

Case Study Series No. 3

# Nurturing Peaceful Co-existence Through Interfaith Collaborations:

Responses to Radicalisation &  
Violent Extremism in Kenya and Zanzibar







*Maps showing Zanzibar, Kilifi & Mombasa*

## **Nurturing Peaceful Co-existence Through Interfaith Collaborations: Responses to Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Kenya and Zanzibar. Case Study Series No. 3.**

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## **Communities Richer in Diversity (CRID)**

The four-year Communities Richer in Diversity project (CRID) aims at leveraging the influence of faith leaders and institutions to promote cultural diversity and respect for equal dignity in six African countries, namely, Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, and Tanzania. It was initiated by a consortium of faith-based organisations and networks, including Faith to Action Network (F2A), Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), African Council of Religious Leaders-Religion for Peace (ACRL-RfP), and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) with financial support from the European Union (EU). The project started in April 2018, and by 31 March 2021, six-country partners had reached at least 25,000 young men and women with interfaith and intercultural interventions. Such interventions enhanced the understanding, tolerance, and respect for cultural and religious diversity among the project participants and beneficiaries in the six countries. The activities can be categorised into four broad areas: edutainment and performance arts, peer education and capacity enhancement, community peacebuilding, and shaping of public discourse.



## Faith Organisations

### Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar (ADZ)

The Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar (ADZ) is the smallest in the Anglican Communion worldwide because it has 2,500 congregants that are divided into seven parishes and three sub-parishes in Unguja and one parish in Pemba. It is the oldest Christian denomination in Zanzibar, which is 96% Muslim. The main cathedral sits on the former site of a slave market in central Stone Town. The Anglican Universities Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) founded the Diocese in 1892, and it initially covered Tanganyika, Congo (current Democratic Republic of Congo), Shire Highlands (now Malawi), Mozambique, and Rhodesia (currently Zambia and Zimbabwe). Over the years, the Diocese became smaller as many other Dioceses were created. In addition to its Anglican ecumenical mission, the Diocese aims at promoting holistic social development to the vulnerable members of the Zanzibar society. Over the years, since the election-related violence in 1995 and the rise of violent extremism in the early 2000s, the Diocese, in partnership with the Office of the Mufti of Zanzibar (OMZ), has been involved in peacebuilding projects in Unguja and Pemba through its Peace and Justice Commission. Among these projects was one on prevention of violent extremism in 2016 and the Community Awareness Program on prevention of violent extremism in 2017. Therefore, the Diocese joined the CRID consortium to advance its peacebuilding interventions in Zanzibar.

### Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA)

Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA) is a Civil Society Organisation (CSO) that is based in Nairobi, Kenya, but has regional offices in Mombasa, Nakuru, Isiolo, and Kakamega counties. The organisation was established in 2003 to coordinate efforts of young Muslims in addressing various development issues, which include peacebuilding, human rights, social exclusion, good governance, and health. KMYA aims at empowering young men and women with adequate knowledge, appropriate skills, and positive attitudes as key ingredients of their personal and communal development. It utilises its grassroots networks, human, and other material resources in all programming activities that target the youth. In the last 10-years, the organisation has received funding from international institutions, including USAID and International Alert (IA), to implement peacebuilding and counter-violent extremism activities in Kenya, especially in counties along the Indian Ocean coast. KMYA used funds from the CRID project to continue its interventions in peacebuilding, intergenerational conflicts, and counter-violent extremism in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties from September 2018 to November 2019, and from February 2021 to May 2021.

## Acronyms

ADZ	Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar
CRID	Communities Richer in Diversity
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CVE	Counter-Violent Extremism
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
KMYA	Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSCVE	National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
VE	Violent Extremism
VEOs	Violent Extremist Organisations

## Abstract

The world has been experiencing old and new waves of radicalisation and Violent Extremism that have destroyed property and led to the death of many innocent people. Whichever is the justification, faith, economic exclusion, ethnicity, politics, or ideology, violent extremists reject tolerant and inclusive society as expounded by goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, the increase in actors that engage in violent extremism and the growth of networks of violent extremists, across the world, is raising serious concerns in development and democratic social spaces. While the global 2030 agenda on sustainability envisions an inclusive world, violent extremists are antagonistic. Therefore, innovative approaches are needed to respond to violent extremism and mitigate the dynamics that lead to recruitment into Violent Extremist Organisations (VEOs). This realisation was the rallying call for Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA) and the Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar (ADZ), who wanted to go beyond the securitisation and economic push and pull framework into interfaith collaborative activities to foster peaceful coexistence. This paper shares the outcome of KMYA and ADZ's interfaith activities that nurtured peaceful coexistence and responded to radicalisation and violent extremism in Kenya and Zanzibar.

**Key Words:** Peaceful Coexistence, Interfaith Collaborations, Interfaith Dialogues, Radicalisation, Violent Extremism, Inclusive Society, Communities Richer in Diversity, and Sustainable Development Goals

# **Nurturing Peaceful Co-existence Through Interfaith Collaborations:**

## **Responses to Radicalisation and Violent Extremism in Kenya and Zanzibar**

### **1. Introduction**

This paper documents lessons and impacts of interfaith interventions which the Communities Richer in Diversity (CRID) implemented in Kenya and Zanzibar respectively. The CRID projects basically intended to leverage the influence of religions, faith leaders, religious actors, and institutions in fostering peaceful coexistence. The main aim was to promote interfaith collaborative activities as a mechanism for peaceful coexistence in the face of radicalisation<sup>1</sup> and violent extremism.<sup>2</sup> The Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance (KMYA) and the Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar (ADZ) implemented the reviewed activities between September 2018 and May 2021. KMYA operated in Likoni and Mvita in Mombasa County and Mtwapa and Rabai in Kilifi County.<sup>3</sup> The organisation focused its interventions in the selected areas because they were experiencing rivalry between religious sects, inter-religious tension, radicalisation, violent extremism, and killings of the elderly by the youth (CRID 2019). KMYA focused on peaceful coexistence: promoting interfaith, intercultural, and intergenerational relations. In Zanzibar, there were rampant cases of religious and cultural intolerance that caused disharmony among the local communities. Accordingly, the Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar (ADZ) worked in Pemba and Unguja, focusing on promoting religious and cultural harmony among the communities by establishing common ground for interfaith dialogues and peacebuilding (CRID 2020).

This paper will review the two institutions' interfaith collaborative activities to mitigate religious disharmony and intolerance, especially issues of radicalisation and violent extremism. The article will assess the impact of KMYA interventions in Kenya and ADZ in Zanzibar in fostering peaceful coexistence and responding to religious radicalisation and violent extremism. The paper anticipates that some of the lessons and best practices from the two locations could be universalised and applied in other countries.

The first section has introduced the paper, while the second section will highlight the background which informed the two organisations' projects and activities. The third section will explain the methodology which the research for this case study employed to collect primary and secondary empirical data, and the fourth section will review the involvement of religious leaders in the mitigation of violent extremism and nurturing of peaceful coexistence. The fifth section will examine the role of state authorities in the mitigation of violent extremism and nurturing of peaceful coexistence, while the sixth

section will highlight the analytical framework that we will use to analyse the empirical data. The seventh section will present the empirical evidence and analyse it using the provided analytical framework, whereas section eight will outline the lessons from those interfaith interventions in Kenya and Zanzibar. Section nine will conclude the paper and present some recommendations.

## 2.0 Background

There has been an escalation of incidents of religious conflicts and tensions including radicalisation and violent extremism in Kenya over the years (Shauri, 2018). Following the terrorist attack in Kenya on 7 August 1998, the country saw an increase in radicalisation and a spike in incidents of terrorism peaking in 2014/2015.<sup>4</sup> The increase was linked to the Somalia-based Islamist group Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (popularly known as al-Shabaab). Inspired by global jihadist doctrines, al-Shabaab exploited local grievances in Kenya's Coast and North-Eastern regions. It used modern sophisticated weapons and its attacks targeted security instalments, business establishments, public transport, foreign installations, individuals, ethnic groups, and religious formations, specifically Christians. The situation worsened when the militia group killed at least 48 people in Mpeketoni in Lamu County.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, certain Muslim clerics were killed in Mombasa by unknown gunmen.<sup>6</sup> Also, there were incidents of human rights violations by the security forces as they responded to the rising radicalisation and extremism.<sup>7</sup> In particular, the attacks on Christians and their religious institutions led to the rise of tensions between Christians and Muslims, which threatened peaceful coexistence. Therefore, KMYA intended to promote peaceful coexistence in Mombasa



*KMYA dialogue with parents of a juvenile gang in Majengo*



*KMYA briefs boda boda (motor taxi) drivers for a sensitization campaign*

and Kilifi counties by contributing to reducing these tensions, radicalisation, and violent extremism.

Similarly, Zanzibar, which is a semi-autonomous region of Tanzania, has seen rising religious tensions and incidents of radicalisation and violent extremism over the years. Although Zanzibar is 96% Muslim, it has recorded religious tensions in recent decades like mainland Tanzania. Also, Zanzibar has experienced political tensions and violence in every election year since 1995. Since 1998, Zanzibar has been on the map of the global ‘war on terror’ because three of the bombers who attacked the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on 7 August 1998 were from the islands.<sup>8</sup> Other global attacks in which nationals of Zanzibar were involved include the bombing of the USS Cole off the coast of Yemen in October 2000 and the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York, United States, on 11 September 2001.<sup>9</sup> Also, there have been incidents where youth from Zanzibar were arrested as they tried to move over to Somalia to join al-Shabaab.<sup>10</sup> Just like in Kenya, radicals and extremists in Zanzibar are inspired by global jihadist doctrines, but they exploit local grievances to win the support of the population. Unlike in Kenya, however, the attacks in Zanzibar have used crude homemade explosives, handguns, and cans of acid. The attacks have targeted Christian leaders, churches, and other soft targets such as bars and restaurants.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, religious radicalisation and violent extremism has been a threat to peaceful co-existence and religious harmony in Zanzibar. This is the challenge that informed the ADZ’s involvement in the communities richer in diversity project.

While most research on the involvement of youth in religious tensions, radicalisation, and violent extremism has considered them as both perpetrators and victims, less attention has been given to their involvement in the promotion of peaceful coexistence. Indeed, young men and women are excluded from peace interventions and conflict management processes. As Gastaldello et al. (2016) observe, structures of power and politics, whether formal or informal, can exclude or discount youth from development considerations. The exclusion may erase and deny the multiple experiences of young men and women as peacebuilders who negotiate complex systems of risk and oppression to act for peace at local levels. Hence, responses by different stakeholders towards the prevention of radicalisation and violence should include young men and women. Such inclusion will incorporate youth in violence mitigation interventions and curbing threats to peaceful coexistence.

The paper will use primary data from Mombasa and Kilifi in Kenya and Unguja and Pemba in Zanzibar to assess the role of youth in the resolution of religious tensions, reduction of radicalisation and violent extremism, and promotion of peaceful coexistence. The paper notes that a significant amount of research has been conducted on the general phenomenon of violent extremism, especially on the push and pull factors. But as Mwakimako (2010) avers, stakeholders should harness interfaith relations, particularly between Christians and Muslims, to bolster efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism with a view to promote peaceful coexistence between cultures and religions. KMYA and ADZ are such stakeholders.

### 3.0 Scope and Methodology

Research for this paper drew empirical data from a comparative analysis of the KMYA project in Kenya and the ADZ project in Zanzibar. KMYA's activities aimed at generating knowledge on interfaith activities among the youth to promote pluralism and counter-radicalisation and violent extremism, while the ADZ project aimed at promoting religious harmony among the youth by establishing common ground for interfaith peacebuilding. The research reviewed the two cases to draw parallel impacts and lessons in the promotion of peaceful coexistence.

The research chose Mombasa and Kilifi in Kenya and Unguja and Pemba in Zanzibar because of their similar histories and due to their geophysical connection through the Indian Ocean. The choice of KMYA and ADZ considered the experience the two organisations have in fostering peaceful coexistence through interfaith activities. Broadly, the comparison offered an opportunity to explore how activities of faith-based organisations can be used to promote peaceful coexistence in the face of religious conflicts and tensions caused by radicalisation and violent extremism.

To link the two projects with universal issues, the researchers analysed secondary data sources from the international and regional interventions that mitigate religious conflicts and tensions arising from radicalisation and violent extremism. The researchers also reviewed religious tensions, radicalisation, and violent extremism trends and mitigations in Kenya and Zanzibar. Nonetheless, the main secondary data sources were the KMYA's and ADZ's project documents: proposals, log frames, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, project key performance indicators (KPIs) matrices, and projects baseline and endline reports. The research extracted empirical evidence using content analysis, case reviews, case comparisons, case interpretation, and meta-analysis. Therefore, the research collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative evidence was collected by adapting tools that had been given to KMYA and ADZ by Faith to Action Network, while qualitative data was collected by way of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to fit local contexts.

The primary data was collected from 280 young men and women from Kenya and Zanzibar. The sample from Kenya comprised 80 young men and women on an equal ratio (1:1:1:1) from Likoni and Mvita in Mombasa County, and Mtwapa and Rabai in Kilifi County) i.e., 20 from each location. Meanwhile, the sample from Zanzibar comprised 200 young men and women on the ratio of 3:2 from Unguja and Pemba i.e., 120 were Unguja while 80 were from Pemba. The sample, in both cases, was drawn using systematic sampling in combination with simple random. All the selected respondents in Kenya (K) were 18 years and above and those in Zanzibar (Z) were aged 15 and above. The research collected qualitative information from 38 Key Informants (K28:Z10) and 78 Focus Group Discussion participants (K28:Z50) selected purposively. In the two countries,



researchers developed KIIs and FGDs guidelines. The data collection involved project participants and beneficiaries. Before presenting the conceptual framework that we used to analyse the empirical data, it will be helpful to briefly review the role of religious actors in promotion of peaceful coexistence and their responses to radicalisation and violent extremism.



*Training of youth leaders in Likoni discussing a case study*

## 4.0 Religious Leaders in Mitigation of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

In response to the spread and damages caused by radicalisation and violent extremism, the international community has prioritised mitigation of the problem (United Nations 2015). Yet, these traditional highly securitised approaches have not been successful in many countries (Afro Barometer 2016, USM-UN 2020). The failure, however, is more pronounced in some countries in the Horn of Africa, as evidenced by failure by governments to mitigate the geographic footprint of violent extremists in the sub-region. In a speech by Ambassador Kelly Craft, the permanent representative United States Mission to the United Nations on 11 March 2020, governments alone cannot prevent and counter violent extremism (USM-UN 2020). In this regard, there is a need to recognise that Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have crucial knowledge of and engage with local communities to confront the challenges of recruitment and radicalisation to violence.

These are the reasons that inspired and informed KMYA and ADZ's decisions to conceive, design, and implement interfaith activities to promote peaceful coexistence through mitigating radicalisation and violent extremism in the four locations. The two organisations recognised that governments have over the years treated radicalisation and violent extremism as security problems. Using security approaches became an impediment to free social spaces for collaborations and partnerships. Indeed, cases of human rights violations in Kenya (Shauri 2017 and 2018) spread fear and reduced social spaces for CSOs. Moreover, KMYA and ADZ recognised governments' failure to mitigate the geographic footprint of violent extremism. They understood that CSOs and faith leaders play a significant role in mitigating radicalisation and violent extremism in the communities where they operate.

More importantly, KMYA and ADZ recognised that approaches to prevent and counter violent extremism uses both hard and soft power. However, policy discourses and the practice have paid less attention to religion and religious actors. Yet, the role of religion and religious actors is central because religious ideology fuels radicalisation that leads to violence. According to Nozell and Mandaville (2017), the interest and space for including religious actors in policy on prevention and countering violent extremism have grown over the past few years. However, the debate on how the ideological, religious, or structural factors contribute to violent extremism has not yielded clear guidance for policy and practitioners. Further, Nozell and Mandaville reiterate that the role of religion as a potential driver to violent extremism is significant, but its causal relation is not linear.

Therefore, religious leaders and actors are critical partners in the fight against radicalisation and violent extremism, especially where religious ideology is a tool for recruitment as used by violent extremists such as Al-Shabaab and Al-Qaeda. While extremists can take advantage of their influence to radicalise, mobilise for recruitment, provide justification, and radicalising narratives into extreme violence, anti-radicalisation, and counter-violence interventions can follow the same pathway to de-radicalise, provide counter-narratives, and demobilise violent extremists. As Nozell and Mandaville (2017) aver, religious leaders are integral members of civil society and key contributors to public and political discourse. Accordingly, religious leaders and actors are crucial partners in addressing the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism. These are the insights that informed KMYA and ADZ as they conceived and designed the two projects to engage religious leaders and actors in the responses to radicalisation and violent extremism. But the two faith organisations were not operating in a vacuum. Rather, they intended to work in environments where the state authorities had adopted policies and practices to counter and mitigate radicalisation and violent extremism.



*Youth leaders participate in a sermon on peaceful coexistence in at Masjid Jabreen*

## 5.0 Mitigation Approaches by State Authorities

All countries in East Africa have suffered from extreme violent acts, whether perpetrated by and against a country's nationals for a domestic cause or focused on extra-national or regional targets such as embassies of Western countries (GCCS 2016). The GCCS report categorises the root causes of violent extremism in the region into push and pull factors. Push factors are structural conditions such as underdevelopment, lack of access to education or employment, and social marginalisation. Push factors fuel grievances that are felt on behalf of communities with whom individuals share cultural, ideological, religious, or ethnic bonds, making individuals receptive to radicalisation and violent extremism. Pull factors are immediate incentives that make violent extremist ideas or groups appealing. They include the attraction of charismatic individuals, strategic communications, and compelling messaging, financial or other material benefits, or the social status that group members feel they achieve as being part of an extremist group.

Kenya, for example, has its share of political and socio-economic challenges that extremist groups have exploited. The push-pull factors of radicalisation and violent extremism in Kenya have roots in legacies of ethnic and social injustices that portends exclusionism in access to public goods, human rights violations by security agencies, and challenges of the justice system. Other endemic factors include corruption, institutional degradation, structural inequalities, and youth bulge (GCCS 2016; Shauri 2017a & 2017b and 2018). Kenya's responses to the threat of radicalisation and violent extremism use multiple approaches. Ruteere and Mutahi (2018) posit that the Kenyan Government has adopted a raft of legal and policy interventions, which include the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2012) and Policy on Development of Youth (2018). According to Ogada (2017), Kenya has a strategy to P/CVE named the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism [NSCVE] (2016). The strategy endeavours to build youth resilience through the promotion of strong bonds at the community level, provision of jobs, and enhanced coordination of P/CVE actors. Alongside the NSCVE there are County Action Plans (KCAPCVE 2017) as mechanisms to actualise the pillars of the NSCVE, building its operational framework.

Similarly, Tanzania has its share of push-pull factors. Key among them is poverty, which rates eight times higher in rural areas than in Dar es Salaam (GCCS (2016). Thus, questions of structural and income inequalities spur tensions. Grievances on economic, social, and political marginalisation, laced with negative interfaith relations also fuel the allure to radicalisation and violent extremism. Confounding the situation in Zanzibar are political tensions over elections and secession tendencies among Zanzibaris who feel that Zanzibar lost its identity after union with Tanganyika to form the current United Republic Tanzania. Broadly, however, incidents of violent extremism in the country remain under the radar because of their small numbers. So, the country's mechanisms for preventing religious radicalisation and violent extremism include interfaith campaigns

and a strong community policing initiative that strengthens relationships between the government and communities (GCC2016). Further, the Tanzanian government has a national counter-terrorism strategy whose central pillars are security responses, intelligence gathering, and community policing.

Overall, counter-radicalisation and responses to violent extremism in both Kenya and Tanzania have not engaged religious actors heavily in the mitigation of radicalisation and violent extremism. That is the gap that led KMYA and ADZ to initiate collaborative activities to mitigate radicalisation and violent extremism and contribute to peaceful coexistence between cultures and religions. Before we present the research findings, it is prudent that we highlight the analytical framework that the paper will use to analyse the empirical data on those collaborative interventions.



*A youth-led dialogue with religious and community leaders on interfaith and intercultural collaboration in Mtwapa*

## 6.0 Analytical Framework: Exit, Voice and Loyalty

The paper will analyse the empirical data on the KMYA and ADZ activities in Kenya and Zanzibar using the theory of Exit, Voice, and Loyalty by Albert Hirschman (1915-2012). The theory stipulates that Exit and Voice are responses to situations which are not satisfying about the quality of goods or services. When the quality of goods or services goes down, an individual may choose to complain (Voice- repair or improve the relationship through the communication of the complaint) or leave (Exit-withdraw from the relationship) without trying to remedy the situation. However, where the quality of goods or services remains consistently high, then an individual becomes loyal.

The exit, voice, and loyalty framework is very flexible and applies to personal relationships, protest movements, migration, political parties, and interest groups. Accordingly, this paper will use the framework to understand interfaith collaborations that sought to address religious-inspired radicalisation and violent extremism and enhance peaceful coexistence in the project locations. The analysis will show that collaborative activities between religious actors represent the interplay of exit, voice, and loyalty. Loyalty to the organization is the intervening variable because it determines the choice, that is, whether to exit or to voice (Hoffmann and Elizabeth 2006).

Practically, members of religious faith may respond to increasing religious radicalisation and violent extremism in two ways: by being aloof (exit) or engaging in collaborative activities such as dialogues (voice) to mitigate the problem. Similarly, young men and women opt to quit violent groups or express their concerns through various activities, including dialogue forums. Dissatisfied young men and women may choose to engage in dialogues to find solutions or remain distant and continue with their non-conformist behaviours. The exit and voice framework seeks to answer the following questions. When is it prudent for members to fight for reform within the group? When should they fight for reforms from without the group? When should they exit? However, the interplay between exit and voice is dependent on an array of factors. Such factors include the level of loyalty that members have to a group. More loyal members will likely voice their concerns in the hope of instituting change from within than less committed members who will prefer the exit option.

More critical to consider in the exit and voice framework is the effectiveness of the voice. Group members prefer exit over voice when they perceive limited chances of success. The other critical factor is an analysis of the cost-benefits of exit and voice. Individuals and groups have the capabilities of weighing both options. When the benefits of voice are more than the costs, individuals and groups will prefer to voice their discontent. When the cost of voice is higher than the benefits, individuals and groups will choose to exit. More critical for this paper is that voice as an option is likely to be adopted where the exit options are limited. This scenario applies to religious groups. Therefore, it is usual to see more voice in religious groups than in other groupings. In a nutshell, we



will use the framework to analyse the KMYA and ADZ interfaith activities that sought to mitigate radicalization and violent extremism and foster peaceful co-existence.

From the principles of the theory, one can measure the decline in a group using both exit and voice options. But the voice remains more informative by providing underlying reasons for the weakening of a group. The exit option alone only provides symptoms of decline and not the underlying causes because exit and voice interaction offer an opportunity for feedback and critique of the group. Such feedback opportunities provide good outcomes that minimize exit. For instance, stifling dissent in a religious faction or between religions may generate more pressure for members to prefer violent expressions of dissent than exit. Alternatively, there will be less voicing where there are higher chances of exiting.

While exit and voice are deterministic, the interplay of loyalty can function as an intervening variable. It can generally affect the cost-benefit analysis of using either exit or voice. Where religious faith or faction is loyal (as evidenced by worship practices or fundamentalist adherents), the exit option may be reduced, especially where options to exit are not so appealing (ex-communicated or banishment or ostracism). Thus, loyal members become devoted to a religious faction that gives them opportunities to voice their concerns. Where reform is not forthcoming, members legitimize the use of the violent expression.

Thus, by understanding the relationship between exit and voice and the interplay that loyalty has with these choices, religions and religious actors can craft interventions to address their members' concerns and issues. Such measures will improve interfaith collaborations and peaceful co-existence. Failure to understand these competing pressures can lead to the decline in collaborative activities that seek to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, as envisaged in this paper.

In essence, the gist of the framework is that all membership organisations face triple challenges, namely, knowing how the members are engaged with the organisation; how likely the members will remain in the organisation; and when the members might exit the organisation. Thus, an organisation can observe, review, and address voice, exit, and loyalty concerns. In other words, early interventions can lead to a reduction in the number of those members who choose the exit option. Additionally, early interventions can enhance the retention of members through increasing satisfaction, loyalty, referrals, and growth. Studies by Elizabeth (2006) and Mark et al., (2000) confirm Hirschman's assertion that greater exit and entry costs heighten the likelihood of voice. The principle applies when examining dispute resolution in contexts with limited exit opportunities like those of religious organisations. Stringent entry costs may also make members prefer to voice than exit, according to the theory. Hence, these propositions make the framework appropriate for analysing empirical data from the KMYA and ADZ interventions in Kenya and Zanzibar.

## 7.0 Data Presentation and Discussion

### 7.1 Demographic Profile of Research Respondents

The research considered respondents from the counties of Mombasa (52%) and Kilifi (48%) and Pemba (40%) and Unguja (60%). Considered variables were gender, age, religious affiliation, and the level of education. These variables represented the diversity of voices and the dynamics of religious actors. We included religion of affiliation as a variable for two reasons. First, it provides the diversity of faiths and reflects the social spaces upon which interfaith activities occur. Second, it captured the ideology and motivation on the allure of radicalisation and violent extremism among the youth. Results of the study on the demographic profiles of respondents are represented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents by Country

Respondent's Characteristics	Kenya (%)	Zanzibar (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	59.0	62.0
Female	41.0	38.0
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>		
Islam	67.0	70.0
Christianity	33.0	30.0
<b>Age</b>		
≤ 34 Years	93.7	63.5
≥ 35 Years	6.3	36.5
<b>Level of Education</b>		
No Schooling	0.0	2.0
Madrasa Only	0.0	20.0
Primary School	7.8	48.0
Secondary School	53.1	25.0
Vocational	3.1	4.0
Tertiary	35.9	1.0



## 7.2 Interfaith Interventions in Kenya and Zanzibar

Documents analyses reveal that KMYA and ADZ conceived and implemented a diversity of interfaith interventions that aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence and mitigating religious radicalisation and violent extremism. While KMYA completed all their activities in the targeted locations, ADZ did not complete their activities. Therefore, this section will analyse the impacts of the implemented activities. Table 2 shows the theory of change as we conceptualise it, the activities the two partners implemented, and the key outcomes.

*Table 2: Interfaith Collaborative Activities for Peaceful Coexistence in Kenya and Zanzibar*

<b>Theory of Change:</b> “IF we enhance interfaith collaboration in the face of radicalisation and violent extremism among the youth in Kenya and Zanzibar, THEN we will enhance peaceful coexistence”	
<b>The Process:</b> Collaborative activities implemented by partners in project countries	
<b>KMYA Activities in Kenya</b>	<b>ADZ Activities in Zanzibar</b>
Youth peer leaders TOT training on promotion of interreligious diversity	Staff and partners' inception training on the project's aims and projected outcomes.
Peer-led cascaded trainings on promotion of interfaith, respect, understanding and tolerance	Stakeholders meeting in Unguja on the role of religious tolerance and the nexus between political practices and tolerance and peaceful coexistence.
Mentorship sessions for young clergy training in religious leadership	Awareness seminars in Unguja and Pemba – the seminars focused on community peacebuilding.
Review meetings on establishment of structures that promote respect for religious diversity.	Peace caravan in Unguja to highlight to the general population the ADZ's quest for peaceful coexistence in Zanzibar
Youth-led religious and community leaders' accountability forums on interfaith collaborations	Distribution of IEC materials and dissemination of tolerance messages – those reported were 67 brochures, 2 rolling banners, 1 backdrop banner, and 56 project fliers
Dialogue meetings between youth & religious leaders to build trust for collaboration in mitigating security challenges	Shaping public discourse on peaceful coexistence through media coverage by the national TVs, radio stations, and both Kiswahili and English language newspapers.
Grassroots youth-led dialogues on interreligious respect and diversity	Visibility through the ADZ's online platforms – newsletter, Facebook, twitter, and Instagram.

Information exchange sessions aimed at enhancing peaceful co-existence	
<b>Key Outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amplified voices against radicalisation and violent extremism</li><li>• Enhanced community peacebuilding</li><li>• Shaping public discourse - increased respect for religious diversity and promotion of tolerance</li><li>• Building youth resilience - increase in youth embracing cultural and religious diversity</li></ul>	

As explained in the preceding sections, interfaith activities in Kenya and Zanzibar involved bringing together members of different faiths in various forums which acted as spaces of engagement. The activities encouraged religious leaders to promote unity in diversity and cultivate peaceful coexistence. While the activities were diverse and tailored to the local contexts, they cumulatively aimed at forging common solutions to common challenges. Others aimed at reconciling or resolving inter-faith conflicts. The following sub-sections analyse the impacts the two organisations attained within the four broad areas of outcomes highlighted above.

### 7.2.1. Amplified Voices Against Radicalisation and Violent Extremism

From the inception of their projects, KMYA and ADZ intended to amplify the voices of the project participants and beneficiaries against religious radicalisation and violent extremism. Amplifying the participants’ voices would encourage members of faith organisations to enhance their individual and group voices and loyalty and pursue change within their organisations as espoused in the analytical frame. Such change would contribute to long-term peaceful coexistence. KMYA and ADZ intended to achieve this goal through interfaith activities that would empower the project participants and beneficiaries with knowledge on different faiths and cultures, attitudes and perspectives to reject extremist doctrines, and skills to pro-actively promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence between religions and cultures.

The projects would assess indicators for such changes by comparing findings between baseline and end-line surveys and qualitative empirical evidence from project participants and beneficiaries. The quantitative baseline and endline tools had questions which explored awareness and knowledge on violent extremism, knowledge of individuals who had joined extremist groups, knowledge of individuals who had left extremist groups, and individual admirations for or desires to join extremist groups. Other questions were whether different religions can coexist peacefully, channels of exposure to violent extremism and whether only individuals and groups from certain religions are predisposed towards extremist ideologies.

In Kenya, comparisons of the Baseline Values (BV) and End-line Values (EV) on these issues yielded interesting findings. Awareness level had increased from 78% during the baseline to 91% during the end-line survey. Knowledge level had risen from 60% during the baseline to 67% during the end-line survey. Knowledge of someone who joined a violent extremist group had increased from 47.7% during the baseline survey to 55% during the end-line research. Knowledge of someone who had left a violent extremist group had increased from 44.6% at the baseline to 59% at the end-line. Further, the numbers of those who had been part of a violent extremist group dropped from 15.4% at the baseline to 12% at the end-line survey, while those who had admired or considered joining a violent extremist group dropped from 12% at the baseline survey to 6% at the end-line research.

We infer that the increase in awareness and knowledge levels was a positive impact. It shows that KMYA empowered more young men and women, who became aware of the dangers of violent extremism. More importantly, the empowered individuals were willing to speak openly about those dangers and express their concerns. The changes, especially open expression of concerns, speak to the propositions of the analytical framework that engaging members of an organisation or religious group reduce the costs of voicing concerns and improves opportunities of pursuing change from within. In other words, the KMYA interventions in Mombasa and Kilifi decreased the exit option and attraction to extremist organisations.



*Secretary General of the Office of the Grand Mufti in Zanzibar and another officer.*

In essence, KMYA provided spaces and platforms for engagements which enhanced the participants' voices against radicalisation and violent extremism and reduced attraction to extremist doctrines. Further, the figures of those who knew someone who had joined extremist organisations or desired to join such organisations dropped, showing that the KMYA interventions had provided alternative mechanisms of addressing their concerns. Again, this change is in line with the principles of the analytical framework as explained above.

Assessing the impact of the ADZ on this issue was slightly different because there was no endline data to compare with the baseline data at the time of writing. Also, Zanzibar is complicated because people do not openly discuss religious radicalisation, violent extremism, and terrorism, as these issues are officially classified as security matters that only the police can address. So, interventions by Civil Society Organisations on these issues are packaged and assessed as peacebuilding. The challenge explains the ADZ's choice of the peace caravan and mass media as the main opportunities for shaping the public discourse on these issues. Public discourse in this sense refers to the terms, assumptions, labels, categories, and narratives that the population use to describe and explain violent extremism.

Nonetheless, there were interesting pointers from the ADZ project reports and data from research for this paper. Regarding channels of exposure to extremist ideologies, for example, 31% of those interviewed during the case study research pointed fingers at religious leaders compared to 56.3% at the baseline survey. The change showed an improvement in the sense that participants in the ADZ activities had built confidence in religious leaders as agents of countering radicalisation and violent extremism. Further, 57.5% of the case study respondents argued that their religion is not predisposed to religious extremist ideologies. Meanwhile, 72% of the case study respondents talked about improved relations between security forces and the population. We infer that the ADZ activities had built the participants' confidence, and they were able to freely express themselves and reveal what they knew about religious-inspired extremism.

Just like in Kenya, the ADZ activities empowered more young men and women, who acquired confidence and could now speak about religious radicalisation and violent extremism. Their acquired abilities to express deep-seated concerns speak to the argument of the analytical framework that engaging members reduces the costs of voicing concerns and improves opportunities for pursuing change from within. We, therefore, deduce that the ADZ interventions decreased the exit option by providing platforms for engagements. The ADZ enhanced the participants' voices against radicalisation and violent extremism and reduced attraction to extremist doctrines. Such changes would contribute to long-term peaceful coexistence in Zanzibar between members of different religions, cultures, and political formations and persuasions. As a male participant noted during an ADZ's engagement forum in Unguja, "Zanzibaris are polite and peace-loving people. It is only our leaders that are letting us down."<sup>12</sup>

Overall, the impacts achieved by KMYA in Kenya and ADZ in Zanzibar provide a respite for the hope that faith organisations are important actors who contribute to the reduction in religious-inspired radicalisation and violent extremism.

## 7.2.2. Enhanced Community Peacebuilding

KMYA and ADZ sought to contribute to peaceful coexistence between cultures and religions through their interfaith activities. The activities broadly fall under what peacebuilding literature calls community peacebuilding. As conceptualised in the literature, community peacebuilding posits that attaining long-term peace requires the involvement of all levels of a society, from top to bottom. It recognises that different layers in a society occupy positions and levels of authority and that conflicts and violence affects actors in these levels differently. It further posits that the lower actors, that is, the grassroots, experience in their daily interactions the hatred and animosity which arises from a conflict. In this view, peacebuilding interventions aim at creation of social mechanisms that enhance continuous cooperation and dialogue between different social, identity or religious groups.

Therefore, community peacebuilding emphasises change in relations between grassroots actors i.e., the local population, including repairing and transforming the damaged relationships. Hence, community peacebuilding activities seek to create spaces and opportunities for the local actors to share their experiences, learn new perspectives,



*Youth leaders participate in discussions of a listening group in Mtwapa*

change their perceptions of the 'other', and promote tolerance and religious and cultural inclusivity. To assess KMYA and ADZ's contribution to local peacebuilding, the baseline and endline tools had questions on relations between members of different religions and cultures. Specific questions centred on relations with neighbours from other cultural or religious groups, regular conversations and interactions between members of different religions, understanding of the similarities and differences between religions and religious traditions, how such differences shape social interactions, perceptions towards 'other' cultures and religions, tolerance and inclusivity, peaceful coexistence between different cultures and religions, and group relations at the institutional and policy levels.

In Kenya, comparisons of the KMYA's baseline values and end-line values on these issues produced thought-provoking findings. Of the sample, 71.2% of the youth who participated in the endline survey supported religious tolerance compared to 68.8% during the baseline survey. Similarly, 86.4% of the endline survey respondents accepted religious inclusivity compared to 75.4% during the baseline survey. And 78.8% of the endline survey respondents supported interfaith relations and collaborations compared to 68.8% during the baseline survey. Further, 93.6% of the endline survey respondents accepted knowing similarities and differences between religions compared to 75% during the baseline survey. There were other positive trends.

For example, 56% of the endline respondents supported respect for cultural diversity compared to 43.1% of the baseline survey. Another 87.8% of endline respondents agreed with the statement "is your religious group able to practice its cultural practices freely" compared to 87.5% during the baseline survey. Additionally, 53% of the endline respondents argued that KMYA had reached the youth messages of peaceful coexistence in the project locations compared to 33.3% at the baseline research. Regarding individual change, 89.5% of the endline respondents engaged with neighbours from other religions compared to 85.9% at the baseline survey. Another 92.3% of the endline respondents has friends from other religious groups compared 81.8% of the baseline respondents.

We deduce that the positive trends are indications that the KMYA interventions empowered the youth such that they opted for the voice option rather than the exit option. Empowerment activities included training in learning circles where young men and women acquired knowledge about other religions and cultures and engagements in spaces provided by the KMYA team. Such spaces included cultural forums, mentorship programs, and dialogue forums. Additional knowledge and engagements with those from other religions and cultures enhanced the voices and loyalty of the participating young men and women and considerably reduced the exit option.

Thus, the empowered individuals chose relations with their neighbours, accepted peaceful coexistence between cultures and religions, appreciated common humanity

between them and their neighbours from different religions and cultures, and saw the value of cultural and religious diversity. In essence, the KMYA interventions provided spaces and platforms for engagements which enhanced the participants' voices and contributed to transformation of relations between members of different cultures and religions. These changes were in line with the principles of the analytical framework.

Assessing the impact of the ADZ on this issue was slightly different because there was no endline data to compare with the baseline data at the time of writing. However, the ADZ interventions can be viewed as aspects of community peacebuilding as they were packaged. Empirical data for the case study shows positive trends. For instance, 58.5% of the youth who participated in the case study research engaged, either formally or informally, with people from other religions compared to 51% during baseline survey. We also observed that 67% of those who participated in the case study research believed that collaborating with people from other religions is among the best approach to maintaining peace in the society compared to 63% during the baseline survey.

Research for the case study also found that 80.3% of the youth had a positive attitude towards people of different religions and culture compared to 77% during the baseline survey. Further, 62% of case study participants accepted knowing similarities and differences between religions compared to 50% during the baseline survey. The quantitative statistics are consistent with the qualitative evidence. As one youth revealed to the case study researchers,

“I am a Muslim, but I was trained at St Augustine, a Christian University in Mwanza. For me, exposure to different religions is a good thing. I believe that cultures and traditions in Zanzibar are always changing. Modern Zanzibar contains many positive aspects including acceptance of others and their differences”.<sup>13</sup>

This concurs with the presentation of a female participant in an ADZ forum, who argued that,

“We should not fight because of politics. Politics should unify all of us. As Muslims, we should treat each other as brothers and sisters. The Holy Prophet says that you will not enter heaven unless you trust others, and you will not trust each other unless you love each other. It is not Islamic to hate someone because of their political position.”<sup>14</sup>

A presentation from a Christian in Pemba buttresses the argument of change. In her words,

“The conditions have been improved...As Christians we can nowadays practice our religion and receive basic social services like any other



religious group in the community... People have been educated and 'we are free from worshipping...One of the participants is a group leader of female Christians and Muslims joint women group at Mkadini Chake Chake here in Pemba.' <sup>15</sup>

Just like in Kenya, the ADZ interventions empowered the project participants and beneficiaries so that they opted for the voice option rather than the exit option. Empowerment activities included training during the project inception, peace engagements with partners, and peacebuilding forums in Unguja and Pemba. We argue that the forums provided spaces for engagements which enhanced the voices of the participating young men and women and considerably reduced the exit option. Thus, the empowered individuals chose relations with their neighbours, and collaborations between cultures and religions. So, just like in Kenya, the ADZ interventions in Zanzibar provided spaces and platforms for engagements which enhanced the participants' voices and contributed to transformation of relations between members of different cultures and religions. Again, these changes were in line with the principles of the analytical framework.

### 7.2.3: Shaping of Public Discourses

One way of contributing to long-term peaceful coexistence is shaping public discourses and including all stakeholders in development processes. Shaping public discourses involves creating spaces and opportunities for engagement with all stakeholders, including local and national leadership. It also requires incorporating local actors in decision-making. As the analytical framework anticipates, such inclusion and other forms of engagement would enhance the voice option and, thus, give the youth hope that they could influence changes without turning to extreme actions. In essence, it would minimise the exit option and promote interfaith and intercultural collaborations. Minimising the exit option meant that more youth would be involved in the KMYA activities and other local opportunities and, thus, would not be attracted to the extreme positions.

KMYA used different activities to shape public discourses. These activities include engagement forums with various categories of local and national leadership, involving various leaders in youth forums, sending youth representatives to local and national government meetings, youth mentorship interventions, engagement with religious leaders, and participating in cultural events. Because of specific challenges in Zanzibar, especially the small size of the Anglican Diocese and stringent security requirements, ADZ used public events, that is, the peace caravan and the national mass media to shape public discourses.

For KMYA, 83.3% of the endline respondents accepted that they had been involved in various activities that shaped public discourses compared to 56.3% at the baseline





*Bishop Michael Hafidh and government officers at the stadium in Unguja during the peace caravan.*

survey. 78.8% of the endline respondents admitted they had been involved in leading activities, including meetings with government officials, compared to 36.9% during the baseline. Another 71.2% of the endline respondents agreed that they had been involved in leadership opportunities compared to 40.0% at the baseline. Additionally, 54.6% of the endline respondents confirmed participating in decision-making platforms compared to 40.6% during the baseline research. Figures for leading interreligious activities stood at 63% for endline respondents compared to 35.9% for the baseline respondents. These improvements show that KMYA contributed to public discourses by involving the youth in leadership activities. Such involvement enhanced the voice option.

In Zanzibar, as noted in the preceding paragraphs, ADZ opted for public events and national mass media. The peacebuilding forum in Pemba, for example, was publicised through Pemba Today newspaper.<sup>16</sup> The peace caravan was widely covered by various television stations and newspapers. According to the ADZ reports,<sup>17</sup> it started at Kisonge ground in central Unguja and marched through Michenzani, Madema, Kilimani Chini to Maisara KMKM stadium. Marchers were guided by the traffic police officers. Those in the march included the Regional Commissioner for Urban West Region, District Commissioner for Urban District, the Chairman of Peace Committee of Urban District, the Bishop of the Anglican Church, and the General Secretary of the Anglican Diocese of Zanzibar. ADZ states that the march reached at least 3,000 people directly and more than 1,000,000 people through the mass media. The Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation TV gave live coverage, and other television stations, the Star Television (ST), Independent Television (ITV), and Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC) Television covered the march in their 8.00 pm news bulletins.

The case study research did not have the benefits of an endline survey. However, comparing baseline values with targets reached shows improvements. For instance, while the baseline value for the inter-religious activities was 15.5%, the target reached shows a value of 50%. And while the baseline value for unifying speeches by religious leaders was 45%, the target reached value was 73%. Lastly, the percentage of personal values on religious tolerance was 69.5% for the baseline and 85% for the target reached. These findings are consistent with the views of a male participant in a peace forum, who argued that

“Every institution should use every available opportunity to build peace and promote peaceful coexistence. For example, on 8 January 2020, around 9.30 am, about 100 CCM supporters lowered and destroyed the flags of ACT-Wazalendo. The police who were escorting them did not stop them. I decided to report the matter to the nearest police station, but the OCS claimed the issue was beyond him. Yet, we told our supports not to revenge.”<sup>19</sup>

Essentially, the participant urged ADZ and other faith organisations and political actors to intensify their messages of tolerance and peaceful coexistence despite their doctrinal, political, and ideological differences. A female participant shared the same viewpoint.

“As we discuss these issues, let us remember that violence is a very bad thing. I am a Muslim, and my religion does not support violence. No religion supports violence. However, let us remember that denial of basic human rights leads to these problems.... Any leader who preaches violence does not respect and fear God (she quotes Qur’an in Arabic). All leaders whether religious or political should pursue tolerance and peaceful coexistence....”<sup>20</sup>

In Summary, the ADZ forums had created safe spaces for free expression, and, in turn, they had enhanced the voice option. The participants in the forums viewed them as opportunities to engage with public dialogues and shape the public discourses on tolerance and peaceful coexistence as they were unfolding. We infer that such public engagements and the consequent changes would contribute to long-term peaceful coexistence in Zanzibar between members of different religions, cultures, and political formations and persuasions.

## 7.2.4: Building Youth Resilience

Violent extremism is traumatic and threatens peaceful coexistence. Therefore, responses to violent extremism require building the resilience of young men and women. Using the analytical framework, we argue that building youth resilience is a deliberative process that requires the enhancement of youth voices and minimising the exit option. Therefore, it involves enhancing the confidence of young men and women and creating spaces and opportunities in which they can voice their concerns. It also requires deliberative and proactive responses to those concerns.

Research for this case found that KMYA was very deliberative on this issue of youth resilience because their foundational activities were learning circles that targeted youth and were led by young men and women. Because of using young men and women as agents of change, KMYA registered positive trends in most of the indicators on youth resilience during the endline survey. For example, 50% of the respondents during the endline survey supported youth initiatives to prevent violent extremism and build peaceful coexistence between religions and cultures compared to 38.1% during the baseline survey. Further, 44% of the end-line respondents supported gender-sensitive security interventions, compared to 24.2% of the baseline respondents. The issue of economic activities was not part of the original questions. However, project participants and beneficiaries discussed it during the projects' roll out and the endline and baseline surveys.



*Government and security officers at KMYA's youth forum in Rabai.*

They urged ADZ to enhance the resilience and economic status of young men and women. Indeed, 39.4% of the end-line respondents supported socio-economic activities through credit access and business development training compared to 20.6% of the baseline respondents. The same trend appeared in the relationship between faith leaders and the youth because 50% of the endline respondents supported collaboration between religious leaders and youth compared to 20.6% of the baseline respondents. Lastly, 50% of the endline respondents supported collaboration between youth and religious leaders, compared to 28.1% during the baseline survey. In essence, the KMYA activities had created spaces for building youth resilience through enhancing their voices and reducing the exit option.

We argue that the situation of collaborative activities and their positive impact on peaceful coexistence was like that of Kilifi and Mombasa, but we did not have the benefits of the endline survey to assess the degree of impact. According to the baseline survey, 58.5% of the youth in the project locations had a neighbour from the other religion. We project that more youth recognised and accepted this reality as the project rolled on. Also, the baseline had shown that 50% of respondents always engaged in conversation with someone from the other religion. Given the overwhelming dominance of Islam in Zanzibar and the small number of Christians in the islands, it is probable that this number of respondents represented Christians. But it is good to note that 92.5% of the baseline respondents had agreed that their religious practices are free of interference from the other religion. Another 69% of baseline respondents thought that peaceful coexistence among people of a different faith is possible so long as they have mutual



*KMYA Mvita learning circle members in a group photo*



respect. As a male participant explained to participants in an ADZ peace forum,

“We are all building the same house. There are many designs for building a house. So, as we enter political campaigns, our leaders should not incite the youth to violence. Instead, be championing peaceful coexistence. Further, our media should champion peace and coexistence issues. Our media should warn the youth about the dangers of conflicts and violence. Also, let us stop blaming the police for violence and start the change process from ourselves.”<sup>21</sup>

Speaking in the same forum, the Urban Regional Police Commander articulated the viewpoint that:

“Parents should take their responsibilities and guide their teenagers. We should start the change process from our homes. The speakers in this forum have told us that politicians are the ones who incite violence.... Let us embrace tolerance and peace. As police, we have met leaders from all political formations. We urge all people to embrace tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Let us help our youth in the neighbourhoods to reject political incitement. Let us embrace each other and coexist in peace in the neighbourhoods.”<sup>22</sup>



*Female participants at ADZ's stakeholders' forum in Unguja*

In essence, the argument here is that the ADZ activities sought to build the resilience of young men and women so that they could withstand and resist political incitement to violence, religious radicalisation, and recruitment into violent extremism. To achieve this objective, the ADZ involved representatives from different sectors, including faith leaders, political leaders, and state agencies such as the police. We infer that the ADZ's activities amounted to enhancing the voice of the youth and minimising the exit option. Given that religious leaders and institutions are well-respected the ADZ's interventions sought to help the faith communities know when and how to engage with the young men and women, and when and how to address their concerns. Such interventions would minimise the exit option.



*KMYA sensitizes a group of young clergy*

## 8.0 Drawing Lessons from Kenya and Zanzibar

From the above findings, we draw the following lessons.

- 1: The KMYA's and ADZ's interventions brought interfaith youth together through religious and "non-religious" collaborative activities to promote peaceful coexistence:
  - (a) Religious collaborative activities in the KMYA's project included youth-led religious - community leaders' forums on interfaith coexistence, grassroots youth-led dialogues on respect for diversity, young clergy training on leadership through mentorship sessions, youth peer leaders training, and peer-led cascaded training on promotion of interfaith understanding and tolerance. All these promoted interfaith collaborations and peaceful coexistence in Kilifi and Mombasa.
  - (b) The ADZ project increased religious harmony among the communities by establishing common ground for interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding. As a result, inter-religious activities increased, and different sectors embraced religious tolerance in the communities and neighbourhoods.
  - (c) In Mombasa and Kilifi, KMYA supported religious structures that promoted diversity and public information exchange sessions that enhanced peaceful co-existence. In Unguja and Pemba the ADZ's project integrated seminar-style forums with public events (peace march and media coverage) which reached 3,000 people directly in Zanzibar and more than 1,000,000 people in Tanzania through mass media.
- 2: KMYA and ADZ's programming demonstrated the power of partnerships and successful enhancement of collaborative activities, whose aim was to promote peaceful coexistence. This lesson is crucial for other organisations interested in ensuring successful peaceful coexistence and mitigation of radicalisation and violent extremism. What is more powerful is the inclusion of the partners from the inception of the projects, tool development, baseline, and project monitoring and exit surveys. KMYA and ADZ projects demonstrated the power of participatory approaches, which enhanced community ownership of the interventions.
- 3: Radicalisation and violent extremism is complex phenomenon, with both push and pull factors in interplay. The uniqueness of KMYA and ADZ projects has been the application of multiple peacebuilding initiatives. These initiatives included religious and "religious laced non-religious" activities, and innovation to replicate in other scenarios that promote peacebuilding. This approach suggests that de-

radicalisation and mitigation of violent extremism are not unilinear approaches but multidirectional ones, involving different activities and stakeholders. Accordingly, organisations promoting collaborative interfaith activities should employ a multi-sectoral approach to resolve identified peaceful coexistence challenges, especially those related to radicalisation and violent extremism.

- 4: The finding that religious leaders did not use divisive language while speaking on peaceful coexistence is a milestone in interventions to check on radicalisation and violent extremism that needs to be universalised. This revelation by the youth brings in a new dimension to the Exit and Voice Theory that when voicing you need not use a language that will escalate the dissatisfaction or push your members into extreme action. The non-use of divisive language in promoting peaceful coexistence by religious leaders also demonstrates respect for religious diversity and tolerance for the leaders.
- 5: The finding that participants respected religious institutions opens new frontiers in the efforts to mitigate radicalisation and violent extremism, promoting interfaith collaborations, and peaceful coexistence. According to the Voice, Exit, and Loyalty framework, the onus then is on the religious leaders to ensure containment of their members amidst situations of dissatisfaction that can spur radicalisation and recruitment into violent extremism.



## 9.0 Conclusion

The two projects on collaborative activities to foster peaceful coexistence in Kenya and Zanzibar reflect a growing appreciation of the role of religions and religious actors in leveraging the mitigation of radicalisation and violent extremism. The two projects have demonstrated that engaging religions and religious actors through collaborative activities can influence peaceful coexistence through youth resilience, tolerance, cohesion, cooperation, and respect for diversity. The results confirm that religion is a source of motivation and inspiration, in the minds and hearts of the youth who exhibit the spirit of care, generosity, and kindness (UNDP 2016) to humanity. More specifically, the KMYA and ADZ projects:

- (i) Brought youth together and, thus, broke barriers borne out of intra-religious, inter-religious, and extra-religious diversity for peaceful coexistence.
- (ii) Fostered entertainment for peace (Peacetainment) innovations and change in approaches to mitigate radicalisation and violent extremism for peaceful coexistence in Kenya and Zanzibar.
- (iii) Enhanced peaceful coexistence through collaborative activities such as dialogues, peace meetings, and training forums, promoting living together peacefully through knowledge transfers and respect for diversity, tolerance, and collaboration and reinforcement through innovative approaches such as peace caravans.
- (iv) The findings confirmed the relevance of the case study's analytical framework through the observed opportunities for dialogue and collaborative community engagements. These activities created safe social spaces for intra-religious, inter-religious, and extra-religious activities that allowed the community, especially members of religious faiths, to participate and give feedback. The interactions enhanced voice and minimized exit by focusing on what works and what does not work in de-radicalization and counter-violent extremism programs.

## 10.0 Recommendations

- a) From these findings, the paper recommends that organisations should anchor their programming in a nuanced appreciation of the engagement of religions and religious actors and their influence on the youth and their institutional frameworks to tackle religious tensions.
- b) The case study shows that religions and their actors should respond to the allure of radicalisation and violent extremism through interfaith collaboration. Thus, the paper recommends that faith organisations should prevent and respond to the charm of radicalisation and violent extremism through collaborative interfaith engagements.
- c) Religious institutions and their leaders are highly respected. Accordingly, there should be more engagement with religious leaders in interfaith peacebuilding activities, especially those interventions involving young men and women. More so, there should be the formation of interfaith structures in the project locations. The KMYA's and ADZ's interventions tapped from this strength.
- d) State actors should engage religious institutions and leaders in their interventions to mitigate radicalisation and violent extremism. Such engagements will facilitate a transition from over securitisation of violent extremism into a softer approach putting religious institutions and leaders at the centre of prevention and countering violent extremism efforts.
- e) The stakeholders should create more opportunities and spaces for dialogues and engagement with the communities, especially members of religious faiths and the youth. Such opportunities will enhance voices and minimise the exit option by focusing on what works and what does not work. That includes peacebuilding interventions and responses to radicalisation and violent extremism.

## 11.0 Endnotes

1 Radicalisation is a process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice. <https://www.google.com/>

2 Violent extremism is “encouraging, condoning, justifying, or supporting the commission of a violent act to achieve political, ideological, religious, social, or economic goals”. <https://www.google.com/>

3 Likoni and Mvita in Mombasa County were selected because they are predominantly Muslim inhabited sites ensuring the inclusion of the Muslim voice in the project, whereas Mtwapa and Rabai in Kilifi County are predominantly occupied by followers of the Christian faith, with Rabai being the cradle of Christianity in Kenya.

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