

Implications of Border Security, Control and Counter-Terrorism Measures Within Liboi Border Along Mandera County, Kenya

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Abstract

The question of border security and terrorism continues to face Kenya's security agencies, including those operating along the often-volatile Liboi border areas of Mandera County. Border security and control in Liboi border, like all border areas, demands acts of solidarity across all government security sectors. However, there are numerous challenges which are even complicated more by terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism which are commonly experienced in the Kenyan northern corridors. This study assessed the implications of border security, control and counter-terrorism in Liboi border in Mandera County of Kenya. Specifically, the study explored the influence of government security agencies on counter-terrorism, influence of security inter-agency coordination on control of terrorism activities at Somalia Liboi border, the effect of cross-border cooperation on counter-terrorism at Liboi border, and the influence of access to security weapons by criminals on counter-terrorism at Liboi border. The study adopted descriptive research design where different categories of stakeholders involved in border security in Liboi border areas were targeted. These included law enforcement agencies and community policing units, Community Based Organizations, and Business Community. Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 64 respondents for the study. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential data analysis techniques with the help of SPSS computer software while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. It was noted that cases of terror attacks in Liboi borders have significantly reduced due to enhanced interagency coordination, reduced access by the local communities to illegal arms, and cross-border cooperation among other strategies. Relative calm had returned in Liboi border area as a result of aggressive security operations by Kenya's security agencies. However, the fight against terrorism in Liboi border areas still remained a big challenge, especially due to the ever-emerging al-Shabaab sympathizers, unfavorable political dynamics, contraband business dealings, and illegal firearms among other factors. Given the complex nature of the security situation in Liboi border areas, it was recommended for the border control and security agencies to approach the issue carefully where all factors are put into consideration. It was also important for the government security and border control agencies to proactively work hand in hand with local NGOs and CBOs for effective sharing of crucial information to help in making critical decisions regarding security and terror activities in the border regions.