



## Strengthening Community Resilience against Extremism (SCORE)



### ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

SCORE is a capacity-building activity for civil-society organizations (CSOs) working on conflict and countering violent extremism (CVE) in the six counties on the Kenyan coastal region.

The activity currently works with 15 local civil society organization to strengthen community resilience against conflict and violent extremism through approaches such as interfaith dialogues and counter messaging, empowering women and girls to address violent extremism and conflict, advocating for the strengthening and harmonization of policies on CVE and land to mitigate land conflicts and youth empowerment by expanding economic opportunities and encouraging civic participation to reduce the allure of financial gain from VE and violence.

Through continuous institutional capacity building, SCORE is empowering local CSOs to effectively address violent extremism and conflict. The activity has established a fund to rapidly and effectively respond to emerging and urgent conflicts in target counties.

### ACTIVITY AREAS

In the initial phase, SCORE is targeting six coastal counties: Kilifi, Kwale, Lamu, Mombasa, Taita Taveta and Tana Rivers, with prospects of expanding to other regions.

### ACTIVITY IMPACT

Aisha Mohammed's son, Khamis (names have been changed to protect identities), received a scholarship to Saudi Arabia to become an Islamic teacher, or so he said. For three months, Aisha did not hear from him, and when she finally reached him, he sounded uneasy and unhappy to hear from her. "He warned me against calling him; he said it was not safe for him to talk to me, and if need be, he would reach out to me," Aisha said. Eventually, she would learn he was an al-Shabab member. "It's been three years now since I last saw or spoke to my son, and I still feel sad because I cannot imagine what kind of life he lives. He left me with so much pain and many questions, because I will never understand why he chose that life," she said.

Aisha is one of many mothers and wives who tell their stories secretly, in perpetual mourning, stricken with a grief that can be expressed only in the safety of those who share it. With USAID support, a local community organization, leads a support group for mothers and wives of men recruited into terrorist organizations. Aisha has been attending since March 2015.

#### Implementing Mechanism Name:

Strengthening Community Resilience Against Extremism (SCORE)

**Funding:** \$4,999,999

**Duration:** October 2014 – September 2019

#### Activity Goals:

- Strengthen community resilience against conflict and violent extremism;
- Enhance institutional functionality and technical capability of targeted CSOs to address conflict mitigation and CVE in the context of devolution;

Establish a rapid response fund to rapidly and effectively respond to emerging VE and conflict incidents in target counties.

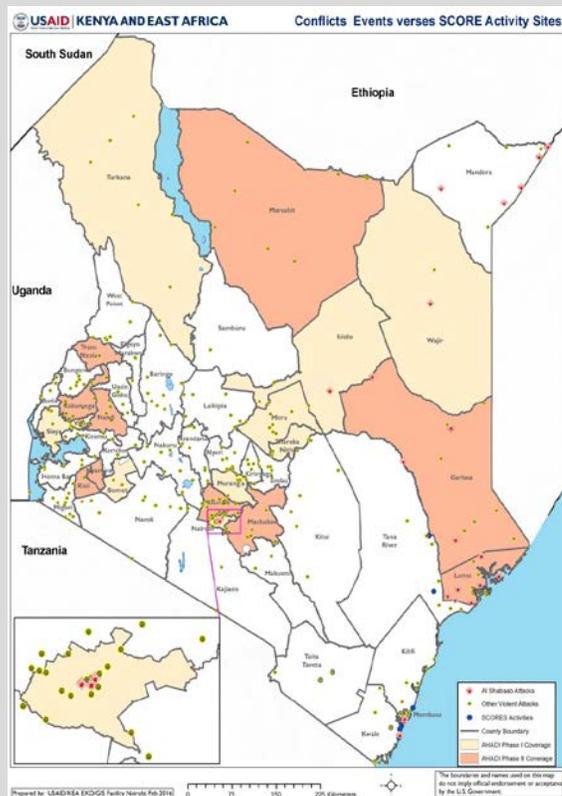
#### Activity Accomplishments:

- 15 local Subgrants funded to up to \$50,000;
- A conflict and CVE assessment conducted in all 6 target counties;
- Management Control Assessment (MCAs) of 18 local organizations conducted;
- Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCAs) conducted;
- Support to women impacted by extremism through COEC;
- Awareness creation around CVE and conflict through various forums- 1698 reached.

#### Implementing Partner: Act Change Transform (ACT)

**Key Partners:** Supreme Council Of Kenya Muslim (SUPKEM), KWACHA Afrika, Tana River Peace Reconciliation & Development, Coast Education Centre (COEC), Kikozi Programme Group, Management of Arid Zones Initiatives & Development Options (MAZIDO) International, National Council Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), Human Rights Agenda (HURIA), Diani Chale Management Trust (DCMT), Haki Africa, Kenya Community Support Centre (KECOSCE), Likoni Community Development Program (LICODEP), Moving the Goalpost (MTG), Sustainable Development Solutions (SDS), Ummah Initiative Group (UIG).

**Activity Locations:** Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, Taita Taveta and Tana River Counties.



**USAID/Kenya Contacts:**

**Karen Freeman**  
Mission Director, USAID Kenya and East Africa  
Tel: +254 (0) 20 862 2000  
Email: [kfreeman@usaid.gov](mailto:kfreeman@usaid.gov)

**Makena Kirima**  
Activity Manager  
Office of Democracy, Governance and Conflict  
Tel: +254 (0) 20 862 2000  
E-mail: [mkirima@usaid.gov](mailto:mkirima@usaid.gov)

“Joining a support group has been the best thing that has happened to my life, getting to talk and share my feelings with women going through the same situation has eased my burden. I don’t feel like I have a secret anymore; the load is lighter,” she confided.

The women get interrogated by the police regularly and other people in the community detest them saying they’ve been irresponsible with their own families. Some women have even been forced to relocate to avoid their children being labelled as a bad influence.

At the first few meetings, only three women attended. Soon after, the word spread, and now more than 30 women attend groups across Mombasa, Kwale and Kilifi counties. At each session, women share their feelings and experiences. A trained psychologist helps the women overcome their grief and focus on their own personal development, including coping with societal pressure.

A 2015 assessment by the USAID Strengthening Community Resilience against Extremism Conflict activity found that women and girls are reluctant to speak about extremism yet had an important role in resisting violent extremism, because they were in a better position to observe changing behaviors of their children or significant others.

A healthy civil society can act as a counterweight to violent extremist groups. Coast Education Centre (COEC) is one of eight local organizations receiving USAID assistance to strengthen its advocacy and operations to counter violent extremism. In the coming months, COEC will begin linking the women with small savings and loans services to help them start up their own businesses, building their self-reliance and ability to provide for themselves and their families. Ultimately, COEC hopes to empower these women to speak out and to share their stories to prevent the radicalization of other husbands and sons.

*Impact original story by Faith Njun’ge.*