

Civil Military Cooperation (CIMIC) As A Strategy For Security Stabilization Operations: Case Of Lamu County, Kenya

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Abstract- This study sought to assess the role of civil military cooperation in security stabilization of Lamu County. It was grounded on Deutsch's theory on cooperation and competition and employed a descriptive research design. The researcher targeted the community leaders, ward administrators, religious leaders and officials from the security agencies and humanitarian actors. Stratified, simple and purposive sampling was adopted such that the final sample size was 132 respondents who took part in the study. Primary data was sourced from interviews and open-ended questions while secondary data was sourced from books and journals. Content analysis was conducted on qualitative data while descriptive analysis was done on quantitative data. The results revealed that the factors that led to the adoption of CIMIC approach included continued instability in the county, collapse of lines of communication, economic sabotage, existence of locals who were sympathetic to the terrorists and the presence of youth gangs. The study also found that some of the CIMIC activities undertaken by the multiagency teams included liaison activities, quick impact projects (QIPs), and outreach programs. On the effectiveness of CIMIC approach the study found out that it had aided in opening up lines of communication, strengthened the relationship between the various security actors, re-built the social lifestyle of the people, economic empowerment, and led to the creation of a safe region through rooting out gangs and criminal elements as well as increased instances where residents willingly shared key information. It was also found out that there was reduction in crime rates, free movement and improved growth and development of the county. The study concluded that the use of civil military cooperation approach had led to peace, security and stability in Lamu County. The study recommended that all the stakeholders from the multi-agency team should continue with operations in the region to further strengthen security situation in Lamu County, Kenya

Index Terms- Civil -Military Cooperation, Security and Stabilization, Liaison Activities, Outreach Programs, Peace Actors

I. INTRODUCTION

Regions that are characterized by insecurity are often left behind in terms of development, growth and advancement. This is because the people and its leaders concentrate on finding peace and stability (Albro & Ivey, 2014). Many approaches are used in trying to resolve the conflicts and bring lasting peace such as the use of military force which was a favored approach. But as the complexity of the conflicts expanded, the use of military force was limited since it could not fully solve the security issues and bring lasting stability to the conflicted areas. This led to adoption of alternative approaches and the use of civilian actors who tried to find solutions without the use of force. The military and civilian component worked to stop the conflicts and stabilize regions but through different approaches. This interaction between the two groups is what birthed the concept of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC).

CIMIC concept describes the relationships between civilian and military personnel as they work together to resolve conflicts and stabilize unstable regions. Friend (2020) noted that CIMIC came about due to the complex issues that were associated with wars and conflicts. Bannelier-Christakis (2016) share that CIMIC approach is a great tool that can be used in the modern world based on interferences and complications in the present environment. The concept as a tool is ideal in conflict and post-conflict stabilization operations (Liaw, Guido De Oliveira, Idrus & Talib, 2019). The civil military cooperation concept was developed by NATO and it was first applied in the Balkans and involved the formulation of common goals and pathways during its implementation process (Welch, 2019).

Civil military cooperation (CIMIC) activities remain one of the most important elements of stabilization operations within a conflict prone area and an essential capacity of information operations. The CIMIC concept has been applied in different regions including Afghanistan in routing out terrorists and rebuilding of the nation; Lithuania in handling the provincial reconstruction teams (PRT); and in Malaysia when handling natural disasters. Regionally, it has been adopted in post-Gaddafi era in Libya, tackling Boko Haram in Nigeria, and also in South

Sudan and Somalia. In all the regions that CIMIC has been adopted, the results have been varying with some achieving paramount peace and stability while others continue to experience instability.

Within East Africa, Somalia has continually suffered from attacks by the Al-Shabaab terror group and in the year 2010 the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) launched operations in the Country with a view of degrading the terrorist group and liberate the area. This resulted in the infiltration of the elements to the neighboring countries including Kenya. The Al Shabab concentrated their attacks in the larger North Eastern region, part of the Coastal region and Nairobi City (Kimari & Ramadhan, 2017). In the coast province, the major attacks were staged in Lamu County since it harbors the Boni Forest which is a conducive hide-out and training base for the newly recruited members. Major attacks were concentrated in the Mpeketoni area which led to the death and maiming of many innocent Kenyans. This led to the launch of the multi-agency operation by the Government of Kenya code named 'Operation Linda Boni' in the year 2015 which was aimed at liberating the Lamu County from Al-Shabaab.

The operation was CIMIC centered and involved various security agencies within the County. Wanjiku (2020) shared that military action alone cannot resolve the issue of terrorism in any region such as Lamu County and therefore recommended the participation of local residents and other civil organizations of local and international decent. Assessing CIMIC approach in Lamu County will bring a clearer picture of workings of this specific approach, based on the fact that the region has seen operations conducted by the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF), the National Police Service (NPS), National Security Intelligence Service (NSIS), National Youth Service (NYS) and the provincial administration. This study therefore examined CIMIC approach as a strategy in enhancing security stabilization and the focus was the Lamu County where several CIMIC activities have been conducted in the Al-Shabaab infested region.

II. 2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the commencement of 'Operation Linda Nchi' in Somalia, the Al-Shabaab group reacted by penetrating the porous Kenyan border. The militant group later launched several terror attacks, kidnappings and destruction of property in different regions within the country. In the coastal region, the rampant insecurity cases have had a negative effect on the socio-economic well-being of the locals. Wanjiku (2020) noted that the Al-Shabaab terrorists had mingled with the locals and one of the ways of defeating their agenda was to work with the locals who would help in identifying and flushing out the terrorists.

This led to the launching of an operation code named 'Operation Linda Boni' by the Kenyan Government in the year 2015, whose sole aim was to flush out the Alshabaab militants from the Boni enclave. The operation was CIMIC centered and was meant to last for 90 days. However, despite massive funding and support, the operation have been characterized by poor coordination, mistrust between the local community members and infighting between the various actors with the Alshabaab militants continuing to control sections of the Boni Forest and using it to

launch attacks in the region even in areas occupied by the locals and across the nation (Jowell, 2018).

Questions are therefore raised on the suitability and effectiveness of the CIMIC approach towards attaining peace and security in Lamu County. This study assessed the use of civil military cooperation (CIMIC) strategy in the quest for securing and stabilizing Lamu County. The focus of the study was to look at the activities and effectiveness of the CIMIC strategy in attaining its mandate.

III. 3.0 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the use of civil military cooperation as a strategy in security stabilization in the operations in Lamu County.

The study sought to answer these research questions:

- i) What factors led to the adoption of civil military cooperation approach in the security stabilization of Lamu County?
- ii) Which civil military cooperation activities have been applied in Lamu County?
- iii) How is the civil military cooperation effective in security stabilization in Lamu County?

IV. 4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Theoretical Review

Deutsch's Theory on Cooperation and Competition

This theory was developed by Morton Deutsch (1949) whose basic concept is based on two ideas that relate to the type of inter-dependence of the agenda of the people within a certain situation and the action that they take. At any singular time, the goal interdependence can either be positive or negative. For positive interdependence, it relies on probability of attaining the goal for an individual such that it is correlated to other people's chances of attaining the goal. On the negative inter-dependence, it is such that the probability of attaining the goal has a negative relation to chances of others attaining the same goal.

The theory operates on the fact that different people's goals are interlinked and Deutsch (2011) noted that positive inter-dependence can be as a result of joint attainment of goals by a group of people. This can be done through resource searching and sharing, working together to overcome the hurdles and splitting the workload to different sections of the work group. The group is affected by the personality of each person in the group and the socio-cultural orientation. Alternatively, the cooperation of the work group can be affected by socio-psycho processes with elements like substitutability, cathexis, and inducibility. Substitutability works to avoid duplication of roles and actions, hence creation of task specialization; Cathexis is based on developing favorable bonds or cliques that can create nepotistic angle and Inducibility is conforming to the viewpoint of others and losing individual contributions that are unique (Tjosvold, Wong, Chen & Li, 2012). This weakens and fractures the group cohesiveness and deteriorates it.

The concepts identified in the theory guide the interactions of civil actors, humanitarian actors and the military forces while working to stabilize any conflicting region. It explains how CIMIC approach can best be adopted to improve interrelations and attain the goal of stabilizing and securing a war-torn region. Thus, the theory guides the different stakeholders assigned to play different roles in securing and stabilizing Lamu County.

4.2 Empirical Literature Review

Factors Leading to Adoption of CIMIC Approach

Civil-Military Cooperation approach is applied in conflict ridden regions to try and resolve the conflicts and bring lasting peace. Grigorov (2017) alludes that analysis of the operations conducted in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq gives a clear indication of the complex nature of current conflicts. CIMIC approach has been adopted in solving complex conflicts and looking at the situation in Lamu County, the presence of sympathizers and the availability of an expansive hide out within the Boni Forest, complicates the conflict, thereby calling for amicable ways of solving the conflict.

Enschede (2011) notes that most of the modern conflicts being experienced around the globe stem from non-military causes and its resolution will need proper coordination and cooperation, enhanced liaison and compromises that require both the military and civilian actors to work together towards solving them. De Coning (2016) further emphasizes that the complexity of the conflicts in the current societies stem from non-military reasons and as such cannot be resolved by military force. He emphasizes, hence the need to incorporate the humanitarian actors and local community components. The civil-military interaction has become central in contemporary peace processes and operations.

Rietjens (2016) share that when lasting peace, coordination and stability of a region has failed to be achieved by the various actors; then, adopting CIMIC approach and interaction that is informed by policy, practices and development doctrines, can achieve the set goals. CIMIC is ideal where there are fault lines like Travis (2018) noted in the American forces where fault lines were on ethics, identity and expertise. The civil-military cooperation approach is needed across the globe because of the increase in natural disasters like eruptions, cyclones, flooding and earthquakes and man-made disasters like terrorist attacks. Khisa and Day (2020) shared that the military is working to develop the economic and social aspects of the local communities hence incorporation of the civilians and humanitarian actors in solving the issues that the society is facing. The challenges facing Lamu County will need the military component and other security agencies like the National Police Service to work together towards achieving peace in the region.

Civil Military Cooperation Activities

In any situation where there are post-conflict operations, Dusman and Zupancic (2012) noted that it requires joint efforts from various players to achieve stability. The stakeholders in these efforts should include local and foreign actors, government and non-governmental institutions, locals and business communities; each of which should play different roles and responsibility. He

further noted that their activities should range from stabilization, rehabilitation, reconstruction, peace building and development with their success heavily relying on cooperation and coordination of all actors. Jenny (2001) noted that CIMIC ensures that military forces and the civilian actors complement each other. Cooperation is needed when both actors are involved in rescue missions, infrastructure reconstruction, provision of medical aid through medical camps and joint trainings for self-defense in potentially violent regions.

Stubbs (2004) shared that civil-military cooperation approach helps in minimizing civil interference and on the other hand maximizing civil support. It also covers combat military missions, peace-keeping missions by NGOs and local authorities. The Romanian CIMIC Handbook (2012) identifies three basic functions of CIMIC; maintenance of the connection among the different actors; the provision of support to civilian actors and provision of support to the military forces. CIMIC according to Grigorov (2017) may take various forms including but not limited to civil military coordination, humanitarian aid, emergency response program, transition initiatives, joint civil military operations and security training. The military commanders can also work with the local leaders to designate protection zones for the locals like schools, worship centers and hospitals. There is also need for information sharing between the various actors to enhance effectiveness.

CIMIC activities also include, the protection of the civilians and provision of life saving aid. The US Army in Afghanistan worked with the host government to restore infrastructure that had been destroyed by the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Allard (2012) noted that US Marines and Army units gave humanitarian aid to locals in Somalia and at the same time got information that helped them to institute the tribal consuls which worked to distribute food and other necessity goods to the people. Lang'at (2018) shared that CIMIC activities witnessed in Somalia stem from the international community promoting peace and stability by stopping the terror activities of the Al-shabaab. In Kenya during the post-election violence period, several CIMIC activities were launched that included medical camps, mediation talks and distribution of food and water, and borehole drilling. Odhiambo (2020) recommends that for KDF to improve its reputation and foster better relations, they should continue with various humanitarian activities like construction projects, peacekeeping and negotiations between conflicting parties, chaplaincy and disaster management.

Effectiveness of Civil Military Cooperation Approach in Security Stabilization

Failing to gain the local populations' support and goodwill during any mission can lead to failure and catastrophic consequences. Dusman and Zupancic (2012) revealed that tensions were created between the military and NGOs in the Lithuanian, Slovenian and Estonian cases, based on military using the hierarchical administrative method, while the NGOs were using the horizontal approach. Allard (2012) stated that CIMIC when properly used, can be a force multiplier by enrolling the support of locals such as the case of US forces in Somalia. Owino (2020) revealed that the KDF unit had fostered a good relationship by engaging in economic development activities within Eldoret

town, including tree planting, conducting medical camps, provision of learning materials for schools and drilling water projects. There were also sporting activities, and non-official visitation to military graduation ceremonies that resulted in strengthened coordination and cooperation with the local communities.

Onditi (2015) shared that poor relations between the civilians and military forces made the African standby forces (ASF) unable to respond to various emergencies as they took longer to make decisions. Furthermore, Leff (2009) noted that pure military and police force actions failed to quell the violence and insecurity of the pastoralists war along the Kenya-Sudan-Uganda border. The governments' response was forceful disarmament exercises that led to distrust amongst the security forces and the local communities. This case shows the value of security forces working with the civilians and local peace actors in handling conflicts and disagreements.

Ligawa (2018) revealed that attacks led by Al-Shabaab on the AMISOM bases raise questions on capacity and abilities of AMISOM in delivering on its mandate. Employing purely military strategies, slowed down the peace building process in Somalia and

hence the need to engage the common Somali man. There is also need to empower the local security system and incorporate humanitarian actors. An effective civil-military relation is based on coordination and cooperation efforts by all components. Conflicts can be resolved by participation of all actors including local community members and its leadership. Onditi, Okoth and Matanga (2016) shared that peace support operations and peace-building activities can only yield lasting results whenever all players are brought on board.

4.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shown illustrates the relationship between independent and dependent variables of the current study. The factors that led to adoption of CIMIC approach and CIMIC activities including the civil military liaison activities, civil assistance activities and the CIMIC outreach programs and the effectiveness of CIMIC approach are independent study variables. While the dependent variable is security stabilization whose indicators include reduced crime levels, freedom of movement and peaceful social coexistence amongst the populace. This study is expected to cause improved security situation hence improving the day-to-day life of the locals.

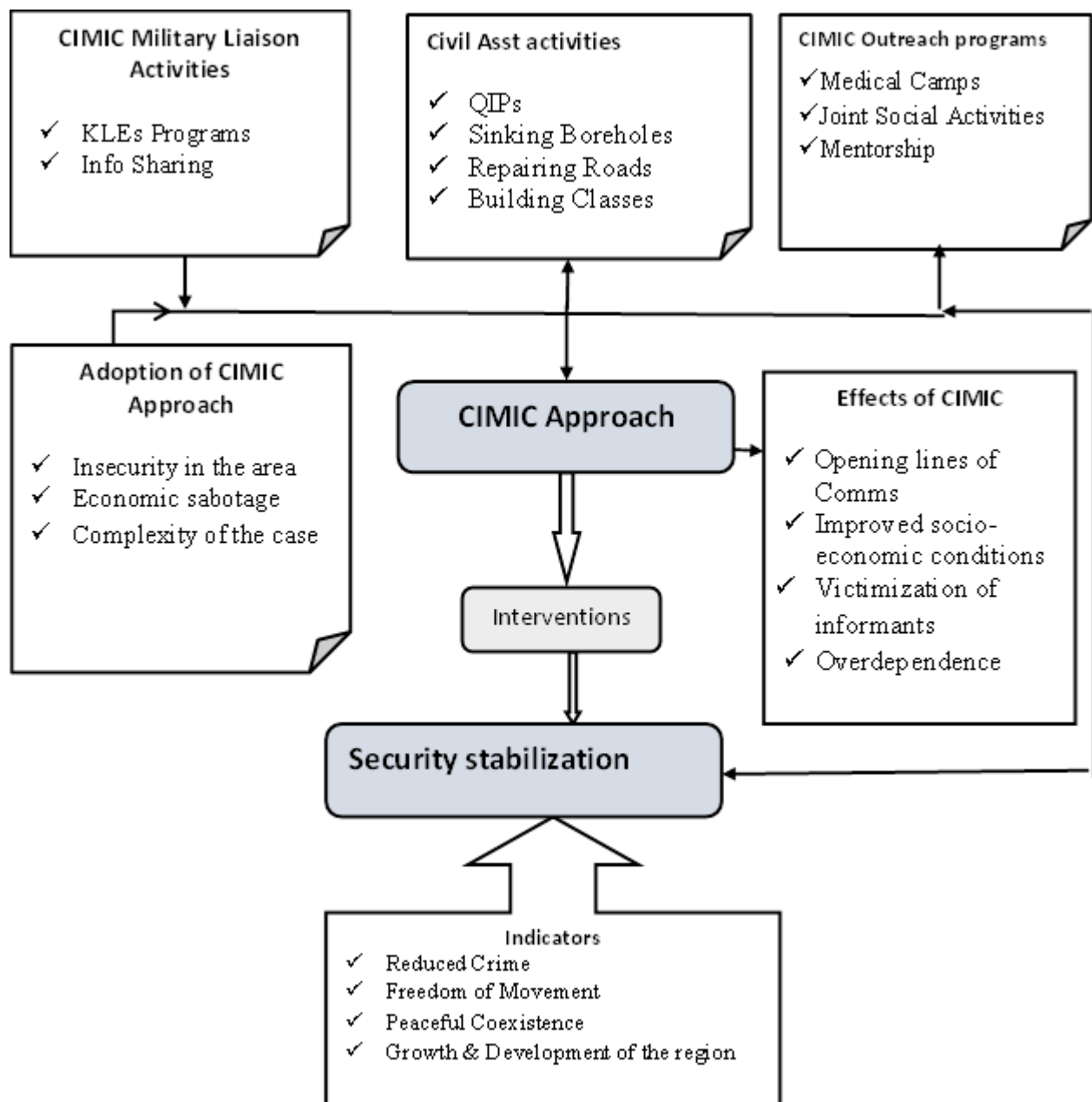


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

V. 5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was adopted as it was ideal in describing the CIMIC approach and the activities undertaken by different actors when securing and stabilizing Lamu County. The study population was comprised of all the 37, 963 households in Lamu County as per the 2019 KNBS census. The researcher targeted 34 community leaders, 14 ward administrators, 10 religious leaders and official representatives from the humanitarian actors and security agencies in Lamu County. Stratified sampling technique was adopted as it arranged the population as per their role. Simple sampling was employed in selecting respondents who took part in the study while purposive sampling was used to select the security officers who had led operations in Lamu County and those who had pertinent information.

Primary data was collected using questionnaires and interview guides which produced both qualitative and quantitative data. Secondary data was sourced from books, journals and other electronic materials. The researcher conducted the interviews and used two research assistants to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Qualitative data from the open-ended questions and interviews were analyzed using content analysis by arranging the data in themes. While quantitative data was analyzed descriptively and obtained means,

frequencies and percentages. This was done using SPSS version 25.0 system and the findings were presented in charts, discussions and tables.

VI. 6.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Factors Leading to Adoption of CIMIC Approach

Variable	Mean	SD		D		N		A		SA		Std. Dev.
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Collapse of the lines of communication	3.981	2	2.2	9	10.2	12	13.6	23	26.1	42	47.7	.790
Economic sabotage by the Al-Shabaab militants	3.777	0	-	10	11.3	3	3.4	61	69.2	14	15.9	1.053
Continued terror attacks like laying of explosives	4.011	0	-	5	5.6	0	-	35	39.7	48	54.5	.908
Presence of sympathizers among the local residents	3.569	10	11.3	15	17	12	13.6	23	26.1	28	31.8	.813
Total	3.834											.891

SD –Strongly Disagreed; D –Disagree; N-Neutral; A- Agree and SA- Strongly Agree

The findings showed that respondents agreed to continued terror attacks being the number one reason for the adoption of CIMIC approach, followed by collapse of lines of communication, economic sabotage and lastly existence of sympathetic local residents. Other reasons included the presence of the extensive

Boni Forest as a hide-out for the terror group and the fear and brutality of the security forces which has seen the local residents’ side with the militants. Divisive political interests and presence of religious extremists and youth gangs were also cited.

Table 2: Civil Military Cooperation Activities

Variable	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Liaison Activities						
Key leadership engagement programs	38	43.1	50	56.8	88	100
Information sharing	61	69.2	27	30.6	88	100
Quick Impact projects						
Sinking of boreholes	23	26.1	65	73.8	88	100
Repairing/Building of roads	14	15.9	74	84	88	100
Building of schools/churches/mosques	69	78.4	16	18.1	88	100
Outreach programs						
Medical camps	85	96.5	3	3.4	88	100
Joint social activities	53	60.2	35	39.7	88	100

The results showed that the three main areas of CIMIC activities included liaison activities, quick impact projects and outreach programs. Other activities include escorting of public transport buses when kidnappings cases were on the rise, protecting locals during large gatherings like church services, mosque, schools and hospitals, provision of humanitarian aid

including distribution of food, water and clothing to the victims of insecurity and terror activities and also conduct of rescue missions. The military also helped to airlift residents during flooding especially to people stuck in remote areas and also provision of tutorial services in the county schools.

Table 3: Effectiveness of Civil Military Cooperation on Security Stabilization

Variable	Mean	SD		D		N		A		SA		Std. Dev.
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	

CIMIC approach led to opening communication lines	3.702	0	-	5	5.6	11	12.5	27	30.6	45	51.1	.765
The relationship between all actors is needed under CIMIC approach	4.300	0	-	0	-	0	-	54	61.3	34	38.6	1.014
The informants are victimized for sharing info with security agents	3.689	4	4.5	7	7.9	19	21.5	41	46.5	17	19.3	.980
The social lifestyle of the people is affected by CIMIC approach	3.225	19	21.5	11	12.5	5	5.6	20	22.7	33	37.5	.889
Securing of Lamu County overdepends on security agents from different agencies	4.019	8	9.0	4	4.5	9	10.2	55	62.5	12	13.6	.972
Economic empowerment relies on a secure and stable county	4.426	0	-	14	15.9	16	18.1	42	47.7	16	18.1	1.204
Total	3.893											.970

SD –Strongly Disagreed; D –Disagree; N-Neutral; A- Agree and SA- Strongly Agree

The presence of a multi-agency team in the county had made the Al-Shabaab abandon their hide-out and bases within the Boni forest. Night movement by public buses had resumed with minimal requirement for armed police escorts. The CIMIC activities had also resulted in reopening of lines of

communication, improved social lifestyle and economic empowerment of the people as well as improved information sharing between the various actors.

Table 4. Security and Stability in Lamu County

Variable	Mean	SD		D		N		A		SA		Std. Dev.
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Crime rates have reduced in Lamu County	4.201	0	-	16	18.1	22	25.0	35	39.7	17	19.3	.812
Public transport system can move freely	3.984	0	-	21	23.8	34	38.6	24	27.2	9	10.2	.973
All diverse entities in Lamu co-exist	3.417	5	5.6	16	18.1	14	15.9	35	39.7	18	20.4	1.108
The county has seen growth and development	3.429	10	11.3	10	11.3	1	1.1	28	31.8	39	44.3	.773
Total	3.757											.916

SD –Strongly Disagreed; D –Disagree; N-Neutral; A- Agree and SA- Strongly Agree

The findings showed that there was remarkable reduction in crime levels, freedom of movement through the use of public transport system and resumption of economic activities in the County. The residents' ability to trade and move freely had led to growth and development of the county. The people from different tribes and races are peacefully coexisting and working in harmony. Local and international peace actors have also helped to secure the county through engaging locals, opening communication channels to share information and awareness creation through education forums. These efforts have borne fruit in terms of peace, security and stability in Lamu County.

VII. 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the reason behind the adoption of the civil military cooperation approach in Lamu County was as a result of the complexity of the conflict. The complexities stem from existence of sympathizers, deep-rooted radicalization, deteriorating insecurity with continued terror attacks and the

failure of other approaches to secure and stabilize the region. The study also conclude that the three categories of civil military cooperation activities implemented in Lamu County included engagement in liaison activities through information sharing, leadership engagement forums and provision of escort services; the quick impact projects which included repairing of roads, construction of schools, churches and mosques and the sinking of boreholes; and finally the outreach programs that included medical camps and joint social activities.

On the effectiveness of civil military cooperation on the security stabilization of Lamu County, the study concluded that the approach has had a positive and rewarding effect towards the stabilization of the county. The effect is such that there is reduced rate of terror activities, free movement of people and goods, peaceful co-existence of people from diverse background and economic growth and development in the county. The study further concludes that CIMIC activities had improved relations between the locals and security agencies where residents can comfortably share vital security information with the security

agencies. In general, the study made the conclusion that the use of civil military cooperation (CIMIC) approach had led to the realization of improved peace, security and stability in Lamu County.

VIII. 8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations to different stakeholders such as the government, security agencies, NGOs and the general public. The national and county government should sensitize and conduct awareness programs to the residents on the dangers of insecurity in order to reduce cases of radicalization and sympathizers. The multi-agency teams should be encouraged to involve more locals in the planning and implementation phases so as to build trust and enhance cooperation. The national government should deploy sufficient manpower, equipment and other resources to respond quickly to any arising insecurity issues. The study further recommends that appropriate laws and guidelines be enacted to fill the gaps on existing laws touching on radicalization and sympathizers' scenarios.

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