

Community Policing in Tanzania: Capacity of Community Members in Combating Gender-Based Violence Crime, a Case of Kibaha Township

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Abstract: *A study on the capacity of community members in combating Gender-Based Violence crime was carried out in 2013, a case of Kibaha Township. Whereby, two Wards were involved as specific case study namely Picha ya Ndege and Tumbi Wards. The general objective was to investigate the capacity of community members in combating Gender-Based Violence crime. The study employed descriptive research design to survey the study area, sources of data collection were primary and secondary in nature within which tool for data collection were; Key informant's interview and questionnaire. It has been found that the capacity of community members in combating gender-based violence crime is poor. The study recommends that the government should formulate community policing policy to be used as a working tool in combating gender-based violence crime by empowering the larger community to use their local techniques to find solutions for local crime related issues. This will be achieved by providing special training to volunteers in neighbourhood watch groups.*

Keywords: Community policing, Crime, Gender-Based Violence, Community Members

1. Introduction

The term Community Policing (CP) is a newly and growing style of policing introduced by Police agencies worldwide geared towards uniting Police and citizens/communities in a quest to improve public safety, stopping crime, social disorder and the fear of crime (Yusufu, 2012). However, CP refers to bringing police and citizens together to prevent crime and solve problems by using local techniques, emphasizing the prevention of crime rather than the traditional policing method of responding to crime after it has happened (URT, 2011).

In Tanzania, CP is a new concept borrowed from western countries after the failure of traditional policing of Sungusungu and Peoples Militias who did not involve community members in policing functions from being reactive by nature to crimes thus opposing democratic policing. According to URT, (2011) CP established in 2006 in the response to implement the eight year strategic plan to deal with the dramatic escalation of crimes. The implementation of CP was first done by appointing CP officers- Rank and Files Officers, who covered all Wards and "Shehia" in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar respectively as decentralized 'mini chiefs' in permanent locations, where they enjoy the freedom and autonomy to operate as community-based problem solvers (URT, 2011). Additionally, the inspectorate program in 2011, involved the deployment of inspectors in the Division/Province in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar respectively to cooperate in partnership with the community to solving local crime by using local solutions as Extension Officers. The general idea was to make police service delivery close to the community they serve. In 2012 the Commission of Community Policing and Gender service was established headed by the Commissioner of Police who is the main coordinator of community policing implementation arrangement countrywide.

Crimes in Tanzania are so many and according to the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) crimes are categorised as crime against persons, crime related to property, crime against public tranquillity while road accidents are termed as traffic offences since they are not involve evil intention (URT, 2009). The former category of crime is the main focuses of this study which Gender-Based Violence –GBV falls in. While GBV is not widely recognized as a human rights violation in many parts of the world, it is a serious problem that limits the ability of men, women, and children to enjoy their basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. At global level, GBV both reflects and reinforces inequities between men and women and compromises the health, dignity, security, and autonomy of survivors. Despite its prevalence in most countries, GBV is often not addressed most notably in Tanzania communities. It has been described as perhaps the most shameful human rights violation, and the most pervasive (MOHSW, 2011).

GBV is a relatively new topic of public discussion and intervention in Tanzania. The lack of programs and protocols on how to respond to show that there is much work to be done to address the problem. However, it is work that is increasingly possible, given the increasing recognition of GBV and support to address the issue in Tanzania (USAID, 2008). GBV is a crime until any act that causes harm such as from physical abuse, rape, and/or domestic violence cause death or bodily injuries. Its definition defers from one community to another depending on how one society attributes meaning to GBV acts. Traditional gender norms that support male superiority and entitlement some cultural practices that encourage tolerance to GBV restrain survivors from reporting and seeking help (MOHSW, 2011). For example, the northern part of Tanzania in Mara region the act of men/husband to beat their wives is a sign of love and it is acceptable to all genders.

According to Yusuf, (2012) the establishment of the Police Gender and Children Desk in Urban-West Region- Zanzibar

has recorded a drastic increase in acts of gender-based violence in the past two years. There have been increases of reported cases from an average of one to more than 10 per week, about 850 cases of abuse in January, 2011 to June, 2012 (Yussuf, 2012). Therefore, the major concern of this study was to investigate the capacity of community members in combating crimes most notably Gender-Based Crimes (GBV).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study Area

Kibaha District is one of the 6 districts of the Pwani Region, Tanzania. The district is bordered to the North by the Bagamoyo District, to the East by Dar-es-Salaam, to the South by the Kisarawe District and to the West by the Morogoro Region. Kibaha district covers an area of about 1,812 total Sq. Kms. The district has 3 Division, 13 Wards, 53 Mitaa and 25 Villages. According to the 2002 Tanzania National Census, the population of the Kibaha District was 132,045 (URT, 2013). Specifically, the study was conducted in two selected Wards of Picha ya Ndege and Tumbi. Prevalent of violence against women and men in the respective areas was a major reason for selecting the study areas. Logistic support was also another reason for selecting the named Wards.



Figure 1: Map showing study area

2.2 Data Sources and Collection

The study was conducted from February to May, 2013. The sources of data used were primary and secondary data. The sample population covered 80 respondents of which the following were involved; Police officers, Security stakeholders, NGO's, Religious leaders, Politicians, Mtaa Executive Officers, Social Welfare Officers to mention just a few. The main tools of data collection were field research survey using interview, focus group discussion and questionnaires.

2.3 Data Processing and Analysis

The study used qualitative and quantitative research method of data analysis. Then data was coded by assigning code numbers to questionnaires. Researchers edited all the questionnaires received from the field by checking the correctness and filling in the respective codes. On completion of data entry, the data was cleaned before starting data entry in the computer software. The raw data were then analysed through the aid of Computer software- Microsoft Excel and Statistical Packages for Social Scientist (SPSS) IBM version 20 since the researcher is literate in these software and interpretation was done through table.

3. Results and Discussion

The term *capacity* means someone's ability to do something (Longman Dictionary, 2010). Therefore, capacity of community members in this study means that ability to combat and solve issues relating to crime and in this case GBV, that affects them in their neighbourhoods. Table 3.1 Show the perceived views of the respondents on the level of the capacity of community in combating GBV crime.

Table 3.1: Levels of the Capacity of Community Members in Combating BGV Crimes

	Level	Wards		Total	Percent
		Picha ya Ndege	Tumbi		
How can you assess the capacity of community members in combating Gender-Based Violence in your area?	Very Poor	4	7	11	16.4
	Poor	15	12	27	40.3
	Satisfactory	11	10	21	31.3
	Good	5	3	8	11.9
	Total	35	32	67	100

Source: Field Survey Between Tumbi & Picha ya Ndege Wards, 2013

Respondents were asked to rank the level of the capacity of the community in combating GBV in the respective areas and the findings are summarised in table 3.1. It shows that on the average 38 respondents equals to 56.7 percent viewed the capacity of the community in combating GBV crimes to be poor, 21 respondents equals to 31.3 percent ranked to be satisfactory and the rest 8 respondents equals to 11.9 percent viewed it to be good. An interview response revealed that

about 8 respondents out of 18 said it is poor, 5 respondents said satisfactory and 5 respondents said well. In the FGD about 3 groups said it is poor and 1 group said satisfactory.

The implications from the above finding is that, the capacity of community members in preventing and combating crime is generally poor, and this can be so because of the fact that CP strategy did not play its role in making sure that

community members are empowered to combat GBV through their own local techniques. According to the US Department of Justice, (1996) CP puts the police in partnership with the community to identify a problem, define a strategy for responding, and then evaluate the effectiveness of various responses. Collaboration is the focus of a new \$20 million Community- Oriented Policing Services program-COPSP, "CP to Combat Domestic Violence," which is open to police departments interested in applying CP techniques to fight domestic violence (US Department of Justice, 1996). In addition, Skogan and Hartnett, (1998) argue practices will vary from place to place to respond to the unique situations faced by communities (Coquilhat, 2008).

The observation from the field indicate that, the poor capacity of community members in combating GBV is due to the fact that the public have no time to involve in GBV affairs, lack of awareness and no mutual assistance amongst members. According to Trojanowicz, (1983), increased levels of community participation in crime reduction and prevention efforts are another indication of CP program success. Community members will not act if they are afraid or suspicious (The US Bureau of Justice, 1994). One interviewed respondent had this to say;

"The capacity of public members in combating GBV is poor because they protect themselves from revealing perpetrators, and even police officers do the same".

A Female Peasant aged 64

Furthermore, the capacity of community members in combating GBV is poor because majority of victims/relatives have poor income for them to report and or attend at police stations/court proceedings and the end of which decides to withdraw from the case. Interestingly, Skogan and Hartnett (1998) suggest that the public have a great deal to tell police, and that they are grateful for the opportunity to have their voice heard. However, Reno *et al.*, (1998) warns that the type of neighbourhood determines whether the community is good at dealing with their own problems. For example, if the community has more social capacity then they were more likely to deal with their own problems and attend arranged meetings than those without such investment (Coquilhat, 2008). An interviewed respondent when asked this question had this to say;

"Community's capacity in combating crime is poor because of economic hardship which leads victims/relatives to receive monies from perpetrators and withdraw from police case silently".

A Female Entrepreneur aged 50

In Bangladesh, study by CARE, (2013) found that one of the challenges in responding to GBV is that, in many of communities, gender-based violence is hidden from view and perpetrators often enjoy impunity. Even in countries where violence against women is prohibited under law, such acts may often go unreported or unaddressed through legal processes due to social and cultural attitudes that view GBV as acceptable and stigmatize and blame the survivor. The absence of safe and supportive health, psycho-social and legal services also plays a role in discouraging those who

need help from reporting violations and seeking assistance (CARE, 2013).

As documented by Skolnick and Bayley, (1988); Palmiotto, (2000), CP offers the community a larger window into police activity and provides opportunities for „grass roots“ support for police (Coquilhat, 2008). However, communities with existing capacity are more likely to participate in community policing, but are less likely to benefit from it because, in general, they are already proactively addressing issues to increase community safety (Mayhill, 2009). Building community capacity can mobilise and empower the community to identify and respond to concerns (Segrave and Ratcliffe, 2004). The benefit of an empowered community is a stronger community who want to participate in addressing issues (Mastroski, 2006). This pushed Skogan, (*et al.*, 2004) to argue that the growing capacity of the city's neighborhoods to defend themselves, are linked to the declining level of violence in the city/community (Skogan, *et al.*, 2004).

The important issue here is that community should be empowered in terms of capacity building on how to respond to GBV incidences. This could be done by using CP approach involving all stakeholders" interventions, conduct campaign and training of leaders in all levels and the community at large about their roles in combating GBV crime. This can be succeeded only if there will be a national CP and gender policy which will articulate explicitly how to involve the public in combating GBV crime. Interestingly, Social disorganized theory is seen to be consistent with the level of the capacity of the community in combating GBV found in this study. The theory emphasizes the ability of a community to realize common goals and solve chronic problems. According to the theorists Kubrin & Weitzer, (2003), poverty, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity and weak social networks decreased a neighborhood's capacity to control the behavior of people in public, and hence increase the likelihood of crime such as GBV (Kubrin & Weitzer, (2003).

In Uganda for example, established the Uganda Gender Policy, 2007 which is used as a guide to all stakeholders in planning, resource allocation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes with a gender perspective. Together with the Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs) to planning and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) as mechanisms for PEAP implementation, the GoU the UGP is expected to enhance gender focused programming, gender equity budgeting so that national and local government interventions, expenditures and services benefit both women and men (RoU, 2008).

The policy is in line with Uganda's regional and international obligations on gender and women's empowerment, whereby the government of Uganda commits to address gender inequality and safeguard the rights of women in particular to accessing justice; eliminating socio-cultural discrimination against girls and women; addressing gender based violence and promoting awareness about women's rights among women and men (*Ibid*). The study recommends that, it is a high time for the government of

Tanzania to introduce national CP policy so that every member in the society will be aware of the obligations in combating GBV crimes in the respective areas.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 Conclusion

Community Policing (CP) is a newly and growing style of policing introduced by Police agencies worldwide geared towards uniting Police and citizens/communities in a quest to improve public safety, stopping crime, social disorder and the fear of crime (Yusufu, 2012). However, CP refers to bringing police and citizens together to prevent crime and solve problems by using local techniques, emphasizing the prevention of crime rather than the traditional policing method of responding to crime after it has happened (URT, 2011).

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Findings indicates that on the average 38 respondents equals to 56.7 percent viewed the capacity of the community in combating GBV crimes to be poor, 21 respondents equals to 31.3 percent ranked to be satisfactory and the rest 8 respondents equals to 11.9 percent viewed it to be good. An interview response revealed that about 8 respondents out of 18 said it is poor, 5 respondents said satisfactory and 5 respondents said well. In the FGD about 3 groups said it is poor and 1 group said satisfactory.

4.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that the government should formulate community policing policy to be used as a working tool in combating gender-based violence crime by empowering the larger community to use their local techniques to find solutions for local crime related issues. This will be achieved by providing special training to volunteers in neighbourhood watch groups.

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