

Incidences and Implications of Insecurity on Non-Governmental Organizations Service Delivery in Mandera County, Kenya

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Abstract:

The Kenyan government is increasingly concerned about the ongoing deterioration of insecurity concerns and the recurrent terror attacks that are being fueled by terrorist operations in Mandera County. This study looked at the incidences and implications of insecurity on non-governmental organizations in Mandera County, Kenya. This study's broad objective served as guidance as it explored incidences of criminal attacks against NGOs, examined factors that contribute to the insecurity of NGOs in Mandera County, and ultimately established the implications of insecurity on NGOs' services in Mandera County. This study used a descriptive research design with Routine Activity Theory as its foundation. Questionnaires and key informant interview guides served as the primary tools for gathering data. The sample size of this study was 95 respondents drawn from 4 NGOs working in Mandera County and 10 key informants drawn from the Mandera County security committee. Stratified and simple random sampling methods were used in this study. The collected data was interpreted and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and the results were presented in tables with the help of descriptive statistics, namely frequency and percentages. This study found that NGOs were frequently the target of criminal attacks, which negatively impacted their ability to provide services. This study noted various incidences of criminal attacks, including bomb threats, ransom kidnappings, gang rapes, gun shootings, kidnappings, robberies, and assaults, which contributed to the general perception of instability in the area. The findings showed that political unrest in Somalia, long porous borders, the availability of small and light weapons, terrorism, unemployment, a high rate of illiteracy, a lack of government support, poverty, and, lastly, the existence of ongoing armed conflict were the main causes of insecurity. The study also found that insecurity has a negative impact on the services provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with major implications including high operational costs, programs disruptions and suspensions, scaling down of NGOs, and relocation of NGOs to safer grounds. Among other recommendations, this study suggests that NGOs should adopt life insurance policies against their employees, as this will offer protection and even motivation. Strong policies, procedures, and strategies should be developed by the government in order to address the underlying causes of insecurity. Lastly, in order to inform and raise awareness of the need to maintain national peace, the government should impose security training programs.

Keywords: Non-Governmental Organizations, Insecurity, Incidences, Implications, Service Delivery, Prevalence Factors

Introduction:

The problem of insecurity has become a sensitive one, not just in Kenya but all throughout the world. Kenya has become a dangerous and unfriendly country as a result of the increasing instability in the country's northeastern area. The threat of insecurity has grown to be a significant social obstacle to national peace and stability. Operating in an unstable environment not only deters investors but also poses a security risk to the lives of employees and the property of organizations, as stated by Meddings (2001). Amana et al. (2020) contend that the state needs mechanisms, resources, and policies to provide maximum protection for citizens and their properties from any local and international threats.

The provision of services by NGOs to communities is significantly impacted by the existence of hostile and unstable conditions. Assisting people in armed situations or places of widespread violence has always been risky and challenging (Egeland et al., 2011). Rahma and Kani (2023) claim that regardless of an individual's status or geographic location, insecurity concerns continue to pose a challenge to all organizations and individuals worldwide. Non-governmental organizations are more prevalent in communities around the world, particularly when it comes to providing services. Due to its severe effects on providing humanitarian help within unstable nations, insecurity continues to expose NGOs to insecurity threats. The long-running Al Shabab insurgency is still wreaking havoc in Kenya's northeast region, particularly in Mandera County (Rahma and Kani, 2023).

James and Mukhtar (2021) have observed that insecurity crises have severely disrupted the ability of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide services in unstable regions, ultimately rendering many locations inaccessible. The presence of insurgents in the area results in the inaccessibility of many regions, the displacement of people, and even the loss of life as a result of insecurity threats within society. As a result of the insurgency issue in a region, there are now security challenges. If these challenges are not addressed

quickly, they will escalate to complicated levels that call for international cooperation to handle insecurity (James and Mukhtar, 2021).

One significant issue that adds to the problems of insecurity is the porous nature of the Kenyan border. The northeastern region of Kenya has long faced issues related to insecurity. The dangers of cross-border intrusions are just one security consequence of border porosity. The spread of tiny arms and light weapons, kidnappings, the smuggling of illicit products, and terrorism are only a few of the major repercussions. This exacerbates the region's insecurity situation and has a detrimental impact on service delivery (Muchwa, 2023).

King (2010) claims that the existence of global international terrorism has made the environment hostile and made it harder for NGOs to provide meaningful services to the community. According to the Global Terrorism Index (2022), terrorist attacks have devastated Kenya, making the nation insecure and degrading its security situation. Kenya's participation in the African Transitional Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) operations aimed at driving out al-Shabab extremism from Somalia has resulted in the country being listed as a target for terrorism. The Aid Worker Security Report (2022) states that attacks on aid workers proved to be deadly in 2022, leading to a higher number of aid worker casualties than the attacks of the year before. This has made it extremely difficult for NGOs working in northeastern Kenya, particularly the Mandera Triangle, to provide services smoothly (AWSR, 2022; GTI, 2022).

Insecurities have a significant impact on society since they can cause the community as a whole to become unstable and ruin government-instituted infrastructure (Udoh, 2015). Ezeah and Osayi (2014) assert that the degree of devastation caused by insecurity crises in any society ultimately disrupts the provision of functional services, making life extremely tough for the locals. Due to instability and frequent attacks on their personnel and property, service delivery is hampered globally (OCHA, 2019). Due to an increase in insecurity

incidents over the past ten years that have impeded humanitarian access and sophisticated criminal attacks against aid workers, operating aid workers in hostile surroundings has become a significant insecurity concern (OCHA, 2019).

NGOs have created effective strategies and targeted practices to lessen the effects of insecurity, but the issue still exists, claims Irrera (2019). The decision to completely suspend some activities is the most drastic one used by the NGOs, and it has a direct effect on the humanitarian work that has already been done and benefits the local communities. The degree of devastation caused by an insecurity crisis in any society ultimately disrupts the provision of effective services. hence causing life to be extremely difficult for the occupants (Ezeah and Osayi, 2014).

Statement of The Problem:

Scholarly interest in Kenya and perhaps worldwide is currently sparked by the increasing trends of safety and insecurity challenges. It is with great concern that the Al-Shabab insurgency has posed an increased danger to security in Mandera County. The continuous crackdown of terror groups in Somalia has resulted in an influx of Al-Shabab terror into Mandera County, making the situation more dangerous. Recently, there have been numerous and varied instances of insecurity attacks that have exposed NGOs to insecurity threats threatening their property and lives. The ceaseless efforts made by NGOs to provide effective service in Mandera County were severely hampered by insecurity. The presence of the terrorist organization Al Shabab in Mandera County has resulted in numerous fatalities and the destruction of several state infrastructures. According to Amana et al. (2020), the state needs procedures, assets, and laws in order to give residents the best possible protection.

Furthermore, Mandera County has recently seen an increase in attacks that have resulted in property damage, casualties, and even the deaths of innocent bystanders. The community's ability to receive services has been badly impacted by these vulnerabilities and the different consequences of

insecurity. Since 2011, NGOs have been repeatedly exposed to acts of direct and collateral violence that have resulted in numerous fatalities and widespread property devastation. The region still experiences insecurity despite the tireless efforts made by government security agencies through the implementation of numerous strategic initiatives and strategies to address insecurity. Numerous studies have undoubtedly been conducted, but they haven't done anything to examine how often insecurity occurs and what effects it has on NGOs' ability to provide services in Mandera County. Considering that the severity and growth of insecurity have had an adverse effect on the ability of NGOs to provide services, this study focused on examining the incidences and implications of insecurity on non-governmental organizations service delivery of in Mandera County, Kenya.

Methodology:

This study used random and stratified sampling techniques as part of the descriptive research design employed in this study. Data were gathered using questionnaires and a key informant interview guide purposefully drawn based on their experience and knowledge on security issues in Mandera County. This study's sample size was 95 respondents drawn from 4 NGOs operating in Mandera County and 10 key informants chosen from the Mandera County security committee. The data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, and the results were presented using tables with the help of descriptive statistics, namely frequency and percentages.

Results and Discussions:

Incidences of Targeted Criminal Attacks Against NGOs in Mandera County, Kenya

The first objective of this study explored different incidences of criminal attacks against non-governmental organizations in Mandera County. This study indicates that the most prominent incidences of criminal attacks directed towards non-governmental organizations (NGOs) include car bombs, explosive attacks, robberies, gun shootings, gang rapes, kidnappings, human

trafficking, and arson. Furthermore, the results of this study demonstrated that terror groups employed the use of highly skilled improvised explosive devices and weapons to cause maximum death and destruction, which were mostly responsible for the varied incidents of attacks. According to this study, the majority of NGOs in Mandera County were victims of insecurity. The study's conclusions unequivocally demonstrate that Mandera County is an unstable and unsafe area for NGOs to conduct their service delivery effectively.

The findings of this study lend support to various studies, such as Humanitarian Outcome (2015) on attacks on humanitarian aid workers, which revealed that aid workers were more exposed to danger in conflict settings. In addition, the study revealed that few organizations respond in hostile and insecure environments compared to the larger number of organizations that respond in secure settings. Findings were in line with the Aid Worker Security Report (2022). Workers experience insecurity challenges, with major violence increasing extremely in hostile and insecure countries.

Factors Contributing to the Prevalence of Insecurity in Mandera County, Kenya

This study's second objective looked at the different risk factors that contribute to the prevalence of insecurity in Mandera County. Findings from this study established the following were the main causes of insecurity in Mandera County: political instability in Somalia, ongoing armed conflict in the region, the availability of small arms and light weapons, terrorism, long porous borders, unemployment, poverty, high rates of illiteracy, and a lack of government assistance. The space available for the operation of non-governmental organizations in the area is severely impacted by the increased level of insecurity in Mandera County.

The results of this study are consistent with those of other researchers, like Adedokun (2020), who found that a number of risk variables, such as poverty, unemployment, and a lack of government support, contribute to regional insecurity. The

results were further supported by Nwagbosa (2012), which found that if any state does not address the grave problems of youth poverty and unemployment, there is a significant chance that young people will become more inclined to commit crimes, which will worsen regional security.

Implications of Insecurity on NGOs Service Delivery in Mandera County, Kenya:

This study's third objective established the several ways that insecurity affects NGOs' ability to provide services to society. According to this study, the most notable outcomes or implications of insecurity threats towards non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are as follows: higher operational costs; fatalities or serious injuries; reduction in the number of NGOs employees; suspension of NGOs activities; damage to infrastructure; limitations on the movements of NGOs personnel; and, lastly, a large-scale NGOs' departure from Mandera County. This study unequivocally demonstrated that a significant obstacle to the provision of services in society was insecurity.

Findings from this study showed that new patterns of insecurity crises ultimately have a detrimental impact on society's service providers. This study unequivocally demonstrated that insecurity is a significant issue that hinders NGOs' ability to provide effective services. The result of this study conveys a clear and strong message to both the local and international communities about how dangerous and hostile Mandera County is, putting the lives and property of innocent service providers in jeopardy.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that insecurity poses a serious threat to peace and stability. As a result, Mandera County is considered a volatile and high-risk area because of the constant risks of insecurity and the high degree of uncertainty resulting from terror group attacks. This study found that the lives of innocent service providers and their belongings are in jeopardy in Mandera County. In order to stop additional harm and the deaths of innocent people, this study urges

a prompt reaction to address the root cause of insecurity.

Recommendations:

It is admirable that the government and non-governmental organizations are attempting to address the issue of insecurity in Mandera County, Kenya. But in addition to what is presently being done, more work needs to be done. Based on the study's findings, the government and non-governmental organizations should create and adopt life insurance policies and procedures that safeguard both governmental and non-governmental organizations from intensified insecurity risks. The state needs to develop plans and policies to deal with the underlying causes of community insecurity. Lastly, the government should modernize and use cutting-edge technology to address insecurity concerns within the government by working with other security agencies and making significant investments in intelligence collection techniques and the sharing of intelligence.

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