

Enhancing Cooperation to Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya necessitates robust and coordinated countermeasures. This study investigates collaborative approaches to countering IEDs, focusing on opportunities for enhanced cooperation among stakeholders. The primary objective is to assess the impact of multi-agency collaboration on improving the effectiveness of IED countermeasures and to provide policy recommendations for strengthening these efforts. The study is grounded in the theory of collaborative governance, which emphasizes the importance of interconnectedness and cooperative strategies among various agencies to address complex security challenges. Data were collected from a target population comprising security professionals, government officials, and international partners through a mixed-methods approach. This included a survey with 95 respondents and semi-structured interviews with 15 key informants. Findings from the study indicate a high level of engagement in collaborative efforts to counter IEDs. Survey results reveal that 69.8% of respondents agree or strongly agree that multi-agency collaboration is crucial for addressing IED threats, with a mean rating of 3.59. Similarly, 66.8% acknowledge the significant contributions of international partnerships, with a mean rating of 3.73. Despite these positive perceptions, challenges such as poor coordination and transparency issues in international collaborations were frequently cited. Interviews corroborated these findings, highlighting the need for improved communication channels and trust-building measures. Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the level of agreement on various aspects of collaboration, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and insights. Key recommendations include the establishment of structured frameworks for information sharing, enhancing leadership capacities, and prioritizing transparency in international partnerships. Continuous engagement and knowledge-sharing initiatives are also vital for fostering innovation and effectively refining strategies to counter IED threats. In conclusion, this study underscores the critical importance of enhanced cooperation among stakeholders in mitigating the impact of IEDs in Kenya. By addressing identified challenges and leveraging collaborative opportunities, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies to improve security outcomes and protect public safety.

Keywords: Collaborative approaches, Improvised Explosive Devices, Multi-agency collaboration, International partnerships, Coordination mechanisms, Information sharing

INTRODUCTION

The global threat posed by IEDs has emerged as a critical concern within international security, drawing substantial attention from policymakers, security experts, and humanitarian organizations. IEDs, employed by various armed groups and terrorist organizations, have significantly altered the dynamics of modern conflict. According to a 2020 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), IEDs

rank among the most prevalent weapons in asymmetric warfare and terrorism (Amnesty International, 2023). Their widespread use is attributed to their versatility, accessibility, and devastating impact, as they can be constructed from readily available materials such as fertilizer, cell phones, and household items, allowing non-state actors and insurgent groups to deploy them with relative ease.

In East Africa, the threat of IEDs has escalated, particularly in Somalia and Kenya, where groups such as Al-Shabaab frequently conduct attacks. The porous borders and transnational nature of these groups exacerbate regional security challenges. A study by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) highlighted the need for enhanced regional cooperation to address cross-border militant movements and explosive trafficking (AMISOM, 2023). Collaborative initiatives, including joint patrols, intelligence sharing, and capacity-building programs, are essential for strengthening regional security against the IED threat.

In Kenya, the IED threat is most severe in regions bordering conflict zones such as Somalia and South Sudan. The Kenya National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) has reported a significant increase in IED incidents targeting both security forces and civilians (Dathan, 2017). For instance, in January 2020, an IED attack on a passenger bus in Mandera County resulted in three fatalities and several injuries. Similarly, in June 2021, an IED explosion targeted a military convoy in Lamu County, killing at least five soldiers and injuring others. The most recent incident was on 29th April 2024 at Elwak town, Mandera County, North Eastern Kenya an IED hidden in a donkey cart killed five people and severely injured five others. These incidents underscore the urgent need for comprehensive countermeasures. The persistent and evolving nature of these threats highlights the necessity for robust and coordinated responses to mitigate the impact of IEDs effectively. The rise in IED incidents also calls for enhanced intelligence-sharing mechanisms and increased support for local law enforcement and military units to improve their capacity to detect and neutralize such threats.

However, countering IEDs in Kenya faces specific challenges, including a lack of coordination among government agencies, leading to fragmented approaches and inadequate information sharing. Limited resources further constrain the ability of law enforcement, military, and intelligence agencies to implement effective counter-IED measures (Dodgson, 2017). Intelligence sharing gaps and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in border regions compound the problem, facilitating the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives (McDaniel et al., 2023). Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to streamline inter-agency collaboration, allocate resources effectively, and enhance border security measures to disrupt the supply chain of IED materials. Moreover, standardized protocols for intelligence sharing and joint operations are essential to improve the detection and neutralization of IED threats across Kenya's border regions.

While the importance of collaboration is widely acknowledged, there are differing opinions on the best approaches to achieve effective cooperation. Some argue that international partnerships are crucial, providing resources and expertise that can significantly enhance national capacities. Others emphasize the need for stronger regional cooperation, particularly in addressing cross-border issues and leveraging local knowledge and capabilities. Additionally, debates persist over the balance between military and civilian roles in counter-IED strategies, and the extent to which local communities should be involved in these efforts. This divergence in perspectives underscores the complexity of formulating a cohesive and effective counter-IED strategy.

This study investigates collaborative approaches to countering IEDs in Kenya, focusing on opportunities for enhanced cooperation among stakeholders. It examines the extent of involvement in collaborative efforts, the perceived impact of multi-agency collaboration, and participation in international initiatives. By addressing identified challenges and leveraging collaborative opportunities, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective strategies to mitigate the IED threat and enhance security outcomes in Kenya.

Through a detailed analysis, this research aims to provide actionable insights that can inform policy decisions and operational frameworks, ultimately contributing to a more coordinated and effective response to the IED menace.

The objective of this study is to assess whether collaborative efforts have been effective in countering IED threats in Kenya and to identify potential areas for improvement. The findings aim to provide insights that can inform policy and practice, enhancing the overall effectiveness of counter-IED strategies. Through this research, we seek to contribute to the broader academic and policy discourse on countering asymmetric threats and improving security cooperation in complex environments.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As conceptualized by Ansell and Gash (2008), the collaborative governance theory offers a comprehensive framework for comprehending the intricate dynamics of addressing security challenges such as the proliferation of IEDs. This theoretical perspective emphasizes the necessity of engaging many stakeholders, from governmental and non-governmental organizations to local communities and civil society groups, in policy formulation and execution. By highlighting the significance of cooperative decision-making and fostering collaborative relationships among these diverse actors, collaborative governance provides a structured approach to addressing the multifaceted nature of IED threats. Furthermore, this framework underscores the importance of establishing agreements and partnerships to tackle complex problems effectively, ensuring that resources, expertise, and perspectives are integrated cohesively to develop and implement counter-IED strategies. In essence, collaborative governance offers a holistic perspective that recognizes the interdependence of various stakeholders and promotes inclusive participation in shaping security policies and practices to mitigate the impact of IEDs in Kenya.

Roles, Functions, and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Government Agencies:

- **National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC):** Central coordination body responsible for developing national counter-IED strategies, facilitating intelligence sharing among security agencies, and providing training and resources to enhance the capacity of law enforcement and military units.
- **Kenya Defense Forces (KDF):** Conducts operations to detect and neutralize IED threats, engages in border security to prevent the smuggling of IED materials, and collaborates with international military partners for training and joint operations.
- **National Police Service (NPS):** Responsible for investigating IED incidents, including forensics, gathering intelligence from local communities, and maintaining public safety through patrols and security checkpoints. Prosecute perpetrators in collaboration with the Office of the Public Prosecution.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):

- **Humanitarian and Development NGOs:** Support victim assistance, engage in community outreach to raise awareness about IED threats, and participate in rehabilitation programs for affected areas.
- **Security-focused NGOs:** Offer expertise in demining, explosive ordnance disposal, and counter IED tasks, research IED trends, and facilitate workshops to enhance the technical skills of security personnel.

Local Communities:

- **Community Leaders and Elders:** Serve as crucial links between security forces and local populations, facilitating the flow of information and intelligence and fostering trust and cooperation in

counter-IED efforts.

- **Community-based Organizations (CBOs):** Engage in grassroots initiatives to educate residents about the dangers of IEDs, report suspicious activities, and support the reintegration of individuals affected by conflict.

Civil Society Groups:

- **Advocacy Groups:** Lobby for policies that address the root causes of IED proliferation, such as poverty and political instability, and advocate for greater transparency and accountability in counter-IED operations.
- **Research Institutions:** Conduct studies to evaluate the effectiveness of counter-IED strategies, provide evidence-based recommendations for policy improvements, and develop innovative technologies for IED detection and disposal.

International Partners:

- **Foreign Governments and Militaries:** Provide financial aid, training programs, and technological assistance to enhance Kenya's counter-IED capabilities and participate in joint operations and intelligence sharing.
- **International Organizations (e.g., UN, IGAD):** Support regional cooperation initiatives, facilitate dialogue and coordination among East African nations, and offer technical expertise and resources for counter-IED projects.

By incorporating the theory of collaborative governance into the study's objective, the research provides a structured framework for assessing potential collaborative strategies to mitigate the risks associated with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. This entails a systematic approach to identifying and engaging key stakeholders, including government agencies, security forces, local communities, civil society groups, and international partners, to comprehensively understand their roles and interests in addressing IED threats. Emphasizing the establishment of partnerships and consensus-building among these stakeholders, the framework facilitates an in-depth examination of existing collaborations and initiatives aimed at countering IED threats. Moreover, it enables the evaluation of the effectiveness of these collaborative efforts in achieving common goals and enhancing overall security outcomes in Kenya. Through this integrated approach, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into optimizing collaborative strategies for mitigating the complex challenges IEDs pose, thereby enhancing regional security resilience.

The theory of collaborative governance underscores the importance of shared decision-making and the proactive involvement of stakeholders in policy formulation, encompassing tasks such as setting priorities, resource allocation, and strategy development to tackle IED threats effectively. Through the application of this theoretical framework, the study is poised to strengthen its ability to recognize collaborative initiatives, evaluate their efficacy, and recommend strategies for enhancing stakeholder cooperation to confront the multifaceted challenges posed by IEDs in Kenya. This approach enhances the study's analytical framework and provides valuable insights into fostering synergistic efforts among stakeholders to address the region's dynamic and evolving nature of IED threats.

However, there remains a pressing need for additional academic inquiry to comprehensively grasp the practical application of collaborative governance principles within the specific context of Kenya concerning the mitigation of IED risks. A notable scarcity of empirical studies exists that could shed light on the degree to which Kenyan policies have embraced collaborative elements and successfully involved a diverse array of stakeholders in crucial decision-making processes. This gap in research underscores the necessity for deeper exploration into the practical utilization of collaborative governance approaches in shaping and executing security policies within the Kenyan landscape. Such investigations are pivotal for enhancing our

understanding of the efficacy and challenges associated with collaborative governance in countering IED threats, thereby informing more targeted and effective policy interventions in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to investigate collaborative strategies for countering IEDs in Kenya. Qualitative data was gathered through key informant interviews with stakeholders from government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and local communities, alongside focus group discussions with community members. Complementing this qualitative approach, quantitative data was collected through surveys administered to security personnel, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders involved in counter-IED efforts. This mixed-methods design facilitated a comprehensive analysis, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities in addressing IED threats in Kenya.

The study targets a diverse population of stakeholders engaged in counter-IED efforts, including government agencies such as the Ministry of Interior, the National Counter-Terrorism Center, and the Ministry of Defence, as well as private security organizations and the National Police. A stratified sampling approach was employed, categorizing the target population based on stakeholder roles. Proportional allocation determined sample sizes within each stratum to ensure a balanced representation of stakeholders, enabling a comprehensive understanding of policy effectiveness and collaboration strategies in countering IED threats. Further, ethical considerations were upheld throughout the research process, with informed consent from all participants and ethical approval from relevant institutional review boards. Data analysis involved transcribing and coding qualitative data to identify key themes and patterns, alongside quantitative analysis using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to explore relationships between variables. Integrating qualitative and quantitative findings informed evidence-based recommendations for enhancing cooperation and strengthening counter-IED efforts in Kenya.

FINDINGS

Opportunities for Collaborative Approaches in Countering Improvised Explosive Devices in Kenya

This section delves into exploring opportunities for collaborative approaches in countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. The primary objective of this section is to examine and identify these opportunities, aiming to foster a more unified and effective strategy in addressing the threat posed by IEDs within the country.

Involvement in Collaborative Efforts

This subsection seeks to gauge the extent of involvement in collaborative efforts pertaining to countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. By examining respondents' participation in such initiatives, valuable insights were gained into the current landscape of collaborative endeavors to address the IED threat within the country.

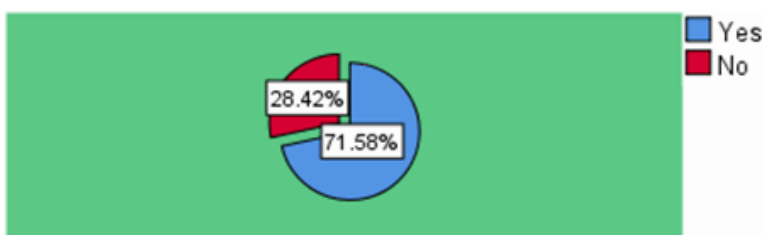


Figure 2: Involvement in Collaborative Efforts

(Source: Researcher, 2023)

The data presented in Figure 2 indicates that a majority of respondents, comprising 71.6%, have been involved in collaborative efforts to countering IEDs in Kenya. Conversely, 28.4% of respondents reported no involvement in such collaborative initiatives. This suggests a significant level of engagement among respondents in collaborative endeavors to address the country's IED threat. In this section, respondents involved in collaborative efforts related to countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya were asked to provide insights into their experiences.

“As the Commander Engineers Brigade, I was involved in coming up with Pillars of IED Threat Mitigation together with other agencies, which had three levels inter alia; preparation of the force, defeating the device, and attacking the network. The agencies were: National Police Service, National Intelligence Service, National Counter-terrorism, US, and UK partners, among others.”

The provided quote illustrates a structured and comprehensive approach to collaborative efforts in countering IEDs, involving the development of strategic frameworks like the “Pillars of IED Threat Mitigation.” This initiative demonstrates multi-agency coordination, including key stakeholders such as the National Police Service, National Intelligence Service and international partners like the US and UK. Such strategic frameworks likely facilitate aligning objectives and pooling resources and expertise across various agencies. However, despite these organized efforts, challenges such as “Poor coordination among agencies due to lack of relevant skills and leadership” were also noted, indicating that while formal structures may exist, operational obstacles can hinder their effectiveness.

Multi-Agency Collaboration and Success of Countering IEDs

This section explores the perceived impact of multi-agency collaboration on the effectiveness of countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. Participants are asked to assess the extent to which they believe collaborative efforts between multiple agencies contribute to the success of countering IEDs, ranging from high to very low extent.

Table 1: Multi-Agency Collaboration and Success of Countering IEDs

	Frequency	Percent
High extent	51	53.7%
Moderate extent	6	6.3%
Neutral	17	17.9%
Very low extent	21	22.1%
Total	95	100.0%

(Source: Researcher, 2023)

Table 1 presents respondents' perspectives on the role of multi-agency collaboration in countering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. The data reveals that a significant portion, accounting for 53.7%, believe that such collaboration contributes to countering IEDs to a high extent. Conversely, 22.1% expressed a perception of very low impact. While 6.3% see a moderate extent of contribution, 17.9% remain neutral on the matter. This variation in perceptions underscores the complexity and diverse viewpoints regarding the effectiveness of multi-agency collaboration in addressing the IED threat landscape in Kenya.

Respondents emphasized the critical importance of multi-agency collaboration in addressing the complex nature of IED threats in Kenya. One respondent stated,

“A multi-agency approach is critical for synchronizing and unifying the entire security sector on how to respond to an event to maximize the extraction of information that can assist in furthering proactive approaches in profiling, investigating, and interdicting.”

This observation underscores the critical necessity for coordinated efforts across diverse security agencies to mount effective responses to Improvised Explosive Device (IED) incidents and mitigate their impact. In the face of IED threats, which are often multifaceted and dynamic, the fragmented approach of individual agencies can result in disjointed responses and suboptimal outcomes. By emphasizing the imperative of coordination, this insight highlights the importance of synchronizing activities, sharing resources, and exchanging information among security entities. Such coordination facilitates a cohesive and unified response to IED incidents, enabling agencies to leverage their strengths and resources more effectively. Furthermore, coordinated efforts enhance communication, streamline decision-making processes, and optimize the allocation of resources, ultimately enhancing the overall resilience of security systems and reducing the vulnerability of communities to IED threats. Therefore, fostering collaboration and coordination among security agencies is essential for maximizing the effectiveness of counter-IED efforts and minimizing the impact of these dangerous devices on public safety and security.

Participation in International Collaborations

In this section, the study explores the involvement of individuals in international collaborations concerning countering IEDs in Kenya.

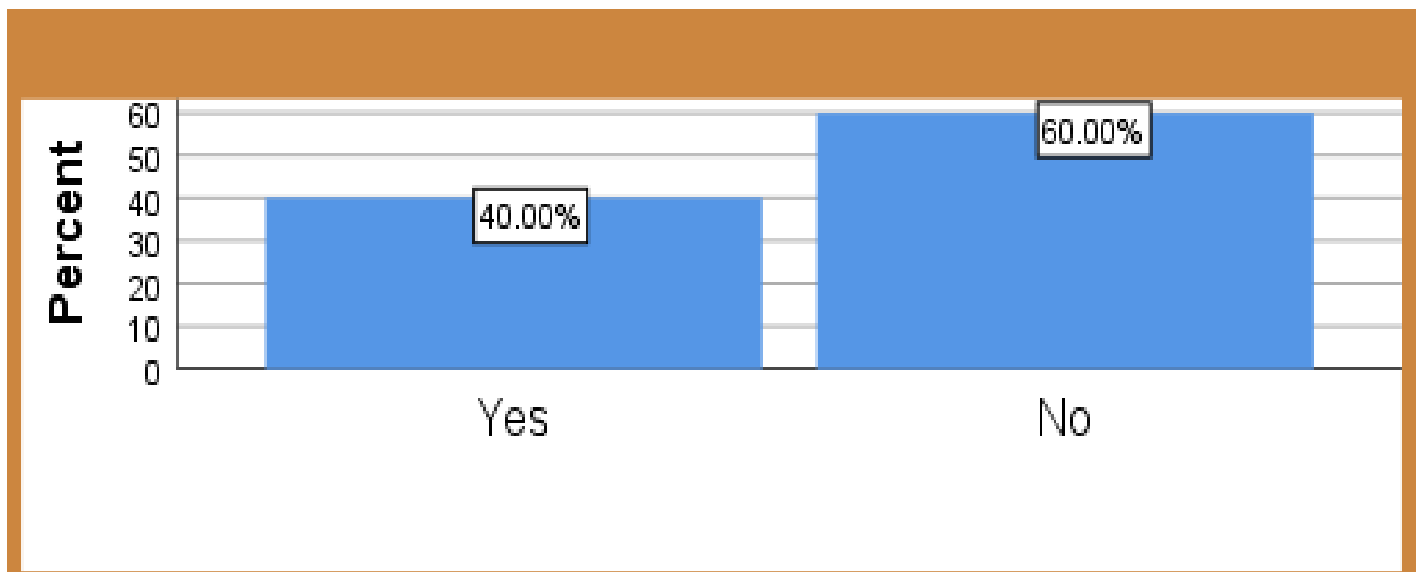


Figure 1: Participation in International Collaborations

(Source: Researcher, 2023)

Figure 1, labeled “Participation in International Collaborations,” displays the frequency and percentage of respondents who have participated in international collaborations related to countering IEDs in Kenya. Out of the total respondents, 38 individuals, constituting 40.0%, reported their involvement in such collaborations, while 57 individuals, accounting for 60.0%, indicated that they have not participated in any international collaborations on this matter. For those who said yes were asked about their participation in such collaborations and invited to share their experiences. Their insights shed light on the dynamics, effectiveness, and challenges associated with international efforts to counter IED threats. One of the respondents noted that;

“Outwardly, they show concern on what the IEDs are doing to the community, but inwardly, they may be funding the emplacement of the devices.”

This quote highlights a significant concern regarding the integrity and transparency of international collaborations. While on the surface, there may be expressions of solidarity and support, there are suspicions about potential clandestine activities, such as funding or indirect support for the very threats being combatted. This underscores the importance of ensuring accountability and trustworthiness in international partnerships to address IED threats effectively. Another respondent indicated that;

“Attended equipment exhibition on countering IEDs and concept development.”

Participation in equipment exhibitions and concept development workshops reflects proactive engagement in enhancing capabilities to counter IED threats. These collaborative initiatives provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, technology transfer and capacity building. By attending such events, stakeholders can stay abreast of the latest advancements in countering IEDs, fostering innovation and preparedness in addressing evolving threats. The respondent also indicated that;

“Having supported the efforts by the United Nations to review the C-IED training manuals, it was evident that there is a need for continuous engagements in understanding the existing capabilities of the different Global IED system actors.”

This respondent underscores the importance of continuous engagement and knowledge sharing in international collaborations. By supporting initiatives like the review of training manuals, stakeholders contribute to refining strategies, harmonizing approaches, and leveraging global expertise in countering IEDs. Such collaborative endeavors facilitate a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of IED threats and promote synergistic efforts toward effective mitigation strategies on a global scale.

Another respondent shared their experience of involvement in collaborative efforts, stating,

“Yes, I was the C-IED deputy branch chief at USAFRICOM, worked to build capacity within the KDF Engineer Brigade, and supported strategic initiatives at HPSS. I am currently serving as the Resident Program Manager of the Anti-Terrorism Assistance program in Kenya with the mandate of building the capacity of the Bomb Disposal Unit under the Directorate of Criminal Investigations.”

This firsthand experience underscores the pivotal role of international partnerships in bolstering capacity-building efforts and strategic initiatives to counter IED threats. By actively engaging with international stakeholders, such as the USAFRICOM and the Anti-Terrorism Assistance program, respondents can leverage diverse resources, expertise, and perspectives to enhance the effectiveness of counter-IED measures in Kenya. These partnerships facilitate the exchange of best practices, training programs, and technical assistance, empowering local agencies like the KDF Engineer Brigade and the Bomb Disposal Unit under the Directorate of Criminal Investigations to strengthen their capabilities and respond more effectively to IED threats. Additionally, international collaborations offer opportunities for joint research, intelligence-sharing, and coordinated operations, enabling a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to countering IED threats on both national and global scales.

Level of Agreement on Collaborative Approaches in Countering IEDs

Assessing the level of agreement on collaborative approaches is essential for understanding stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards countering IEDs in Kenya. In this section, respondents were asked to rate various statements related to collaborative efforts on a scale from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” Their ratings provide insights into the effectiveness, challenges, and potential improvements in collaborative

approaches to combat IED threats.

Table 2: Level of Agreement on Collaborative Approaches in Countering IEDs

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
Collaborative efforts enhance the overall effectiveness of countering IEDs.	0	24 (25.3%)	17 (17.9%)	42 (44.2%)	12 (12.6%)	3.44	1.008
Multi-agency collaboration is crucial for addressing the complex nature of IED threats.	0	19 (20.0%)	22 (23.2%)	33 (34.7%)	21 (22.1%)	3.59	1.047
International partnerships contribute significantly to countering IEDs in Kenya.	0	15 (15.8%)	27 (28.4%)	22 (23.2%)	31 (32.6%)	3.73	1.086
Collaborating with local communities is essential for successful countering of IEDs.	1 (1.1%)	24 (25.3%)	22 (23.2%)	15 (15.8%)	33 (34.7%)	3.58	1.234
The sharing of intelligence and information among collaborating entities is efficient.	2 (2.1%)	22 (23.2%)	34 (35.8%)	0	37 (38.9%)	3.51	1.279
Collaborative efforts facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of IED threats.	1 (1.1%)	0	14 (14.7%)	34 (35.8%)	39 (41.1%)	3.65	1.43
Average						3.58	1.18

(Source: Researcher, 2023)

Table 2 illustrates the responses regarding the level of agreement on collaborative approaches to counter IEDs in Kenya. Across the six statements, respondents rated their agreement on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing “Strongly Disagree” and 5 indicating “Strongly Agree.” The analysis reveals several key insights. Firstly, there is a consensus among respondents that collaborative efforts enhance the overall effectiveness of countering IEDs, with a notable 44.2% agreeing and a moderate mean rating of 3.44. Similarly, multi-agency collaboration is deemed crucial for addressing the complex nature of IED threats, supported by 34.7% of respondents with a mean rating of 3.59

Furthermore, international partnerships are seen as significant contributors to countering IEDs in Kenya, as highlighted by 32.6% strongly agreeing, with a mean rating of 3.73. Additionally, collaborating with local communities is considered essential, with a substantial 34.7% strongly agreeing and a mean rating of 3.58. Moreover, respondents strongly believe that sharing intelligence and information among collaborating entities is efficient, with 38.9% expressing strong agreement and a mean rating of 3.51. Lastly, collaborative efforts are seen to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of IED threats, with 41.1% strongly agreeing and a mean rating of 3.65. The findings suggest a moderate to high level of agreement with collaborative approaches in countering IEDs in Kenya, as indicated by the average rating of approximately 3.58.

DISCUSSIONS

The study investigated opportunities for collaborative approaches in countering IEDs in Kenya, aiming to

enhance strategies for addressing the threat posed by these devices more effectively. It revealed a significant level of involvement among respondents in collaborative efforts to counter IEDs, indicating widespread recognition of the importance of collaborative approaches in enhancing security outcomes. This finding is consistent with prior research emphasizing the value of multi-agency cooperation in addressing security challenges (Mburu, 2020). However, despite the high level of involvement observed, challenges such as poor coordination among agencies due to a lack of relevant skills and leadership were noted, echoing findings from previous studies (Tsou, 2013). These challenges underscore the need for more effective coordination mechanisms to optimize the impact of collaborative efforts in countering IED threats.

The study revealed varying perspectives among respondents regarding the perceived impact of multi-agency collaboration on countering IEDs. While a substantial portion believed that collaboration contributes significantly to countering IEDs, others doubted its effectiveness. This variation in perceptions reflects the complexity of multi-agency collaboration dynamics, as also noted in previous literature (Ombati, 2023). Despite the documented benefits of collaboration in enhancing security effectiveness (Dathan, 2017), challenges such as coordination issues and differing agency priorities continue to hinder realizing its full potential. As highlighted in prior research, addressing these challenges will require sustained efforts to foster trust, improve communication, and align objectives among collaborating agencies.

Regarding participation in international collaborations, the study found that many respondents reported involvement in initiatives to counter IEDs in Kenya. While international collaborations offer opportunities for knowledge exchange and capacity building, concerns were raised about their transparency and integrity. This finding underscores the importance of accountability in global security partnerships, as emphasized in previous studies (Avooske, 2020). Moreover, the study's emphasis on continuous engagement and knowledge sharing in international collaborations aligns with prior research highlighting the value of sustained cooperation in addressing transnational security threats (Cilliers, 2009). However, suspicions regarding potential clandestine activities highlight the challenges of maintaining trust and transparency in international security initiatives, as noted in the literature.

The findings supported by Mutua and Reuben's (2023) paper suggest that the establishment and strengthening of the National Counter-Terrorism Center (NCTC) have significantly contributed to countering violent extremism (CVE) in Kenya. Using science and technology, particularly through the NCTC's multi-agency approach, has enhanced intelligence gathering and analysis to prevent attacks. This aligns with the government's commitment to leveraging technology and collaborative strategies in the fight against terrorism. Additionally, collaborations with international agencies have facilitated data and information sharing, enabling predictive analysis and capacity building for stakeholders involved in CVE efforts. These findings are consistent with prior research highlighting the positive impacts of multi-agency counter-terrorism operations in Kenya and emphasizing the importance of coordination and understanding between units for effectively tracking and apprehending terrorists.

CONCLUSION

The research explores collaborative approaches to countering IEDs in Kenya, emphasizing the importance of enhanced cooperation among stakeholders. Key findings reveal significant engagement in collaborative efforts, highlighting the critical role of coordination and information sharing in addressing IED threats. Challenges such as coordination issues and concerns about transparency in international partnerships persist, underscoring the need for improved mechanisms and sustained engagement to optimize collaborative efforts.

Furthermore, the study underscores the specific challenges facing Kenya in countering IEDs, including fragmentation among government agencies, limited resources, gaps in intelligence sharing, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in border regions. Strategies such as improved inter-agency

collaboration, enhanced border security measures, and disarmament initiatives are proposed to mitigate these challenges and enhance security outcomes. By adopting a multi-dimensional approach that integrates global, regional, and national strategies, Kenya can effectively address the IED threat. Leveraging international partnerships, strengthening regional cooperation, and enhancing domestic capabilities through improved coordination, intelligence sharing, and investment in counter-IED technologies is essential. Generally, the article emphasizes the need for sustained collaboration and proactive measures to safeguard the security and well-being of Kenyan citizens and contribute to regional stability against the pervasive threat of IEDs.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis conducted in the study, several recommendations emerge to enhance collaborative efforts and mitigate the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Kenya. These recommendations include strengthening inter-agency coordination through clear communication channels and standardized protocols, enhancing capacity-building initiatives for law enforcement and military agencies, fostering transparency and trust in international partnerships, improving border security measures, promoting community engagement through awareness campaigns and local initiatives, and investing in research and development of counter-IED technologies. By implementing these recommendations, policymakers and practitioners can effectively address the challenges posed by IED threats, enhance security outcomes, and safeguard the well-being of citizens in Kenya.

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