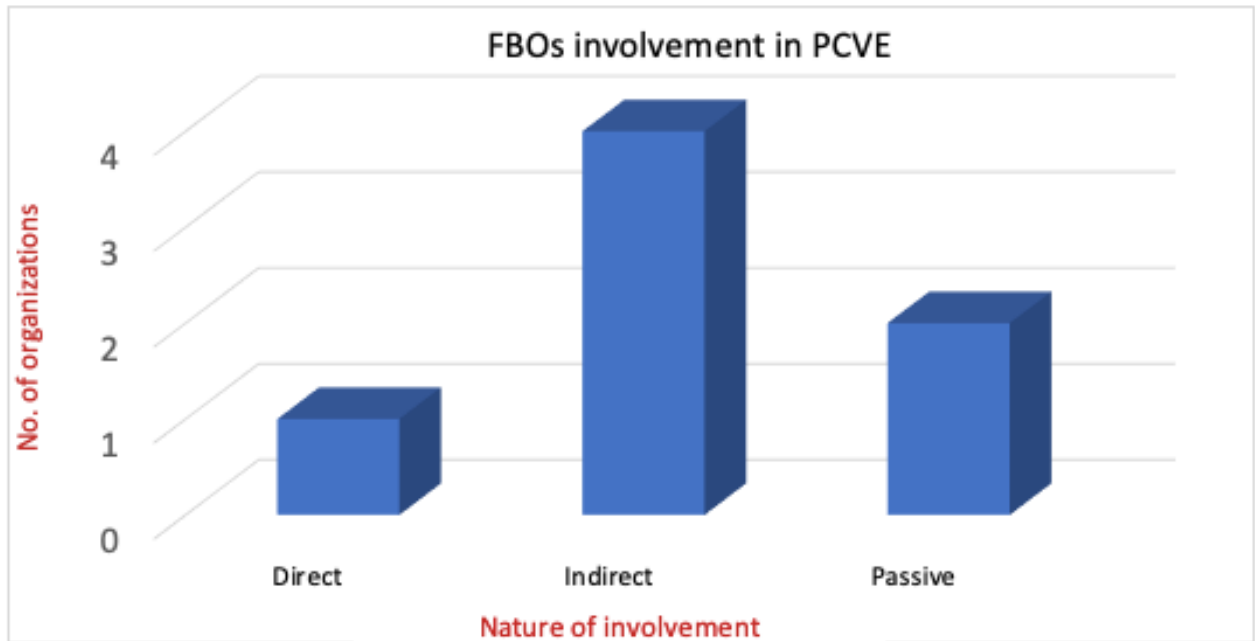
Generally, the onset of CVE activities in Kenya involved the employment of high-handed measures such as profiling, arbitrary arrests and detentions which mainly targeted Muslim communities and organizations (*see section 2.2 on evolution of PCVE in Kenya*). This created not only a stigma but also a lack of trust between the various actors in the PCVE space and hence the passivity on the part of the FBOs in engaging in CVE and later PCVE programs. On the same note, in spite of offering no reasons for lack of initiative on their part, some FBOs felt there has not been effort to engage them directly by other organizations, donors and the state.

On the other hand, some respondents also mentioned the presence of fear of reprisals from the VEOs and the recruiters. This fear can be given some credence by information from literature on PCVE in the country. In a study conducted for World Bank Group involving a rapid assessment of institutional architecture for conflict mitigation in Isiolo County, there were reports of harassment of those reporting on violent extremism by violent extremist organizations (Agade and Halakhe, 2016). The report also notes how, in other counties such as Mombasa, this has resulted in killing of some Muslim clerics. Meinema (2021) also notes how Muslim FBOs implementing PCVE programs avoid publicly identifying with Western donors funding PCVE programs for fear of violent extremist organizations (VEOs). It is important to note that, the VEO involved in all the identified cases is Al Shabab which is also active in and carrying recruitments in Isiolo County.

Other than fear of reprisals from the VEOs, study of existing literature also reveals state harassment of FBOs that are active in CVE and also champion human rights. For instance, Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI) and Haki Africa were put on a list of sympathizers and supporters of terrorism in a move that was seen largely as politically motivated (Seefar, 2016).

The graph below portrays a summary of the data on nature and level of involvement in PCVE by FBOs:

Figure 3: Nature & level of involvement in PCVE



5.9. Age of organization and involvement in PCVE programs

In the course of compiling the profiles of the organizations involved in the study and during the initial face-to-face interviews with the respondents, a pattern on the relationship between the age and the period of formation of an organization and its nature and level of involvement in PCVE programs and activities emerged. This prompted the exploration of this phenomenon in subsequent the face-to-face interviews and the follow up queries as well as mainly during the focus group discussion session.

The table below provides a summary of the data on the nature of the organizations involved in the study, the date or year of their inception, as well as the nature and level of their involvement in the PCVE programs and activities.

Table 4: Age of organization and involvement in PCVE

	Organization	nature	Inception	Involvement
1	Isiolo Peace Link Organization	Secular	2006	Direct/indirect
2	SCORES	Secular	2016	Direct/indirect
3	Merti Holy Qur'an Center	FBO	1985	Indirect/passive
4	Isiolo Inter-Faith Organization	FBO	2012	Indirect
5	Isiolo Women of Faith Network	FBO	2009	Direct/indirect
6	Al Falah Islamic Centre	FBO	1972	Indirect/passive

Based on the above data, all the secular or faith-based organizations that are either directly or indirectly involved in PCVE programs are relatively younger compared to the FBOs that were mostly indirectly or passively involved in PCVE activities. Putting the significant developments in the PCVE space in the country into consideration, these organizations were all formed after the September 11 attacks on the world trade center and the subsequent war on terror campaigns.

Based on the above, an assumption could be made with regards to their formation to meet some conflict management related need. For instance, according to UNICEF (2015), an Isiolo Interfaith Network was formed around the year 2012 as part of their 'Leveraging Inter-Faith Mechanisms for Conflict Mitigation' project. Supplemented by information from the interviews and an examination of their core activities, these organizations came into existence as a result of the contemporary security challenges experienced in the county.

5.10. Significance and motivation for or against engagement in PCVE programs

As discussed in an earlier section, the lack of success of the hard military approach to countering violent extremism and the fact that some of the grounds and grievances exploited by the VEOs lie beyond the reach of government, made the need for the CSOs involvement in PCVE programs relevant and inevitable (OSCE, 2018). According to an OSCE report (2018), CSOs by their orientation and the space they occupy are regarded as more credible and experienced at working with vulnerable individuals in the society. It is, therefore, inevitable that the FBOs in the study were drawn towards participating in various forms in PCVE programs implemented in the county.

In addition, the organizations in the study acknowledged that violent extremism related to religious ideology posed a new challenge in the county. It threatened to divide communities that had coexisted peacefully in spite of occasional violence over natural resources between the pastoralist communities. The organizations in this study, therefore, reported their involvement in PCVE activities to have been motivated by the need to promote peace, tolerance and coexistence amongst the local communities in the county.

Related to this is often a pressure placed on the Muslim community members, leaders, and organizations to speak out on violent extremism whenever terror-related incidences involving Muslims is reported (Schneier, 2015). Thus, FBOs, especially Muslim organizations are hard-pressed to condemn and act on allegations that they support or are complicit in violent extremism incidences. The respondents from the FBOs acknowledged this as partly motivating their need to act and engage in PCVE activities.

On the same note, violent extremism related to religious ideology tends to paint a specific religious faith as the source and its followers as the perpetrators in the public opinion. In this case, the violent extremism explored in this study is related to Islam and the Muslim FBOs expressed the need for their participation in order to clear this misconception. Two of the FBOs in the study purely draw membership from the Muslim community while the other two interfaith networks have members from across the religious divide. For these organizations, participating in the PCVE programs was an opportunity to provide a counter-narrative to the one provided by the VEOs. In addition, the interfaith networks' platform provided for an opportunity to disseminate these counter-narratives to all the communities across the religious divide.

With regards to reasons for lack of engagement in PCVE programs, no FBO expressed any opposition to taking part in the implementation of PCVE programs. The indirect and passive involvement in these programs by the FBOs as explained earlier was mainly out of hesitation based on the precarious position these organizations occupy between the VEOs and the government (*see section 5.4 on nature and level of involvement*). This involves the fear of being perceived as spies for the state and foreign agents by the VEOs on one hand and as enablers or accomplices of the VEOs by the government on the other hand. The respondents confirmed this in their responses.

On the other hand, the participation of the FBOs in PCVE programs either directly or indirectly is of significance to all the stakeholders in the PCVE space. The participation in these programs helps build the capacity of the personnel of these organizations as well as build trust between not only the collaborating organizations but also between the FBOs and the government. In the face-to-face interviews, the respondents confirmed the improved working relationship with other organizations in the PCVE space as well as the government and the security agencies. As pointed out earlier (*see section 5.4*), the mistrust between the FBOs and the government has been one of the challenges facing the implementation of successful PCVE programs. On the same note, for donor agencies and the government, the collaboration with the CSOs such as the FBOs, ensures that beneficiaries most in need are identified and reached (Seefar, 2016). Studies have shown that religion is quite influential in times of social upheavals as individuals turn to it for help in navigating the crisis in their lives (Omar, 2016). During the interviews and the FGD, the respondents from the FBOs expressed their recognition of this role of religion. For instance, the Isiolo Women of Faith Network offer not only psychosocial support to families affected by violent extremism but also empowers them to identify, cooperate with and seek support from relevant institutions such as in cases of recruitment of family members by VEOs (IRCK, 2020).

On the same note, although no study on the success of the various PCVE initiatives undertaken by specifically the FBOs was available, the respondents from both the FBOs and the secular organizations acknowledged the critical role of the provision of counter-narratives to those of VEOs in reducing incidences of recruitment of the youth from the county. The respondents also reported improved interfaith relations within the county.

As part of PCVE programs, governments and CSOs often undertake capacity building activities that target populations that are at risk of radicalization. Although the FBOs in the study acknowledged their limited ability to carry out such activities due to limited funding, they confirmed agitating for these through various platforms and engagements with the government and other organizations. Currently, Isiolo County has a youth innovation center established by the Kenya School of Government aimed at building the capacity of the youth. The center works with CSOs and the local community to provide this service. The Kenya school

of Government is a government institution established with the mandate to transform the public service through human resource capacity development (KSG, n.d.).

5.11. Challenges faced by FBOS in engaging in PCVE programs

Although the participation of the CSOs in general and the FBOs in particular in PCVE programs and activities is essential as alluded to in some of the sections above, it faces a number of challenges. The discussion on these challenges in this section is informed not only by the data from the interviews, FGD and the archival research but also by the review of related literature.

As part of the Kenya government's effort to streamline PCVE programs, the Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2019 was passed. The bill outlines new approving and reporting procedures with regards to PCVE interventions and requires the Kenya National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) to provide concurrence for all PCVE activities in the country (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020). Although aimed at coordinating efforts in the PCVE, this legislation also presents a stifling effect on the stakeholders such as the CSOs who sometimes not only play some oversight role on government agency activities but may also need to respond to situations in a timely and creative manner. Where ordinarily CSO activities are restricted, those of FBOs face far greater scrutiny given the stigma and mistrust they encounter with regards to violent extremism and terrorism. For instance, there have been incidences of some FBOs questioning government excesses and human rights abuses in the war on terror getting themselves blacklisted as sponsors of terrorism (Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020).

Other than harassment of FBOs and their leadership, mostly drawn from the religious elites, by the state security agencies, this group also faces security threats from the VEOs against whom they sometimes preach (Wario, 2021). The respondents also echoed these sentiments during face-to-face interviews and the FGD. This is a real threat to the religious leadership of FBOs which is not confined to Isiolo County. Vocal religious clerics have been shot dead by suspected Al Shabab operatives at the Coast of Kenya (Agade & Halakhe, 2019).

According to the respondents, the full-scale implementation of PCVE programs require substantial funding. The FBOs in the study, like is the case with the majority of the FBOs in the county, have limited funding sources to implement sustained PCVE programs (Wario, 2021).

The Muslim FBOs especially have had their external funding sources disrupted from the onset of the war on terror by the US and its allies (Morris, 2010).

Other than inadequate funding, stigmatization and security threats faced by the FBOs, the respondents also identified gate-keeping of the PCVE space by some actors from secular organizations that enjoy funding to implement or coordinate PCVE programs. Gatekeeping refers to a situation where a few individuals or organizations determine the extent or amount of information, places or participants that can be accessed (Liko, 2018). This allows the gatekeepers to enjoy financial gains, monopoly in a sector or control over access to opportunities for funding and networking. The respondents from the FBOs allege favoritism in terms of invitation to participate in PCVE activities or in the sharing of information about events. The events in question were those that are mostly either implemented, or coordinated by some secular organization or their partners. However, other organizations attributed this to challenges related to logistics and limited funding.

5.12. Funding of PCVE programs In Isiolo

Violent extremism and/or terrorism is a global security challenge. In the discussion on the evolution of PCVE in Kenya, I mentioned how national and international collaborations and efforts have been undertaken to deal with the phenomenon. Governments and donor agencies have marshalled finances and resources to fund PCVE program and activities (Presthold, 2011; Aronson, 2012; Van Zyl & Mahdi, 2019; USAID, 2019).

The PCVE programs in Isiolo county is undertaken with resources from external donors funding, the county and national government as well as local organizations' resources. With regards to a query on sources of funding for PCVE activities undertaken in the county, the respondent in this study identified the sources mentioned above.

5.12.1. Challenges faced by FBOs in Funding of PCVE programs

Various studies on challenges encountered by the various implementors of PCVE programs have often cited the lack of sufficient funding (Agade & Halakhe, 2019; Wario, 2021). The respondents in this study also acknowledged lack of funding as one of the major impediments to the implementation of sustained PCVE activities by CSOs in general and FBOs in particular.

On sources of funding for the PCVE activities they undertake, all the FBOs confirmed mostly using their own resources for carrying out some small scale PCVE activities intermittently. The respondents confirmed internal funds were so limited as to be dedicated towards these efforts. Hence, the use of avenues that required little or no funding such as the pulpit was utilized for awareness and community sensitization purposes as part of their main PCVE activity. Only one of the FBOs acknowledged ever receiving donor funding to carry out some PCVE activities.

During the FGD, there was a discussion on funding challenges faced by the FBOs. The respondents acknowledged FBOs face challenges accessing donor funding from conventional international funding sources. According to some respondents, Muslim oriented FBOs are usually suspicious of the intentions of Western donors and are indifferent towards applying for these fundings even where opportunities existed especially with regards to PCVE programs. Existing studies reinforce the existence of this suspicion in addition to the fear of identification with Western donors (Meinema, 2021). The suspicion may cut both ways as donors and governments are also generally wary of engaging FBOs, especially those considered illiberal, in development projects (Becker, 2015; Salehin, 2018; Mackintosh & Duplat, 2013; Wario, 2021). Within the FBOs circles, this suspicion seems higher amongst relatively old and conservative faith-based organizations.

Other than this mistrust, the respondents also identified lack of capacity as one of the factors hindering access to donor funding by FBOs. They posited that most FBOs, especially old ones, lack the structures, knowledge and personnel to successfully identify, bid for and secure donor funding for their PCVE programs. These organizations are, therefore, disadvantaged as they cannot adequately compete for the limited donor funding opportunities.

5.13. Suitability of FBOs in conducting PCVE activities

In the earlier discussion on the increasing recognition of the role and the relationship between FBOs and development work as well as PCVE programs, we saw how they uniquely operate as boundary agents and development entrepreneurs. They play a critical role in expressing alternative views on development and their activities permeate different spheres of a society's life (Koehrsen & Heuser, 2020).

In the face-to-face interviews as well as the FGD, respondents were asked about the suitability of engaging FBOs in PCVE programs. The respondents acknowledged FBOs as representatives of faith traditions enjoy great loyalty and attention from their followers. Although modernization seems to have somehow eroded this to some extent, the respondents felt this has still persisted. As a result, their messages, endorsements and participation in a program or activity gives such programs increased credibility. In this regard, the FBOs stand above other secular organizations. For instance, respondents make reference to expectation of allowances by participants when attending meetings, workshops and seminar organized by CSOs. However, there rarely is no such expectation when attending forums organized by FBOs according to the respondents.

On the other hand, as has been mentioned earlier, religion maybe used to incite, recruit, legitimize, or justify violence (Omar, 2016). Violent extremist organizations have often utilized this to acquire recruits to their cause. Suspected recruiters have in some cases been linked to religious organizations or FBOs (OSCE, 2018). However, FBOs still remain a credible ally and partner in mitigating this challenge through provision of counter narratives and implementation of interventions aimed at mitigating some of the factors leading to radicalization (Omar, 2016; Agade & Halakhe, 2016; Sharamo & Mohamed, 2020). The respondents in the study, from both the faith-based and secular organizations, acknowledge the need for more involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs.

6.0 Summary and conclusions

In this chapter, I provide a summary as well as reflections derived from the findings of my study. Provided in the different sections within the chapter are also recommendations based on these reflections. In addition, there are comments on the gap in literature identified at the outset of this study, insights from answers to the research questions and objectives as well as an exploration of opportunities for further research.

6.1. Summary on the identified gap in literature

Both at the preparation stage and at the outset of this study, an extensive literature search and inquiry revealed a gap in literature. There is literature on radicalization, recruitment by VEOs and implementation of PCVE programs by CSOs in Isiolo County (Miriri, 2019; USAID, 2019; RUSI, 2020; Turi, 2020). However, the search turned up little data on direct involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. It is this gap that motivated this study into motivation and nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. Conducting this study provided an opportunity to carry out literature review, face-to-face interviews and archival inquiry on the same.

An inquiry from the respondents during face-to-face interviews and FGD as well as the archival research confirms the above situation. The data gathered on the nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE may partly help in explaining the phenomenon. The FBOs are mainly involved indirectly or passively in the implementation of PCVE programs. As a result, when documentation and reporting is conducted, it is the organizations or actors that are directly involved who get their narratives recorded. The rest are briefly mentioned as participants or partners. The respondents from the FBOs confirmed this was indeed the case.

However, as to whether the FBOs have anything to document, this study reveals that there is. FBOs in their own capacity undertake numerous activities that constitute but not yet officially labelled as PCVE activities. Recognition and documentation of these activities as being part of PCVE programs can provide materials for reflection on the PCVE practice in the county. This may in turn have implications for funding, ownership and sustainability of PCVE programs and activities.

Hence, this study not only confirms the existence of the gap and provide an explanation as to why this was so but also fills the gap by providing data on the nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs.

6.2. Summary on the research questions and objectives

The study set out to answer a number of questions on the motivation, nature and level of participation as well as the PCVE activities undertaken by the FBOs.

These questions have stayed relevant throughout the study. However, seeking answers to these questions led to the formulation of an additional question. The additional question thus was;

- *What is the link between the age of an FBO and the nature and level of its involvement in PCVE activities?*

At the initial stages of data collection, there was a realization on a possible link between age of an organization and nature and level of participation in PCVE programs. This angle was pursued through follow up questions after the initial face-to-face interviews, and inclusion of a question on the same during subsequent interviews. In addition, it also influenced the focus of the FGD.

In the course of the study, through the interviews, literature reviews and the FGD it was apparent that there was indeed a link between the age of FBOs and the nature of their involvement in PCVE activities. Generally, older FBOs played more indirect and passive role in the implementation of PCVE activities. The challenges identified in section 5.8 on nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs may partly explain this. In addition, the younger FBOs who mainly adopted an interfaith approach may have come into existence as a response to the cotemporary security challenges. This also partly explains why the nature of their involvement differed from that of older and more conservative FBOs. The respondents from this organizations confirmed the same.

6.3. Summary on the nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs

Based on the data from the interviews, focus group discussion and archival research the organizations' involvement in PCVE programs ranged from direct to indirect and passive. However, these modes of involvement are not mutually exclusive as organizations would be passive towards some PCVE activities but indirectly or directly involved in others. For instance, the Isiolo Women of Faith Network would be directly involved in carrying out psychosocial support programs and indirectly involved in a capacity building program implemented by Isiolo Peace Link organization. Hence, perceiving the nature of involvement as mutually exclusive would distort the complete picture.

On the other hand, funding seems to have significant influence on the nature and level of involvement. In the absence of funding to directly implement PCVE programs, organization would either opt to be passive or get into partnership with other organizations.

On the same note, the official labelling of programs and activities as constituting PCVE may also have had an influence on the results of the classification of the FBOs involvement based on the nature and level of involvement in PCVE programs. This would also have an impact on the documentation of the same. For instance, the respondents from the FBOs identified a number of activities they implement which constitute PCVE activities such as regular Friday lectures by Muslim clerics on peace, co-existence, sensitization on substance abuse or misinformation about Jihad, etc. However, they never regarded them as PCVE activities or reported them as so. Therefore, this affects not only the classification of the FBOs but also documentation which in turn contributes to the gap in literature on the involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. Hence, identifying these activities, acknowledging them as part of PCVE activities and documenting them appropriately would help fill the gap in literature.

6.4. Summary on the challenges faced by FBOs in implementing PCVE programs

In section 5.9, the Miscellaneous Amendments Bill of 2019 was identified as one of the challenges faced by CSOs in general and FBOs in particular in the PCVE space. The bill requires the Kenya National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) to provide concurrence for all PCVE activities in the country and sets new approving and reporting procedures. Although aimed

at coordinating efforts in PCVE interventions due to national security considerations, this has a stifling effect. In addition, it may cause delays considering government bureaucratic systems. For instance, captured in literature during archival research, is a report by one of the implementors of *NiWajibu Wetu*, a PCVE project implemented in a number of counties including Isiolo county, documenting such delays as having affected their activities disrupting their target timelines (USAID, 2019). Ways of preventing such occurrences could be through possible amendments to the approval and reporting procedures as well as in streamlining the operations of NCTC.

Lack of adequate funding was by far one of the biggest challenges to the direct involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. The reasons ranged from highly competitive donor funding environment and unwillingness to pursue some funding sources to lack of capacity to successfully bid for donor funding. Claims of gate-keeping by some organizations may have also exacerbated this situation. On the other hand, the lack of capacity and apathy towards pursuing some donor funding sources seems to affect the older FBOs more as compared to the younger ones. However, the data from the face-to-face interviews on use of own resources to carry out PCVE activities by FBOs is encouraging since it may impact on ownership and sustainability of PCVE programs in the county. Moreover, owing to the unique position the FBOs occupy in the PCVE space, efforts may need to be put in not only sensitizing them on donor funding sources but also in building their capacity.

On the other hand, mistrust between FBOs and the government security agencies as well as threats from VEOs was cited as one of the challenges FBOs generally face in the country. Possible contributors of threats from violent extremist organizations (VEOs) to religious leaders and FBOs may emanate from incidences where information on reporters of VEO recruitments leaks back to the suspected recruiters. Although the respondents did not directly acknowledge this, it was documented in past studies and mapping of conflict dynamics in Isiolo (Agade & Halakhe, 2016). In addition, in Mombasa County, such a lapse led to killing of clerics. Memory of such security lapses, therefore, may give rise to mistrust and impact on the nature and level of involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs. These loopholes need to be sealed and synergy established between all the PCVE actors for successful PCVE programs.

6.5. Summary on the significance, suitability and motivation for involvement in PCVE programs by FBOs

The violent extremism prevalent in Isiolo County and also the subject of this study is religious extremism related to Islam. Four FBOs were involved in the study. The motivation for involvement of FBOs in PCVE programs ranged from responding to pressure by the public to respond to extremism, promoting peaceful coexistence and countering religious misinformation to meeting the psychosocial needs of, among others, the members of their congregations.

On the hand, the interfaith organizations involved in the study brought together Muslim and Christian clerics. Some of the radicalized youth from Isiolo who also took part in terror-related incidences were new converts. Based on the nature of the extremism, it was quite understandable why the Muslim clerics would be actively involved. However, for the Christian clerics this was also a source of concern. This reflects an existing vulnerability which involvement by clerics across the religious divide would help mitigate. Pursuing the motivations and feasibility of this from such a perspective may serve an opportunity for further research.

With regards to the significance of the FBOs in PCVE programs, it was quite clear from the respondents' perspectives and from archival research that there was improved trust and working relationship between the various PCVE actors in the county, reduced incidences of recruitments as well as increased awareness on radicalization, recruitment strategies, etc. In addition, participation in the PCVE programs also contributes to building capacity of the organizations involved.

Moreover, the suitability and contributions of the CSOs in general and FBOs in particular in peace and development arena cannot be underestimated as evidence from literature and data from the respondents confirms (Koehrsen & Heuser, 2020; OSCE, 2018). However, it is also significant to weed out unhealthy practices such as gatekeeping and establish synergy amongst all the PCVE actors and practitioners.

6.6. Opportunities for further research

Other than the research questions and objectives, this study provides insights into opportunities for further research. Since the nature of the violent extremism explored in this study was mainly related to a religious ideology and mostly associated with Islam, there was a certain bias in the choice of the FBOs. The focus was mainly on Muslim FBOs though an attempt was made to accommodate other faiths through the choice of interfaith organizations.

Therefore, a study with a bias towards the involvement of FBOs from other faith traditions other than Islam in PCVE in Isiolo County would be worth pursuing. Moreso, because when there seems to be evidence of their partial participation through the interfaith network platform. These organizations and members of their faith communities have always been perceived as victims and targets of religious violent extremists (United States Department of State, 2019; Gettleman, 2012).

On the same note, claims of gatekeeping by some organizations in the PCVE space also provides an opportunity for further research. Such a study may explore the drivers of the practice, how it is perpetuated as well as its effect on the implementation of PCVE programs in particular and peace building projects.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview schedule – (Organizations)

1. Is your organization secular or faith-based?

2. What is your understanding of preventing and countering Violent extremism (PCVE)?

3. Is your organization involved in PCVE activities? If yes, what PCVE activities does it carry out? (*Mainly activities led or directly implemented with or without external funding*)

4. What is your organization's motivation/reasons for carrying out the PCVE activities?

5. If your organization is not involved in PCVE activities, what is could be the reason for the lack of engagement in the activities?

6. What is the significance of PCVE activities you undertake?

7. What is the source of the funding for the PCVE activities you undertake?

8. What other organizations does your organization collaborate with on PCVE work? And which PCVE activities did you implement together?

9. How many of these organizations are faith-based organizations (FBOs)?

10. What is the significance of engaging faith-based organizations in PCVE activities?

11. What are the challenges of engaging FBOs in PCVE activities?

Appendix 2: Interview schedule (Interfaith coordinator)

1. What is your understanding of preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE)?

2. How does your office contribute towards the implementation of PCVE programs in the county?

3. What kinds of organizations take part in the implementation of PCVE programs in the county?

4. How are FBOs involved in the implementation of PCVE programs in the county?

5. What challenges do FBOs face in the implementation of the PCVE programs in the county?

6. What is the significance of FBOs involvement in the implementation of PCVE programs in the county?

7. What other unique contributions do FBOs make in the implementation of PCVE programs as compared to other kinds of organizations?

Appendix 3 – Informed Consent Form

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project [*preventing and countering violent extremism: A case study of Faith-based organizations in Isiolo County in Kenya*] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in *online meeting or interview*
- to participate in *a written interview – if applicable*
- for my personal data to be processed outside the EU – if applicable*
- for information about me/myself to be published in a way that I can be recognised – if applicable*
- for my personal data to be stored after the end of the project for follow-up studies – if applicable*

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. [*insert date*]

(Signed by participant, date)

