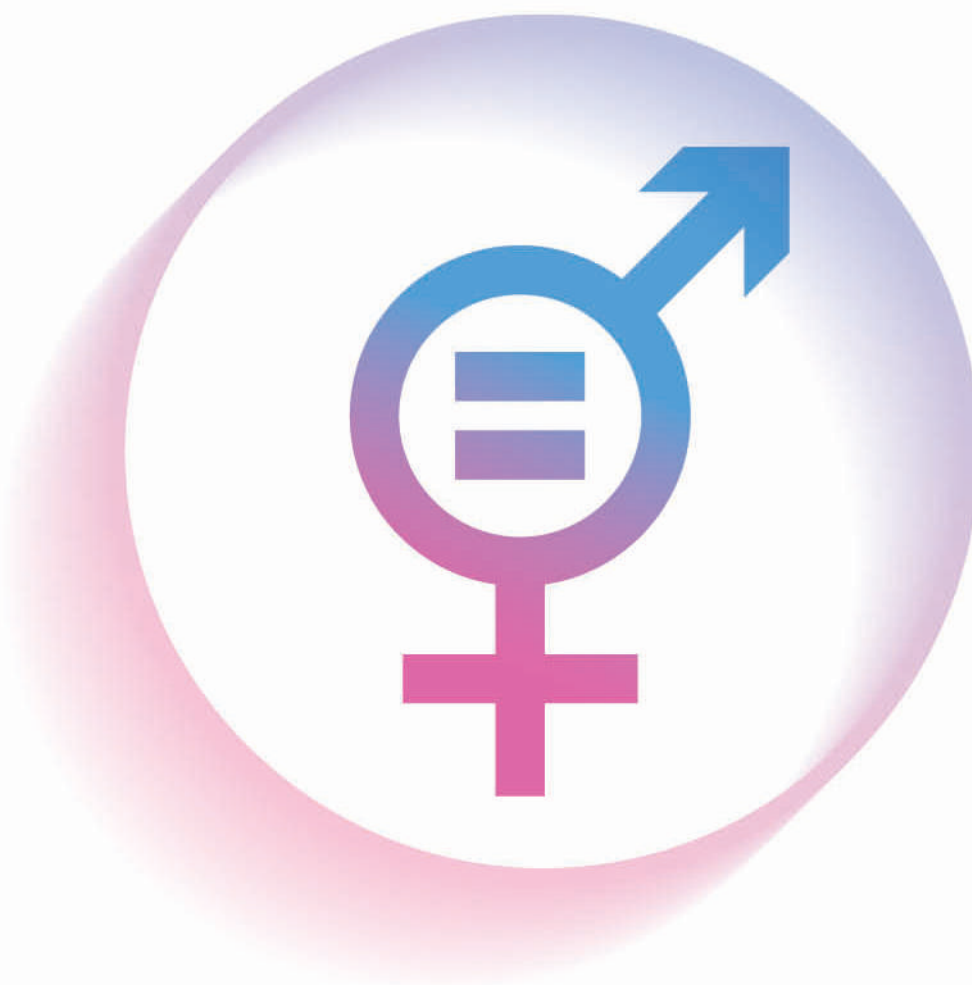




POLICY BRIEF 2026



DANGEROUS SPEECH AND RADICALISATION IN KENYA:

A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

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Key messages

◆ Dangerous speech is any utterance intended to incite conflict, create division, or provoke hostility based on gender, ethnicity, or religion.

◆ Both dangerous speech and hate speech have the potential to incite emotion, trigger violence, and destabilise communities.

◆ Dangerous speech manifests in four key forms: ethnic-based speech, political speech, gendered speech, and religious intolerance.

◆ The main propagators of dangerous speech include: politicians, community elders, opinion shapers, religious and cultural leaders, youth and social media influencers, as well as media personalities.

◆ Both men and women/, boys and girls, are subjected to hate and dangerous speech, with specific forms, underlying motives, and resultant impacts varying considerably.

◆ There exists a direct link between dangerous speech and radicalisation, with dangerous speech being viewed as a trigger and a critical driver of radicalisation, an enabler of division, animosity, and violence within communities.

◆ Awareness levels of existing policies on dangerous speech, radicalisation, and gender dynamics among community members are generally low.

DANGEROUS SPEECH AND RADICALISATION IN KENYA: A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

INTRODUCTION

Kenya's security landscape continues to be shaped by a legacy of violent conflict and extremist threats, where hate speech frequently acts as a catalyst, sowing division and inciting violence. Gender dynamics are essential in understanding the nexus between hate speech, radicalisation and violent extremism, as gendered norms, roles and power structures shape the deployment of hate speech, the targeting of its victims and the avenues to radicalisation.

The United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (2015) highlights that violent extremism is not gender-neutral and hence calls for gender-responsive approaches to address gender stereotypes and inequalities that extremist groups often exploit to recruit individuals. Likewise, the National Cohesion and Integration Act (CAP 7N) focuses on hate speech and its admissibility to the definition that incites violence based on ethnic, religious, and racial discrimination. However, this characterisation suffers from the vice of silence on the gender dimension. To address this lacuna, the study adopted the term *dangerous speech*, a concept that is complementary to hate speech with a broad perspective and incorporates gender issues.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) was a defining moment in global policy, affirming the essential role of women in peace and security efforts. The resolution recognises that women and girls disproportionately experience the consequences of conflict, yet remain largely excluded from decision-making structures (UNSC, 2000). Kenya has also taken steps in implementing these principles through the Kenya National Action Plan on 1325 II (KNAP II) (2020–2024), whose aim is to enhance women's participation in conflict prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding, while addressing gender-based violence as both a cause and consequence of conflict (GoK, 2020). Despite these commitments, persistent challenges such as entrenched gender stereotypes, lack of political will, and limited resources continue to hinder women's

meaningful participation in peace processes (GoK, 2020).

This policy brief draws on findings from a study conducted by the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) in collaboration with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which examined the gendered dimensions of dangerous speech and radicalisation in Kenya. The study assessed how harmful narratives affect different gender groups, including men, women, boys, and girls, the link between dangerous speech and radicalisation, as well as evaluated the extent to which existing policies and programmes are gender-responsive, to inform future interventions.

The study was conducted across nine counties¹ [Nairobi, Laikipia, Busia, Kisumu, Marsabit, Isiolo, Samburu, Taita Taveta, and Kilifi.], adopting a qualitative approach and purposive sampling technique to facilitate an exploratory inquiry into the complex and sensitive issues around the study area. The data were collected from 62 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and 292 participants from various Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). This was complemented with secondary data gathered from a thorough literature review of policies, reports, and frameworks on hate speech, violent extremism, and gender issues.

KEY FINDINGS

Across the nine counties studied, a consistent definition emerged, characterising dangerous speech as any utterance intended to incite conflict, create division, or provoke hostility based on gender, ethnicity, or religion. Dangerous speech was widely perceived as inflammatory, inciteful, or harmful language capable of generating tension and promoting hatred, particularly along political, ethnic, or gendered lines. Worth noting is that participants viewed dangerous speech and hate speech as interchangeable due to their shared potential to incite emotion, trigger violence, and destabilise communities, demonstrating a fair grasp of the concept.

¹Nairobi, Laikipia, Busia, Kisumu, Marsabit, Isiolo, Samburu, Taita Taveta, and Kilifi.

FORMS OF DANGEROUS SPEECH

DANGEROUS SPEECH



The study reveals four common forms of dangerous speech, including:

1. Ethnic-based dangerous speech emerged as one of the most widespread and damaging forms, often involving the stereotyping of entire communities. Participants noted that it sometimes goes beyond politics and spills into economic and social life, thereby fostering deep-seated mistrust between community members, as averred by an FGD participant: ⁴

How many times have you heard people call Kikuyus thieves? We label each other on ethnic grounds all the time, and those labels just deepen the mistrust and division between us. And it's not just about politics, these are statements we hear in everyday conversations...at work, or during social interactions. Haven't you heard people say all watchmen or farm laborers come from one tribe, like it's a fact? These kinds of labels and stories get passed around so casually, and over time, they become normal, making people accept discrimination as just part of life. This speech is dangerous, as it keeps stereotypes alive, and makes it harder for us to come together as one nation – FGD Participant, Laikipia County

2. Politically-instigated dangerous speech is intensified during election cycles with intent to cause ethnic divisions. In counties such as Isiolo, inciting political language such as 'We will come back and fix them. Whom do they think they are? We will show them that it is our people who matter' was reported, illustrating how such rhetoric fuels fear and anticipatory violence among communities.

3. Gendered dangerous speech is rooted in male chauvinist culture, religious beliefs, and rigid gender norms, frequently targeting women and girls, especially those in public, academic, or leadership positions, and more so by questioning their competence and morality.

'In my community, it is so common to hear words like women are too emotional to lead; she is immoral based on how she dresses; women and girls can't be engineers...and such comments. Of course, this is meant to intimidate us, to limit us from gaining our full academic and professional potential. They say women are like children, not fit to lead or speak on serious matters. Such remarks don't just insult; they demean us. They make us question our competence and reinforce a culture excluding us from decision-making roles' KII Participant, Isiolo County

4. **Religious intolerance** was observed to strengthen exclusion or violence in specific counties, including Isiolo, Marsabit, Kilifi, and Taita Taveta counties. This form of intolerance manifests as dangerous speech that incites hostility based on religious identity, portraying certain groups as unworthy, dangerous, or spiritually inferior.

5. 'When words such as a Kafir (non-Muslim) are used to insinuate that one is not fit to lead Muslims, then surely, such terms undermine the principles of religious coexistence and equality. What we have witnessed here is that during periods of political or social unrest, religious rhetoric is very rampant and sometimes adopts violent undertones. Others will even say it's God's punishment on this and that group. It is worse if it comes from respected spiritual authorities, because of the place they are accorded in society' FGD, Isiolo County

PLATFORMS WHERE DANGEROUS SPEECH IS MORE PREVALENT

The study unearthed platforms where dangerous speech is more prevalent, key among them being social media platforms, traditional media, and public gatherings (both official and informal public events).

1. Topping the list were social media platforms, which increase and normalise harmful messages through memes, coded jokes, and misinformation. WhatsApp, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok, and YouTube were frequently mentioned. Participants expressed increasing concern over AI-generated content, deepfakes, and digital manipulation, which are used to weaponise and fabricate stories, dehumanise opponents, and incite violence.

2. Traditional media, specifically vernacular FM stations, emerged as highly influential in rural areas due to their communication in local languages and the trust they command from listeners. The proliferation of creative arts, usually through cultural and creative platforms, including music, poetry, and comedy, was listed as platforms where dangerous speech is mostly witnessed.

3. Public gatherings and informal settings, including political rallies and campaign platforms, also serve as offline flashpoints for dangerous speech, where key leaders often make inflammatory remarks targeting specific communities or individuals, with audience cheers reinforcing harmful animosity.

'This kind of speech isn't just heard in debates or public meetings; it's everywhere. Even in everyday conversations at the church, the market, or even at weddings or funerals. In fact, politicians here are notorious for using very bad language in forums like this. Of course, in most cases, people laugh it off or dismiss it as just joking or harmless talk, but those comments can really shape how others see different groups. What we sometimes forget is that even our kids are in some of these forums, and what kids see is what they do. We cannot just talk anyhow, in the name of teasing each other, yet we end up passing these bad manners down through generations.

Even local elders and community leaders need to be very cautious because we pass down our bad stereotypes, particularly during dispute resolution spaces and cultural ceremonies. My community is known for negatively targeting women through its words. This needs to stop' FGD Participant, Samburu County.



MAIN PROPAGATORS OF DANGEROUS SPEECH

The study identified politicians, community elders, opinion shapers, religious and cultural leaders, youth and social media influencers, as well as media personalities, as key propagators of dangerous speech, amplifying divisive narratives that heighten exclusion and the risk of violence.

Participants noted that politicians ‘ride on tribalism to win votes’ and ‘use hate speech to divide communities and gain power’ ultimately weaponising identity and grievances for electoral gain.

‘It is common in my community to hear elders and other respected leaders sometimes say who deserves land, jobs, or leadership positions. It’s like they sit down somewhere and agree and push it down our throats. Sometimes they use very unfriendly words against us women, often suggesting that we are not fit to hold certain positions. Sadly, through their comments, others are left out’ **KII Participant, Marsabit County**

‘Some media guys play a big role in encouraging the use of dangerous speech on our televisions and even radios. If you watch/listen carefully, a lot is said during call-ins. Yet, the host doesn’t always correct false or hateful remarks. Instead, they laugh it off, encourage people to tear each other apart simply for following and viewership. Do you know the damage this creates? It further entrenches societal divisions along ethnic, political, religious, and gendered lines’ **FGD Participant, Nairobi County**

GENDER VULNERABILITIES TO DANGEROUS SPEECH

The findings allude to the fact that both men and women/ boys and girls, are subjected to hate and dangerous speech. However, the specific forms, underlying motives, and resultant impacts vary considerably. The vulnerabilities are shaped by societal expectations, cultural stereotypes, and political dynamics. While the analysis of dangerous speech often prioritises its effects on women and girls, this study underscores its equally far-reaching and detrimental consequences for men and boys.

For men and boys, dangerous speech perpetuates harmful stereotypes, discourages emotional expression, reinforces rigid masculinity, puts pressure on men/boys to engage in violence, limits their engagement in peacebuilding initiatives, and contributes to intergenerational cycles of exclusion.

An FGD participant in Nairobi provided examples of the use of phrases such as *'Wacha umama'* (Stop acting like a woman) or *'siku hizi wamama waliacha kuzaa wanaume'* (Women no longer give birth to real men), commonly used in everyday discourse to mock men who exhibit emotion, doubt, or vulnerability.

The study notes that women are disproportionately subjected to stigmatisation and discrimination, which significantly impede their participation and safety in public and political spheres. Other effects include exclusion from leadership, manipulation and exploitation, as well as vulnerability to violence.

'When I was in active politics, most of my female colleagues quit simply because of being trolled on social media. The kind of language that is used on you, especially if you're a woman, is just something else. And if you happen to be single? Your male colleagues will literally trample on you and target you with very harsh words. You will even be asked how you can lead if you can't keep a man. Those who are not strong enough just gave up and quit' **KII Participant, Nairobi County**

PERCEPTIONS ON RADICALISATION

The findings reveal radicalisation as a gradual and systematic transformation of beliefs largely influenced by an individual's vulnerability and susceptibility to manipulation. Participants generally understood radicalisation as a progression of ideological indoctrination that ultimately rejects mainstream norms and may legitimise violence.

Radicalisation was also viewed as a precursor to violent extremism, where extreme beliefs ultimately translate into action. Moreover, it is perceived as not always overt, but frequently insidious and

covert in nature. Occurring through the use of coded language, actions and phrases that are weaponised to influence political and other beliefs and foster ideological rigidity, particularly in the lead-up to elections.

Through cultural and traditional lenses, areas such as Samburu explained radicalisation through cultural practices, for instance, the expectation for 'morans' (young men) to engage in banditry as a sign of maturity was cited as a tradition that could transform into organised violence.

PERCEIVED DRIVERS / ROOT CAUSES OF RADICALISATION

The study underscored numerous factors as drivers of radicalisation, key among them;

1. Economic hardship and social disintegration, driven by unemployment, poverty, and idleness render many, particularly youth, susceptible to recruitment with false promises of financial stability and purpose. This which was exemplified by the Marachi Boys domiciled in Busia County (dubbed jobless), who were lured by lack of employment opportunities. The attraction of instant wealth, especially among disillusioned youth, further escalate their vulnerability, as traditional pathways to success appear slow or unattainable.
2. Religious and ideological drivers also occur through distorted theological teachings, which are used to legitimise extremist behavior and reinforce extremist narratives under the guise of faith. In Taita Taveta, for instance, participants voiced concerns over the inability to question religious leaders who are revered.
3. Political and governance related drivers occur through inciteful speech from political figures who escalate tensions and fuel communal animosity. Moreover, weak administrative structures and a perceived absence of justice create fertile ground for radical ideologies.

"I just want to be a good citizen, but because I was treated otherwise by the system, I feel like I want to join Al-Shabaab... I have never gotten over it. If I meet those people who recruit people into Al-Shabaab, I'll gladly join. Why shouldn't I? Am tired". FGD Participant, Nairobi County

4. Historical Injustice and marginalisation occur through deep-rooted grievances, as many young people report feeling unheard, marginalised, and disconnected from national discourse, enhancing their vulnerability to radical ideologies and extremist narratives as averred by one youth:

'they don't listen to us. Decisions are made up there. Ours is to consume. Simply being told to do this and that. And let me tell you...even when they invite us to those meetings, it's like our recommendations are not considered. You will just hear later that this and that happened, then you wonder why they wasted time inviting you in the first place'. FGD Participant, Nairobi County

5. Drugs, substance abuse, peer pressure, and psychological vulnerability were also seen to drive youth radicalisation as the desire for revenge or social acceptance, and the absence of healing and support systems push individuals toward radical ideologies. Social media and peer influence further accelerate this process by exposing young individuals to extremist content.

6. Ethnic and identity-based issues including ethnic polarisation, clannism, and tribalism also contribute to social fragmentation and reinforce divisions.

Ethnic issues in this country have divided us for far too long. We have even shed blood. But it is worse now because like in this county, we have even gone all the way down to the clan level. And it is sad because it reinforces divisions, with leaders always at the forefront of profiling and entrenching exclusion and contributing to inter-group tensions. And you know what? It's getting worse because we now have an identity crisis with the Gen-Zs feeling they have been alienated and segregated for far too long. All these enhances their vulnerability to radical ideologies. KII Participant, Isiolo County

7. Misinformation and Illiteracy make individuals vulnerable to manipulation and more likely to accept false narratives, extremist ideologies, and propaganda without scrutiny.

8. External factors such as volatility of neighboring regions, spillover effects, porous borders, cross-border movements, and socio-economic linkages.

NEXUS BETWEEN DANGEROUS SPEECH AND RADICALISATION

The findings illuminate a direct link between dangerous speech and radicalisation, viewing dangerous speech as a trigger and a critical driver to radicalisation, an enabler of division, animosity, and violence within communities. The findings illustrate how harmful narratives and hate speech serve as catalysts that deepen social divisions and facilitate the recruitment of vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth.

EXISTING LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK STRENGTHS AND GAPS

The study demonstrates a distinction in awareness levels of participants regarding the policy and legal frameworks on dangerous speech, radicalisation, and gender dynamics as highlighted below:

Awareness Level among Experts and Community Members

The study established that community awareness of existing policies on dangerous speech, radicalisation, and gender dynamics is generally low. Many grassroots participants found the idea of a 'policy' abstract/largely unknown. According to an FGD participant in Samburu County, 'There is no stand-alone policy on dangerous speech that I know of, however, there have been dialogue forums between the Samburu and the Turkana for the last six months... This at least is a drive addressing violent extremism'. This reveals a clear gap between policy formulation and grassroots understanding.

Conversely, a majority of Key Informant Interviewees reflected higher levels of awareness of formal legal and policy instruments. Participants referenced a comprehensive range of existing national frameworks on dangerous speech, radicalisation, violent extremism and gender.

PERCEPTIONS OF POLICY EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION GAPS

Participants provided valuable insights into their perceptions of the effectiveness of current policies and highlighted significant implementation gaps that hinder the achievement of desired outcomes in addressing radicalisation, dangerous speech, and gender-related issues.

Disconnect in Translating Policies into Outcomes

The findings also denote critical gaps in Kenya's policies and legal frameworks concerning dangerous speech and radicalisation.

'Policies are there; however, the government is slow and poor at implementation, financial support is low, and insecurity is rampant. Also, people just choose to be rogue and not follow the policies. People are deliberately killing others, and then they pay the police to evade justice. That is why we're in a state where nothing seems to work'. KII Participant, Nairobi County

Insufficient Legal Education

The study highlights a critical gap in legal education, revealing an over-reliance on informal actors such as elders, faith leaders, and grassroots women's groups, who have taken on roles traditionally designated for formal governance structures, often without the requisite legal training or authority.

'We depend on elders, churches, and nyumba kumi for information. Most of them must talk to us in local languages so everyone can understand. How will they do it if they are not taken through? Or if these policies are in a very difficult language? It probably the reason we don't know if policies are there or not. And if they are, then they're only meant for the educated ones in Nairobi'. KII Participant, Samburu County

Exclusion of Special Groups from Policy-making Processes

In reference to policymaking processes, community members felt excluded, with many expressing that public participation is often symbolic and non-inclusive, especially for women/girls, youth, and Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).

'When discussing issues that affect us as women, we should be at the forefront because we are the main stakeholders. But that doesn't happen at all. An example is when discussing contraceptives that affect us, laws were passed without us being considered. They just went to Mombasa and passed the bill without involving those of us on the ground who are most affected. In short, public participation is simply symbolic and non-inclusive'. FGD participant, Kilifi County

Digital Divide

While digital tools are increasingly employed to foster engagement and gather feedback, many rural and semi-literate populations are effectively excluded from policymaking and implementation processes. This exclusion reinforces existing social and infrastructural divides, leaving vulnerable communities.

'Policies exist, but mostly we don't even know how they have come to be. There is completely no consultation. No public participation, especially for special groups like women, youth, and PWDs. And even when invited, they want to do it online. How many people here in mashinani can access the internet? How many even know how to read? Even here, not everyone has access to smart phones or the required gadgets. And who tells you we have strong network access everywhere? Sometimes I feel that some of these policies are just donor-driven and disconnected from local realities. It's like they just target the elite' FGD Participant, Marsabit County.

Exclusion of Local Knowledge-holders

There was consensus across the nine counties that public engagement efforts are top-down in nature, and dismissive of local input. In the words of a participant in Nairobi,

'There is no public participation where we are invited unless it is by MCAs within the wards. And even when there is such opportunity, you can tell no one wants your opinion, after all they will pass it as it was initially planned. Look at the housing bill? They had already identified the site and everything else, and we were only invited as a by-the-way with no consideration for our needs or contribution'. FGD Participant, Nairobi County

Limitations in Awareness and Implementation of Gender-Inclusive Policies

A significant observation across the study was the widespread unawareness among many participants regarding the gendered nature of existing policies. The Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) summarised the underlying challenge:

'Illiteracy, disability, limited civic education, cultural beliefs, traditional gender roles and norms, patriarchal structures, and gender-based violence (GBV) discourage women from actively participating in policy processes' KII Participant, Nairobi County

GAPS IN POLICIES AND INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS GENDERED DANGEROUS SPEECH AND RADICALISATION

The study highlighted critical gaps in Kenya's policies and legal framework concerning dangerous speech and radicalisation, as discussed below:

1. Gaps in Definition

The study identifies existing gaps of gender inclusivity in the NCI Act and its definition of 'Hate Speech', which is overly broad and lacks clarity.

2. Gaps in Gender Inclusivity

There was a strong consensus across the nine counties that the NCI Act requires revision to incorporate gender inclusivity and adequately address the challenges faced by different genders. 'Tell me why, in this time and age, the NCI Act does not encompass gender issues? I mean, we have all seen the challenges women and other marginalised groups encounter, especially around electoral cycles...there is a need to address gender-based violence, and the Act should speak to it- comprehensively. KII Participant, Nairobi County

3. Gaps in Digital Communication

Gaps exist due to the nature of digital communication and social media platforms that has amplified the spread of harmful and inciteful content, making it imperative for legislation to adapt accordingly.

4. Implementation and enforcement deficiencies

Despite Kenya's efforts to benchmark its laws and institutions against international standards, significant shortfalls persist at the implementation level. There is widespread lack of public awareness and insufficient empowerment of independent bodies such as NCIC with prosecutorial powers to enforce compliance effectively.

5. Challenges in Addressing Radicalisation

Across the nine counties, majority of the participants struggled to articulate what the Kenyan law specifically states about radicalisation. Worth noting is that most participants used the terms 'radicalisation' and 'violent extremism' interchangeably. While many community members in high-risk regions are aware that recruitment activities are occurring, there is a limited awareness of existing legal protections or reporting mechanisms to address such threats.

The emerging concerns identified through the study included:

1. Gendered Vulnerabilities and the Prevalence of Dangerous Speech

Dangerous speech pushes men toward aggression, while it shames, excludes and silences women from public life. The study gives evidence that in conflict-affected pastoral counties, dangerous speech incites emotions and portrays violence as a sign of strength, pressuring young men to retaliate and perpetuate cycles of external aggression and internal turmoil. Failure to conform can lead to slurs like;

'If you don't fight for your community, you're not a real man: women stopped giving birth to real men'

Based on the study evidence, dangerous speech exploits existing social vulnerabilities among women and reinforces harmful gender stereotypes, such as the deeply rooted belief that 'women are weak, emotional, belong in the kitchen, or simply unfit for leadership'.



2. Digital Platforms as amplifiers of Gendered Dangerous Speech

Digital amplification through online harassment, misinformation, and the misuse of AI, such as deepfakes were evolving issues witnessed. The anonymity and speed of the internet facilitate the rapid proliferation of attacks, particularly targeting women in leadership roles.

3. Novel Forms of Dangerous Speech and Challenges in Detection

New, concealed forms of coded terminologies which can be categorised as dangerous speech such as the 'kusalimiwa' trend loosely translated as 'being greeted', memes, viral hashtags, and humorous

posts which utilises slang, satire, or culturally specific proverbs, subtly makes it harder to detect and address.

4. Intersection of Religion, Dangerous Speech and Radicalisation

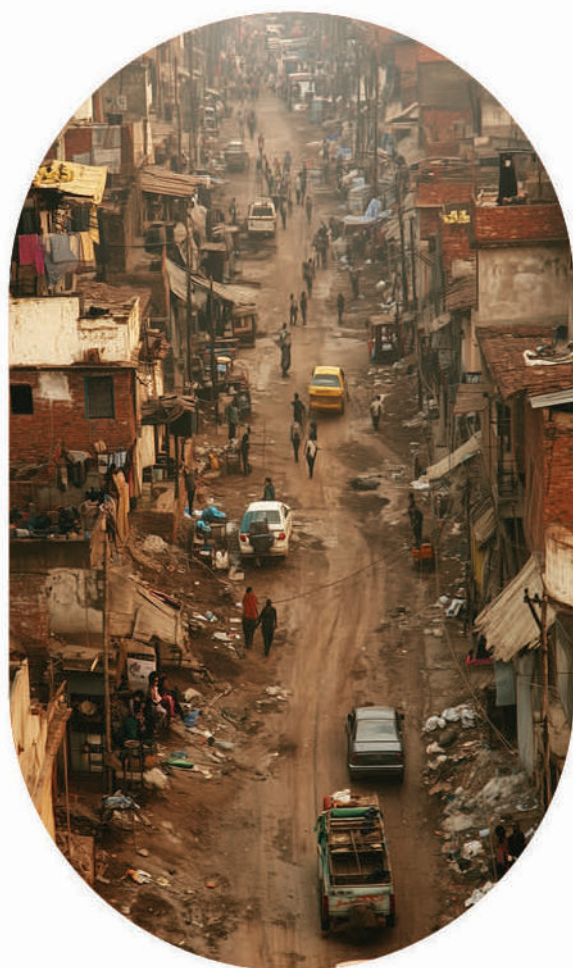
Study participants expressed concerns about religious institutions serving as platforms for politicians to disseminate dangerous speech, demonstrating how politicians exploit religious venues to advance their own agendas. High illiteracy levels in certain regions increase residents' vulnerability to manipulation and recruitment into cult-like movements by religious leaders, posing a significant challenge to community cohesion and individual well-being.

5.Socio-economic Factors and Divisive Political Narratives

These emerging trends, fueled by unemployment, exclusion, politicised religion, and local media that reinforce stereotypes, increase vulnerability to radicalization. Divisive narratives, like the 'natives versus those who migrated' concept, further fuel ethnic tension and undermine social cohesion. The study revealed cases where politicians weaponise language to 'turn young men into either violent aggressors or loyal followers', this erodes social cohesion.

6.Media's Role in Perpetuating Stereotypes and Dangerous Speech

Local vernacular radio stations were frequently pointed out as common platforms where gendered stereotypes are spread, often disguised as cultural commentary. Although the content may appear harmless or traditional, it significantly contributes to long-term social fragmentation by normalising and reinforcing discriminatory narratives and biases, making it a critical challenge in efforts to promote social cohesion and gender equality.



RECOMMENDATIONS

As key recommendations, the study endorses a comprehensive, multi-layered approach to address the gendered aspects of hate speech, dangerous speech, and radicalisation.

1. Legislative Reform

The study recommends:

a) Amending the National Cohesion and Integration Act to include more clear and precise definitions of hate speech, incorporate gender inclusivity and adequately address the challenges faced by different genders, combat gendered radicalisation, and resolve issues related to digital communication and social media.

b) Reviewing and amending the Prevention of Terrorism Act to explicitly consider the distinct gendered aspects of radicalisation and violent extremism.

2. Proactive approaches by Civil Society Organisations

a) Enhance public awareness and education by prioritising comprehensive civic education programs to better inform the public about relevant legal provisions and support initiatives to prevent radicalisation in Kenya. Ample lead time should also be provided to create awareness about policies before public participation.

b) The government, in collaboration with international partners, should invest in programs that actively tackle youth unemployment, improve access to education, and address widespread poverty to address socio-economic root causes. Creating a genuine sense of hope and providing tangible economic opportunities is a critical long-term strategy for preventing manipulation and radicalisation.

3. Accurate and Unbiased information by the Media

Media houses should provide legal education on existing laws, promote the importance of peaceful coexistence, and encourage their various outlets to provide accurate and unbiased information to counter the spread of rumours and misinformation, particularly on social media platforms.

4. Leverage Community and Traditional Structures

Both state and non-state actors should facilitate these groups with the necessary training to recognise and effectively counter dangerous speech narratives. Fostering public forums at the grassroots level and establishing citizen committees can ensure that policies and programs are well-informed by the lived experiences of ordinary people.

5. Translate Policy Documents into Local Languages

Key policy documents translated into local languages to enhance accessibility remain crucial to preventing radicalisation and the impact of dangerous speech.

6. Leading Role of Religious Organisations in guiding the Public

Religious organisations should play a leading role in guiding the public responsibly, rather than exploiting religious platforms to disseminate dangerous speech and incite radicalisation. A comprehensive regulatory framework, such as the 'Religious Organisations Bill', should be developed to oversee religious organisations, with standardised and mandatory education and training requirements for religious leaders in modules on peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue, ethical leadership, and the identification and prevention of dangerous speech and radicalisation. In addition, the Media Council of Kenya should regulate religious messaging across all media platforms and collaborate with platform providers, which is crucial in developing and enforcing guidelines for responsible religious messaging.

CONCLUSION

The Commission confirms that dangerous speech and radicalisation in Kenya are deeply intertwined with gender dynamics, political processes, and socio-economic realities. While progress has been made through policies and frameworks, critical gaps remain in addressing how gendered narratives fuel exclusion and vulnerability.

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