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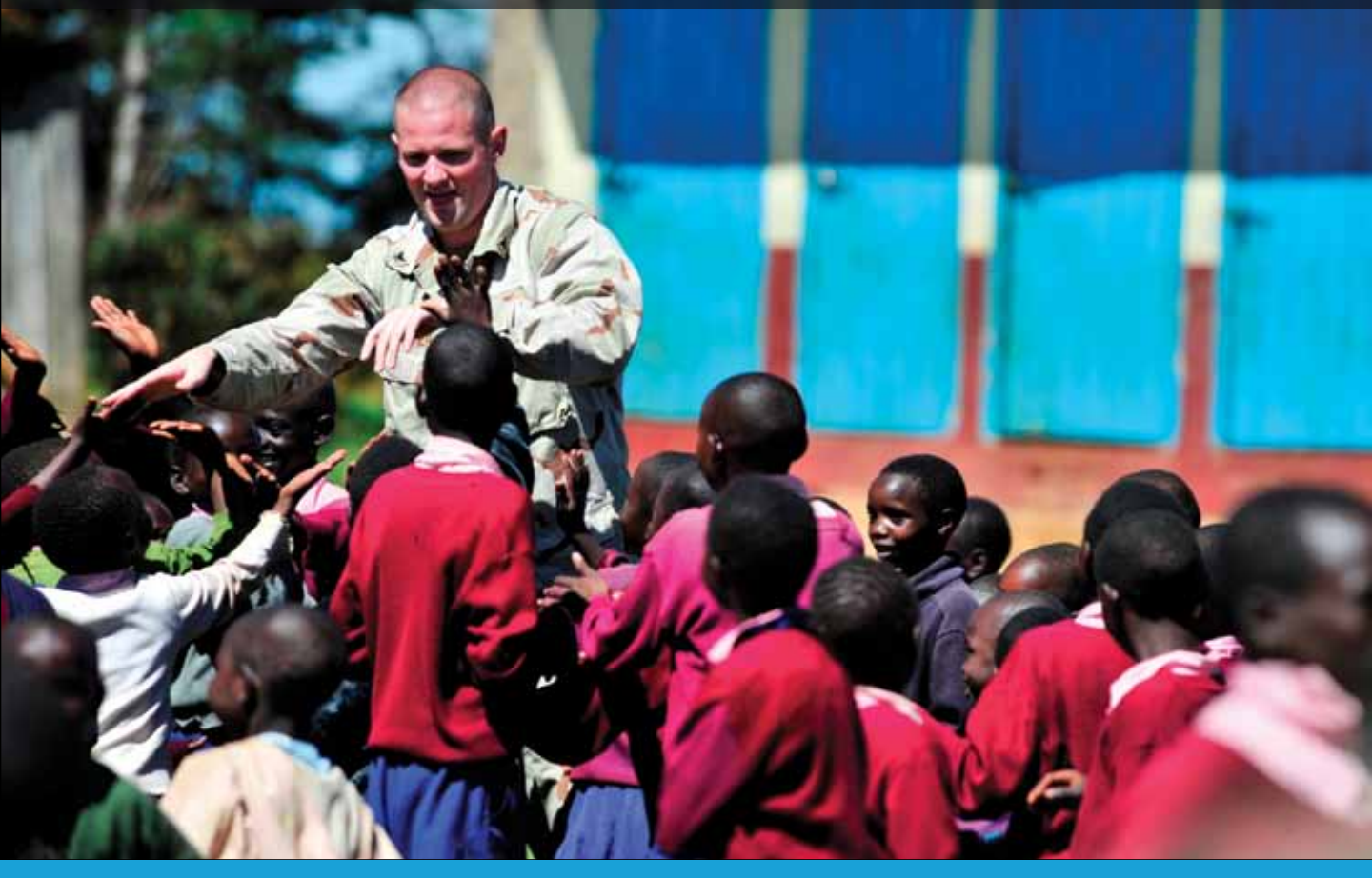

Winning Hearts and Minds? Examining the Relationship Between Aid and Security in Kenya

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Cover photo

RIFT VALLEY, Kenya - Petty Officer 3rd Class Brett Custer, Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), plays with children at one of the schools in Burnt Forest, Kenya. A CJTF-HOA civil affairs team visited the region to rebuild schools which were damaged or destroyed during post-election violence there last year. (U.S. Navy Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Scott Cohen)
Source: http://www.hoa.africom.mil/file.asp?HR=2&ID=20090112190114

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GLOSSARY

deyr	rainy season from October to December
jihad	a holy war waged on behalf of Islam
madrassa	Islamic religious school
mirra	a narcotic shrub; the leaves are chewed for their stimulating effect
reer Somali	citizens of Somalia
shifta	rebel, outlaw or bandit
ulema	Muslim scholars

ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Against Hunger
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
ALRMP	Arid Lands Resource Management Project
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APHIA II	AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance
CA	Civil Affairs
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (US)
CID	Criminal Investigation Division (US)
CIPK	Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa
COL	Contingency Operating Location
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DC	District Commissioner
DDF	District Development Funds
DENTCAP	Dental Civic Action Program
DoD	Department of Defense
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
DSG	District Steering Group
EDC	Educational Development Center
EMACK	Education for Marginal Children in Kenya
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GWoT	Global War on Terror
HA	Humanitarian Assistance
HCA	Humanitarian and Civic Assistance
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MEDCAP	Medical Civic Action Program
MP	Member of Parliament
MSI	Management Systems International
NEMA	National Environmental Management Authority
NEP	North Eastern Province
NFD	Northern Frontier Province
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
OEF-TS	Operation Enduring Freedom Trans Sahara
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
PEACE	Peace in East and Central Africa
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
RELPA	Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas
SUPKEM	Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VETCAP	Veterinary Civic Action Program
WFP	World Food Programme

MAP 1: KENYA

As of September 2006

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

RSAL
Regional Spatial Analysis Lab
Nairobi, Kenya

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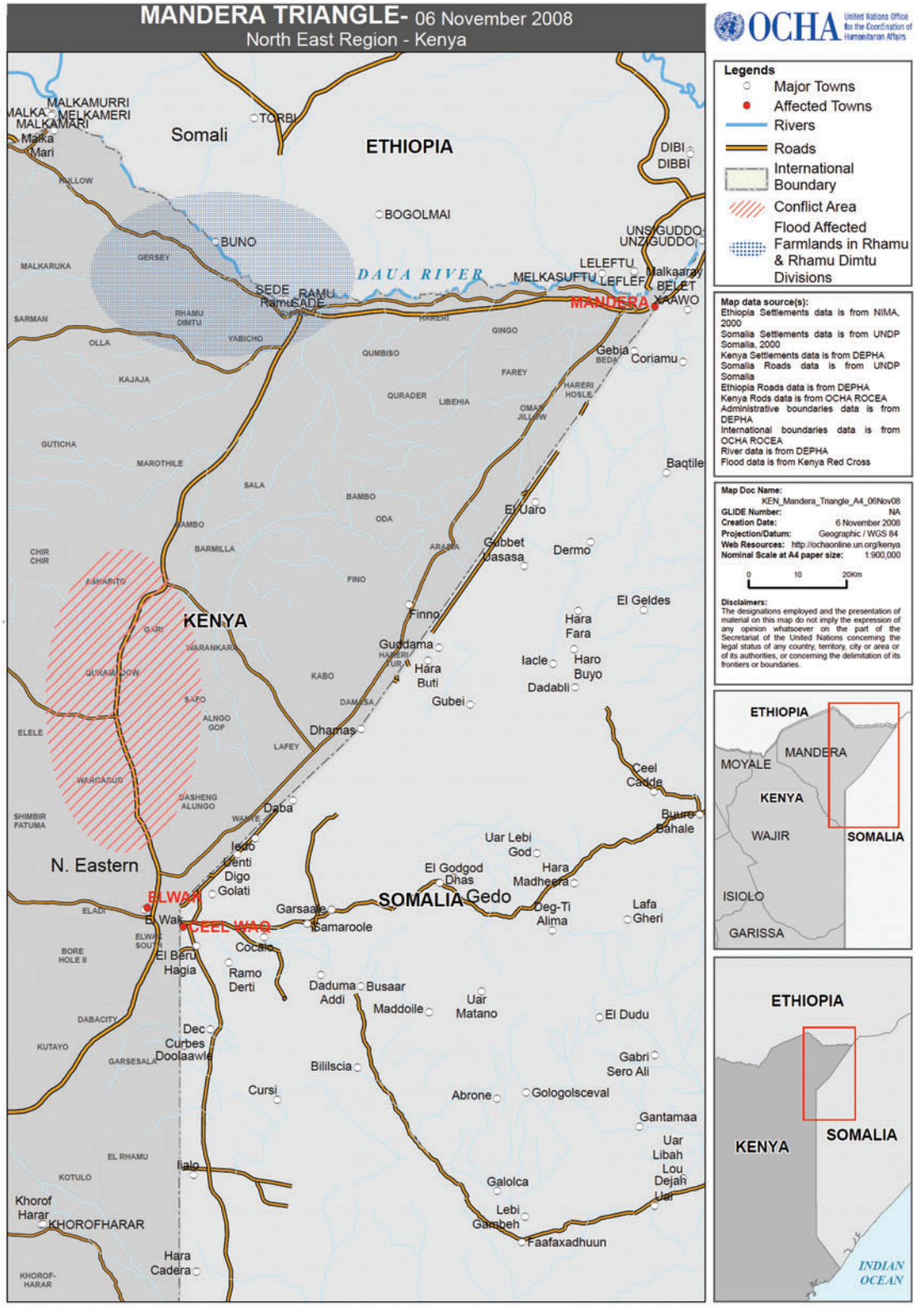
MAP 2: MANDERA TRIANGLE



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Africa, the United States (US) military since 9/11 has become increasingly involved in providing humanitarian and development assistance; the Pentagon controls over 20% of US assistance to Africa.[1] This trend is being consolidated in the new US Command for Africa – AFRICOM – that advances a role for the US military in Africa's development. One of the models for the new command has been the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) which, since 2003, has been providing humanitarian and development assistance to "win hearts and minds" in Muslim communities in the Horn of Africa as part of a regional counterterrorism and stabilization strategy. Examining the experience of CJTF-HOA in northeastern Kenya and along the Kenyan coast, this study assesses the effectiveness of the US military's use of "soft power" in addressing the security challenges of the US and its allies in the region.

Somalia is considered by the US and its regional allies to be a threat to their security, not least by offering a possible safe haven for terrorist organizations. Yet the Civil Affairs (CA) teams attached to CJTF-HOA have not focused their activities on Somalia itself, but instead on ethnic Somali and other Muslim communities in the neighboring countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Unlike in Afghanistan and Iraq, CJTF-HOA's attempts to win hearts and minds in Kenya therefore occur in a non-kinetic environment where the US is not an active combatant.

CJTF-HOA's projects in Kenya's North Eastern and Coast provinces were small, scattered, and under-resourced. Any conclusions about their impact on hearts and minds are therefore provisional. But the experience of CJTF-HOA in Kenya highlights the limitations of trying to win hearts and minds in a non-kinetic environment. Although these activities were arguably effective on a tactical level, in terms of facilitating the US military's entry into regions of potential concern, they also show that small-scale projects (and exposure to the US military) are not enough to make communities significantly alter their worldview.

"Winning hearts and minds" is an amorphous concept, but in the case of CJTF-HOA it appears to incorporate several overlapping objectives.

Tactically, these military aid projects provide an entry point into communities that are potentially hostile to the US and its interests. They allow the military to build connections and networks and acquire knowledge about the population; connections and information which may then be used to augment intelligence, to influence local leadership, or to facilitate a military intervention, should the need arise.

At the same time, these projects are intended to influence local perceptions and stereotypes about the US, with the goal of undermining local support for groups hostile to the US and its allies and thus to prevent potential conflict.

The objective of winning over a "crucial population" has also become conflated with far more ambitious goals around addressing the underlying causes of terrorism and violent extremism, through alleviating poverty and facilitating the reach and acceptance of the Kenyan state into previously "ungoverned" areas.

Assessing the success of the hearts and minds activities in achieving US security goals is complicated by the changing objectives, the conceptual confusion underlying these objectives, and the difficulty of disentangling the impact of military aid projects from other CJTF-HOA operations, including direct military-to-military support and Special Forces operations in the region.

There is some evidence that CJTF-HOA has achieved a measure of tactical success insofar as Civil Affairs (CA) teams have established a presence in northeastern Kenya and along the Kenyan coast. Over the past six years, local

[1] "More Money for the Military," *Africa Confidential* 51, no. 3. (5 February 2010): 9-10.

attitudes towards their presence have become less hostile and more accommodating. Familiarity, political lobbying, better outreach by CJTF-HOA and other US government agencies, and a continuing demand for external assistance mean there is a pragmatic and tacit acceptance of the presence of CA teams. This may make it easier for the military to build connections, to acquire local knowledge, and to gather atmospherics.

That said, it's not clear that the communities were innately hostile to the US to begin with; for instance, interviewees spoke favorably about the Peace Corps and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assistance. The initial resistance to the CA teams might not have reflected anti-American sentiment so much as suspicion of the US military following the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, a suspicion that was aggravated by the way in which CA teams during the early years of CJTF-HOA separated themselves from the population and acted as though they were in potentially hostile territory.

Arguably, the increased acceptance of the presence of CA teams owes as much to the teams interacting more openly with communities and local leaders—as well as through outreach by the US Embassy and lobbying by interested local politicians—as it does to communities changing their perceptions about the US military.

Tacit acceptance, furthermore, is not proof that the presence of CA teams and the aid projects have changed overall attitudes about the US government and its foreign policy. Communities and their leaders are skeptical about the purpose of CJTF-HOA's mission and dubious about the utility of some of the assistance provided. Acceptance does not appear to be based on firm foundations and attitudes can wax and wane in relation to a variety of variables.

Furthermore, there is no evidence that the hearts and minds projects have achieved the broader strategic objectives of countering terrorism and violent extremism or reducing conflict and improving stability. One reason for this is that these objectives are based upon a series of false assumptions.

The idea that, by delivering aid, the US military can change people's perceptions about the United States is premised on very simplistic assumptions. It is naive to assume that a project or series of small projects are sufficient to change people's perceptions, convictions, and values, regardless of the historical and contemporary local, regional, and global sociopolitical and economic context.

As we found in this study, attitudes are influenced by a multitude of factors beyond the scope of aid projects, such as the relationship between the target population and the Kenyan state, their self-perception as Muslims, local leadership, the media, and, more importantly, their perception of the impact of US foreign policy, both globally and in Somalia. Acceptance of aid does not automatically translate into acceptance of the policies or beliefs of the entity providing the assistance.

People differentiate between CJTF-HOA and other, non-military aid actors. The proximity of covert Special Forces and the involvement of the US military in operations within Somalia also reinforce suspicions about the ulterior motives behind CJTF-HOA aid projects. At the same time, the small-scale nature of much of the assistance leads people to question whether the US military is in fact interested in their welfare, or has other motives for providing assistance. The delivery of aid projects by military personnel leads people to conclude that the assistance is part of a military strategy in the "Global War on Terror (GWoT)."

To that end, local communities did not seem to believe that CJTF-HOA activities had improved their security. To the contrary, their comments suggest that some feel more insecure than before because of the US presence. Security in Kenya's

borderlands has worsened over the past three years, partially as a consequence of US and Western policy towards Somalia. Some people feared that their association with the US could make them more vulnerable to violence by extremists, although there is no evidence that such projects have led to any such attacks. Some respondents were uncomfortable with the US military's association with the Kenyan military, given the Kenyan military's historical record of violence against the Somali population in North Eastern Province. Some people feared that the aid projects (and in particular borehole drilling) were in reality a cover for harmful activities such as the burial of nuclear waste. In a context where US foreign policy in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Somalia, and Kenya has been seen as an attack on Islam, aid projects that aim to win over both "hearts" and "minds" can appear to people as an attempt to directly influence a Muslim community's faith and beliefs.

CJTF-HOA has avoided working in the most insecure areas of northeastern Kenya. Most projects and in particular the larger-scale projects have been implemented where there is a more secure and conducive operating environment. This in itself suggests small-scale aid projects are a blunt instrument for tackling US security concerns.

The presence of CJTF-HOA and the aid projects has not addressed the security concerns expressed by the communities. That said, CJTF-HOA's goals of conflict prevention and stabilization are not concerned with reducing the threat to local populations, but with the potential threats to the US that might arise from these communities.

There is a residual assumption that underdevelopment is a "push" factor in radicalization and that aid projects can address this by reducing poverty and building state capacity, a perception that has some local acceptance given levels of poverty and unemployment. Communities have spoken of the benefits of certain projects such as schools where they have helped increase enrollment. However, the number and scope of CJTF-HOA's aid projects are too small to have had a cumulative, sustainable impact on addressing the "underlying conditions" that may give rise to radicalization and extremism.

There is no evidence that the CA teams and their projects have had any impact on rolling back "ungoverned spaces." The concept itself is simplistic and ignores the existence of local governance institutions. The idea that education or health projects can help to extend the reach of the state assumes that ungoverned spaces are the result or function of a lack of state presence, in particular in infrastructure or in the provision of basic services.

The political manipulation of projects – for instance, by politicians seeking to consolidate new administrative areas or trying to get projects implemented in their home areas – shows that the issue of governance is not the lack of the state per se. In a situation where state presence is characterized by the dichotomy between localized capture on one hand and coercive, if not predatory, interventions on the other (i.e., the traditional response by the military and security services), it is hard to see how simply building infrastructure addresses the root cause of the problem.

CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds efforts have been hampered by the fact that soldiers are not aid workers. Despite the developmental rhetoric of CJTF-HOA, there are several glaring problems with the process of delivering humanitarian and development assistance that have implications for the ability of the US military to achieve its objectives.

Whatever the technical skills of the reservists who make up the CA teams, they do not necessarily have the requisite skills or knowledge to undertake community development work. The short-term rotation of the CA teams means that relationships and projects lack continuity. From our interviews, it does not seem that CA teams are adequately prepared before deployment, nor

provided consistent support while in the field. Furthermore, the organizational strength of the military does not translate into a more efficient delivery of aid projects.

Finally, US military use of humanitarian and development assistance to further military aims threatens to erode long-held principles of aid provision based on need. At the same time, there is little evidence from the experience of CJTF-HOA that security-focused foreign assistance increases the security of Americans.

1. Introduction

Photo: M. Bradbury

Garissa livestock market.

The US military has been providing humanitarian and development assistance in the North Eastern and Coast provinces of Kenya since 2003. US military Civil Affairs (CA) teams and engineering units have similarly been operating in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and the Comoros. Most operate in locations that are remote, far from centers of high population density, away from formal government services, and among communities that are predominantly Muslim. These areas are considered strategic because they are perceived to be vulnerable to violent extremism and potential sources of political instability. These teams are deployed from the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti, which was established in 2002 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, the US government's response to the terrorist attacks on mainland America. The creation of CJTF-HOA was prompted by concerns about Somalia, and the Horn of Africa more generally, becoming a haven for Islamic militants fleeing Afghanistan and Iraq and a focus for Al Qaeda operations. The US military campaign in northern Kenya to win hearts and minds through the delivery of humanitarian and development aid is part of a broader counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategy in territories and among populations that are considered a security risk to the US government and allied African states. CJTF-HOA itself is an experiment in defense, diplomacy, and development. With its mixture of forces and mandates, it is considered a likely model, along with Operation Enduring Freedom Trans Sahara (OEF-TS), for how the recently formed US Africa Command (AFRICOM) will develop, with other similar forces planned for the continent.[2]

[2] Thomas P.M. Barnett, "The Americans Have Landed," *Esquire*, 27 June 2007. See also: Brooks Keene, "Securitization of U.S. Foreign Assistance in Sub-Saharan Africa: Preliminary Research" (unpublished report for CARE, 12 May 2008).

In Kenya, a key ally of the US in East Africa, at least 151 projects have been implemented by CJTF-HOA between 2003 and 2009 at the cost of at least US$6.9 million.[3] These include support to veterinary, health, education, and water services, as well as one-off activities such as sports events and debates. The main focus of these activities has been in an area that lies east of the Tana River to the Kenya-Somalia border and north from the coast to the Ethiopian border. Most of the projects have been concentrated in Kenya's North Eastern province and the northern districts of Coast province. In North Eastern province, projects have been concentrated in Garissa district, with a smaller number in Wajir and Mandera districts (see Table 1). In Coast province, the focus has been on Lamu district and the eastern part of Tana River district, with a few projects implemented in Malindi and Khalifi districts. A small number of projects have also been carried out in Isiolo district in Eastern province and in Nairobi. In 2008, CA teams were briefly deployed to several locations affected by post-election violence in the Rift Valley province. The nature and impact of the CA projects in the northeast and on the coast have varied, reflecting, in part, the distinct features of these operating environments.

Since the late 1990s, Kenya's large and thinly populated northeastern borderland area, long considered a security threat by the Kenyan state, has become a focus for US government efforts to counter terrorism, mitigate violent extremism, and promote stability and governance. This is due to the following reasons:

- the protracted conflict in Somalia and the porous borders with Somalia and Ethiopia that allow an unhindered flow of people, commercial traffic, and arms;
- the weak remit of the Kenyan government that gives the impression that these are "ungoverned" regions with alternative centers of power that can challenge the state;
- the safe havens on the coast found by the perpetrators of terrorist attacks in Kenya, and;
- a concern that the majority Muslim population in these provinces is vulnerable to radicalization.[4]

Although the borderland is described in military jargon as a "non-kinetic" environment, since 2001, the US military has deployed Special Forces and airstrikes to capture and kill "high value" terrorist targets in Somalia. Similarly, CJTF-HOA's primary objectives for deploying CA teams in this area are military: to win hearts and minds in populations that are considered potentially hostile to the US and its allies; to prevent conflict by containing the spillover from Somalia's long civil conflict; to promote regional stability; to "prevail over extremism" by "stabilizing" these populations and preventing them from becoming incorporated into Al Qaeda's global agenda; and to secure access to potentially useful militarily assets, such as ports and airstrips. This is in essence a military intervention to prevent conflict through the provision of aid and a physical presence. In the context of other developments in US military doctrine and foreign policy in the past decade, the deployment of CA teams to this non-kinetic military environment follows a trend that has involved the steady convergence of security strategies and development assistance. In this, the CA teams have some commonalities with the work of other international aid actors.

This study of US military's hearts and minds activities in northeast and coastal Kenya explores the relationship between aid and security by examining the evolution of US military aid projects in the Horn of Africa. It investigates the widely-held assumption that humanitarian and development assistance promote security and stabilization, the effectiveness of using humanitarian and development assistance as a counterterrorism strategy, the efficacy of military aid projects in winning the hearts and minds of people in northern Kenya and along the coast, and the policy implications of this strategy.

[3] A more detailed discussion of what these costs represent can be found in Section 6.1.

[4] For a summary of these concerns, see Angel Rabasa, "Radical Islam in East Africa" (RAND Corporation, 2009).

1.1 Methodology

This case study is part of a comparative study with Afghanistan undertaken by the Feinstein International Center at Tufts University, examining the relationship between aid and security and, in particular, the assumption that aid projects can contribute to improved security by helping to win hearts and minds.[5]

"Hearts and minds" is a somewhat amorphous phrase. For the purpose of this study, it refers to the range of US military Humanitarian Assistance (HA) and Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA) activities undertaken by CJTF-HOA, CA, and engineering units. It does not refer to other CJTF-HOA operations in Kenya, such as military-to-military training. Furthermore, the study does not look at similar projects carried out by CA teams attached to US Special Forces operating elsewhere in the region.

Research for the Kenya study was undertaken by a team of researchers from the United States, Britain, and Kenya, from September 2008 to April 2009.[6] The research was undertaken in the US, Djibouti, Europe (including Germany and the UK), and Kenya and was structured in three parts.

The study began with a literature review. This included studies on the historical context and the political and security considerations motivating foreign assistance policies and practice, studies, and assessments on northern Kenya, policy literature on reconstruction, development, and the "securitization" of aid, US government security and development strategy, and relevant US military doctrine. CJTF-HOA activities in Kenya are mentioned in several academic studies and newspaper articles, based mostly on secondary information sources. Needs assessments, technical assessments, or post-hoc project assessments by CJTF-HOA are not publicly available. There are similarly no publicly accessible studies or evaluations by the US or Kenyan governments assessing the effectiveness of these military aid projects over the past six years.

Seventy interviews were conducted during the second stage of the research. Interviews were held with officials from the US State Department (including the Embassy in Nairobi, the Bureau of African Affairs, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, the Office for the Coordinator of Counterterrorism, and the Humanitarian Information Unit), the Department of Defense (including Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, US Africa Command, Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency), USAID (including the Office of Military Affairs, the Office of Transition Initiatives, USAID/ East Africa, and USAID/Kenya), the British Department for International Development, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Kenyan Government's Ministry for the Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands, UN agencies and NGOs working in northern Kenya, and academics with specialist knowledge. These interviews took place in Washington DC, Djibouti, Europe (including London and Stuttgart), and Kenya (including Nairobi, Garissa, and Lamu), as well as occasional phone interviews. The vast majority of these interviews were conducted on background and, given the sensitivity of the subject, no quotes or opinions are attributed to named individuals in the text.

The third part of the research was conducted in Kenya over the course of February, March, and April 2009. The research team visited twenty project sites in Garissa and Wajir districts in the North Eastern province and Lamu district in Coast province. Two sites, Wareng District and Eldoret town, were also visited in Rift Valley province. The purpose was to solicit the views of those communities where CJTF-HOA had implemented HA/HCA projects. Some sixty-eight individual interviews and twelve focus group discussions were conducted with male and female community leaders, local government officials, school boards, youth, civic activists, professionals, and business people.

[5] https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=19270958

[6] The Research team comprised Michael Kleinman, Mark Bradbury, Halima Shuria, Hussein A. Mahmoud, and Amina H. Soud.

The research team was able to compile a list of at least 151 HA/HCA projects undertaken by CJTF-HOA in Kenya since 2003 as well as an estimate of their costs (see Table 1). This list was compiled from a number of sources, including the military and USAID. It was not possible to verify whether this was a complete list; further, the cost estimates do not include the cost of maintaining US units in the field or related transportation costs.

The study assesses the impact of CJTF-HOA HA/HCA projects—commonly referred to as hearts and minds activities—against three broad and at times overlapping objectives: security (countering terrorism and enhancing stabilization); political (winning hearts and minds and countering the influence of Al Qaeda and violent extremists); and developmental (meeting basic needs and strengthening governance).

1.2 Structure of the Report

The report is structured in eight parts. Part 1 describes the aims of the study and the research methodology. Part 2 traces the evolution of the CJTF-HOA hearts and minds doctrine and the operations of the CA teams in Kenya. Part 3 describes the political and social context in Kenya's northeastern borderlands where CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities are being implemented. Part 4 considers some of the drivers of insecurity in the borderlands region that the hearts and minds activities are intended to address. Part 5 briefly looks at how non-military development resources have been deployed to manage conflict and support stabilization in Kenya's northeastern borderlands. Part 6 examines the evolution of the CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities, the factors that have shaped them, and the distribution and costs of those activities. It also examines the distribution and costs of those activities. Part 7 draws on interviews with people in the host communities to assess the impact of the hearts and minds activities. The final Part 8 draws together the findings of the study.

2. The Evolution of CJTF-HOA Hearts and Minds Doctrine and Operations

Photo: M. Bradbury

Faza village, Pate Island.

CJTF-HOA was established in October 2002 as a component of Operation Enduring Freedom.[7] The task force arrived in the region in December 2002 and by May 2003 had transferred to Camp Lemonier, a former French Foreign Legion base in Djibouti. It originally fell under the control of US Central Command (CENTCOM), before transitioning to the newly-established US Africa Command (AFRICOM) in 2008.

As a *combined* force CJTF-HOA includes soldiers from allied nations and as a *joint* force it includes different branches of the US military. By 2004, there were between 1,400 and 1,600 US military and civilian personnel based in the region. The current size of the task force, including troops from coalition and partner countries, is around 2,000 personnel.[8] The Combined Joint Operating Area covers Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, the Seychelles, and Yemen; CJTF-HOA is also operating in Tanzania, Uganda, Mauritius, and the Comoros.[9]

The original mission of CJTF-HOA was to capture and kill Islamist fighters and terrorists fleeing the US-led invasion of Afghanistan. Over time, the approach and articulation of the mission has changed and expanded, with an increasing focus on hearts and minds activities and military-to-military support, especially after the Navy assumed command from the Marines in 2006.[10] According to its own publicity, it now emphasizes

[7] The operation in the Horn of Africa is one of four operations, all with a focus on counterterrorism, the other three being Afghanistan, Trans Sahara, and the Philippines.

[8] Information from CJTF-HOA website at http://www.hoa.africom.mil/AboutCJTF-HOA.asp (accessed 17 January 2010).

[9] Ibid.

[10] J. Piombo, "Military Provision of Humanitarian and Civic Assistance: A Day in the Life of a Civil Affairs Team in the Horn of Africa," (Center for Complex Operations Case Study Series, National Defense University Press, 25 August 2009), 3.

countering violent extremism as its primary mission, as opposed to a more narrow focus solely on counterterrorism:

> CJTF-HOA employs an indirect approach to counter violent extremism. We conduct operations to strengthen partner nation and regional security capacity to enable long-term regional stability, prevent conflict and protect U.S. and Coalition interests.[11]

2.1 Counterterrorism

Since the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, the Horn of Africa and East Africa have been a focus of international efforts to combat terrorism. As the Taliban regime in Afghanistan collapsed in 2001, the Horn of Africa, and the collapsed state of Somalia in particular, were thought to offer a potential safe haven for Islamic militants fleeing that war and to be a breeding ground for Islamic terrorists. The international security climate that prevailed at the time was reflected in the media. For instance, the *Washington Times*, citing US intelligence sources, reported that there were indications Bin Laden was setting up "new bases of operations in Somalia."[12] Western governments responded by sending naval vessels and aircraft to patrol the waters and skies around Somalia to prevent terrorist suspects from gaining a foothold there, and CJTF-HOA established a permanent US military presence in the region. The US government came close to approving military action in Somalia; the rationale being the alleged links between the Somali Islamist movement (Al Ittihaad Al Islamiya), the Somali-owned money-transfer company (Al Barakat), and the Al Qaeda network.[13]

Under the commands of Marine Major General John Sattler (2002 to 2003) and Marine Brigadier General Martin Robeson (2003 to 2004), CJTF-HOA pursued a capture and kill mission. One State Department official described it in those early days as a "taskforce on steroids with little adult supervision."[14] CJTF-HOA personnel had anticipated that they would operate directly in Somalia,[15] but the expected exodus of terrorists from Afghanistan did not materialize. As Ambassador Lange Schermerhorn, the Political Advisor to the commanding general of CJTF-HOA from 2003 to 2004, explained:

> The Task Force's first mission was to go find bad guys and whack them. There weren't a lot around, so the desired end state became – while you are at it, stabilize the region. It was not well thought-through from the beginning. But then they got there and tried to figure it out.[16]

Photo: M. Bradbury

Street scene, Lamu.

[11] Information from CJTF-HOA website at http://www.hoa.africom.mil/AboutCJTF-HOA.asp (accessed 17 January 2010).

[12] "Terrorist group likely on the move," Washington Times (Washington, DC), 2001. The Daily Telegraph in Britain also cited intelligence and diplomatic sources that "thousand fundamentalist Muslims linked to al-Qa'eda are being trained as terrorists at bases in Somalia." "Banks-to-terror conglomerate faces US wrath," Daily Telegraph (London), 28 September 2001.

[13] M. Bradbury, "Somalia: The Aftermath of September 11th and the War on Terrorism" (unpublished report for Oxfam GB, February 2002).

[14] Interview with US State Dept. official, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[15] Rye Barcott, "Intelligence, Command, and Control of the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa" (unpublished paper, 2007).

[16] Ibid., 13.

2.2 Failed States and Ungoverned Territory

In the absence of a mass influx from Afghanistan, CJTF-HOA's mission was shaped by the emerging view, expressed in the 2002 US National Security Strategy (NSS), that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones."[17] According to the White House summary of the NSS:

> Regional conflicts can arise from a wide variety of causes, including poor governance, external aggression, competing claims, internal revolt, tribal rivalries, and ethnic or religious hatreds. If left unaddressed, however, these different causes lead to the same end: failed states, humanitarian disasters, and ungoverned areas that can become safe havens for terrorists.[18]

Even if the threat of terrorist migration to the Horn initially proved unfounded,[19] the region was still considered a potential threat because of both state collapse in Somalia and the weakness of governments in neighboring countries which left "ungoverned spaces."[20] Poverty and underdevelopment are regularly cited as drivers of violent extremism; however, it has become increasingly common to identify poor or weak governance, corruption, lack of services, and political alienation as equally or more important drivers.[21] Although US security policy initially identified Somalia as presenting the main security threat to the region, in the past decade Kenya has provided a more conducive environment for Al Qaeda's operations. Evidence unveiled at the trial of men linked to the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in East Africa and from recovered papers and phone intercepts showed that Al Qaeda (like foreign aid agencies) found Somalia in the 1990s to be a challenging operating environment. In contrast, a combination of good infrastructure, lax government and security surveillance, and a disaffected Muslim population enabled a terror network to develop and flourish undetected on Kenya's coast.[22] Some of the suspects in the 1998 embassy bombings found haven on the coast. Then, in November 2002, Israeli commercial and tourist interests were attacked with the bombing of Paradise Hotel in Kikambala and an attempt to shoot down an Israeli charter plane leaving Mombasa.

2.3 Hearts and Minds

The difficulties of operating directly in Somalia, the lack of a mass influx of militants from Afghanistan, the absence of an active insurgency in Kenya, and the increasing policy concern with ungoverned spaces eventually led CJTF-HOA to re-brand itself.[23] Kinetic capture and kill operations were de-emphasized in favor of a preventative strategy involving the provision of assistance to win hearts and minds, focused on Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, all of which are nominally allied to the US.

"Hearts and minds" is itself a problematic term, implying far more art than science. The US Army Counterinsurgency Field Manual defines winning

[17] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, September 2002, 1.

[18] http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2006/sectionIV.html (accessed 17 January 2010).

[19] Ironically, this became more of an overt issue several years later, catalyzed by the intervention of Ethiopia in 2006, backed by the US.

[20] A similar argument – based on the dangers stemming from ungoverned spaces – was also used to justify the establishment of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP). See "British Anthropologist Jeremy Keenan on 'The Dark Sahara: America's War on Terror in Africa,'" *Democracy Now*, 6 August 2009, http://www.democracynow.org/2009/8/6/keenan.

[21] Guilain Denoeux and Lynn Carter, "Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism" (Management Systems International report for USAID, February, 2009); Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa" (Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, 2007).

[22] Ibid., iii.

[23] Letitia Lawson, "U.S. Africa Policy Since the Cold War," *Strategic Insights* VI, no. 1 (January 2007), http://www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/OnlineJournal/2007/Jan/lawsonJan07.html. According to Lawson, "Initially, [HOA] was [driven] by concerns that terrorists fleeing from Afghanistan would be attracted to the 'vast ungoverned spaces' of the Horn of Africa. When such a mass influx failed to materialize, and the local terrorist threat proved to be relatively limited, CJTF-HOA began giving greater emphasis to its role in preventing terrorism by providing assistance and waging a hearts and minds campaign."

"hearts and minds" as a desired end-state, rather than specific activities. Accordingly:

> "Hearts" means persuading people that their best interests are served by [counterinsurgency] success. "Minds" means convincing them that the force can protect them and that resisting is pointless.[24]

This definition is most applicable to the US military engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq; CJTF-HOA, however, is not explicitly engaged in a counterinsurgency campaign in northeastern and coastal Kenya. Instead, it focuses on preventing the emergence of a terrorist threat and countering violent extremism more generally. Describing the activities of the CA teams under the rubric of "hearts and minds" establishes little more than a broad overarching goal or intention, but remains somewhat vague and open to interpretation.[25] Different CJTF-HOA commanders have articulated the task force's goals in slightly different ways. For example, Navy Rear Admiral James Hart, the commander of CJTF-HOA from February 2007 until February 2008, defined the goals as the "4P's" – preventing conflict, promoting regional security, protecting coalition interests, and prevailing against extremism. Navy Rear Admiral Philip Greene, the commander from February 2008 until February 2009, focused on the "3S's" – increasing security, improving stability, and enabling sovereignty. Within these various frameworks, CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds activities seem to have a number of discrete, albeit overlapping, objectives that contribute to the US government's overall efforts by gaining access and exerting influence.

First, the hearts and minds activities serve a tactical purpose.[26] They facilitate access to populations and areas considered a threat to the interests of the US and its allies, enabling the military to gain a better understanding of local conditions, for instance by collecting atmospherics.[27] At the same time, access can allow CJTF-HOA to have influence, by building relationships with communities that could prove useful in the future.[28] Projects can also be used as a sweetener to gain cooperation from local leaders[29] and to enable local populations to familiarize themselves with the US military.

Second, these activities are seen as a way to help address the underlying causes of poverty and extremism in the area.

Third, these activities, more broadly, are meant to change the perceptions of local communities and to overcome ill-founded or negative assumptions that they might hold about the United States in general, and the US military in particular.[30] To this end, some CJTF-HOA personnel see themselves as "warrior diplomats."[31]

A fourth, more nuanced, view among some members of CJTF-HOA conceptualizes hearts and minds activities in light of larger questions of "good governance." In a country like Kenya, where weak or poor governance is considered a driver of conflict, instability, and extremism, hearts

[24] Department of the Army Counterinsurgency (FM 3-24, 15 December 2006), Appendix A, A-26.

[25] Such ambiguity is not limited to the military—aid agencies often use similarly vague terms (e.g., "empowerment") without defining exactly what they mean in practice.

[26] Piombo, "Military Provision of Humanitarian and Civic Assistance," 3.

[27] Interviews with US State Department and Department of Defense officials, Washington, DC and over the phone, 2008. Numerous officials drew a distinction between collecting atmospherics and collecting intelligence, arguing that CA teams were involved in the former and not the latter.

[28] Interviews with US Embassy official and officers with CJTF-HOA, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[29] Interview with officials from the US State Dept. Africa Bureau, Washington, DC, 2008.

[30] Interviews with CJTF-HOA officials, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008 and 2009.

[31] Ibid.

and minds activities are seen as a way not only to change local perceptions about the US, but also local communities' perceptions of their own government and military.[32] Partnering with the Kenyan military and other Kenyan agencies to implement humanitarian and development activities is, according to one former commander of CJTF-HOA, intended to encourage communities to be more supportive of the Kenyan government.[33] In the words of another senior officer, the military aid projects are meant to convey the message that the US is "working to help your government support you."[34] These collaborative activities are also intended to extend the reach of the state into areas where it has traditionally had a weak, intermittent, or predatory presence.[35] It is an open question, however, to what extent this viewpoint is shared by CJTF-HOA as a whole, as opposed to individual officers tasked with overseeing these activities.[36]

The 2009 AFRICOM Posture Statement sums up these various goals:

> Civil-military activity and development are also pathways to security capacity building for CJTF-HOA. The presence of Civil Affairs (CA) teams in the region help partner nations improve their civil-military relations with local communities. These teams provide CJTF-HOA the ability to access high risk areas, thereby helping advance USG and host nation development priorities. In coordination with USAID and DOS, civil affairs activities help mitigate the stresses that contribute to regional instability.[37]

2.4 Stabilization

This view of hearts and minds activities as supporting a larger governance end-goal can be situated within the broader evolution of US military doctrine, and in particular the 2005 Department of Defense (DoD) Directive on Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations. The Directive defines stability operations as:

> "[M]ilitary and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in States and regions….The long-term goal is to help develop indigenous capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society."[38]

According to a 2008 report by the Congressional Research Service, combating the new threat from decentralized networks of violent extremists who use terrorism as their weapon of choice will require the US to "assist others in developing the wherewithal to protect their own populations and police their own territories."[39]

The shift in policy towards stabilization is also influenced by the experience of the US in Iraq, where the failure to plan for anything beyond regime change was responsible for the post-war quagmire in which the US found itself.[40]

[32] Interviews with US Embassy official and CJTF-HOA officers, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008 and 2009; also interview with AFRICOM officials, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[33] Interview with former CJTF-HOA commander, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[34] Interview with CJTF-HOA officers, Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, 2008.

[35] Interview with AFRICOM officers, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[36] Email communication with official from the US Embassy in Kenya, November 2010.

[37] United States Africa Command 2009 Posture Statement, based on the Statement of General William E. Ward, USA Commander, United States Africa Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Armed Services Committee on 17-18 March 2009.

[38] Department of Defense Directive 3000.05: Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations (28 November 2005), sections 3.1 and 4.2.

[39] The Department of Defense Role in Foreign Assistance: Background, Major Issues, and Options for Congress (Nina Serafino, Coordinator, Congressional Research Service, 25 August 2008), 4.

[40] Barnett, "The Americans Have Landed."

2.5 Hearts and Minds on the Ground

The mission of CJTF-HOA in Kenya has therefore evolved from one concerned with countering terrorism through combat operations to countering terrorism and violent extremism through activities that aim to promote developmental goals of stability and good governance. This evolving strategy needs to be understood as part of a broader US government strategy that has involved a mixture of "hard" and "soft" security approaches involving the military, government, and non-government aid actors. It is also important to note that hearts and minds activities constitute only one of the ways in which CJTF-HOA seeks to achieve these goals. Other interventions like military-to-military support and training are also important to the overall mission, but outside the scope of this paper.

The capacity of CJTF-HOA to pursue any of these roles has been constrained by funding and the limited numbers of troops available to cover a vast area nearly the size of the continental US. It has therefore relied on Civil Affairs teams, whose traditional role is to "enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in areas where military forces are present."[41]

Since 2003, CJTF-HOA has deployed teams involving different combinations of intelligence personnel, CA teams, construction units (i.e. Seabees), and force protection elements to more than eight of the countries in its area of operation. The teams vary in size, from some eighty people in Lamu to only five in Garissa. The CA teams themselves often comprise no more than four or five soldiers, including a commanding officer, a team sergeant, one or two CA specialists, and a medic.[44] According to a former US serviceman who served with CJTF-HOA, "the local team leaders generally have remarkable autonomy to run operations and make day to day decisions."[45] As of 2008, there were two Civil Affairs companies assigned to CJTF-HOA (not including companies attached to Special Forces), each of which comprised five CA teams.[46]

Although the use of CA teams in the region falls in line with evolving US military and security policy, the decision to actually deploy them does not appear to have been based on a deep strategic analysis, but rather a need to be seen to be doing something. As one Department of Defense (DoD) official explained, "CJTF-HOA commanders were searching for what to do – [so they] turn to CA."[47] Another mid-level officer explained,

Box 1: Civil Affairs Tasks

CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities relate to a number of core CA tasks, including the provision of foreign humanitarian assistance and nation assistance. According to the Civil Affairs Field Manual, foreign humanitarian assistance programs are "conducted to relieve or reduce the results of natural or man-made disasters or other endemic conditions such as pain, disease, hunger, or privation that might present a serious threat to life or that can result in great damage to or loss of property."[42] In contrast, nation assistance (NA) comprises "civil or military assistance (other than foreign humanitarian assistance) rendered to a nation by U.S. forces within that nation's territory during peacetime, crises or emergencies, or war based on agreements mutually concluded between the United States and that nation. NA operations support a [host nation] by promoting sustainable development and growth of responsive institutions. The goal is to promote long-term regional stability."[43]

[41] Department of the Army, Civil Affairs – Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (Field Manual 3-05.401, July 2007), section 5-3.

[42] Ibid., section 5-25.

[43] Ibid., section 5-40.

[44] Interview with CA team in Kenya, 2009.

[45] Barcott, "Intelligence, Command, and Control," 11.

[46] Interview with CA team leader in Kenya, 2008.

[47] Phone interview with DoD official, 2008.

"HOA does CA because it's something they can do."[48] And, according to a civilian DoD employee, CJTF-HOA's theory was "we have engineers, so we dig wells. We have CA teams, so we do CA work."[49] A USAID official echoed this assessment, stating that CJTF-HOA was a military command without a combat role, and so, as an outlet, and in order to gain relevance, the command began to focus on CA activities.[50] The CA teams (and, to a certain extent, engineering units like the Seabees) have since become the public face of CJTF-HOA's engagement in the region and are central to its stabilization strategy.

Box 2: Humanitarian and Civic Assistance (HCA) and Humanitarian Assistance (HA)

The nature of the hearts and minds campaign has also been shaped by the funding mechanisms available to it, namely *Humanitarian and Civic Assistance* (HCA) and *Humanitarian Assistance* (HA), the uses of which are defined under US law.[51] HCA funding is restricted to activities that promote the security interests of both the US and the country in which the activities are carried out, as well as the specific operational readiness skills of the members of the armed forces who participate in the activities.[52] The legislation specifies allowable activities, which include: 1) medical, dental, and veterinary care; 2) construction of rudimentary surface transportation systems; 3) well-drilling and construction of basic sanitation facilities; 4) rudimentary construction and repair of public facilities; and 5) detection and clearance of landmines.[53] Because of the operational readiness requirement, US forces must be involved in HCA activities; they cannot be sub-contracted to third parties, although US forces can partner with host nation militaries or civilian agencies to implement them. HCA activities include MEDCAPS (Medical Civic Action Programs), VETCAPS (Veterinary Civil Action Programs), and engineering projects.

HA activities do not carry the same restrictions. The authorizing legislation simply states that these activities "shall be used for the purpose of providing transportation of humanitarian relief and for other humanitarian purposes worldwide."[54] Because HA projects do not have to contribute to operational readiness, CA teams can identify projects which meet basic humanitarian needs and then implement them using local contractors. The activities can be "stand alone" projects and do not need to be tied to operational deployments.[55] Notwithstanding the name, however, HA activities are not meant as purely humanitarian exercises. According to DoD Policy Guidance for Overseas Humanitarian Assistance:

> Important complimentary security goals that HA should aim to achieve include those of direct benefit to DoD, such as improving DoD visibility, access, and influence in a partner nation or region; generating long-term positive public relations and goodwill for DoD, and promoting interoperability and coalition-building with foreign military and civilian counterparts. Just as important are indirect benefits to USG security interests that arise from improving basic living conditions of the civilian populace in a country/region susceptible to terrorist/insurgent influence; enhancing the legitimacy of the host nation by improving its capacity to provide essential services to its populace, including responding to disasters and other crises; and building/reinforcing security and sustainable stability in a host nation or region.[56]

To that end, the US military's definition of humanitarian assistance differs significantly from that of humanitarian aid agencies.[57] Indeed, many humanitarian agencies are against collaborating with CJTF-HOA, out of a concern that it would fundamentally compromise their own humanitarian mission and potentially affect staff security.[58] A few development agencies have been more open to collaboration.[59]

Any project carried out by CJTF-HOA now requires approval by a number of different authorities. As late as 2005 and 2006, coordination between CJTF-HOA, the State Department, and USAID was haphazard at best. At that time, USAID and the State Department began to grow increasingly concerned about CA teams making promises to communities in Kenya and then failing to follow through.[60] Increasing coordination eventually culminated in the signing of a joint CJTF-HOA, State Department, and USAID Memorandum of Understanding in January 2007, covering CJTF-HOA's operations in Kenya. A 3D working group within the Embassy now vets all projects, which then go back to CJTF-HOA and then AFRICOM for final approval. This, in turn, often leads to significant bureaucratic delays in approving and implementing projects.[61]

Finally, it is important to note that US military involvement in humanitarian and development activities is not an entirely new undertaking in Kenya. In 1998, a Marine-led Joint Task Force Kenya provided support to the World Food Programme operations to deliver relief assistance to populations affected by El Nino-induced flooding along the Tana River in northeastern Kenya.[62] In early 2002, the US military, as part of a training exercise, undertook a project to renovate and expand the primary school of Faza on Pate Island, near Lamu.[63]

Since 2003, CJTF-HOA has deployed two CA teams in northern Kenya. One is based in Garissa, the headquarters of North Eastern province. The other is stationed within the Kenyan naval base in Manda Bay north of Lamu Island. The nature and impact of hearts and minds activities in these two locations have varied, reflecting, in part, the distinct features of the operating environments. The activities of the CA teams are described in more detail in part 6 of the report. The following section describes the physical, political, and security environment within which the CA teams are operating.

[48] Interview with AFRICOM officer, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[49] Interview with AFRICOM civilian official, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[50] Interview with USAID official, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[51] Humanitarian and Civic Assistance by 10 U.S.C. 401, and Humanitarian Assistance by 10 U.S.C. 2561.

[52] 10 U.S.C. 401.

[53] 10 U.S.C. 401.

[54] 10 U.S.C. 2561.

[55] PowerPoint presentation, AFRICOM Civil Affairs HA Team Training, July 2008.

[56] Department of Defense Policy Guidance for FY08 Overseas Humanitarian Assistance, (September 2007).

[57] The key difference is in terms of end goals. Contrast the military's definition of humanitarian assistance in the text above with the definition of humanitarian assistance provided by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: "Aid that seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis-affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality, as stated in General Assembly Resolution 46/182. In addition, the UN seeks to provide humanitarian assistance with full respect for the sovereignty of States. Assistance may be divided into three categories – direct assistance, indirect assistance, and infrastructure support – which have diminishing degrees of contact with the affected population."

[58] Interviews with Oxfam GB, 4 February 2009, Nairobi; ACF, 24 March 2009, Garissa.

[59] Brooks, "Securitization of U.S. Foreign Assistance," 8-9.

[60] Interview with USAID official, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[61] Under CENTCOM, CJTF-HOA used to have the authority to approve small, de minimus projects under $10,000. Under AFRICOM, CJTF-HOA no longer has this authority.

[62] See Special Operations.com, Operation Noble Response, Kenya. 21 January 1998 – 25 March 1998.

[63] Interviews, Faza, Pate Island, April 2009.

3. Kenya's North Eastern and Coast Provinces

Photo: M. Bradbury

Old town, Lamu.

A campaign to win the hearts and minds of populations in Kenya's North Eastern and Coastal provinces will inevitably be challenged by the scale and relative remoteness of the area and its varied ethnography. The attitudes of people in this area to the US, Kenya, Somalia, and Islam are influenced by their different histories and their relationship to the Kenyan state and to Somalia. This section briefly describes the geography, ethnography, and history of the borderlands, and religious and development trends.

3.1 Geography

The North Eastern "frontier" province is Kenya's third largest province, covering some 126,902 km^2 and bordering Ethiopia to the north, Somalia to the east, and touching the most northern part of the Kenyan coast where it meets Somalia. It is the least populated province, with 1,410,300 inhabitants and a density of only 11 people per square kilometer.[64] Lamu district in northern Coast province, where the largest number of CA

[64] http://www.citypopulation.de/Kenya.html.

projects has been implemented, is also lightly populated, but at 6,167 km² is a fraction of the size of North Eastern province. Lamu district also borders Somalia to the north, with Lamu town itself 80 kilometers from the border.

The ecology of this region reflects the marked climatic variations, with annual rainfall of 1500 mm and dense bush and forest on the coast, and as little as 200 mm of rainfall in the northern semi-arid savannah around Wajir. Erratic weather patterns produce droughts and serious river flooding, often leaving populations in need of relief assistance. Human habitation has left its mark on the ecology. Charcoal production, refugee camps, restrictions on nomadic movements, and increased commercial traffic all contribute to deforestation and rangeland degradation in the northeast, while coastal districts have been affected by resettlement schemes, agricultural development, and the unsustainable harvesting of mangroves.

The ecology has shaped the varied livelihood practices. Nomadic pastoralism is the predominant livelihood in the semi-arid North Eastern province, cattle herding in the richer grasslands on the southern border area, irrigated agriculture along the Tana River and its delta, some hunting and gathering in the Boni forests, and fishing along the coast. Historically, trade across the Indian Ocean has been central to the economy of coastal towns like Lamu, but since the 1970s tourism has grown in importance. In the northeast, increasing numbers of people are involved in trade and service industries due to urbanization, the large refugee population, increased cross-border trade, and a significant remittance economy.

The population of this large border region is predominantly rural. However, urban centers have been a long-established feature of the coast. The fourteenth century town of Lamu is the longest continually inhabited settlement in Kenya. To the north, the towns of Garissa, Wajir, and Mandera have experienced rapid growth in the past two decades due to political changes, the presence of refugees, increased commercial trade with Somalia, and overseas remittances. The biggest settlement in North Eastern province is Dadaab camp, which currently hosts over 255,000 Somali refugees—one of the largest concentrations of Somalis anywhere in the world.[65]

3.2 Ethnography

Identity politics based on ethnicity, social status, and citizenship is a critical factor shaping conflict and security in this border area, and an awareness of this is important for organizations supporting the development of the region. The fluidity of ethnic identity has been a characteristic of pastoral groups in the northeast, but the influence of clan conflicts from Somalia and multi-party politics in Kenya has led to an instrumentalization of group identity and incited resource competition. Aid programs that aim to build local infrastructure and state institutions can, wittingly or otherwise, become part of this political dynamic.

Most people in North Eastern province come from one of several Cushitic-speaking ethnic groups who share a similar Islamic culture, history, and, traditionally, a nomadic, pastoral way of life. Somalis are the largest ethnic group with the Darod "clan-family"[66] and its constituent clans and sub-clans dominating the border region between the Tana River in Kenya and the Jubba River in Somalia. The Oromo constitute the second-largest group. The lower Tana River area is inhabited by the Pokomo (Bantu) farmers and Orma and Wardey pastoralists.

Lamu district is ethnically and culturally more heterogeneous, including among its inhabitants Swahili traders and fishermen, Bajuni fishermen and farmers, Orma agro-pastoralists, a few Somali pastoralists, Boni and Sanye forest hunters and gatherers, and Pokomo and Giriama agriculturalists. On the mainland and the islands in the archipelago, there are diverse and scattered communities of mixed Bantu, Arab, Turkish, and Asian descent who are part of the coastal Swahili

[65] Weekly Situation Update, UNHCR Kenya Operation. Week Ending: Friday, 8 January 2010.

[66] The Somali nation is structured on a kinship system of patrilineal lineages which segment into subsidiary clans and sub-clans, to the level of the nuclear family. All Somalis are conventionally described as belonging to one of six "clan families" or clan confederations, which are genealogically related and trace descent from a common ancestor, the *Darod*, *Hawiye, Digil, Dir, Isaaq*, and *Rahanweyn*. The importance of kinship compared to other forms of social organization is contested in contemporary Somali society, but it continues to influence intergroup relations, and is an important institution for governance and for organizing and managing violence and commerce.

culture, which developed from a mixture of indigenous African and Arab cultures. Many of these small island communities are isolated and dwindling in size, with a drain of "brain and brawn" to urban centers such as Mombasa and Nairobi. In the 1970s, the government settled Kikuyus from Tanzania on agricultural schemes on the mainland, which has altered the ethnic makeup of the district.

A crucial feature of this border region is the ethnic and kinship bonds between peoples across the Kenyan, Somali, and Ethiopian borders. The Kenya-Somali border is not defined by any geographic or ethnic boundary, but was simply a "line in the sand" agreed in a 1924 treaty, by which Britain ceded territory to Italy to secure its alliance in the First World War. The consequent division created within the Somali "nation" has been an important dynamic influencing the region ever since. The collapse of the Somali state since 1991 has deeply affected cross-border relations, facilitating the movement of trade and people, but also compounding a complex mix of citizenship identity and territorial rights. For example, the distinction between indigenous Somali populations (*guri*) in Kenya and incoming Somalis (*galti*) – known as *reer* Somali – affects access to land and other resources. The *reer* Somali are also perceived as more aggressive and assertive in politics than Kenyan Somalis.[67]

3.3 Historical and Political Overview

Another important identity issue that influences local political perspectives is a sense of marginalization shared by people in the northeast and the coastal Swahilis, for being Muslims and "low-country" citizens in a state that is dominated by non-Muslim "up-country" Kenyans. These grievances are commonly traced to colonialism and rooted in the development of the post-independence Kenyan state.

3.3.1 The "Shifta War" and its Legacies

Historically, people in the northeast have had an ambiguous relationship with the Kenyan state and the *Shifta* War, from 1963 to 1968, has been particularly important in shaping this. The colonial partition of the Horn of Africa left Somalis in this Northern Frontier District (NFD), as it was known, in Kenya, although separately administered through clan authorities.[68] Prior to Kenya's independence in 1963, Britain ignored a commission of enquiry that found Muslims in the NFD favored unity with the newly independent Somali Republic. Consequently, newly independent Kenya found itself confronted by a secessionist insurgency.

The government, which was struggling to establish its authority and defend the country's territorial integrity against calls for regionalism, dismissed the irredentist aspirations of the Somalis and the insurgency as a criminal problem of banditry (*shifta*), giving rise to the name "*Shifta* War."[69] Draconian emergency laws were introduced and North Eastern province was designated as a "scheduled area" closed to public access. The Kenyan army's counterinsurgency strategy involved an assault on the pastoral way of life. The pacification of the area involved the forced movement of pastoralists into "protected" villages and the confiscation of their livestock. In the 1960s and 1970s, the resettlement of "unproductive" populations was an established development paradigm and the strategy reflected a bias in the new state against pastoralism as un-Kenyan and un-productive.[70]

Armed violence has been a part of the state-building process in Kenya.[71] The management of conflict in this "peripheral" region through the villagization of populations is an early example in Kenya of the merging of security and development that continues today with the involvement of foreign forces. The "developmental

[67] K. Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis" (prepared for Development Alternatives Inc., USAID, 31 August 2005), 7.

[68] Hannah Whittaker, "Pursuing Pastoralists: the Stigma of *Shifta* during the '*Shifta* War' in Kenya, 1963-68," Eras Edition 10 (November, 2008):4, http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/publications/eras/.

[69] The term *shifta* (bandit or rebel) has its origins in the Amharic verb *shaffata* (to rebel) and is commonly used in East Africa and the Horn to describe an armed group at odds with the law of the state. It was used by early District Commissioners in northern Kenya to describe groups who raided villages and police posts. The tem has acquired nationalist overtones, which associates banditry with anti-state activity. Ibid., 6-7.

[70] Ibid.

[71] J. Lind and J. Howell, "Aid, Civil Society and the State in Kenya since 9/11" (NGPA Working Papers 21, 5 June 2008), 5, www.lse.ac.uk/ngpa.

war" against the *shifta* had long-term social and economic consequences, as destitute nomads became an urban underclass and educated Somali Kenyans fled the country.

The war was formally ended by a peace agreement between Kenya and Somalia in January 1968, but North Eastern province remained a "restricted area" and emergency laws were maintained until 1992. Political relations between the people of North Eastern province and the government did gradually change following a failed coup against President Moi in 1982. After the appointment of Lieutenant-General Mahmoud Mohamed – a Somali from Garissa – as the Army Chief of Staff, Kenyan Somalis began to make inroads into Kenyan politics. Since the advent of multi-party politics in 1992, Kenyan Somalis have held several government posts. However, the alleged threat of *shifta* has been used to legitimize the continuous presence of Kenyan military and non-native soldiers in the province, where it has been responsible for several violent events, including massacres in Garissa in 1980 and Wajir in 1984.[72] The perceived threat of *shifta* was also used to justify the nation-wide screening of Somalis in 1989 and 1990.[73] As recently as October 2008, a Kenyan police and military operation to disarm warring militias in Mandera district resulted in over a thousand casualties and a dozen rapes.[74] The legacies of the *Shifta* War are still apparent in the disruption to the pastoral economy and the economic neglect of the region. The fact that the only paved road to the northeast ends at Garissa is frequently cited by people locally as evidence of the neglect of the province. To many non-Somali Kenyans, Somalis are synonymous with *shifta*, and the use of the term has served to "criminalize" a whole community in ways that are similar to current counterterrorism and anti-radicalization strategies that single out communities as "crucial populations."[75] As discussed below, the *Shifta* War contributes to a narrative of injustices that underlie Kenyan Muslims' sense of marginalization within the country.

3.3.2 Marginalization among Kenya's Coastal Muslims

There is no history of secessionism among the coastal Swahili Muslims. But, like Somalis in the northeast, they have a shared sense of marginalization and grievances against the state, which they trace to European colonialism and earlier and to Kenya's post-colonial dispensation.[76] In Lamu district, a particular focus for these grievances has been the pressure on land from settlement schemes, military bases, and tourism.[77] Historically, Lamu town owed some of its wealth to the export of grain produced on the mainland. Under the British colonial authorities, the coastal area was administered as a protectorate with coastal lands protected as Crown Land. In the early 1970s, the government expropriated land to settle Kikuyus in agricultural schemes, the largest being Mpeketoni. The settlers were given title deeds by the government, whose Minister of Finance and Economic Planning at the time was Kenya's current President Mwai Kibaki. The resettlement schemes altered the ethnic composition of the area, with some claims that Kikuyu now make up 50% of the population of the district. Some Swahilis believe this was a deliberate attempt to destroy their economic power, which adds to the narrative of marginalization in Kenya.[78] The words of a religious leader reflect a common sentiment on Lamu:

[72] In one particularly violent incident at Wagalla airstrip in Wajir in 1984, up to 300 men of the Degodia clan were killed by the Kenyan army. The incident is regularly invoked as an example of the repressive nature of the Kenyan state.

[73] Whittaker, "Pursuing Pastoralists."

[74] Human Rights Watch, "'Bring the Gun or You'll Die' Torture, Rape, and Other Serious Human Rights Violations by Kenyan Security Forces in the Mandera Triangle," (June 2009).

[75] Jan Bachmann and Jana Hönke, "Peace and Security as counterterrorism? The political effects of liberal intervention in Kenya," *African Affairs* 109 (2010): 97-114.

[76] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 54; Ndzovu Mwakimako and Justin Willis, "Trends in Kenyan Islam" (a report prepared for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, October, 2009).

[77] Interviews with Paul Goldsmith and Justin Willis, Nairobi, January 2009.

[78] Interview with religious leader, Lamu, March 2009.

> In colonial times we had access to our land and could minimize our poverty, but Kenyatta gave the land to his people.[79]

In the 1980s, people were also moved off Manda Island to make way for a planned military base. Current government-backed plans to develop another 400,000 hectares for agriculture in the Tana delta will further affect the area and the Orma in particular.[80]

Coastal Swahilis are not unique in their experience of oppression and discrimination; other coastal peoples, such as the Pokomo and Giriama, have historically faced discrimination, including from the elite Swahilis. For coastal Swahilis, however, the grievances over land tenure contribute to a deeper sense of loss of political status and wealth felt by them in post-independence Kenya. In 1990, government action to clamp down on the Islamic Party of Kenya led to unrest in Lamu, during which the market was burned down. Nevertheless, while Lamu town is an important religious center and neighboring Shela is a center of Wahhabism, there is no tradition of militant radicalism.

The Arab Swahilis of the northern coast have not made the same kinds of gains in national politics as Kenyan Somalis. The latter represent a more unified, predominantly Muslim, voting bloc, than coastal peoples, who are more divided and include mixed faith communities. Furthermore, the familial, cultural, and economic links between the Arab-Swahili-speaking Muslims of the coast and the Persian Gulf is a distinguishing feature of this area and the sense of marginalization has fostered instead an attitude among some that looks to the Gulf and Middle East for ideas and religious leadership. The comments of one religious scholar on Lamu reflect the sense of grievance with the state:

> The Government of Kenya treat us as foreigners, though we have been here 1,000 years. The Government has to see the source of the problem. We just want equality. Muslims make up less than 1% of students at university.[81]

Like in North Eastern province, Kenyan security forces have also had a long-term presence in this border district. Manda Bay naval base was built in 1992 in response to the collapse of the Somali government and at the time when US Marines were leading the UN peacekeeping mission there. Since the mid-1990s, the US military has had an active presence in Lamu, conducting joint training operations with the Kenyan military. The US Navy Seals have used Manda Bay as a staging post for counterterrorism operations and for training the Kenyan Navy.[82] It has become a forward operating base permanently housing some eighty US military personnel, a CA team, and Seabees and is still used as a staging post for special operations units in Somalia.[83]

As in North Eastern province, services and infrastructure are under-developed, even on Lamu Island, which is a popular tourist destination. The lack of a paved road north of Witu town is a regular complaint. Plans to establish a new commercial port in the Lamu archipelago is also generating concern, particularly among people on Lamu, because of the potential environmental, cultural, social, economic and political impact. Some believe that the port development is inevitable and part of a long-term development plan for the district, which has involved the settlement of Kikuyu in the area.

[79] Interview with head of a community development organization, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

[80] The *East African Standard* (Nairobi), Monday 20 November 2006 reported thousands of Tana River residents held a demonstration at Garsen to protest against Tana and Athi River Development Authority and Mumias Sugar Company's plans to establish a sugar factory in the area.

[81] Interview with religious leader, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[82] This is one of three "downrange" bases or Contingency Operating Location (COL) for CJTF-HOA, the other two being in Ethiopia. The US military has launched missile strikes and air raids in Somalia from these bases.

[83] Barnett, "The Americans Have Landed."

4. Drivers of Insecurity in the Northeastern Borderlands

Photo: M. Bradbury

Quay, Lamu.

The deployment of CA teams to North Eastern province and Lamu district is based on an assessment that this Muslim-populated borderland area is a zone of insecurity that threatens US interests and the stability of its allies in East Africa. The threat is perceived to emanate from several sources. The first source is perceived to be Al Qaeda's presence in East Africa and the apparent priority given to the region in its global strategy, evidenced by the terrorist attacks in Kenya in 1998 and 2002.[84] The second source is the existence of a permissive, "ungoverned" environment where weak state authority has allowed individuals involved in the terrorist attacks in Kenya to live and organize undetected in Kenya's coastal communities.[85] The third source is the high level of social and economic deprivation and grievances among Kenya's Muslim population, which is thought to make them – particularly the youth – vulnerable to recruitment by extremist organizations. And fourth is the proximity to Somalia and its potential destabilizing effect on Kenya, due to cross-border ethnic, religious, cultural, and economic bonds, and the spillover of religious, political, and criminal violence.

The drivers of insecurity differ between North Eastern province and Lamu district, as do international and local perceptions of what constitute a security threat. Kenya's North Eastern province has been persistently affected by insecurity and periods of acute communal violence since independence. The factors contributing to this are variously identified as latent irredentism, marginalization, endemic poverty, changing livelihoods, environmental degradation, resource competition, proximity to

[84] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures."

[85] Ibid. The Harmony Project documents describe Al Qaeda cells operating remarkably freely in Kenya, with seemingly few concerns about being monitored or detained by Kenyan police or security forces.

Somalia, the proliferation of small arms, and Islamic radicalization.[86] Conflict assessments also commonly recognize the regional drivers of insecurity by including North Eastern province in the so-called "Greater Mandera Triangle," an area variously described as a "zone of conflict" or "arc of crisis"[87] and part of a "conflict system" that encompasses the pastoralist regions in Kenya's northern provinces, southern Somalia, southern Ethiopia, southern Sudan, and eastern Uganda (see Map 2).

Regional factors are seen to be less significant drivers of insecurity in Lamu and irredentism has not been an issue, although anger among coastal Muslim communities in the wake of the 2007 elections saw discussion of a Zanzibar-type secessionism aired. The area was affected by the *Shifta* War,[88] and Somali *shifta* were being blamed for highway banditry up to the late 1990s. Banditry was eventually curtailed by increased policing and the arming of community-based police reservists. From an international and Kenyan state perspective, the primary security concerns relate to the haven found in the area by Al Qaeda operatives, the proximity to Somalia, the weak remit of government, and the marginalization and poverty of coastal Muslims. From a local perspective, tensions exist between the Swahili people of Lamu and the state over land rights and plans to site the new port in the archipelago. Drug abuse and criminal activity associated with it are commonly cited as a security threat, and residents of Lamu express fear at the consequences of in-migration:

> Security in Lamu is worse because so many up-country tribes have come to Lamu. Before we were living by ourselves. I don't feel secure walking to the hospital.[89]

While some describe these tensions as explosive, they seem unlikely to generate serious internal insecurity. Like the northeast, the area was unaffected by post-election violence in 2008.

4.1 Terrorism

Since terrorists attacked the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998, Kenya, Somalia, and the Horn of Africa, and East Africa more generally, have been a focus for international efforts to combat terrorism. The priority given to the region by Al Qaeda was subsequently underlined by the incidents in Kikambala and Mombasa in 2002. A resurgence of the war in Somalia since Ethiopia intervened militarily in 2006 to overthrow the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) has drawn Kenya deeper into the prosecution of the "Global War on Terror (GWoT)."

For reasons already noted, in the past decade Al Qaeda has found Kenya to be a conducive environment for its operations in East Africa.[90] The Lamu archipelago has been of particular concern for the US and Kenyan authorities due to the fact that Al Qaeda operatives involved in the 1998 and 2002 terrorist attacks resided in the area for some time. In 2002, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed ("the Comoran"), thought to be Al Qaeda's leader in East Africa, lived under a pseudonym in the village of Siyu on Pate island, where he married, established a *madrassa*, and ran a football team called "Al Qaeda." Mohamed Saddiq Odeh, a Palestinian from Jordan, convicted for his involvement in the Nairobi embassy bombing, married into a family in Witu in Lamu district and posed as a fish trader. Another member of Al Qaeda's East Africa cell, Salih Ali Salih Nabhan, who was killed by US Special Forces in Somalia in September 2009, used to visit Lamu Girls Secondary School where his wife was a matron.[91]

[86] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis;" Human Rights Watch, "'Bring the Gun;'" Hussein A. Mahmoud, "Conflicts and Pastoral Livelihoods in the Kenya-Ethiopia-Somalia Borderlands," in Fighting for Inclusion: Conflicts among Pastoralists in Eastern Africa and the Horn, ed. Paul Goldsmith (Nairobi, Development Policy Management Forum, 2007), 54-78.

[87] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[88] Nine Bajuni villages were displaced by Somali incursions in 1964.

[89] Interview with the head of a local NGO and a primary school governor, Lamu, March 2009.

[90] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures."

[91] Nabhan grew up in Mombasa. Another Al Qaeda operative from Kenya, Sheikh Ahmad Salem "Sweden," was also from Mombasa.

Analysts suggest that the existence of a disaffected Muslim population along the Kenyan coast provided an environment which Al Qaeda has been able to exploit with fewer security pressures than elsewhere in the region.[92] This thinly populated and forested border area and the myriad islands in the archipelago make it ideal for overland and coastal smuggling. Odeh made frequent visits from Witu to Ras Kamboni in Somalia to buy fish and smuggle weapons into Kenya.[93] The cross-border smuggling of weaponry is not new; it was a problem in the 1960s and is one reason for the long-term military presence in the area. Today the Kenyan army and navy, backed by the US navy, patrol the area for weapons and terrorist suspects. The popular tourist beach at Shela also has CCTV cameras pointing seawards. The stop and search methods of the military on land and at sea have caused some local complaints. CJTF-HOA assistance projects in this district are, arguably, not just a response to the fact that Al Qaeda had found a safe haven there, but are also meant to win the acquiescence of the population to continuing patrols. The arrest of individuals who were allegedly members of Somalia's Islamist movement, Harakat Al Shabaab ("youth movement"), and a weapons cache found on a beach south of Lamu in December 2009, are likely to be seen as a vindication of this.[94]

4.2 The Influence of Somalia

The Somali civil war and the collapse of the Somali state in 1991 has been one of the main drivers of insecurity in Kenya's northern borderlands over the past two decades. The impact has been greater in North Eastern province, due to its ethnic composition, than in Lamu district. State collapse in Somalia produced a protracted refugee crisis in North Eastern province and on several occasions fighting between Somali factions spilled into Kenya. The collapse of the Somali and Ethiopian governments and the dissolution of both armies in the same year left the region awash with weapons, so that, in the early 1990s, militia and criminal gangs were often better armed than the police.[95] The influx of *reer Somali* into Kenya has created tensions between the incomers and the indigenes and has politicized clanism among Kenyan Somalis. Since the late 1990s, militant Islamists have gradually established a presence on the Somali side of the border and are increasingly seen to pose a threat to Kenyan sovereignty. Proximity to Somalia means that Lamu district has also not gone unscathed by the Somali civil war. The border town of Kiunga was briefly overrun by forces of the Somali warlord General Mohamed Hersi "Morgan" in the 1990s. As noted, the district has also been a conduit for cross-border smuggling and some instances of robbery on the mainland are also blamed on the availability of light weapons from Somalia.[96]

Since 2001, security in the Kenya-Somali borderlands has deteriorated dramatically, as Somalia has emerged as a theater in the GWoT. The overthrow of the ICU by Ethiopia in 2006, the pursuit of its leadership to the Kenyan border, US C-130 airstrikes against terrorists thought to be harboring with the ICU, the rendition of people fleeing Somalia,[97] and the Ethiopian army's occupation of Mogadishu have caused a major crisis in the northeastern borderlands. The intensification of the war has led to an increase in the flow of Somali refugees into Kenya and a two-way flow of weapons.

In 2007 and 2008, there were reports of Kenyan Somalis joining the insurgency against Ethiopia in Somalia. In 2009, the rhetoric escalated between the Kenyan government and the Somali Islamist movement Al Shabaab. Following several border incidents, including the kidnappings of nuns and Kenyan aid workers by gunmen from Somalia, the Kenyan media and government called for a more robust response from the African Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM),[98] and raised the specter of Kenyan military

[92] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 47.

[93] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 6; Interview with the head of a community development organization, Lamu, March 2009.

[94] Anthony Kitimo, "Armed Al Shabaab Suspects Arrested in Lamu," 7 December 2009, <http://www.nation.co.ke/>.

[95] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[96] Interview with government official, Witu Division, April 2009.

[97] Human Rights Watch, "'Why Am I Still Here?'" The 2007 Horn of Africa Renditions and the Fate of Those Still Missing," (2008).

[98] Oxford Analytica, "Kenya: Leaders marginalise key threats to security" (12 August 2009).

intervention there. In a further sign of deteriorating security, the northeast appears to have become a recruiting ground for Somalia's Islamists and the Kenyan army. Reportedly, Al Shabaab has been recruiting school children and unemployed youth in Kenya,[99] while Somali refugees and Kenyan Somalis are being recruited by Kenya security forces and trained to fight in support of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia.[100] This is stoking a long-held fear in Kenya and internationally that the war in Somalia will spread to Kenya.

After two decades, the impact of state collapse in Somalia goes deeper than the immediate cross-border relations. With over one million Somalis residing outside the country, the Somali "nation" has become transnational. Ironically, it has been the collapse of the Somali state rather than secession from the Kenyan state that has helped to integrate the Somali "nation." This has taken place in different ways. In Dadaab camp, for example, North East province has the largest concentration of Somalis anywhere outside of Somalia. State collapse in Somalia has helped to integrate the economy of southern Somalia and northeastern Kenya, by stimulating an expanded cross-border trade in livestock, food commodities, electronics, and weapons. It has transformed parts of the border by expanding old settlements and generating new ones and, at times, has generated violent competition over trade and urban real estate. In some places, a convergence of economic interests has contributed to stabilization. This has been the case for the area south of El Wak, one of the most violent areas in the province in the early 1990s. Since 2000, the economic interests of the Absame clan, who dominate the border area and who have a stake in Somalia's Lower Jubba region and in Garissa in Kenya, have helped to stabilize the area.[101]

The transnational integration of the Somali nation also encompasses the expanding suburb of Eastleigh in Nairobi, where many Somali refugees have settled and Somali businesses have boomed. The integration is not solely economic. An indication of the level of political integration that has occurred was apparent in the considerable support that Somalia's president Sheikh Sharif received from the Somali community in Nairobi on taking office in early 2009. There is also an important dynamic in the religious discourse between Kenya and Somalia, with Kenyan-Somali religious leaders in Eastleigh finding a following in Somalia and with Somali religious scholars moving between Kenya and Somalia. With Eastleigh's growing economic and political importance, Nairobi is being drawn into the "arc of crisis."

The integration of the Somali nation also incorporates Ethiopia, where the government's counterinsurgency campaign against the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) has resulted in Ethiopian Somalis seeking refuge in Kenya.[102] The reported presence of ONLF in Garissa has led some people to describe it as the new capital of the Ogaden.[103]

4.3 Governance and Security

The counterterrorism analysis that fragile states and ungoverned spaces are a threat to international security leads to the conclusion that the weakness of government in an area like northern Kenya is a driver of insecurity. This can be challenged in two ways. First, it overlooks the sophisticated indigenous systems of governance that exist there. Second, it ignores the state itself as a driver of insecurity. As noted above, state-building in Kenya has been a violent process. While global and regional factors impact on the

[99] Ibid.

[100] Katharine Houreld, "Kenyans recruited to fight in Somalia," Associated Press, 16 October 2009. Following their defeat by Al Shabaab in Kismayo in October, the Somali Islamist group Hizbul Islamiya is reported to be seeking support in Kenya. They may seek to mobilize support among the Darod in the North Eastern province, who have interests in Somalia's lower Jubba region.

[101] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[102] The ONLF, established in 1984, is fighting a separatist insurgency in the Somali Ogaden region of eastern Ethiopia. In April 2007, the ONLF escalated its campaign by attacking a Chinese-run oil field in Abole, Somali Region, killing Ethiopian and Chinese nationals. The Ethiopian government responded with a harsh military crackdown on the Somali region, causing widespread displacement, which was condemned by human rights groups.

[103] Interview with the head of a local aid organization, Garissa, March, 2009.

security of populations in Kenya's borderlands, the most important driver of insecurity is political.[104]

Violent competition over pasture and water has been a frequent occurrence in North Eastern province, where issues of resource scarcity are exacerbated by unclear land tenure, inward migration, the presence of a large refugee population, and increased settlement and urbanization. The demarcation of administrative districts that have proliferated since the introduction of multi-party politics in the 1990s is contested and has produced zones of ethnic exclusion. In 1998, for example, conflict between the Somali Aulihan and Abdwaq erupted over land and access to the Tana River in Garissa district, triggered by the influx of Aulihan from Somalia, which threatened to upset the political balance in the 2002 elections.[105] Rapid urbanization also means that it is frequently urban interests and urban populations that are the main protagonists in armed clashes in the area, while pastoralists may serve as a principal source of militia.

The lifting of emergency rule in North Eastern province in 1992 was a necessary part of the introduction of multi-party politics into Kenya. But it also coincided with the introduction of structural adjustment programs, a retrenchment of state services, and state collapse in Somalia.[106] After years of repressive rule, North Eastern province lacked strong community organizations or authoritative clan leadership to immediately fill the vacuum of government, which in the early 1990s effectively lost control over large parts of its territory.

Multi-party politics has exacerbated ethno-politics, generating competition over the demarcation of electoral districts.[107] Competition for land and control of local administrations triggered communal violence in Wajir in 1992-1993 and again in 2000 between the Degodia, Ajuraan, and Ogaden clans.[108] Similarly, politically-motivated violence was a major problem in Garissa district in the 1990s and in Mandera in 2004. Agencies delivering development in northern Kenya are therefore confronted by a paradox. Extending the remit of the state into these "ungoverned" areas has become both a development and security objective because the absence of state authority is perceived to be a factor in the high level of insecurity. The creation of new districts that attract state resources and services is portrayed by government as a progressive "opening up" of the area to development and a way of "bringing services closer to the people."[109] For political parties and prospective Members of Parliament (MPs), expanding the number of locations and extending government services can be an effective way to gain support from their constituencies. However, this can have far-reaching political and social consequences, in places fueling "ethnic cleansing" as clans seek to establish exclusionary rights over land and state resources. It also enables the state to expand its extractive capacity. More government in the border zones, therefore, will not of itself improve security.

Similarly, in Lamu district, the intrusion of government in appropriating land and resettling up-country populations is perceived locally as a greater security threat than the weakness of government that enabled Al Qaeda operatives to establish a base there.

4.4 Islam and Radicalization

Since the US embassy bombings in East Africa and the advent of the GWoT, international concern has been growing at what has been described as "increasing levels of radicalization" among Kenya's Muslim population.[110] The rise of violent Islamist movements, like Al Shabaab, in

[104] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[105] Ibid, 25.

[106] Interview with Kenyan aid worker, Wajir, March 2009.

[107] Mahmoud, "Conflicts and Pastoral Livelihoods."

[108] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[109] Interviews with government official in Habaswein, Wajir, and with a Member of Parliament, Nairobi, March 2009.

[110] Rabasa, "Radical Islam in East Africa."

neighboring Somalia is increasing the imperative to prevent the spread of violent extremism and radicalization among Muslim communities in Eastern Africa and the Horn and limit the influence of Al Qaeda. CJTF-HOA's deployment of CA teams in Muslim communities in North Eastern province and coastal Kenya form part of the US government's preventative strategy.

The influence that religious discourse has on people's attitudes towards CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds campaign should not be underestimated. Muslim scholars are important opinion formers and leaders in contemporary Kenya and Somalia and their articulation of Muslims' needs and their religious-political activism also cannot be ignored. As interviewees in Garissa and Lamu explained:

> Religious leaders are the most important opinion leaders – they influence how people think.[111]

> The Imams are the biggest opinion leaders.[112]

Despite concerns over radicalization, analysts point to two seemingly contradictory trends within Kenya's Muslim community.[115] On the one hand, there is a strong historic sense of grievance and marginalization derived from experiences, such as the *Shifta* War, the expropriation of coastal lands, and Muslim costal communities' experience of a reversal of status in an independent Kenya dominated by highland Christian tribal elites. Kenyan Muslims complain of discrimination in many spheres, such as education, obtaining identification papers, and exclusion from government employment. These local experiences are then given new meaning by global events in which some Kenyan Muslims perceive themselves to be part of a transnational religious community that is under attack from the US and its allies. Although physically remote, developments in telecommunications and the media mean that neither Lamu nor northeast Kenya are isolated from global events. Through radio, television, and the internet, Muslims in the northeast are exposed to events in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, and

Box 3: Kenyan Muslims

Estimates of the Muslim population in Kenya vary greatly, from as low as 6% to over 20% of the overall population.[113] Muslims do not form a uniform community, being divided geographically, ethnically, and along doctrinal lines. The people of North Eastern province constitute the largest concentration of Muslims, while the largest numbers of Muslims in Kenya are estimated to live on the coast, where they reside alongside other faith communities. Kenyan Muslims are also divided along doctrinal lines between Sunni and Shia' and between traditionalists (Sufi) and reformists (Wahhabi or Salafi). Historically, the Qadiriya is the most widely followed Sufi order among Somalis and the Ibadiya among Arabs. Sunni Muslims are found among Kenya's Asian community. There are also established Shia' communities, which are also divided into Ismailis, Ithna'ashriya, and Dawoodi Bohra.[114] Divisions between Sunni and Shia' have been exacerbated since the 1970s by Iran and Saudi Arabia competing for influence and funding mosques, schools, and welfare programs.

[111] Focus Group discussion with women's group, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[112] Interview with head of a local NGO and a school governor, Lamu, Kenya, April 2009.

[113] Such population statistics are politically contested. Rabasa, "Radical Islam in East Africa," 35, quotes a figure of 6%; Møller notes that estimates vary between 10 and 20%. Bjørn Møller, "Political Islam in Kenya" (Working Paper 2006/22, Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, 2006), 10 and 47ff.

[114] Møller, ibid., 11.

[115] Mwakimako and Willis, "Trends in Kenyan Islam," 14-15.

Somalia and to radical narratives which shape their perceptions of the US. Their sense of suffering as Muslims has come to be part of their idea of themselves as a community. As Mwakimako and Willis note, "to be Muslim is to be marginalized in Kenya."[116] The "victimization narrative"[117] that creates a sense of subordination and subjugation, both in Kenya and globally, is, some would argue, a driver of radicalization among Kenyan Muslims, and it informs peoples' attitudes to the Marines sent to build their schools.

At the same time, Kenyan Muslims still see themselves as Kenyan citizens and active participants in the state. As one Muslim leader in Lamu explained, "I am persevering to be a Kenyan."[118] Their position is also changing, not least because of the influence of their vote during elections. Furthermore, their status as a marginalized and suspect community is also helping them attract aid, given the eagerness of Western governments to fund counter-radicalization activities.

These trends are apparent in Lamu district and North Eastern province. Lamu is a historic center of Islamic scholarship in East Africa and Garissa is counted now as the second most important religious center for Kenyan Somalis after Eastleigh in Nairobi. Both have experienced the growing influence of Wahhabism. Shela on Lamu is an established center of Wahhabism and, since the 1970s, Saudi Arabia has been providing scholarships to students in Garissa for religious education in Saudi Arabia as part of a broader strategy to encourage reformism and the rejection of Sufi practices in Kenya and in the region.[119] Until a few years ago, as many as two hundred students from *madrassas* in Garissa, with no secondary education, were annually given scholarships to universities in Saudi Arabia; more than the number who went to Kenyan universities from the whole of North Eastern province.[120] Some of these students returned to teach and preach in Garissa's mosques, which is now said to be an important center of Wahhabism for Somalis.[121]

Consequently, in Garisssa, there is a mixture of Islamic perspectives, with Wahhabi charities like Al-Muntada Al-Islami Trust and Al-Ibrahim Foundation, who have supported relief and development and Islamic outreach activities, alongside traditionalist Sufi religious orders and proselytizing groups like Jama'at al-Tabligh. Doctrinal differences between Sufi and Salafist tendencies are evident in the existence of different *madrassas* and mosques. Wahhabism, however, is the dominant school, with the influence of Sufism fading, a remnant among the older generation.[122] In Lamu, the doctrinal rivalries are particularly evident between Sunni and Shia'. Although Eastleigh is the main center of Islamic discourse that directly influences the thinking of Muslims in the northeast, there is clearly a dynamic relationship between religious trends in northeast Kenya and Somalia. This is not new. Historically, Kenyan Somalis used to travel to religious centers like Bardhere in Somalia for religious education instead of Saudi Arabia. One of the changes occurring in Garissa is that graduates returning from Saudi Arabia are offering alternative teachings to the local sheikhs who had been trained in Somalia. Similarly, in Lamu, there has been a historic flow of religious discourse along the coast. What is new is the potential for religiously motivated violence in Somalia impacting on Kenya. As a Kenyan aid worker in Garissa noted:

> There is more interaction between Kenya and Somalia now, with an increased flow of goods, people, ideas, etc. People in the northeast are watching Sheikh Shariff's approach to the Somali problem. The Islamic agenda and its evolution in Somalia may shape the Somali politics in Kenya and beyond.[123]

[116] Ibid., 2.

[117] Denoeux and Carter, "Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism," v.

[118] Interview with religious leader, Lamu, March 2009.

[119] Mwakimako and Willis, "Trends in Kenyan Islam," 8.

[120] Ibid., 11.

[121] Personal email communication Lynn Carter, January 2010.

[122] It is reported that there is only one Sufi mosque in Garissa, compared to one hundred Wahhabi mosques. Interviews in Garissa, March 2009.

[123] Interviewed in Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

4.5 Poverty and Security

The analysis that social and economic deprivation among Muslim populations in northern Kenya is causally linked to insecurity and violent extremism provides an underlying rationale for the assistance provided by CJTF-HOA. By most measurements, North Eastern province is amongst the poorest of Kenya's regions. It has the lowest human development score in Kenya,[124] the second highest rate of under-five mortality, with only one in three children attending primary school, and only 7% of women having received any education. With only one doctor for every 120,000 people, compared to one for 20,000 in Central province, there is a marked disparity between North Eastern province and the rest of Kenya. Coast province fairs better than North Eastern province on most human development indicators. For example, in 2005, the primary school enrollment rate in Lamu district was 99.4 compared to 27.6 in North Eastern province. However, the Coast scores only marginally better on the human poverty index.[125] HIV/AIDs prevalence is higher than in the northeast, although primarily due to the distorting effect of Mombasa.

The vulnerability of Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands is underscored by the fact that 80% of the population of these areas lives below the poverty line, compared to 56% nationally.[126] During the period of field research in early 2009, both North Eastern and Coast provinces were suffering the effects of prolonged drought, but by October heavy *deyr* rains were causing flooding. The vicissitudes of climate, in addition to the presence of refugees, means that emergency relief is a recurrent need.

Water and education are commonly identified as priorities by communities and government alike throughout the semi-arid northeast. According to UNDP, 38.6% of people in North Eastern province had no access to safe drinking water in 2005.[127] Somewhat surprisingly, the figure is higher (43.7%) on the coast because many of the inhabited islands in the Lamu archipelago rely on rainwater catchment, while water resources on the mainland are underdeveloped. In North Eastern province, plans for water development are controlled by central government because it is so sensitive and regularly precipitates conflict.

North Eastern province has the worst educational statistics in Kenya. The introduction of free primary education throughout Kenya in 2003 has improved primary school enrollment, but secondary education also needs support. The District Education Office in Garissa was only able to place 45% of junior school leavers in secondary school in 2008.[128] Educational development does not spark conflict like water, but, as with all services, it is politicized. A considerable proportion of the District Development Funds (DDF) available to MPs is dedicated to education projects, and education is often one of the first investments made by government in new districts and locations. Muslim communities in the northeast and on the coast point to the lack of educational infrastructure as proof that they are educationally disadvantaged in a Christian-dominated country.[129] As Muslim communities grapple with how to combine secular and religious education, the role of faith-based schools, *madrassas*, and "integrated" schools is an increasingly important focus of debate.

There is a similar disparity in health services between North Eastern province and the rest of Kenya, and Lamu district is also poorly served by health facilities. Although Lamu has a large hospital built by Saudi Arabia, it has only two doctors and limited amenities. Poor transportation links mean that referrals from Lamu to other hospitals are particularly problematic.

After a long period of political and physical isolation, North Eastern province has experienced a growth in international development programs in the past two decades. The reasons for this include the lifting of emergency laws, the Somali refugee crisis (and the resulting growth of the

[124] UNDP, "Kenya National Human Development Report," (2006), 18. Others indices score Nyanza province as the poorest.

[125] UNDP, "Kenya National Human Development Report," 70-74.

[126] Ibid., 35.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Interview with District Education Office, Garissa, March 2009.

[129] Mwakimako and Willis, "Trends in Kenyan Islam," 9.

Dadaab refugee camp), the retrenchment of government, and the overall proliferation of international and Kenyan NGOs. For reasons discussed, it has also been experiencing economic development, notably around Garissa. All three of the main towns in the province – Garissa, Wajir, and Mandera – as well as Dadaab host offices of UN agencies and international NGOs.

The Kenyan government and donors have responded to the developmental needs with a number of multilaterally funded province-wide governmental programs. The largest of these is the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP), a community-based drought management project of the Kenya government, funded by the World Bank, that focuses nationally on arid and semi-arid districts. The regional dimensions of underdevelopment and livelihood vulnerability are recognized in programs such as the Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas (RELPA) program, funded by USAID. This is designed to increase the economic resilience of the populations in the pastoral areas in the Greater Mandera Triangle and to provide a bridge between emergency relief assistance and activities that promote economic development in pastoral areas. Other large bilateral aid programs include APHIA II (AIDS, Population and Health Integrated Assistance) and EMACK (Education for Marginalized Children in Kenya), funded by USAID. It is an indication of both the gains that Kenyan Somalis have made in national politics and the importance now given to development of the north that a new Ministry of Development of Northern Kenya and other Arid Lands was created by the coalition government in 2008, following the post-election violence; the Ministry is headed by a Somali from North Eastern province.

Lamu district has many of the same development needs as North Eastern province, with additional needs in agriculture. The settlement schemes have not proven to be entirely successful. A significant school dropout rate is an indicator of continuing low income per capita in households.[130] In early 2009, at the time of the field research, the harvests had failed due to lack of rain, and the mainland and the islands were facing acute water shortages. The fishing industry along this part of the coast is still feeling the impact of the December 26, 2004 Tsunami which affected the reefs and depleted fishing stocks.

A striking difference between Lamu district and North Eastern province is the much smaller number of foreign aid organizations and development programs along the coast. The Kenyan Red Crescent is the largest relief organization. As few as three foreign NGOs provide assistance through local institutions, in addition to WFP and UNICEF. The largest aid program is APHIA II, which, in addition to primary health care, supports a range of organizations, including the local branch of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK). The reasons for this lighter footprint are unclear, but may have to do with fewer and less regular humanitarian crises. Locally, however, people believe it is because they are poorly represented in government. According to one interviewee:

> The North Eastern province reaps more assistance than Lamu because there are more MPs in high positions in the government. Our MPs are too weak to represent our needs.[131]

Others blame leaders who get into government but neglect their communities. In the words of another community member:

> The problem lies with our leaders. The elite get jobs in government, but they don't come back and assist with our problems.[132]

The developmental needs in Lamu and North Eastern province are huge. Defining what these are, however, is complicated by the fact that state and local perspectives on development are often at variance and, in the past, development has been linked with state security needs, such as the settlement programs in the northeast in the 1960s. The linkages between development and security are, therefore, not new. But the convergence of development and security takes on a new, explicit form with the involvement of the US military in the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance.

[130] Interview with the Headmaster and Board of Governors of Hindi Primary School, Lamu District, April 2009.

[131] Interview with former government official and businessman, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

[132] Focus Group discussion, Kizingitini, Pate Island, Kenya, April 2009.

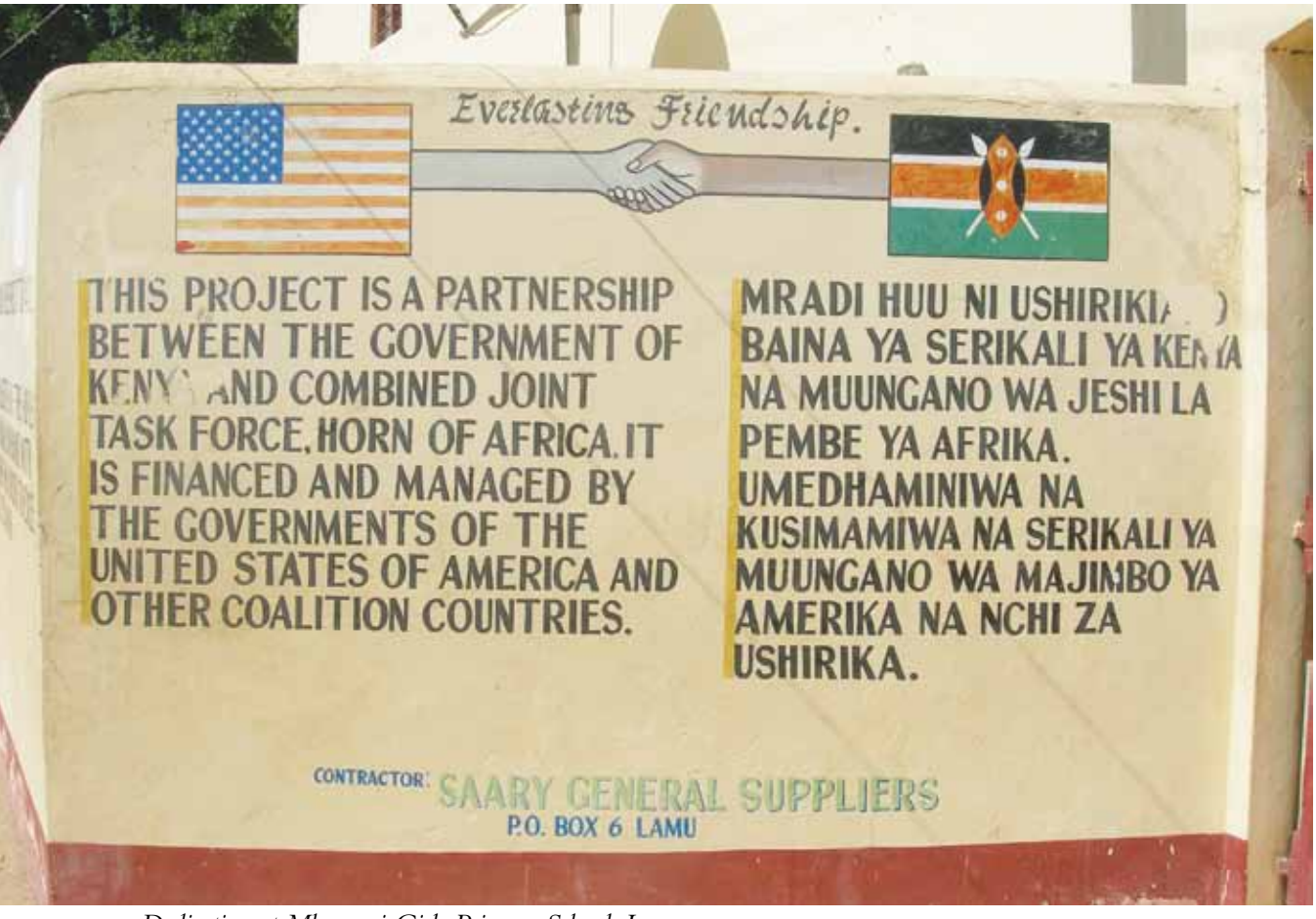


Photo: M. Bradbury

Dedication at Mkomani Girls Primary School, Lamu.

Efforts by the US and Western countries to counter the threat and diminish the conditions that terrorists and violent extremists may try to exploit in Kenya have involved a mixture of "hard" and "soft" security measures and a fusion of development and security agendas. Following the 1998 embassy bombings in East Africa and subsequent attacks in the US and in Kenya, the Kenyan government came under international pressure to increase security, detain suspects, close Islamic charities, and introduce anti-terrorism legislation.[133] Foreign governments have supported the strengthening and expansion of Kenya's security services with equipment and training, including along the Kenya-Somalia border. Aid has been targeted at suspect Muslim communities through NGOs and channels such as CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds campaign. This effort has been supported by institutional changes within the US government which seek better coordination between aid, foreign policy, and security agencies at a national and local level.[134]

5.1 Community-Based Conflict Management

The escalation of the war in Somalia since 2006 and the ONLF insurgency in Ethiopia has led to a deterioration in security in the Kenya-Somalia borderlands. Mandera district in particular has been affected. Prior to that, however, security in the province had been improving since the early

[133] Lind and Howell, "Aid, Civil Society and the State."

[134] Institutional changes have similarly taken place in other donor governments. J. Howell and J. Lind, "Changing donor policy and practice on civil society in the post-9/11 aid context" (NGPA Working Papers No 25, July 2008), www.lse.ac.uk/ngpa.

1990s. This was attributable to a combination of strong individual leadership, the collaboration between the government and civic groups, and economic developments.

Far from creating an "ungoverned space," the retrenchment of government in this area led the state to contract out some of its governance responsibilities to civic actors.[135] In Garissa, for example, a Provincial Commissioner, Mohamed Saleh, is widely credited for ending violence in the province between 2001 and 2002, by adopting a zero tolerance policy towards abuses by security forces and partnering with the civic leaders and businesses with an interest in maintaining stability. The most celebrated example of civic action comes from Wajir, where the violence that affected the town in the mid-1990s was ended by the initiative of women, elders, youth, religious leaders, business leaders, and NGOs, who formed a Peace Committee and developed a system of community-based conflict warning and mitigation. The Peace Committee was later institutionalized as part of the structure of local government and was replicated in other districts in the north and across Kenya. In another example of civic action, the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEM) played an important role in mediating between the Murulle and the Garre to end a conflict over grazing in Mandera district in 2004.

Foreign donors and international NGOs, persuaded by the efficacy of this community-based approach, funded other conflict management initiatives and peace work (covering conflict prevention and early warning) became a growth "sector" among development agencies. In the early to mid-1990s, this was mostly concerned with the management of conflict within communities in the northeast, such as in Wajir, described above.[136] In the last decade, the work has expanded to cross-border activities concerned with regional conflict early warning, mitigation, and stabilization. These programs – which cover the Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia border area – are part of a region-wide Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) coordinated by the regional body Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The program supports civil society actors to play a role in conflict early warning and response in an area where there is little state presence. USAID, which considers stability in Africa's border regions a priority, is one of the main donors.

One of the consequences of state collapse in Somalia is the absence of a state counterpart to manage the borderlands and deal with issues of cross-border criminality. Kenyan NGOs in North Eastern province are therefore trying to fill that gap by building the capacity of organizations on the Somali side of the border. They are also supporting development projects in Somalia to reduce the incentive for people to cross the border to access services in Kenya.

In Wajir, a consortium of local NGOs was established to address humanitarian and development needs in Wajir and the Lower Jubba region in Somalia. The consortium was initially funded by USAID (as part of its PEACE I program) through Development Alternatives Inc., to support a cross-border initiative to establish peace committees of elders. The second and current phase (PEACE II), is implemented through the NGO Pact Kenya and builds on this by providing "peace dividends," such as water projects, to reduce conflict and improve well-being.[137] In some places, this has not precluded working with Al Shabaab authorities in Somalia. As one Kenyan NGO recounted:

> The Al Shabaab told us to bring anyone who will bring them development and said they will welcome them so long as they are well-intentioned.[138]

Besides Pact's work on PEACE II – which is the largest current cross-border peace work program – other international NGOs also work cross-border on issues such as drought preparedness and peace building.[139]

[135] Menkhaus, "Kenya-Somalia Border Conflict Analysis."

[136] Interview with local peace committee, Wajir, Kenya, March 2009.

[137] Interview with Pact, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2009.

[138] Interview with local NGOs, Wajir, Kenya, March, 2009.

[139] In the drought of 2004-5, Oxfam trucked water from Wajir to Somalia. Interview with Oxfam, Wajir, Kenya, March 2009.

The impact of the cross-border peace work needs to be placed within the context of broader political and economic developments which can contribute to both the de-escalation or escalation of violence. In the past decade, for example, Garissa town, the provincial headquarters, has become one of the fastest-growing urban centers in Kenya.[140] With a paved road to Nairobi, the largest livestock market in the north, and benefiting from the overall expansion of cross-border trade with Somalia and considerable investment by the diaspora, Garissa has developed into the commercial capital of the entire border region and a cosmopolitan city where all Somali clans can live and do business. For the Somali Absame clan that dominates this district and the Lower Jubba region of Somalia, there have been strong commercial and political interests in ensuring the stability of the area. This may change if their dominance is challenged by the rise of Al Shabaab in southern Somalia.[141] The reports of Somalis in North Eastern province being recruited by the Kenyan government to fight Al Shabaab may signal the beginning of such a change.

5.2 Stabilization and the Securitization of Development

At the same time as supporting cross-border peace work, donor governments, including the US and Britain, have invested in building up Kenyan border security services. The CJTF-HOA assistance to communities in North Eastern province and Lamu can be seen as part of a trend in which stabilization and security have become priority objectives of foreign aid. Indeed, "stabilization" appears to have become a euphemism for the securitization of development, in which "soft" development and "hard" security objectives project similar outcomes.[142] For example, the international NGO Pact receives funding from USAID for its cross-border peace work as part of a USAID stabilization strategy. Pact maintains a critical distance from the activities of the CA teams.[143] However, the distinction between human security and the security interests of states are blurred. As one Kenyan aid worker observed: "Pact is obsessed with borders and security issues. The Pact project is Civil Affairs in plain clothes."[144]

Analysts have pointed out that the link between security and development has become an "unquestioned guiding principle for many Western development and foreign policy actors—and increasingly for the military."[145] In northern Kenya, the convergence of development and security is much broader than peace programs, as articulated in a USAID proposal to "improve economic security" in Kenya's northeast border and coastal regions. The proposal argues that these areas, which are "inhabited predominantly by Somali and other Muslim populations," have been economically and politically marginalized. It proposes a number of activities that will "support U.S. government efforts to "drain the swamp for terrorist recruitment and operations," by enhancing food security and job creation opportunities for young "disaffected Muslims" and so "reduce potential for political instability and volatility."[146] The types of programs that it identifies are assistance to marginalized pastoralists, improved livestock marketing, rural education for pastoralists, and support for coastal urban populations. Many of these are part of the portfolio of programs funded by USAID in northeastern Kenya.

[140] Interview with District Commissioner, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[141] In October 2009, Al Shabaab won control of Kismayo from Hizbul Islamiya. As the latter drew support from the Absame, they may seek to mobilize support in Kenya.

[142] The term "stabilization" has become common parlance among aid organizations, donors aid departments, and Western militaries in relations to "failed" and "fragile" states, blurring the lines between development and humanitarian aid and military strategies. See, for example, the British Military Publication "Security and Stabilisation: the Military Contribution," Joint Doctrine Publication 3-40 (JDP 3-40), dated November 2009, (http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/MicroSite/DCDC/OurPublications/JDWP/JointDoctrinePublicationjdp340SecurityAndStabilisationTheMilitaryContribution.htm). We are grateful to Jan Bachmann for the reference.

[143] Interview with Pact, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2009.

[144] Interviewed in Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[145] Jan Bachmann, "'Kick down the door, clean up the mess, and rebuild the house' – The Africa Command and transformation of the US military," Geopolitics 15, no.3 (October 2010, forthcoming): 2-3.

[146] untitled and undated extract.

The merging of traditional (i.e., non-military) development and security objectives is apparent in the USAID funded "G-Youth Project" in Garissa. USAID has identified Muslim youth in Kenya as a group that is potentially susceptible to recruitment by extremist organizations, as a result of unemployment, social marginalization, and the weakening of family and community ties and authority structures.[147] During the Ethiopian military intervention in Somalia, youth from Kenya went to fight for the resistance. The concern with youth has been heightened by the rise of Harakat Al Shabaab (the "youth movement") in Somalia, where Al Qaeda appears to have found more success in recruiting youth, rather than adults, away from clans and to the global *jihad*.[148] There are reports that unemployed youth in Garissa and other parts of North Eastern province have been recruited by Al Shabaab.[149] In Lamu, youth are seen as a problematic group by residents because of unemployment, crime, and drugs, but not because the youth are radicalized.

As part of an initiative to mitigate violent extremism, USAID has begun to invest in target support to youth in Garissa. The "G-Youth Project" in Garissa began in 2009 with a USAID grant of $2.4 million over two years, with the intention to extend the program. Managed by the Educational Development Center (EDC), the project targets 16- to 24-year-old high school students and graduates, and assists with career development, vocational training, positive opportunities for civic participation, and livelihood support.[150] The project is developed from a counter-extremism assessment and needs assessments conducted in northeastern Kenya for USAID by Management Systems International (MSI) and the Educational Development Center (EDC) that identified youth in Garissa as a socially excluded and marginalized group that could provide "fertile soil" for Salafi-Jihadist ideas.[151] The assessment was financed through State Department from a grant of 1207 "stabilization funds" from the US Department of Defense allocated for work in the Somali region in 2007, at a time when US engagement in Somalia was growing. That said, USAID takes pains to distinguish their work to counter violent extremism from the counterterrorism actions of the military.

[147] Denoeux and Carter, "Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism," 24. US State Department and USAID programs to address marginalized youth are also carried out in coordination with OEF-TS in North and West Africa, the sister model to CJTF-HOA for AFRICOM. Bachmann, "'Kick down the door,'" 10.

[148] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures."

[149] Jenny Cuffe, "Jobless Kenyans admit fighting for al-Shabab," BBC World Service, 6 January 2010.

[150] G-Youth Kenya http://www.equip123.net/docs/e3-garissainitial1-pager.pdf.

[151] Barcott, "Intelligence, Command, and Control," 11. The MSI risk assessment identified Nairobi slums, Garissa, and the coast as areas most prone to radicalization.

6. The Evolving Scope of Hearts and Minds Activities in Kenya

Photo: M. Bradbury

Mkomani Girls Primary School, Lamu.

Since 2003, CA teams deployed out of CJTF-HOA to Kenya's North Eastern province and Coastal province have initiated and implemented at least 151 projects at the cost of $6.9 million (see Table 1), according to information provided to the study.[152] The research team visited twenty-two projects sites, but was unable to verify whether the list was complete or the accuracy of the financial information.

The military aid program has been inconsistent, with the numbers of projects and expenditure, geographic targeting, and sectoral focus seemingly fluctuating year on year. Part of the reason for this can be put down to a learning curve by CJTF-HOA about how to operate in the area and a response to changing security dynamics. A more important factor has been the changing military commands and policy objectives.

Table 1: CJTF-HOA Hearts and Minds Projects in Kenya 2003-2008

Province	***Districts***	***Projects***	***Cost US$***[153]
North Eastern			
	Garissa	27	1,066,283
	Wajir	8	510,950
	Mandera	9	511,411
Total		***44***	***2,088,644***
Coast			
	Lamu	70	3,162,560
	Tana River	5	No data
	Malindi	2	No data
	Kilifi	9	341,000
Total		***86***	***3,503,560***
Eastern			
	Isiolo	*5*	*377,363*
Rift Valley			
	Burnt Forest	*2*	*477,706*
	Others	*12*	*No data*
Total		***14***	***14***
Nairobi		*2*	*544,000*
Total Projects		***151***	***6,991,273***

[152] See Methodology (Section 1.1) for more information on how the research team compiled this list of projects.

[153] These figures do not seem to include the cost of deploying, supplying, and maintaining US forces in the field. From the best of our knowledge, they represent the expense of implementing projects (i.e., money paid to contractors, etc.) above and beyond these other costs.

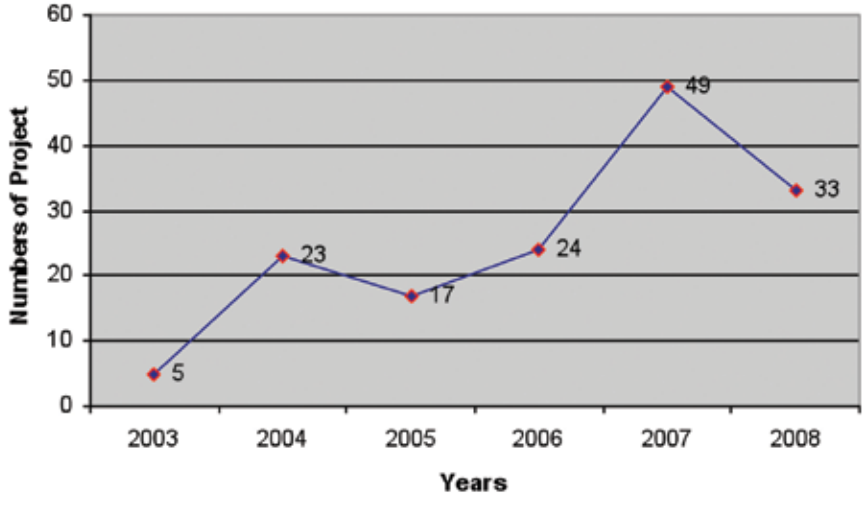
In 2003, in the first year of deployment, CJTF-HOA carried out a total of seven HA/HCA activities in Kenya (see Chart 1). These activities expanded significantly in 2004, to twenty-three projects, the majority involving the rehabilitation of school structures, along with several water and public health projects. Besides Kenya, CJTF-HOA was also carrying out numerous operations in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, within Djibouti, and had scattered projects in other countries.[154] Overall, from September 2003 through March 2005, CJTF-HOA renovated thirty-three schools, eight clinics, and five hospitals in the Horn region, dug eleven wells, and conducted forty medical visits.

At this stage, under successive Marine Commanders,[155] the intent seems to have been to stabilize the restive regions adjacent to Somalia and create a hearts and minds version of the *cordon sanitaire* around the country.[156] This mirrored the military *cordon sanitaire* established around Somalia in late 2001 in the wake of 9/11. There was a slight dip in HA/HCA activities in 2005 before the focus on hearts and minds "took off,"[157] when the military command moved to the US Navy and Rear Admiral Richard Hunt assumed command of CJTF-HOA. Under Hunt, civil affairs humanitarian and development activities became central to the regional counterterrorism strategy. Thus:

> The civil affairs and humanitarian projects are prioritized based on their potential to counter terrorist ideology in the region.[158]

With this change, the number of HA/HCA activities in Kenya increased in 2006 to twenty-four, at the cost of $1,629,500. There was also a geographic shift in focus from North Eastern province back to the Kenyan coast. The reasons for this seem to be a response to increased threats along the Somali border, following the failed attempt by the US and its Somali allies to contain the Somali ICU, and the subsequent expansion of the Court's control over most of south and central Somalia. Demonstrations in Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa over the CA team's presence in North Eastern province caused the team to withdraw completely from Mandera and Wajir. Only two HA projects were undertaken in North Eastern province, while twenty HA/HCA projects were undertaken along the coast.

Chart 1: Trends in Hearts and Minds Project Implementation 2003-2008



[154] CJTF-HOA has since dramatically reduced its presence in Ethiopia.

[155] Marine Major General Timothy Ghormley replaced Marine Lieutenant General Samuel Helland in May 2005.

[156] Interview with Department of Defense official, Washington DC, 2008.

[157] Ibid.

[158] Former CJTF-HOA commander R.W. Hunt, quoted in S. Lischer, "Winning Hearts and Minds in the Horn of Africa: Humanitarian Aid in the War on Terror," *Harvard International Review* (March 2007), available at http://hir.harvard.edu/index.php?page=article&id=1481.

As CJTF-HOA's activities in Kenya expanded, problems with implementing projects increased in the northeast. For instance, CJTF-HOA funded the construction of a health clinic in Isiolo (North East province), but a failure to coordinate with either USAID or the government of Kenya meant the clinic then sat empty. It was around this time that the Task Force began to realize that it needed to link to USAID to ensure the sustainability of its projects.[159] In USAID, a growing concern about the CA teams working practices led to a push for greater coordination and culminated in the signing of a joint Memorandum of Understanding in January 2007 between CJTF-HOA, USAID, and State Department, covering CJTF-HOA activities in Kenya. A "3D" working group created at the Embassy in Nairobi sought to ensure that specific CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities were vetted by the Embassy Country Team.[160] CJTF-HOA, for its part, increased coordination by stationing staff in USAID offices in Addis Ababa and Nairobi. At the field level, CA teams, under the influence of USAID, began to participate in district-level coordination mechanisms, although on an *ad hoc* basis.[161]

The year 2007 marked the high point of CJTF-HOA hearts and minds operations in Kenya, with a total of forty-nine projects initiated, although the expenditure was less than in previous years as many of the projects were relatively small in scale.[162] The increase in activities coincided with several changes in the operation and the operating environment.

In February 2007, Navy Rear Admiral James Hart succeeded Hunt and redefined CJTF-HOA's mission as being to prevent conflict, promote regional stability, protect coalition interests, and prevail against extremism – "the 4Ps." This reflected developments in broader US security strategy, articulated in the 2006 National Security Strategy that identified Africa as a "high priority" where "our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies."[163] Similarly, the 2006 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism emphasized the importance of securing "ungoverned or under-governed areas."[164] Nothing was more emblematic of the US government's new focus on Africa than the creation of US Africa Command – AFRICOM – in October 2007.[165]

The period from 2006 also saw an overt political reengagement by the US government in Somalia. After a decade of political disengagement, following the debacles of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) mission in the early 1990s, the US forged low-key partnerships with local militia leaders and businessmen in counterterrorism monitoring and rendition. This surfaced in 2006 when a coalition of warlords backed by the US formed the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism.[166] The defeat of the Alliance by a combination of Islamist militia and a popular uprising left the ICU in control of Mogadishu. In late 2006, after Arab League efforts to mediate between the ICU and Somalia's beleaguered Transitional Federal Government (TFG) collapsed, the US, somewhat reluctantly, supported Ethiopia's military intervention which ejected the ICU from Mogadishu. In January 2007, as Ethiopian and TFG forces pursued the ICU to the Kenyan border, US planes attacked two convoys of vehicles near the Kenyan border suspected of harboring "high value" Al Qaeda targets. The attack failed to hit their targets, but for Somalis it firmly linked the US directly to the Ethiopian invasion.[167] At the border, over eighty people were detained and rendered to

[159] Interview with AFRICOM officials, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[160] Prior to this, communication between CJTF-HOA and the Embassy about specific HA / HCA projects was much more *ad hoc*.

[161] Interview with a senior Kenyan Government official from the Ministry of Northern Territory and Other Arid Lands, Nairobi, January 2009.

[162] Estimate of HA/HCA costs of between $404,400 and $854,000.

[163] The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006, 37.

[164] The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, September 2006, 37.

[165] Interview with official at the Department of Defense, Washington DC, 2008.

[166] K. Menkhaus, "The Crisis in Somalia: Tragedy in Five Acts," *African Affairs* 106/204 (Oxford University Press on behalf of Royal African Society, 2007): 357–390.

[167] Later that year US missiles also struck at suspected targets in Puntland (northeast Somalia).

Ethiopia by the Kenyan authorities working with Ethiopian and US officials.[168]

The US, other Western governments, and the UN all concluded in January 2007 that the installation of the Ethiopian-backed TFG in Mogadishu provided "a window of opportunity" for reengagement in Somalia, reconciliation, and the revival of a central government in Somalia.[169] The US Office of Transition Initiatives began to deploy resources in Somalia in support of a national reconciliation conference in Mogadishu and to TFG security forces. In response to the perceived "window of opportunity," the USAID East Africa regional office applied for and received 1207 funding from the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization for counter-extremism and stabilization initiatives.[170] One outcome of this was the G-Youth project in Garissa. Some of the funds also supported Pact's cross-border peace work.[171] The Somali unit in the US Embassy in Nairobi that year also increased its outreach in North Eastern province, including a radio call-in show with the US Ambassador to Kenya in which the activities of the CA teams and Seabees operating in the area were discussed.[172]

Perhaps because of the acknowledged failures of the US counterterrorism strategy in Somalia to prevent the rise of the ICU, the US, according to the HOA Director Plans and Policy, "started to realize that there's more to counterterrorism than capture-kill kinetics." Quoted in the *New York Times*, he said, "Our mission is 95% at least civil affairs…It's trying to get at the root causes of why people want to take on the United States."[173] In terms of the hearts and minds activities in Kenya, however, assistance was again focused on the coast, rather than the potentially more volatile North Eastern province. In 2007, thirty-eight projects were implemented on the coast, compared to ten in North Eastern province.

At the same time, CJTF-HOA was beginning to refocus its strategy. According to Navy Rear Admiral Hart, the focus was first and foremost on theatre security and military-to-military activities, followed by humanitarian assistance when requested, and civil-military operations related to regional stability and anti-extremism.[174] The arrival of Navy Rear Admiral Greene as commander of CJTF-HOA in February 2008 signaled a further change in direction, as the Task Force began now to de-emphasize hearts and minds activities. Greene articulated a new focus for CJTF-HOA in terms of the "3S's" – increasing security, improving stability, and enabling sovereignty. Like Hart, Greene believed that CJTF-HOA should focus primarily on military-to-military activities, building the security capacity of host-nation militaries. In a departure from previous commanders, he also began to question whether there could be a link between scattered HA/HCA projects and increased security or stability. CA teams continued to work on previously approved projects, but very few new projects were initiated. Whereas Hart approved over one hundred CA projects, Greene approved only around ten.[175] However, according to one official at the US Embassy in Kenya, there was little change on the ground. There was some increase in "mil-to-mil activities," but the most visible CJTF-HOA presence was still the CA teams.[176] According to a recent study of US military activities in Africa:

[168] Human Rights Watch, "People fleeing Somalia war secretly detained," (New York, 30 March 2007), http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/03/30/kenya15624.htm.

[169] Menkhaus, "The Crisis in Somalia," 383; UNOCHA, "The Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia Calls for Immediate Re-engagement in Mogadishu Nairobi," (17 January 2007).

[170] Interview with US Embassy official, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2009. 1207 funds were given by the US DoD to the State Department Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in the financial years 2006 and 2007, to provide assistance in reconstruction, security, and stabilization. This was extended in 2008 with 1210 funds. The Somalia Reconciliation and Stabilization Program (including Ethiopia and Kenya) received $25 million to support security sector reform, promote capacity building, and mitigate conflict and instability. See "1207 Funding: Facts and Information Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS)," http://www.crs.state.gov.

[171] Interview with NGO staff, Nairobi, Kenya, January 2009.

[172] Interview with Star FM, Nairobi, Kenya, April 2009.

[173] Nicholas Kristof, "Aid Workers With Guns," *New York Times*, 4 March 2007.

[174] Interview with former CJTF-HOA commander, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

[175] According to the State Department Humanitarian Information Unit, there were 135 CA projects approved under Hart, and eight under Greene.

[176] Email exchange with official at the US Embassy in Kenya, November 2009.

> Out of 90 news releases on the CJTF-HoA website between January 2008 and June 2009, every second is related to development and humanitarian assistance projects. An additional ten are related to events of cultural exchange. In contrast, only 15 touch upon military-to-military training which is the core of CJTF's mission.[177]

In 2008, the CA teams undertook nineteen HA/HCA projects in the north compared to thirty-eight the previous year, plus an additional twelve in the Rift Valley, at the request of the US Ambassador, in response to the post-election violence in the area.

Three other factors might have contributed to the de-emphasis on HA/HCA activities under Greene. First was the negative publicity around specific CJTF-HOA projects. For instance, the attempt to drill a well near Shanta Abaq village in North Eastern province in November 2007 amid suspicions that US forces were poisoning the water caused a public backlash, with allegations raised in the Kenyan parliament.[178] At the same time, the US Embassy questioned the advisability of CJTF-HOA engineers drilling boreholes in the arid North Eastern Province, due to the potential ecological impact and possibility that such boreholes might spark conflict. This eventually led to a "strategic pause" in CJTF-HOA's borehole drilling activities, which it had been undertaking in conjunction with the Kenyan military.[179]

Second, the uproar over the Shanta Abaq wells led to the creation of a more formal project vetting process at the US Embassy in Nairobi, through the monthly 3D working group, which required the Ambassador's approval before being forwarded to CJTF-HOA.[180] At the same time, the State Department encouraged CJTF-HOA to focus less on humanitarian activities and more on military-to-military support.

Third, in October 2008, AFRICOM became an independent military command and assumed command over CJTF-HOA. AFRICOM sought to exercise more control over CJTF-HOA than CENTCOM had done, including sign-off for all HA/HCA projects, no matter how small. By the end of 2008, CJTF-HOA had significantly reduced the number of HA/HCA projects it approved, while awaiting further guidance from AFRICOM.[181] Under General William Ward, AFRICOM itself has recently started to emphasize military-to-military activities over humanitarian and development activities.[182]

Consequently, by late 2008, the CA teams were left in the field with neither guidance from above, nor funding with which to initiate new projects.[183] According to one internal CJTF-HOA evaluation:

> The CA teams, in many regards, now serve as fire-and-forget assets. The Task Force places teams in specific locations—and then leaves them largely untouched to oversee HA projects with little guidance. End-state planning does not occur. Most feedback from the team to the staff involves project proposals and little else; and it is unclear whether course corrections move in the other direction, i.e., from the staff back to the team. Teams themselves do not always

[177] Bachmann, "'Kick down the door,'" 12.

[178] Interview with official at US Embassy and USAID staff, Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[179] Interview with US Embassy and USAID officials, as well as CJTF-HOA officers, in Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[180] Interview with US Embassy and USAID officials, as well as CJTF-HOA officers, in Nairobi, Kenya, 2008.

[181] As one former CENTCOM official explained: "CENTCOM validated each and every project sent by CJTF-HOA as did [the Defense Security Cooperation Agency]. The difference is that CENTCOM had authority to approve execution as a special authority from [the Secretary of Defense for Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom]. Africa Command did not inherit the same authority. However, the review process for projects is the same for both Commands based on DSCA guidance. CJTF-HOA was not authorized to execute programs under CENTCOM authority until the project was approved at the Command level. The difference in how HA/HCA Programs were managed had much to do with the philosophy of CENTCOM Commanders—support the ground component commanders. At CENTCOM we were expected to find ways to support vice [i.e., rather than] inhibit the ground commander's plans. If we attempted to inject sanity into their project execution plan, the CJTF-HOA [commanders] would simply go straight to the CENTCOM [Commander] and we would be forced to support." Email communication with former CENTCOM official, December 2009.

[182] According to Bachmann, "'Kick down the door,'" AFRICOM's current focus on military-to-military activities was a response to criticism the Command received when it initially announced that it would emphasize more traditional humanitarian and development activities.

[183] Interview with CA team, Kenya, January 2009.

possess a good understanding of desired effects and objectives; and with minimal guidance beyond identifying projects, that is what CA teams spend most of their time doing.[184]

These concerns about the overall effectiveness of CJTF-HOA hearts and minds operations are not new, however. Since the beginning, it has suffered from a number of structural deficiencies, including:

- short-term rotations, both amongst CA teams in the field and senior staff in Djibouti, making it difficult to build on past lessons-learned;
- a lack of expertise about the region, and a lack of appropriate preparation, especially for CA teams; and
- a lack of well-developed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.[185]

As one AFRICOM official explained: "CJTF-HOA hasn't been around for seven years. Instead, it's been around one year seven times."[186]

6.1 The Distribution and Expenditure on Civil Affairs Projects in Kenya

The CJTF-HOA activities have been restricted to water, education, and health sectors, with a few public relations activities, such as school debates or sports activities.[187] In addition, it coordinates with USAID, the Kenyan military, and NGOs to provide short-duration medical, dental, and veterinary civic action programs (MEDCAP, DENTCAP, VETCAP) which are large public events. All HA / HCA activities require the approval of three authorities: CJTF-HOA in Djibouti, the Humanitarian Assistance Branch at AFRICOM (formerly CENTCOM), and (since 2007) the US Embassy.

Under CENTCOM, the CJTF-HOA commander also had discretionary funds available to spend on projects under US$10,000 and known as "minimal expenditure" or "*de minimus*" projects. This spending authority, however, no longer exists under AFRICOM.

Chart 2: Distribution of Hearts and Minds Projects by Province 2003-2008

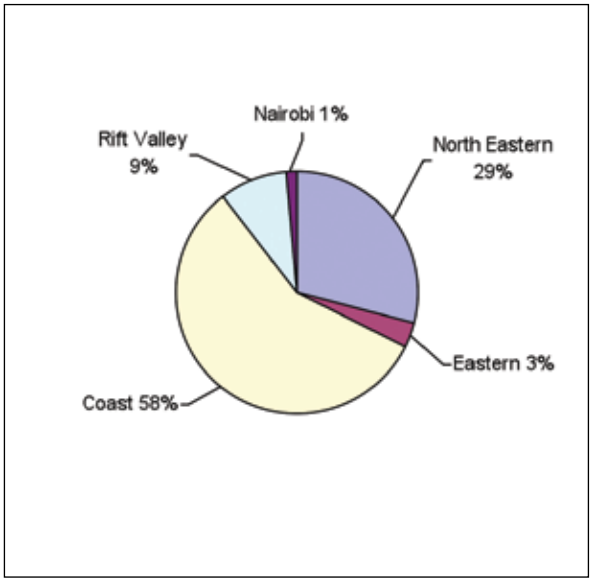
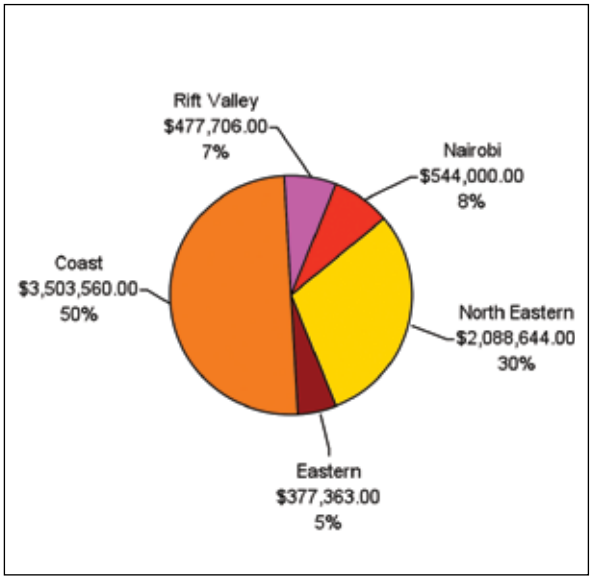


Chart 3: Expenditure on Hearts and Minds Projects by Province 2003-2008 (total expenditure US $6.9 million)



[184] CJTF-HOA Civil Affairs Recommendations, Unclassified CJTF-HOA document, Ryan Close, 9 August 2008.

[185] Interviews with AFRICOM officials, Stuttgart, Germany, 2008.

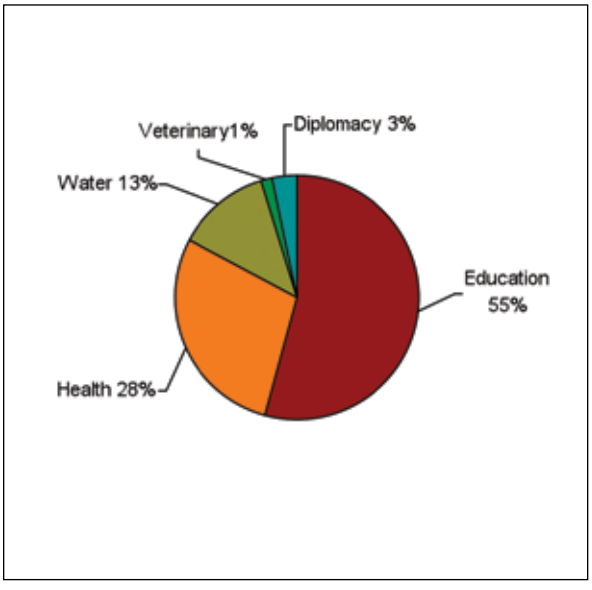
[186] Ibid.

[187] Funding sources for the public relations activities are unclear.

Despite the limitations of the data that were available to the research team, several observations are worth making about the CA projects. First, according to the list of 151 projects, 34% had not been completed in early 2009. In April 2009, projects with a total combined cost of one million dollars had been identified but not yet been implemented.[188] In other words, CA teams have neither had the capacity nor resources to implement all the projects approved. The delays in project implementation and false expectations raised can make it hard for CA teams to sustain community relations.

Second, the focus of CA assistance has been in Coast Province where 58% of projects have been implemented and 50% of expenditure consumed[189] (see Charts 2 and 3). The reasons for this are not clear, but access and logistics are easier given the smaller geographic size of the district and the presence of an established military facility in Manda Bay. The long-term presence of US military in the area means there is better knowledge of the operating environment. Security has also been better than in North Eastern province, with no protests against the CA team in Lamu district. In other words, it would appear that the greater number and larger scale of projects on the coast is likely to be due to a more conducive operating environment, and does not correlate to the relative level of stability or perceived threat emanating from the area.

Chart 4: Distribution of Hearts and Minds Projects by Sector 2003-2008



Third, over 50% of all projects implemented were in the education sector. Education is identified as a priority need among these northern communities, and is a particularly emotive issue among Muslims in Kenya. It is unclear, however, that this was the reason for the investment in this sector. The rehabilitation of educational infrastructure is visible, relatively simple to implement, and mostly uncontroversial.

Fourth, the expenditure of $6.9 million over five years is surprisingly small. The cost of projects range from under $10,000 to $325,000, the latter spent on the renovation of the primary school in the border town of Kiunga in Lamu District. It can be assumed that $6.9 million is less than the overall expenditure. Financial data on projects below $10,000 and data from some large projects, such as Mkomani Primary School in Lamu, were unavailable to the study team. It can also be assumed that the $6.9 million is direct project expenditure only and excludes the costs of maintaining the CA and engineering teams in the field. Given these caveats, project expenditure is small compared to many aid programs. USAID provides $8-12 million per year for education in Kenya and $7 million per year on governance.[190] The $6.9 million over five years also pales into insignificance in comparison with the $1.3 billion spent by USAID under PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) between 2004 and 2008 on HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment in Kenya; a further $534.8 million has been approved for 2009.[191] Kenya is one of PEPFAR's fifteen focus countries and the second-largest recipient of PEPFAR funds after South Africa. The scale of PEPFAR funding is

[188] Interview with official at US Embassy, Nairobi, Kenya, April 2009.

[189] These percentages rise if the recent projects in the Rift Valley are discounted.

[190] Interview with USAID official, Nairobi, Kenya, February 2009.

[191] http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/Countries/africa/kenya.html.

rationalized on a number of grounds, including the arguments that HIV is a foreign policy security concern (because of its economic impact) and that Kenya is an ally of the US that is cooperating with the US in the war on terror.[192] As a senior USAID official in Kenya remarked: "We understand that security is the context in which all of this sits."[193]

Interestingly, only $4-6 million of the PEPFAR funds (less than 0.4% of the budget) are programmed in North Eastern province. A substantial proportion is programmed on the coast, but most in programs in parts of Kenya that are predominantly non-Muslim. Therefore, despite the increased attention given to Muslim communities by donor countries, by far the largest proportion of US aid to Kenya is targeted at non-Muslim communities. It is also interesting to note that the resources spent by the US government in Kenya on effecting behavioral change in sexual practices were far in excess of those available to the US State Department and to the British Foreign Office combined for public outreach and preventative programs among populations suspected of being anti-Western.[194]

Finally, trends in project implementation appear to provide some evidence that these CA-implemented projects have been used in response to spikes in insecurity and increased US military action in the region. Thus, the increase in the number of projects implemented between 2006 and 2007 coincides with a period of heightened conflict in Somalia and when the US became militarily active there and was involved in supporting renditions of Kenyans and Somalis suspected of links to Al Qaeda and extremist organizations. However, the lead in time from assessment to project implementation means that many of the projects may already have been approved. Even "quick impact" projects are therefore a blunt instrument for responding to a spike in insecurity.

[192] HIV/AIDs is reportedly one of five factors over the past decade that led the US to reappraise Africa's strategic significance, the others being terrorism, oil, armed conflict, and global trade. Bachmann, "'Kick down the door,'" 5.

[193] Interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya, February 2009.

[194] Interviews with US and British Government officials, Nairobi, Kenya, February 2009. According to *Africa Confidential*, (5 February 2010), the Public Affairs Officer for Somalia at the US Embassy in Kenya had a budget of only $30,000 in 2008.

7. Assessing the Effectiveness of the Hearts and Minds Campaign

Photo: M. Bradbury

Children at Bargoni Primary School near Manda Bay naval base.

Assessing the effectiveness of CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities in northern Kenya is complicated by the fact that the mission of CJTF-HOA has evolved over time. Indeed, US government personnel interviewed during the course of the research, including members of the CA teams, were surprisingly unclear about the objectives of the CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities. One US official described the main purpose of these activities as being to gain "access and influence,"[195] rather than as humanitarian or developmental. It is clear from CJTF-HOA's own statements and other US military documents and analytical studies that CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities in northern Kenya are part of a broader US counterterrorism and stabilization strategy in the Horn and East Africa. The elements of this include: support for a political settlement in Somalia; military support to Somali security forces in Somalia; military action against individuals and organizations in Somalia with known and alleged links to Al Qaeda and extremist organizations; support for anti-terrorism security forces in Kenya, in Somaliland, and in Puntland; military surveillance; logistical support to AMISOM in Somalia; rendition of suspect individuals from Kenya; equipping and training Kenyan security forces to tighten boarder controls; support for "moderate" Islamic voices to de-legitimize militant ones; strengthening Kenyan state institutions to extend governance in areas where it has minimal presence; and USAID-funded development initiatives designed to promote political, social, and economic stability. Distinguishing the impact of hearts and minds activities within this broader strategy is clearly difficult.

Our research finds that the impact of the hearts and minds campaign and the civil action program

[195] Interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya, April 2009.

has been different in North Eastern province and Lamu district. This can be accounted for, in part, by the different approaches of the CA teams and the different operating contexts. North Eastern province is a larger territory than Lamu district. While there are common themes that link the Muslim communities in both areas, the relationship of people in North Eastern province with the state has been much more violent. The population in North Eastern province is mostly Muslim, and the religious leaders can therefore present a more united position than those in Lamu district, where the recipient communities are of mixed faith. In North Eastern province, security issues are more directly linked to cross-border dynamics with Somalia. On the coast, the major security concerns are smuggling and the fact that Al Qaeda operatives found safe haven there. On the coast, the CA teams are one of very few foreign organizations providing humanitarian and development aid, whereas in North Eastern province there are many international aid organizations.

There are operational differences between the CA teams deployed in North Eastern province and Lamu district. The CA teams in North Eastern province have come from the Marines and, since 2006, those deployed on the coast have been from the Navy, which is the first instance of the Navy deploying CA teams.[196] The Navy team and engineering units operate out of the Kenyan naval base, which limits their interaction with the local population. The Marines in North Eastern province currently stay in a hotel, where they have daily contact with local people. The Marines have longer deployments than the Navy. These contextual and operational variables have influenced the way in which local communities perceive and have been affected by the hearts and minds campaign.

CJTF-HOA's mission statement borrows heavily from the language of international development, with emphasis given to local "ownership" and working in "partnership" with recipients. AFRICOM has taken this further in the language of partnerships, security, stability, and reliability set out in its mission statement. This section, therefore, examines the developmental approach and the impact of the hearts and minds projects. This study interviewed Kenyans about the impact of the CA work in Kenya against three broad objectives:

- security: countering terrorism and enhancing stabilization;
- political: "winning hearts and minds" and countering the influence of Al Qaeda and violent extremists;
- developmental: meeting basic needs and strengthening governance.

7.1 Countering Terrorism and Enhancing Stabilization

7.1.1 Perceptions of Security

At the time of the field research, the deployment of CA teams and the hearts and minds strategy had not been publicly evaluated by CJTF-HOA and its personnel were not able to speak publicly on security issues. It is, therefore, unclear how the US military assesses whether it is achieving its counterterrorism and stabilization objectives. In the six years that CJTF-HOA has been implementing hearts and minds activities in the area, there have been spikes in insecurity, such as during the fall of the ICU in Somalia. The presence of CA teams on the ground may have increased the US military capacity to gather intelligence and build useful relationships, to have some influence over Kenyan security services, to tighten border controls, to interdict terrorist suspects, and to secure access to military assets such as airstrips. This, in turn, may have met some overall US security objectives. That said, it is difficult to disentangle the impact of the CA teams from other CJTF-HOA operations (including direct military-to-military support) – based in Djibouti – when it comes to achieving these security goals.

Critically, however, there is no appreciation among people locally that such activities have brought a discernible improvement to the overall security of their communities. The presence of CJTF-HOA in the northeast and along the coast does not address the main security concerns expressed by the community, as explained in more

[196] Interview with Civil Affairs officer, Lamu, February 2009..

detail below. To the contrary, their comments suggest they feel more insecure than before because of the US presence.

For obvious reasons, perceptions of security also vary between officials of the Kenyan government and its citizens.[197] The nature of insecurity, and people's perceptions of it, varies between and within provinces and is affected by variables such as inter-ethnic relations, proximity to the border, access to and availability of resources, and relations with the state. On the coast, it is land, relations with government, drugs, and crime that mostly concerned people.

7.1.2 Insecurity as a Function of Marginalization

In North Eastern province and Lamu district, people's attitudes towards security are shaped by their relationship with the Kenyan state, which for many poses a bigger security threat than Somalia. These Muslim populations still feel marginalized and discriminated against. The *Shifta* War remains within the living memory of some people in the north and continues to define relations between the Somali and Borana people and the rest of Kenya. The history of the Kenyan army in the northeast, and its involvement in a series of atrocities, such as the Wangala Massacre, its support for renditions in 2007, and its suppression of inter-communal violence in El Wak in 2008,[198] means that the Kenyan army's reputation remains poor. In fact, it is often perceived as an occupying force. This, in turn, helps sustain separatist aspirations among some people in the northeast.

Lamu district is not affected by the forms of inter-communal violence that have plagued North Eastern province, and people stress that security is better than ten years ago when the district was troubled by banditry. However, the vocal critique of central government is equal, if not stronger, among coastal Muslims than in North Eastern province. One interviewee even entertained a vision of separation from Kenya and unity with their Muslim brothers in Somalia. Central government is largely seen as predatory. Politicians are accused of taking land out of local control for personal enrichment and affecting the sustainability of the local environment by building new residences on water catchments.[199] The main security threats are considered to be drug abuse and tensions over land and plans to open a new port. In Lamu, the proliferation of drug use is the most pressing security concern to many community leaders, who view it as threatening their culture. The government is blamed for failing to adequately deal with the issue by refusing to ban the sale of *mirra*.[200] While not everyone is averse to a new port, there is concern about its social, economic, and environmental impact. Local people have not been adequately consulted. There is a fear that the new port will also exacerbate existing social problems, as the head of a local NGO explained:

> We will not benefit from the port, but the government will go ahead anyway. We will lose more mangrove. The people who will benefit are from up-country and the Europeans will go away. Drugs and prostitution will increase.[201]

In Lamu, there is an added layer of complexity and of tension linked to the presence of non-Swahili incomers – mostly, but not exclusively, Kikuyus – who have been resettled on farming schemes.

7.1.3 Insecurity Stemming from the Conflict in Somalia

Local government officials in North Eastern province identified the main sources of insecurity for the province and districts to be both internal and external – resource scarcity and proximity to Somalia and, to a lesser extent, Ethiopia. Within

[197] Most senior provincial or district officials are not from the locations they are stationed in.

[198] Human Rights Watch, "'Bring the Gun or You'll Die.'"

[199] This is a particularly contentious issue on Lamu Island.

[200] Mirra, from the *Celastrus edulis* plant, is a natural stimulant containing ephedrine-like compounds. It is taken socially to produce excitation, banish sleep, and promote communication and as a stimulant to dispel feelings of hunger and fatigue. It is proscribed in the US, Canada, and several European countries, but is widely used in the Horn of Africa (known as Khat or Qat in Somalia), East Africa, and Yemen. The prime growing area in Kenya is Meru in Eastern Province.

[201] Interview with head of a local NGO, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

the province, scarcity of pasture and water is blamed for regular resource conflicts between pastoralists. The management of these internal security problems, they asserted, however, had changed since the 1990s, with the administration and police working with elders of the peace committee. According to the District Officer in Garissa:

> In the past, the government used force to bring about peace, but failed. Now there are peace committees. Insecurity in the district was worse until early 2000. Peace improved through improved governance rather than development projects [although] development helps bring in resources, which reduces scarcity and conflicts.[202]

Similarly, a District Officer in Wajir explained:

> Wajir is calm because we have early warning systems and conflict early warning desks in fifteen divisions.[203]

However, the violent suppression of communal violence in El Wak in 2008 shows that the security forces still resort to the tactics used when emergency laws were in place.[204]

Local officials also identified a security threat emanating from Al Shabaab in Somalia and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) in Ethiopia,[205] as well as the presence of refugees, the inflow of arms and, most recently, a growing problem of kidnapping and abduction along the border. In March 2009, at the time of the research, five Kenyan officials who had crossed to Somalia from Mandera were detained by Al Shabaab militia in Bula Hawa. The incident highlighted the fragility of cross-border relations. The government response to such external threats from Somalia and Ethiopia was to close the border with Somalia in late 2006 and increase border patrols, a move supported by the US and other governments with equipment and training. Because of the length of the border, the government is also supportive of the work of local organizations supported by Pact and others to build cross-border relations and the rapid response teams of the District Peace Committee. The District Officer from Wajir, for example, acknowledged the crucial role of elders in conflict resolution:

> In December, 1999 a sophisticated government of Kenya gun was taken by Somali militia from Diif patrol camp. The Kenyan government wanted to use force to regain the lost gun, but we insisted on the use of elders and we got the gun back in seven days.[206]

On the other hand, local communities and individuals outside government view insecurity through a different lens. In the northeast, people associate insecurity in their lives with inter-clan relations, resource competition, drought, poorly considered development projects, the impact of district formation, and the coercive actions of the Kenyan military. For instance, at the time of the research, it was reported that Garissa and Mandera districts were more affected by insecurity emanating from Somalia than Wajir because of their cross-border ties.[207] People interviewed in Wajir linked insecurity to: resource scarcities and environmental pressures, which were causing an influx of pastoralists from Mandera; the impact of the OLF insurgency in Ethiopia in Wajir north and west; the spillover of refugees from Somalia and the proliferation of small arms. But, within Wajir, there were said to be fewer political tensions than in the past because each clan had consolidated their claim to a district and was

[202] Interview with district government official, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[203] Interview with district government official, Wajir, Kenya, March 2009.

[204] Human Rights Watch, "'Bring the Gun or You'll Die.'"

[205] The Oromo Liberation Front is an Oromo nationalist organization established in 1973 to promote self-determination for the Oromo people. In the past, it has been accused of a series of massacres inside Kenya, where its forces have sought haven when under pressure from the Ethiopian military. Since the 1990s, there have been persistent reports of OLF fighters in Somalia who were trained by Eritrea during its border war with Ethiopia. The OLF are also reported to have allied with Somali Islamist organizations, first Al Itihad Al Ismaliya and later the ICU. The presence of OLF fighters in Somalia was one justification behind the military invasion by Ethiopia in late 2006. OLF fighters fleeing the invasion were reportedly arrested trying to cross into Kenya. The OLF is designated as a terrorist organization by the Ethiopian government.

[206] Focus Group discussion with Wajir Peace and Development Association, Wajir, March 2009.

[207] There are not many Degodia near the border in Somalia with whom Wajir Degodia would have interacted.

represented by an MP. Despite the reputation for being a conflict-ridden and ungoverned borderland, people were also keen to point out that the province has the lowest levels of crime in Kenya and neither North Eastern province nor northern Coast province were affected by post-election violence.[208]

Overall, people outside government in the northeast are less concerned with the security threat from Somalia, although they recognize why the US may have concerns. In Garissa, a group of professionals acknowledged:

> The biggest fear for the Americans is the proximity of Somalia. The distinction between northeast Kenya and south Somalia is blurred; there is so much interaction in business, movement of people and goods, etc.[209]

But, from their local perspective, Somalia was not necessarily perceived as a threat, as they explained:

> From Wajir South to Lamu – it's the same people who live on both sides of the border – so no conflicts.[210]

This view could change if Al Shabaab's defeat of Hizbul Islamiya in Kismayo in October 2009 and their growing strength in Lower Jubba region in Somalia threatens the position of the Absame Ogaden. It could have repercussions in Garissa district where the Absame are dominant; reports of the recruitment of Somali refugees in Dadaab by the Kenyan government may be indicative of this.

In Lamu, our research similarly found that people acknowledge the US and Kenyan governments' concerns about Somalia, but do not perceive it as a direct threat.

7.1.4 Terrorism is Not Seen as a Security Threat

US military intelligence has concluded that coastal Kenya has provided Al Qaeda cells a conducive environment from which to operate, routing fighters through there to Somalia in the early 1990s and planning their operations in Kikambala and Mombasa from there.[211] Our research confirms the findings of the Harmony Project report, however, that for people on the coast and in the northeast, "the threat of terrorism is a low priority relative to their other security concerns."[212] Most people interviewed did not express concern at the potential threat of terrorism or the influence of Somalia.

People in Lamu expressed only mild surprise that Al Qaeda operatives had been "embedded" in their communities, but explained that they were exploited because of their "open-door" culture, which enables outsiders to integrate into their communities. It is not because the Muslim community is supportive of Al Qaeda or its agenda, as one interviewee explained: "Al Qaeda are people who came here and took advantage of us, but they are not from us."[213] The opportunity for more Al Qaeda "sleeper cells" to establish a presence is generally dismissed, because communities have taken measures to make sure that it will not happen again, such as limiting the possibilities of marriage to outsiders. The comments of a local government administrator are typical:

> There are two cases of terrorists in Lamu because they exploited people here. For example, Fazul came from Comoros to Siyu and married a local girl and was accepted by the community. But no one would have allowed this to happen if they knew they are terrorists….There have been discussions in the mosques to ensure that it won't happen again….It used to be that as long as someone is a good Muslim there is no problem in

[208] According to Kenya Facts and Figures, the North Eastern Province has the lowest reported crime figures. UNDP, "Kenya Facts and Figures," (2006), 26. Mombasa did experience some post-election violence, but the intervention of elders prevented its escalation. The elections did impact on how some coastal Muslims view their future relationship with the state, however.

[209] Focus Group discussion with professionals, Garissa, 24 March 2009.

[210] Focus Group discussion with professionals, Garissa, 24 March 2009.

[211] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 7.

[212] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 3.

[213] Interview with head of a local NGO and school governor, Lamu, Kenya, April 2009.

marrying them. People are now more cautious about marrying an outsider. It is no longer enough to be a Muslim. Families do screening of partners.[214]

The US and Kenyan investigations in Lamu district following the Kikambala bombing were clearly a bruising experience for some people and added to local grievances and the sense of marginalization that CA projects have not helped to address. A community leader in Lamu explained:

> The American blank accusations against Islam did not help with the issue of Al Qaeda. When the bombers were traced here there was a general sense of victimization in Witu and Kiunga. The US used the big stick against the Lamu people. A big CIA/FBI/CID intelligence team was thrown into the district, locating people, arresting people and suspecting whole villages, boarding dhows and putting fear into the hearts of nearly everyone on the coast who is Muslim. Despite their efforts they did not identify Nabhani or Fazul. But the whole population was accused and it caused bitterness. People were then even more puzzled when they [the US] changed policy with the carrot rather than the stick. They made repairs to Siyu school while Kubwa was still locked up.[215] The wound has healed but the scar is still there. That period cannot be easily forgotten with a few projects. And Al Qaeda has information about these projects to pacify people.[216]

7.1.5 Insecurity Stemming from the Presence of the US Military

Rather than the presence of the CA team improving security, people fear that Al Qaeda will follow the Americans there. One informant in Garissa expressed a widely-held concern when he commented that "when the CA team is around the security of the 'Nomad Hotel' becomes tight. They create tension and fear in the town."[218] In Wajir, another commented:

> The residents did not want the US presence in the province because Al Qaeda will follow the Americans here. We face risks of Al Qaeda attacks now more than ever before because we might be seen as collaborators of the Americans.[219]

Religious leaders in Garissa expressed concern at the association of the US military with the Kenyan military:

> The American projects have just confirmed our fears. The Kenyan army tortured us for a long time and now the US army has come. We fear that now we will be annihilated. The community is saying that we are back in the

Box 4: Undetected Al Qaeda Operatives

The weakness of Kenyan security services has been blamed for their failures to locate and arrest Al Qaeda operatives. It is interesting to note, however, the ease by which they can live undetected in coastal Kenya. In early 2002, the US military renovated and expanded the primary school of Faza on Pate Island, near Lamu. The project was organized as a military training exercise, with thirty to fifty Marines flown in daily by helicopter from a US naval vessel. (The helicopter blew the roof off the mosque, which also had to be repaired.) Faza village is a short walking distance from Siyu where Fazul Abdulla, the most wanted Al Qaeda operative in East Africa, was living at the time and planned the bombing of the Paradise Hotel in Kikambala in November of that year.[217]

[214] Interview with local government officer, Lamu, Kenya, February and March 2009.

[215] Fazul "the Comoran" married into the Kubwa family in Siyu. After the bombing in Kikambala, his in-law, Mohamed Kubwa, was arrested and detained for some time before being released without charge.

[216] Interview with head of a local community development organization, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

[217] Interviews in Faza, Pate Island, Kenya, April 2009.

[218] Interview with representatives of women's organizations, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[219] Wajir Girls High School 26 March 2009.

> emergency era. The Kenyan army is an African army while the US is a foreign army and so they are here because of their war with Muslims all over the world…. The difference between the two armies is that the Kenyan army attacks the people while the American army attacks the faith. There is a Somali saying that "the size of the thorn that pricks determines the intensity of the pain."[220]

In this quote, the religious leaders in Garissa also voiced a sentiment that it was not only physical insecurity that people feared, but also the potential influence of the US presence on their freedom to follow their faith. They reinforced this when they said:

> The solutions that the Marines think are best for this region and its people are not compatible with Islamic teachings. Islam is a global community and what happens in Iraq and Afghanistan resonates here. The pain inflicted on one Muslim anywhere is felt everywhere among all the Muslims.[221]

Local people's assumption that the US military are in their communities because they are Muslim – whom the US is seen to be at war with – means that many of the hearts and minds projects themselves generate considerable fear in the recipient communities. They fear that their veterinary drugs are intended to kill their animals, that human drugs will make them infertile, and that boreholes are being dug to bury nuclear waste, rather than produce water.[222] Fear of their intentions has resulted in some people staying away from MEDCAPs despite the availability of free drugs.

Finally, people in North Eastern Province and Lamu are not looking to the US to provide security for them, but express confidence in their ability to handle their own security when needed and when supported to do so by the state. People conclude that, despite the rhetoric, CJTF-HOA's aims of stabilization, conflict prevention, and strengthening the state have little to do with reducing the threat to local populations. It is instead about perceived threats to the US that arise from relations between these "critical communities" and the US.

7.2 Winning or Losing Hearts and Minds?

Underlying the hearts and minds strategy is a simple assumption that the aid projects will generate goodwill towards the US and reduce local support for terrorists and militant Islamist ideology. Our research found that local perceptions of the CA teams have changed over time and people have become more accepting of their presence. However, this is not in and of itself evidence that CJTF-HOA has been able to change people's perception of the US more broadly. People in North Eastern province remained highly critical of the aid projects and suspicious of the ulterior motives behind the presence of the CA teams. It is possible that the negative views our research captured reflected a point in time in early 2009 when CA projects had declined, particularly in North Eastern province. Researchers for USAID report a more positive attitude in 2008.[223] In Lamu district, people interviewed were generally more positive and less questioning about the CA presence. Nevertheless, people there were also conscious that the reason they were recipients of assistance from the US military had more to do with US interests than their own well-being. The hearts and minds campaign has been constrained by the legacies of initial contacts, the lack of consultation and transparency and, more importantly, the influence of external factors, such as the position of Muslims in Kenya, events in Somalia, and US foreign policy.

7.2.1 First Impressions

The initial deployment of CA teams to North Eastern province involved a great deal of mutual suspicion that in 2003 and 2004 led to protests against their presence in Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa. This and concerns about insecurity in Somalia led the team to withdraw. There were no

[220] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[221] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[222] Group discussions with elders, youth, and women, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009; Kenya; Somali Blog, "NEP Residents Worried of US Marine 'Nuclear Waste'", Wednesday, 18 June 2008, http://kenyasomali.blogspot.com/2008/06/nep-residents-worried-of-us-marine.html.

[223] Personal communication Lynn Carter, January 2010.

direct protests against the CA teams in Lamu, but people did lodge complaints about the stop and search treatment meted out by the US and Kenyan naval personnel on fishing vessels and a US naval exercise that took place close to Lamu.

These protests in the northeast took place against a backdrop of heightened global and regional insecurity, in the wake of 9/11, the launch of the US military Operation Enduring Freedom, and the start of the second Gulf War. The US came close to authorizing military action in Somalia, but settled instead for the establishment of CJTF-HOA, increased military surveillance, and counterterrorism operations in Somalia. Following the attacks on Israeli targets in Kikambala and Mombasa in August 2002, Muslims on the coast were subjected to arbitrary arrests and harassment, while external pressure was increased on the Kenyan government to introduce counterterrorism legislation. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the Marines first arrived in North Eastern province armed, in uniform, and protected by the Kenyan military, people were suspicious that the US military was planning to use North Eastern province as a base for opening up a new front in the GWoT.

The initial activities of the CA teams caused consternation. In the villages where projects were implemented, the CA teams stayed in camps protected by US and Kenyan military. In some instances, well drilling was done at night, which raised suspicions about their activities and, with little or no communication, rumors abounded. Cultural insensitivity also brought negative responses; in one village Muslim leaders were upset about American women jogging "half-naked." In Wajir, the CA team withdrew from the town after an animal vaccination campaign was accused of poisoning livestock and of trying to encourage Muslims to eat pork.[224] The security restrictions on personnel movement and interaction with communities underscored the US military's lack of knowledge of the operating environment and their own suspicion of the local population. This approach to security had a negative impact, as religious leaders explained:

> The American projects, like the boreholes, were very private, so even Kenyan officials could not access them. These projects are their own ideas. By keeping the wells secretive and the construction of toilets we thought of two possibilities – they were dumping nuclear waste or installing monitoring/surveillance gadgets to watch the Somali population. These gadgets could be buried underground or installed in toilets.[225]

Going directly to the project sites and bypassing local institutions drew protests. In the case of Balambala village, the Chairman of the Peace Committee had to be called in from Garissa, 138 km away, to persuade the people to accept their presence. In Wajir, MPs were called in to do the same. Similarly, as late as 2007, the drilling of a well in the village of Shanta Abaq in North Eastern province caused a public backlash amidst suspicions that US forces were poisoning the water.[226] Kenyan MPs then raised the allegations in parliament (see Box 5).

The words of civic actors in Wajir and a religious elder in Garissa below give a flavor of the suspicion and skepticism surrounding the arrival of the Civil Affairs teams in the northeast. People were not used to the kind of assistance from the military and there were suspicions about the real objectives behind the mission:

> The Marines did a lot of work, but at the beginning there was a lot of tension and resistance from the people. They were not convinced that the Marines, being Americans and in military uniform, really came to assist in education, health, water, etc. We are not used to help from armed and uniformed soldiers. The Kenyan army assists during disasters....but we don't want the presence of the American army. People thought that the Americans wanted to make the airport a big base from where they will wage a war against Somalia. The residents expressed fears that they would arrest them because of their long robes (Islamic dress). We asked why treat

[224] It seems, perhaps innocently, a local employee was offered tinned pork to eat.

[225] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[226] Interview with US Embassy official, Kenya, March 2009.

Box 5: Open Letter Objecting to US Military Presence

Not surprisingly, the military character of the operation worried people in the north about the purpose of the deployment of the CA teams. The protests in Wajir and Garissa against their presence were raised in parliament and covered in the media. And, in December 2003, several months after the CA had withdrawn, the Chairmen of SUPKEM and CIPK in Garissa district sent an open letter to the heads of the diplomatic corps in Kenya.[227] Referring to the incident in Wajir, they described the US military involvement in animal and human healthcare as an attempt to score a "public relations victory" in order to facilitate the American government's "underlying" mission in the Horn of Africa. The letter explained that the population felt apprehensive about the US presence because the US military engagement in Somalia could spill over into northern Kenya and that the US military presence in Kenya could attract Al Qaeda operatives.

The letter named several people from the province who had been falsely arrested on terrorism-related charges and who needed redress "before any relationship can be forged with the US." It noted that an anti-terrorism police office had been opened in Garissa, being "one of the only three in the country." Interestingly, the letter highlighted the gap between US security interests and those of local residents. It noted that if the interests of Garissa residents had been prioritized, then the establishment of an anti-narcotics police office in Garissa would have been more appropriate. They suspected that the anti-terrorism police force was there to spy on Muslims only. The letter also raised concerns about other developments that were occurring because of the "war against terrorism:" that Muslims would bear the brunt of the Anti-Terrorism Bill, if enacted; that the proposal to remove Kadhi's Court from the Kenyan constitution was harming interfaith relations; that action against Muslim charities was having a negative economic impact and harming orphans; and that Kenyans were bearing the brunt of what was a US war.

The letter also affirmed that Kenyan Muslims are part of the Muslim world and they were affected by negative actions against all Muslims. It concluded that they had no other choice than to "perceive the US led war on terror as nothing but a crusade war to eradicate Islam, hence our genuine suspicion of any US military presence in our area." While the letter welcomed humanitarian assistance, it argued that it should be channeled through government and existing NGOs and be invested in durable projects. The leaders called for transparency and consultation in decision-making on matters affecting the northeast. The letter stated that any encroachment on Muslim institutions and cultural values would be resisted. They refused to countenance a foreign military base in the region and they perceived "the so-called US military humanitarian assistance as a pre-cursor to other plans like interfering with our Islamic institutions, checking our religious freedom."

[227] SUPKEM and CIPK, "The North Eastern Province (NEP) Residents Objections to the US Military Presence in the NEP. An Open Letter to all Heads of Diplomatic Corps," Garissa, Kenya, 15 December 2003.

healthy animals? Incidentally, after treating the animals, they started to die and people started to fall ill after eating packet food and some packets contained pork. The CA chief apologized for giving pork and they left and did not return since 2005/6.[228]

The Marines are spying on us. Before they came, the DC called the *ulema* and government officials and told us the CA were coming. We met them at the DC's boardroom. The General in charge of the Djibouti base was there and the deputy General Chief of Staff of Kenya. We were told that the CA will come for development and we accepted, but on one condition, that they don't interfere with our religion. We know that the Americans and the Muslims are at war. If they come to interfere with Islam then we will oppose their presence. We don't want them to establish an American army base and training facilities like they did at the coast. Both generals agreed to those terms. We also told them that any development effort should be directed through the DSG and the Arid Lands project.

They have done a number of projects…. But the question raised was "why should uniformed military men in military vehicles come and do service provision?" In Kenya, the army is only seen during disaster. During the El Nino floods they did food drops, assisted in transportation of people and food and water trucking using their water bowser. Mobilization and preparation of the people was key before the Marines came here. The Marines did not consult so their approach was poor. The feeling [still] is that they are here for the war on terror and Al Qaeda.[229]

In the early days of their deployment, the choice of projects and actions of the CA teams did little to win over people in North Eastern province. The projects were variously criticized for being poorly selected and too small. There was a lack of consultation with the community, projects were implemented in secrecy, and there were bureaucratic delays in implementing them. Elders interviewed in Garissa expressed their disappointment with the projects:

At the second meeting in the DC's office, the Marines said they would provide us with veterinary and human medicines. We were very surprised at this because the expectations were very high.… We were waiting for bigger projects such as roads, hospitals, water resources, etc. These were the mighty projects that we expected from the USA – the largest economy and a superpower. DANIDA is like a state in the US, but they did a lot for us. The might of the US and what they have done is like a drop in the ocean….So this increased our suspicions that the Marines were up to no good and had other objectives.[230]

Attitudes towards the CA were also informed by a mixture of a poor choice of projects, what appear to be unfortunate coincidences and mishaps, and poor implementation. A local government officer in Garissa noted:

The community thought that the Marines were going to poison their wells. Being Americans made their projects suspicious…. One of the first boreholes was drilled in Raya village. It did not yield any water for some time and at last yielded very saline water. This added to the community's suspicion that the Americans were not up to anything good.[231]

Attitudes towards the civil action program in North Eastern province were also influenced by a historical legacy of suspicion surrounding external development interventions, as the following comment by the representative of a women's organization explained:

As a young girl I used to hear about the evils of dumping waste. It's always good to tell the people what you come to do. For example,

[228] Group discussion with Wajir Peace and Development Association (WPDA), Wajir, Kenya, March 2009.

[229] Interview with Wajir Peace and Development Committee, Wajir, Kenya, March 2009.

[230] Interviews with Garissa Elders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[231] Interview with district government official, Garissa, 19 March 2009.

> the Marines came to treat camels and the locals were wondering why. The death of camels under mysterious circumstances in North Eastern province in 2006/7 seemed connected to the US assistance and Marines.[232]

In Lamu, the arrival of the CA team did not provoke the same hostile reaction. Nevertheless, because of the global context, people were also suspicious about their motivations. According to a local government official:

> They came at a bad time when there were a lot of anti-US sentiments. Muslims of the coast feel people in Palestine and Afghanistan are their brothers and that the US involvement there is unfair. Most people appreciate what they have done here (e.g., Mkomani primary school), but some are not happy and say "we are closing our eyes, it is a smoke screen."[233]

Most people believed that they were there because of Somalia and because two of the people wanted for terrorist attacks in Kenya had lived for a time in Siyu and Witu. Some were also suspicious that the US may have interests in the proposed port and oil terminal.[234]

Five years later, relations between the local populations and the US forces have changed. There have been no recent protests in North Eastern province, and there is a pragmatic attitude, whereby the US presence is tolerated for the benefits that they bring, even if limited. In one phone-in with the US Ambassador on the local Star Radio station, some 70% of callers supported the presence of the CA teams and wanted to see more activities by them.[235] In a context of general under-development, something is better than nothing. One teacher in Garissa district gave a positive assessment:

> They told us that their main objective was to change the people's thinking about the US and I think this is being achieved. When they first came to the Nomad Hotel in Garissa they were stoned and later during the launch of the water project at Garissa High School the Marines were seated with the people. I think people's perception of the Marines is changing.[236]

This more accommodating attitude did not come about simply through familiarity, but by efforts to work with local people. In Lamu, for instance, some teachers explained that their initial fear they would be converted to Christianity diminished when they saw that the work to rehabilitate the school was contracted to a Muslim company.[237] In North Eastern province, after withdrawing from Wajir and Garissa, the US military sought the support of politicians from the area, who themselves sought some political advantage from the implementation of projects in their constituencies (or prospective constituencies). The CA teams have also made efforts to build relationships through greater community consultation, attending some government coordination meetings, holding public meetings to explain their work, and moving into the largest hotel in Garissa. At the time of the research, their latest mission was code-named "Operation Take Tea" in which they were tasked to move around town unarmed and talk with people.[238]

While relationships have been built, it is unclear whether this translates into changed perceptions about the US more broadly, or the Kenyan government. People remain skeptical about the motives of CJTF-HOA's presence in North Eastern province and there is little evidence that the hearts and minds activities have changed people's perceptions about extremist groups. The effort made by the CA teams in the North Eastern province to project a different image has clearly not worked with everyone, as religious leaders in Garissa explained:

[232] Focus Group discussion with representatives of women's organizations, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[233] Interview with local government officer, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[234] Interview with local government officer, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[235] Interview with Star FM journalist, Nairobi, Kenya, April 2009.

[236] Interview with secondary school principal, Sankuri, Kenya, March 2009.

[237] Interview with school head and board of governors, Bargoni, Kenya, April 2009.

[238] Interview with CA team in Garissa, Kenya, February 2009.

> They maintain that they are civilian, but we still hold to our opinion that they are military officers.[239]

The CA teams are referred to as "Marines," rather than "Civil Affairs," clearly identifying them with the military. Although people in Lamu are less critical, suspicion and skepticism prevails, as the words of a restaurant owner illustrate:

> If "winning hearts and minds" is their reason for being here then it raises suspicion. People talk and say their work is good for our children's education, but the common man asks why they are doing this.[240]

People believe that the CA teams from the US military are not there for the interests of Kenyans, but for their own interests:

> We feel the US Marines are here because of the problems of Somalia, to monitor Al Qaeda, to stop infiltration on the long porous borders and anti-terrorism. Spying and intelligence collection is their main reason for being here. They came when the ICU was disbanded and ran to Kenya. They are mainly here for surveillance issues. They are doing small projects to cover up why they are really here.[241]

In Lamu district, where people are generally more receptive to the CA teams, attitudes towards them depend on the particular community, an individual's religion, and their knowledge of world affairs. For example, the US built a primary school in the village of Bargoni which is inhabited by Boni people, who were traditionally hunter and gatherers. According to teachers at the school, the community believed the CA teams were there because they were poor and that the school was "a gift from God." The teachers, however, were clear in their minds that the CA were there so they could monitor Al Qaeda and Somalia:

> Their main objective is surveillance….They want to buy the heart of Kenyans.[242]

People are pragmatic enough to accept the aid provided, but remain skeptical of the motives of the US military. They are also discerning enough to distinguish between individual Marines and the US army, as the following anecdote illustrates:

> In Shanta Abaq two boys who had completed school and performed well in exams but lacked school fees went to the Marines who were fixing a borehole and told them about their lack of school fees. The boys were asked to bring a letter from the Chief and upon doing that were given a check of Ksh.18,000. The boys were asked to bring end of term results and were assisted again. Those Marines are gone, but were appreciated by the community and especially the two boys.[243]

In both Lamu and the northeast, people's attitudes do not appear to have been fundamentally changed by the hearts and minds activities. A case could be made, however, that it is the hearts and minds of the CA teams that have been won, rather than the other way around. Members of the CA teams who were interviewed expressed a personal empathy with the local population and a desire to assist. Some in North Eastern province were raising funds through family and school networks in the US to purchase sports equipment for schools. In both North Eastern province and Lamu district, people felt it was they who had gained the trust of the CA teams, who now spent their time interacting with local people rather than protecting themselves from them. This view was expressed clearly in Siyu, a village on Pate Island, where Al Qaeda's leader in East Africa, Fazul, had lived:

> It is a two-way traffic. They learned from us. We made them understand that we are not enemies of them. Sometimes they come with a football team and even the girls play. Twice the US Ambassador visited.[244]

[239] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[240] Interview with businessman and prospective MP, Lamu, Kenya, April 2009.

[241] Interview with school principal, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[242] Interview with headmaster and board of governors, Bargoni, Kenya, April 2009.

[243] Interview with Garissa elders, 21 March, 2009

[244] Focus Group, Siyu, Pate Island, Kenya, April 2009.

7.2.2 The Impact of CA Activities is Dwarfed by the Impact of US Foreign Policy

Our research indicates that the hearts and minds of Muslim people in target communities in northern Kenya are shaped much more by US foreign policy than they are by the assistance delivered by the CA teams. In these communities, as elsewhere, the US has, arguably, been losing Muslim's hearts and minds since the advent of the GWoT, because of its military actions and foreign policies associated with it. At times, the actions and behavior of the CA teams have exacerbated tensions and antagonism towards the US, especially in North Eastern province, but people are clear that local attitudes towards the CA presence need to be understood in a global context. As members of youth organizations and professionals in Garissa explained:

> The question we have is why send military to win hearts and minds of the people considering what we see happening in the world?[245]

> The Islam-US global conflict needs to be considered, to understand why there is such a hatred and resistance for the US military projects in North Eastern province.[246]

The CA teams were deployed to North Eastern province and the Coast in 2003, the year that the US invaded Iraq. The widely-held view and fear among people in North Eastern province at the time, expressed in the religious leaders' letter quoted above,[247] was that the Americans had come to northern Kenyan to open up another front in a war against Muslims. Religious leaders in North Eastern province still clearly view the CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds campaign as part of a US military strategy. As one religious leader stated:

> At the end of the day it is all about Islam versus the West. Even the children know this.[248]

Another religious leader explained how the hearts and minds activities are part of a wider global conflict:

> There are two fronts of the American-Islam conflict – the battles in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine, and the "cold war," like the [CA] projects here. We know that the target is Islam.[249]

A former commander of the CJTF-HOA, Marine Major General Timothy Ghormley, has stated that the rationale behind the hearts and minds campaign and civil action program is to prevent the need for further US military action. Through it, he said, "We are setting the conditions for victory….We're avoiding another Iraq or Afghanistan."[250] Ironically, it seems that it is US foreign policy in those countries that prevents US "victory" in northern Kenya. Rather than hearts and minds activities mitigating the consequences of US foreign policy towards Somalia or Kenya, that policy simply reinforces local suspicions.

Many Muslims in Kenya link their local grievances with what they see as an attack on Islam worldwide. While recipient communities have generally taken a pragmatic attitude to accepting whatever assistance is given, for some there is a moral dilemma involved, as a businessman in Lamu explained:

> People see their projects as a gimmick to win good will….I would prefer if we did not accept the aid because it has cost the lives of innocents in Afghanistan and Iraq.[251]

That said, not everyone accepts this view, of course. One interviewee on Lamu was cynical about the moral high ground taken by religious

[245] Group discussion with youth organizations, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[246] Interview with professionals, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[247] SUPKEM and CIPK, "The North Eastern Province (NEP) Residents Objections."

[248] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[249] Group discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[250] Quoted in Sarah Lischer, "Winning Hearts and Minds in the Horn of Africa: Humanitarian Aid in the War on Terror," *The Harvard International Review* (March 2007), http://hir.harvard.edu.

[251] Interview with businessman, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

leaders, arguing that they are exaggerating the plight of other Muslims of whom they have little knowledge:

> The Imams [shouldn't criticize the US] they don't even know where Palestine is….Don't tell me about Palestine when even the King of Jordan says nothing.[252]

Despite the criticisms of US foreign policy, Muslim religious leaders interviewed in Garissa stressed that they are not anti-American. They pointed out that the first borehole in Shanta Abaq was drilled in 1974 by an American and it is still working. Humanitarian assistance by the US military in response to the 1998 flooding in northern Kenya was also appreciated. In Lamu, where Americans are part of the tourist trade and the US Embassy is a sponsor of the Lamu cultural festival, one hears positive sentiments: "Many Americans come here on holiday….it is not the people of the US, but their foreign policy that we object to."[253] It is the involvement of the US military in the delivery of aid that changes the nature and purpose of the assistance, as one interviewee in Garissa noted:

> The US used to intervene through other agencies but now come as soldiers. This does not in any way change people's hearts, attitudes, and minds. A soldier's role is known and clear. As long as the "war on terror" continues the perception of Muslims will not change.[254]

An assumption that aid projects can win people's hearts and minds is both simplistic and patronizing. One interviewee who works for a humanitarian organization questioned this simple rationale:

> I am skeptical whether all these projects and interventions will achieve its objectives of changing the hearts and minds of the people. The development projects in the region undertaken by the [CA] and my attitude towards the US are not linked. My thinking is shaped by the Somali *ulema* and cannot be changed by American aid.[255]

He went on to point out that people are influenced more by what they hear or see on the BBC, Frontier FM, and Al Jazeera, where they learn about the consequences of US actions in other Muslim countries. The US Embassy in Kenya has invested time in outreach and communicating with communities in North Eastern province and Lamu district, particularly at times of heightened tensions, such as when the ICU was ousted. Nevertheless, there remains a big gap between the US government's and local views, as one religious leader noted in a meeting with the US Ambassador:

> The American Ambassador asked me the best way to bring peace to Somalia. I told him to recognize Al Shabaab and he told me off. I told him the US had crushed the Islamic Courts Union, the Brotherhood in Algeria, and Hamas in Palestine etc., and they should therefore not expect peace.[256]

In Lamu, where they have been more receptive to the CA teams, the relationship is also a fragile one, as one commentator noted:

> All goes well as long the civil affairs presence is what the community wants, but they can turn against them. There is nothing long-lasting to build a relationship on.[257]

In a context where US foreign policy is often perceived by local communities – and in particular by opinion-makers within those communities – as an attack on Islam, aid projects, rather than placating people, may be seen as part of the attack. As such, the research suggests that the impact of a hearts and mind campaign will be limited, at least in terms of a broader strategic goal to change people's overall views of the US.

[252] Interview with businessman and prospective MP, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[253] Interview with businessman and prospective MP, Lamu, February 2009.

[254] Interview with school principal, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[255] Interviewed in Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[256] Discussion with religious leaders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[257] Interview with journalist, Lamu, Kenya, March 2009.

7.3 The Effectiveness and Impact of CJTF-HOA Hearts and Minds Activities

Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategies that use aid to win hearts and minds assume a link between terrorism and violent extremism and underlying socioeconomic conditions of poverty and depravation. Aid projects that tackle poverty – so the thinking goes – will not only influence attitudes but also tackle the underlying causes of violent extremism. The root cause explanation of terrorism or violent extremism is contentious in itself,[258] but it counts for nothing if the aid interventions themselves are ineffective. Our study did not set out to evaluate the CJTF-HOA development and humanitarian aid projects. However, people in recipient communities were asked their views on the effectiveness of the projects.

7.3.1 Consultation and Relevance

Aid projects can only win hearts and minds if they are relevant and address real needs. US legislation restricts the kinds of assistance that CJTF-HOA can provide to human and animal healthcare, water and sanitation, the construction and repair of public facilities, and the detection and clearance of landmines. When CJTF-HOA deployed CA teams to northern Kenya, it did so to meet its own needs rather than responding to a request. While the sectoral interventions do meet commonly expressed priorities, and individually the CA teams have sought to get around some of the restrictions placed on their activities,[259] the CA teams have faced difficulties in project implementation, particularly in North Eastern province. CJTF-HOA's developmental language of partnership, outreach, and participation is not matched by its experience. This is due to weak consultation with authorities and communities, limited understanding of development work by the CA teams, who lacked the necessary social skills, and the paltry levels of funding available to them.

The first intervention in Wajir district – a VETCAP – courted local controversy. Prioritizing veterinary care was not surprising given that pastoralism forms the basis of the majority of people's livelihoods in North Eastern province. However, it is because pastoralism is so crucial to people's way of life that inadequate consultation exacerbated suspicions about the presence of the CA team. A school teacher explained:

> Initially, they came with their uniforms and wanted to treat livestock and do other interventions, but the community refused. But some camels were treated at Leheley and they started to die, which brought more chaos and suspicions. The outbreak of the Rift Valley fever worsened the situation. Then the focus went to rehabilitation of schools, like Habaswein. School projects are less of a problem than interfering with people's livestock.[260]

Some people surmised that the lack of consultation derived from an ignorance of the local context and did nothing to win people over to the US view. A member of the Garissa Peace Committee described his experiences in barely disguised frustration:

> They bring their own projects and do them where they want. They come with a prepared program. They told the community in Balambala that they would drill a borehole for them and should be shown where to drill. The community refused the project and indeed yelled at them. I was called to intervene. I showed them a place to drill, they refused and went to a different place to drill and found no water. They fenced that place and went away. We went in two cars – one was black with tinted windows and one cannot see inside and the second was a white car. I was in the white car but regretted that I travelled with them. We never talked all throughout the 138 km travel from Garissa to Balambala. We started to talk at the meeting for the first time. On return I told them I couldn't travel back with them. They are not interested in the people, but seem to be doing things as if they

[258] See Denoeux and Carter, "Guide to the Drivers of Violent Extremism," for a discussion of this issue.

[259] Such as leaving project tools behind with the community. Piombo, "Military Provision of Humanitarian and Civic Assistance," 2.

[260] Interview with school principal, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

Photo: M. Bradbury

Well at Shanta Abaq, Garissa district.

> were being forced to do them. We Somalis have the knowledge of the area, while they do things here according to their knowledge. They see the rains and the water that flows on the surface, but don't see underneath the ground. They are little "George Bushes," arrogant people. People study in universities; we also have a university in the bush.[261]

As previously noted, state-led development in North Eastern province has left a legacy of suspicion about external development interventions. An initial lack of consultation and transparency by the CA teams in the implementation of projects left them open to criticisms. The lack of consultation was at odds with what communities have become used to from established development organizations and reinforced suspicions that the CA teams were there for reasons other than improving people's welfare. One interviewee commented, "We have seen the methodology of development work, but the Marines are different."[262] Lack of consultation led to the failure of some projects. A sanitation project with the municipal council in Garissa to introduce public refuse bins failed because they did not engage or sensitize the community; the bins stayed unused.[263]

No doubt responding to expressed priorities and looking to make an impact, some of the earliest projects undertaken in North Eastern province were in the water sector. However, water development in this semi-arid environment is extremely sensitive and can precipitate conflict. Plans for water development are therefore controlled by central government and the National Environmental Management Authority.[264] The reputation of the CA teams in the water sector has been poor, with the exception of some school water projects. The CA teams are criticized for a lack of consultation on the location of boreholes, leading to unnecessary failures of some. In some locations, the lengthy drilling process and the secretive manner in which they were drilled at night generated suspicion. The failure to find water in some areas also generated suspicion that the Marines were burying toxic waste and they were subsequently accused by some of causing an increase in cancer. A good example of this is the village of Raya less than 5 km outside Garissa (see Box 6), where the CA team was accused of burying a military truck full of waste.[265] They were also criticized for installing a solar power pump which the villagers were not trained to maintain.

The local water authority in Garissa, however, was more positive in their assessment of CJTF-HOA's intervention in the water sector. According to them, CJTF-HOA did a good job of capacity building and trained people on how to use water pumps.[266] But they also criticize them for a lack of community consultation, so that the community in Raya, for example, still remains suspicious of the water. As a result of the controversy surrounding the drilling of a borehole in Shanta Abaq village, CJTF-HOA's involvement in water development in the northeast was suspended in December 2008, pending discussions with the government.

[261] Interview with Garissa elders, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[262] Interview with elder, Garissa, Kenya, February 2009.

[263] Interviews with youth organizations, Garissa, 20 March 2009.

[264] Interview with official of District Water Department, Garissa, 20 March 2009.

[265] On our inspection, the trucks turned out to be two water tanks.

[266] Interview with Deputy District Water Coordinator, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

Box 6: Raya Borehole

The following summary of issues from a focus group discussion[267] in the village of Raya in Garissa district illustrate the difficulties arising from the lack of consultation between a CA team and a community:

The CA team drilled a borehole in the village of Raya. It was 251 feet deep and yielded saline water. They also buried three large tanks for water storage, which cracked due to heavy concrete that was placed on them. Now the community uses the old storage tank. Water is pumped by use of solar and wind power. The community cannot use the water for drinking or cooking because of its salinity, and so use it for washing clothes, bathing and livestock.

The CA team said they would drill a borehole at the current spot, ignoring local advice to drill near the river where the water there is sweeter. The Marines lived in a camp of about two acres with three Kenyan army camps around them. No one was allowed to approach the camp, including government officials and the elders. Some Marines were uniformed and carried pistols while working. This was the team's first project and it took them two months to complete. No local people were employed, not even a watchman. They were fearful in the beginning, but toward the end bought some balls for the kids.

Upon completion of the borehole they handed it to the government who handed it to the village. The residents refused to use the water because they were not allowed to inspect the drilling and the water tanks when they were built. The Marines were asked to demonstrate the water was safe by drinking first, which they did. [268]

The solar powered borehole pump broke down after three months and a local businessman brought experts to repair it several times because locals had not been trained in maintenance.

People from the area think the CA team was not there to help them but for their own interests. Some thought they were looking for minerals, because they saw people removing soil samples.

Villagers concluded that it had not won their hearts and minds, stating:

> We thought they will make a big difference, but this is not what we expected. The Kenyan government drills a borehole in twenty-five days and it lasts for thirty years. How does the mighty US government spend two months [drilling a borehole] and their machines break down in three months?

[267] Focus Group discussion, Raya Village, Garissa, March 2009.

[268] Focus Group discussion, Raya Village, Garissa, March 2009.

Following demonstrations against their presence in 2003 and 2004, CJTF-HOA's approach became more consultative. In Wajir, for example, consultations prioritized education for girls and projects were initiated in Bute, Wajir, and Habaswein secondary schools for girls. They also used MPs as interlocutors with communities and targeted at least one project in every constituency. In the village of Shanta Abaq, initial difficulties with a borehole project were also overcome through consultations and the intercession of MPs and other community leaders, as they explained:

> In the beginning when they first came there was a demonstration because we heard that they dug many boreholes that failed and that they buried toxic waste. So we insisted to visit the site as they dug and they allowed us to. This reduced some of the tension. Another incidence that endeared them to us was that they treated a child who had been sick for a long time. The father of the child was one of the most outspoken against them.[269]

The consultations paid dividends. The village was pleased with the increased availability of water, the population of the village subsequently grew, and the community has entered discussions with the government about expanding the water distribution system. It was partly as a result of the furor around the Shanta Abaq borehole that CJTF-HOA began to coordinate more closely with USAID and the State Department. Through the 3D mechanism, the Embassy and USAID began to play a more active role in the selection of projects and community outreach. However, as one expert on pastoralism has noted, USAID's own development strategies for Kenya's pastoral regions have been unconvincing.[270]

In contrast to the water sector, the projects in school infrastructure rehabilitation and development appear to have been more successful in meeting locally expressed needs and expectations in both North Eastern province and Lamu district. In Lamu, there appears to have been more consultation from the beginning, especially with the district education office, with whom the CA teams collaborated in the assessment and choice of schools to assist and the tendering and supervision of the work.[271] Most people interviewed in Lamu and North Eastern province were happy with the technical quality of the school projects and generally complementary about the efficiency of the project implementation.[272] In Lamu district, people thought that the school program had had a positive impact:

> In the long run, the standard of education is improving. Previously, none of the Boni children went to secondary school. Last year, three girls and boys went. Having criticized the US for the handling of the war on terror, they do appreciate what has been done [in the schools].[273]

7.3.2 CJTF-HOA's Capacity to Undertake Development Projects

Transforming a military force with a war-fighting mandate into an agent of development is clearly problematic, as fighting wars and doing development require different capacities, organization, and funding. The incompatibility of a military organization doing development is reflected in the following comments from people in Garissa:

> Why send the US army to do development? They are supposed to fight, not to engage in development. [274]

> One of the strangest sights I saw of the [CA] activities was where one was giving treatment to a mother with a child while another one protects him with a gun – a strange kind of aid.[275]

[269] Interview with community leaders, Shanta Abaq – Goriale, March 2009.

[270] Personal email communication, January 2010.

[271] Interview with Quality Assurance Officer, District Education Office, Lamu, March 2009.

[272] Interview with District Education Officers, Garissa, March 2009.

[273] Interview with head of a community development organization, Lamu, March 2009.

[274] Group discussion with representatives of youth groups in Garissa, March 2009.

[275] Focus Group discussion with professionals, Garissa, Kenya, March, 2009.

Interestingly, in both North Eastern province and in Lamu, people were much more positive about the prospects of working with the US Peace Corps than the military. [276]

The CA teams are "not fit for purpose" as development agents. There are several glaring problems with the capacity and deployment of the CA teams and the process of project implementation which have implications for the ability of US military to undertake effective development work. The CA teams are made up of professional reservists, such as medics, engineers, police, and teachers, but they are not development professionals. While some have experience of working in foreign countries and some have professional skills for delivering certain services, few have any previous experience of implementing community development programs. Engineering skills are necessary for drilling boreholes, but they need to be complemented by local knowledge or capacity for social, economic, and political analysis and community consultation. Similarly, animal health interventions require adequate knowledge of local livestock species and diseases. In pastoral areas especially, badly-sited boreholes can easily be a cause of conflict or environmental degradation. The absence of such knowledge among the CA teams was one reason for a pause in further water development projects in North Eastern province. There are exceptions among the CA teams. The CA team leader in Lamu at the time of the study, for instance, had experience of inner-city renewal in the US and a keen interest in community-based development models, such as the UN "Millennium Villages" promoted by Jeffrey Sachs in Kenya.[277] But, as he explained, it is a challenge to "turn engineers into diplomats."[278]

There appears to be little concerted effort by the US military to fill the gap in experience through training or briefings on community development, let alone the specific situation in the northeast and on the coast. The CA teams reported that they do not receive training in Djibouti prior to their deployment and very little briefing or instructions on the purpose of their mission and how to implement it. The CA teams interviewed stated that their orders on doing development were vague. Those in the North Eastern Province had not been supplied with a list of projects that had been implemented by previous teams.

A persistent complaint of local people is that the rotations of the teams are too short – six months for the Navy and up to nine months for the Marines. Lamu had had four or five teams in the past two years.[279] Consequently, there is no continuity in the relationships that the CA teams form with local authorities and the communities. This can change the focus of the work and affect the implementation of projects. One MP commented:

> I believe their objective was to build [the people's] relations with the US government although people's perception is that they had another agenda—the ongoing war against terror and other global problems. They may not have achieved their objective considering the short period they stayed, at least in my district.[280]

7.3.3 Efficiency of Implementation

One might assume that one of the strengths that the military would bring to the aid sector is efficient organization. Our research, however, found that the project cycle can be an inefficient, lengthy, and bureaucratic process, a finding confirmed by other studies.[281] The number of projects implemented by any one rotation is small. Projects assessed by one team may be left to a subsequent team to implement, who may reassess the project, leading to further delays. A project to renovate and expand the water distribution

[276] At the time of the research, there were Peace Corps in Lamu district, but none in North Eastern province.

[277] The first Millennium village was established in Western Kenya in 2004. Others have since been established, including in the northeast, http://www.unmillenniumproject.org.

[278] Interviewed in Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[279] Interview with government official, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

[280] Interview with Member of Parliament for Wajir South District, April 2009.

[281] Piombo, "Military Provision of Humanitarian and Civic Assistance," 7.

system in Garissa Boys Secondary School took four years to come to fruition.[282] At the Girls' High School in Garissa, the Board of Governors commented that there had been three different CA teams in the time it had taken to put up the school fence.[283]

Some projects have been more efficient. In Wajir Secondary School for Girls, for example, the project was commenced by local contractors two months after the initial meeting.[284] Project implementation in Lamu generally appears to have been more efficient. The flagship project to renovate Mkomani Primary School for Girls on Lamu Island took only nine months from the first site visit by a CA engineer in July 2006 to the completion of the project in March 2007, and only four months for the building works itself.[285]

Project efficiency has been affected by the lengthy approval process between project nomination and approval. Funding became more erratic in 2008 as AFRICOM was established and the role of CJTF-HOA came under review. Consequently, in early 2009, the CA team in North East province reported that they only had sufficient funds for food and fuel, and were raising their own funds from family and school networks in the US to purchase equipment for schools.[286]

7.3.4 Cost-Effectiveness

There is insufficient data to determine the true costs of the projects, but it is difficult to imagine that even the larger, more expensive projects can be cost-effective, given the costs of deploying and maintaining US military units in the field. There are also huge additional costs in dedicating projects, which has involved flying high-ranking army personnel from Djibouti and embassy staff from Nairobi; an event that does not impress local people.[287] During the commissioning of the Shabaha water project, for instance, military generals from Djibouti and Kenya were invited. The cost of their travel and other expenses were more than the total cost of the project.[288]

Photo: M. Bradbury

Water system, Garissa Boys Secondary School.

[282] The project in the school was identified and proposed in 2004/5, but was not implemented until 2008. Interview with Principal of Garissa Boys Secondary School and Board of Governors, 23 March 2009.

[283] Interview with Principal and Board of Governors of North Eastern Province Girls Secondary School, March 2009.

[284] Interview with Principal and Board member of Wajir Girls High School, March, 2009.

[285] Interview with Principal of Mkomani Primary School for Girls, Lamu, February 2009.

[286] Interview with CA team in Garissa, Kenya, February 2009.

[287] Several interviewees complained about the high costs involved in dedicating a project and the disruption it can cause because of the added security required for prominent guests.

[288] Interview with North Eastern Province Girls Secondary School Principal and Board of Governors, Garissa, April 2009.

7.3.5 Coordination

Partnerships and coordination with local and international organizations are, according to CJTF-HOA, integral to its vision.[289] This is important for two reasons. First, strategically, humanitarian and development projects are considered "force multipliers" that can facilitate access and establish relationships with different actors. Second, coordination and complementary partnerships should ensure the long-term sustainability of those projects. CJTF-HOA's experience in this area is mixed.

The District Steering Group (DSG), chaired by the District Commissioner, is the main government forum for coordinating development and humanitarian activities in a district. All organizations providing assistance in a district should be approved by the DSG, as well as working with sectoral ministries. The CA teams have been criticized for insufficient coordination with the Kenyan government, US government agencies, and with international and local NGOs. As the line ministry for the CA teams is the Ministry of Defense, coordination with government has primarily taken place in Nairobi.

In North Eastern province, the CA teams initially do not appear to have coordinated with the local government coordination structures. They were urged to do so by community leaders after a VETCAP was linked to the death of some livestock.[290] Such incidents also persuaded the CA teams of the merits of working with government. MPs also played an important role in getting the CA to coordinate their work with government.[291]

Local government departments reported that the CA teams do keep them updated on their activities and sometimes attend the DSG meetings.[292] In Garissa, the government said that the CA team reports to the DC on a weekly basis, [293] although international NGOs who attend the meetings claim not to have seen them there. The importance of consultation with government appears to have been reinforced again in 2006/7 when tensions were renewed over their presence due to events in Somalia. Diplomatic outreach was increased through a series of public meetings and coordination with the DSG was re-established. The CA team present at the time was commended by local leaders for updating the DSG and for involving the religious leaders in discussions.[294]

In North Eastern province, opinions varied on what kind of relationship the CA teams should have with the government. Government employees, most of whom were not from the region, argue that the CA should coordinate their work with the ministries. Local NGOs and religious leaders on the one hand argued that they should engage more directly with the community, while also urging them to work with government as the appropriate agency to deliver development. This sentiment highlights the ambiguity inherent in the relationship between Muslims and the Kenyan state – at once feeling marginalized and having "a surprisingly powerful sense….of their identity as Kenyans, their involvement in a shared national political culture and structures."[295] In this light, while remaining critical of their own government, the insistence on the CA teams working through government can be seen as a defense of Kenyan sovereignty from external intervention.

There were mixed messages on the extent of coordination with government in Lamu district. The CA team does sometimes attend the DSG, but according to the District Commissioner "they mainly go directly to the community, and meet with village chiefs."[296] The Town Clerk confirmed that the CA teams have discussed their work with Lamu Town Council on several occasions, but

[289] See CJTF-HOA website. http://www.hoa.africom.mil/AboutCJTF-HOA.asp.

[290] Interview with the Principal and Board of Governors of the Girls Secondary School, Garissa, 23 March 2009.

[291] Interview with Garissa Boys Secondary Principal and Board of Governors, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[292] Interview with District Commissioner, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[293] Interview with District Officer -1, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[294] Interview with Principal and Board of Governors of Garissa Boys Secondary, March 2009.

[295] Mwakimako and Willis, "Trends in Kenyan Islam," 14-15.

[296] Interview with District Commissioner, Lamu, 8 February 2009.

they do not seek permission from them and the communities themselves approach the CA teams directly with proposals because they are wary of Council politics.[297] The Ministry of Education reported that there was good consultation and joint decision-making on which schools to assist, while the District Development Office reported that they did not receive any reports from the CA teams about their work, and are therefore not included in district development plans.

The instigation of a "3D" working group in the US Embassy has reportedly improved coordination between US government agencies and encouraged more integrated development strategies and greater coordination between the US military and Kenyan government ministries. However, we found little evidence of effective coordination on the ground between CA teams and USAID projects, with the exception of MEDCAPs and VETCAPs.[298]

CJTF-HOA's interest in partnerships extends to building relationships with international and local aid organizations. While there has been some collaboration between CJTF-HOA and local organizations on interventions like MEDCAPs and VETCAPs,[299] they have been less successful in collaborating on development projects. This may partly be due to lack of outreach, but it also reflects a resistance from aid agencies to engage. The entry of the US military into the sphere of foreign assistance and, as in northern and coastal Kenya, into the geographic space long occupied by humanitarian and development agencies has been a cause of consternation among those agencies.[300] Although aid agencies are at pains to distinguish their work in terms of "human security" from state and military ones of counterterrorism or counter-extremism, the similarity of some development projects, the commonality of techniques such as "relationship building" and, in some cases, common funding streams, means there can be a blurring of security and stabilization goals. This potentially affects aid agencies ability to deliver on their humanitarian and poverty alleviation mandates, by politicizing the delivery of assistance, diverting donor resources, and potentially compromising the security of their operations. International aid agencies operating in North Eastern province interviewed for the study were, not surprisingly, circumspect or expressly against associating with the CA teams and their activities. One international NGO representative in Garissa stated:

> Why do the military intervene when there are so many NGOs? I have a problem with them and fear working with the military. The people here are Somalis and would not want to work with US Marines. These projects are not to benefit the communities but to justify their presence. They are not working with the communities or other organizations. They are creating more conflict and not reaching their objectives.... The situation now requires humanitarian interventions. If they [the CA] are serious about doing something they should have been attending district forums.[301]

7.3.6 Developmental Impact

At the time of the research, CJTF-HOA had not conducted an evaluation of the hearts and minds activities in Kenya. Performance was said to be measured in terms of outputs and money spent, rather than how well funds were spent.[302] Given the objectives of the hearts and minds campaign, two areas where one would want to see impact are poverty and governance.

The MEDCAPs, DENTCAPs, and VETCAPs are a collaborative effort between the CA teams, US military medics, the Kenyan health authority,

[297] Interview with government official, Lamu, 9 February 2009.

[298] In this, there appears to have been little advance since 2007, when it was reported that "The reality of cooperation between the three branches of the US government is generally nowhere near to meeting the reality described in the MOU." Keene, "Securitization of U.S. Foreign Assistance," 17.

[299] The Kenyan Red Cross/Crescent has collaborated in MEDCAPs and VETCAPs in North Eastern province and Lamu district. Interviews with Red Cross/Crescent Garissa, Lamu, Kenya, February and March 2009.

[300] Interviews with Oxfam GB, Pact, ACF in Nairobi, Garissa, and Wajir, Kenya, January and March 2009. See also Keene, "Securitization of U.S. Foreign Assistance."

[301] Interview with international NGO representative, Garissa, Kenya, March 2009.

[302] Interview with member of Civil Affairs team, Lamu, February 2009.

Photo: M. Bradbury

Science laboratory, Witu Primary School.

the Red Crescent, and civil society organizations. They attract large numbers of people and are good public relations exercises. People interviewed were generally positive about them. They are particularly popular in areas of North Eastern province and Lamu where access to medical facilities are limited and because, as in the case of MEDCAPs, they can address problems with immediacy.

Within the education sector, some of the larger projects in North Eastern province have supported an increase in enrollment, particularly in secondary schools for girls in Bute, Habaswein, and Wajir.[303] However, enrollment of girls remains only half that of boys.[304] The commissioning of a borehole in Shanta Abaq and the installation of a hand pump in Raya village has increased access to water and the settlement of Shanta Abaq has also increased in size, but their impact on improving overall water access in the northeast is limited.

In Lamu district, the program of school building and repair may have had a more significant impact on access to education than it has had in the northeast. Enrollment has increased at a number of the schools that have been built or repaired. On Lamu itself, Mkomani Girls Primary School has been able to accommodate one hundred more students as a result of the school makeover.[305] The new school in Bargoni has reportedly increased educational access for the Boni children of that area, including girls.[306] Similarly, the rehabilitation of the Arid Land Primary School in Mokowe, also originally built for Boni people, has seen its enrollment increase three-fold.[307] In addition to accommodating increased numbers of students, teachers and school boards of governors report that better facilities have helped to improve attendance and improve the learning environment.[308] The school building and maintenance program has also relieved the burden on families of contributing to the costs of school maintenance, allowing them to spend money on other needs.[309] Overall, in the absence of government support or other aid programs, the CJTF-HOA school building program appears to have met a need at a time when free primary education in Kenya, introduced in 2003, has increased demand for education.

The quality of most of the school building works is good and most of it is useful. There are exceptions. One school in Witu received a new science classroom with modern laboratory furniture, but, with no equipment and no water or gas, proper use cannot be made of it. The high standard of construction means that the infrastructure will last for some time. However, there has been little thought given to the sustainability of the educational projects and they do not address the problems of either teacher or student retention. Ultimately, this is a very expensive and unsustainable program of interventions, which would probably have been more cost-effective if implemented by NGOs.

[303] Interview with District Education Officer, Wajir, March 2009.

[304] Interview with Deputy District Education Officer, Wajir East District, March 2009.

[305] In 2003 there were 985 students, in 2006, 1,032 students, and in 2008, 1,125 students.

[306] Interview with Headmaster and Board of Governors, Bargoni Primary School, April 2009. Student numbers have increased from 130 to 210.

[307] Interview with Headmaster and Board of Governors, Arid Lands Primary School Mokowe, April 2009. Prior to the rehabilitation, there were 83 students; now 360 are enrolled.

[308] Interview with Headmaster and Board of Governors and teachers, Mokowe Primary School, April 2009.

[309] Interview with head of a local NGO and a school governor, Lamu, April 2009.

The overall developmental impact of these projects is negligible. The resources expended are, for the most part, so minimal – a toilet, a fence, a school roof, a single hand pump, a hospital kitchen, a single classroom – and the projects so scattered that they bring little to the overall development of an area or the sectors. These projects are not cost-effective and the spending on them is dwarfed by the spending from other US government departments, such as USAID, which themselves are challenged to prove the impact of their aid.[310]

The projects contribute even less to other more ephemeral objectives, such as extending "governance" or "stability" to ungoverned spaces. The infrastructural development by itself does not build government capacity. Even when collaborating with the Kenyan military, there appears to be no clear CA training program for the Kenyan military, despite political support for that:

> We are also not used to military doing development work so this may be a good thing and help the army to build its reputation and change or try and erase the bad memories people have of this institution.[311]

This was part of the thinking behind the US military assistance in the Rift Valley after the post-election violence. It rests on the idea of the military as an organization of government whose role is to protect the state's citizens, rather than a predatory or oppressive state force as it has acted in North Eastern province, and where it is still viewed as such.

Box 7: Extending the Reach of Government

In some instances, the CA intervention may have inadvertently supported the expansion of government. For instance, the project to develop Habaswein Secondary School for Girls was, according to the local MP, helpful in getting Wajir South established as a district.[312] This is contested by others who assert that the district was established before the school was built. Nevertheless, the school has helped to consolidate the new district and the MP can claim to have influenced this in his election campaign. The consequences of this are twofold. According to the DC of Wajir South, it has helped to "open up the area" and bring it under control:

> The division of the former Wajir District into four new districts has helped improve security. In the past, if something happened in Wajir North, the DC would deploy security personnel there and if something else came up in Wajir South deploying of security personnel there too would overstretch the forces. Now we have our own security forces. Funding has also increased – in the past only Ksh1.7 million was allocated to the whole district for a quarter, but now I have Ksh1 million for a quarter for the new district, which means that we have more money and more personnel. There is improvement in tax collection methods now because the creation of the new district has enabled us to collect more taxes. Our services have improved. Pastoral immigration into the town from the rangelands is increasing and now there are about 10,000 people in Habaswein town and an estimated 135,000 people in the new district.[313]

From another perspective, this expansion of government can be seen as extending the control of central government and its capacity to extract resources in peripheral communities.

[310] Richard Blue, Cynthia Clapp-Wincek, and Holly Benner, "Beyond Success Stories: Monitoring & Evaluation for Foreign Assistance Results. Evaluator Views of Current Practice and Recommendations for Change" (USAID, May 2009).

[311] Interview with Member of Parliament for Wajir South District, Nairobi, April 2009.

[312] Interview with Member of Parliament for Wajir South District, Nairobi, April 2009.

[313] District Commissioner (DC), Wajir South District, Habaswein, 27 March 2009. Figures could not be verified.

Another criticism of the "vertical" approach of CJTF-HOA assistance is that it does nothing to build capacity – community or government – but reinforces a culture of donor dependency.[314] The investment in infrastructure relieves government of its responsibilities to invest and does nothing to increase its capacity or its legitimacy in local eyes. The argument that has been made by some that investment in development will increase the price terrorists will have to pay to get local acquiescence[315] will only work if the communities themselves feel greater ownership.

For the larger projects to have an impact, they need to be coordinated with inputs from government and other organizations, because there is no purpose in building a school if the teachers are not available. The DC of Lamu commented that:

> The Civil Affairs play the role of government in building the schools, but there is a lack of teachers and Lamu cannot attract and retain them.[316]

The DC highlights two problems with the school building program—that CJTF-HOA is taking on government's responsibilities, and the difficulty of retaining teachers in Lamu. These issues could be addressed if there was a coherent strategy by the military, USAID, and the Kenyan government.

While the 3D working group has brought some coordination, there does not appear to date to be a coherent US strategy towards education that the CA projects can fit into. Consequently, the projects will remain as one-off donations from the US government.

One of the most widely-voiced criticisms by people of the hearts and minds activities is their limited scale. Many are so small that they can have no discernible impact on poverty by themselves and, to many people, appear as little more than a public relations exercise. As a public relations exercise, their impact is undermined because people view the limited level of assistance provided as indicative of a lack of serious intent to improve their welfare and develop their communities. People in northern Kenya perceive the US to be an economic superpower and believe they could do more.

If, as is assumed in counterinsurgency policy, poverty can be a cause of instability, conflict, and radicalization, these military-funded projects are doing nothing to alleviate the causes. Moreover, the limited level of assistance only serves to reinforce a suspicion that developmental objectives are a cover for other, more sinister security objectives. One incredulous religious leader in Garissa asked:

Photo: H. Mahmoud

Graffiti in school latrine, Garissa.

[314] Interview with head of NGO, Lamu, February 2009.

[315] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures."

[316] Interview with the District Commissioner, Lamu, Kenya, February 2009.

> Why does the most powerful country in the world come all the way here to repair – not even build – a public latrine? Do they think we are stupid?[317]

People were even more incredulous that the dedication of this particular latrine project required the presence of the US General from Djibouti and the US Ambassador from Nairobi, which incurred a huge cost and also meant that the roads around Garissa had to be closed for security reasons. That the real objectives of the US presence are non-humanitarian is self-evident even to school children, who had graffiti-ed "Al Qaeda" in one school latrine built by a CA team.

Box 8: Paved Roads

Both North Eastern province and Lamu district are poorly served by roads. The paved road from Nairobi to North Eastern province stops at Garissa and the paved coastal road from Mombasa stops at Witu, south of Lamu. People interviewed stated that proper roads were needed beyond Garissa and Witu to boost the economy and improve people's access to services. As a local government official in Lamu explained:

> Some projects, like Lamu schools, have helped to change people's minds. But in 2005, the Chairman of the Council spoke to the CA team, and told them if they want to assist the population and convince them, then we propose they do a big project, like a proper road to Makowe [from Witu]. That would boost the economy and livelihoods…. If you are travelling from Mombassa to Lamu, the minute you feel uncomfortable you know you have entered Lamu district. There is not even one mile of tarmac road in the district….It is only two years since the radio station has reached here. Lamu was cut off from its own country.[318]

In Lamu, the issue of the road has become more important because of the proposed port. Residents argue that the government should demonstrate its good intentions by building a road first, before embarking on a port.

The importance of a road in Garissa is reflected in the comments of the chair of the board of one school:

> For the US to have an impact in this area they should have tarmaced the Garissa-Mandera road. We had requested a perimeter wall [at the school] to keep away land grabbers, instead they gave us a chain link fence.[319]

[317] Interview with government official, Lamu, March 2009.

[318] Interview with government official, Lamu, March 2009.

[319] Interview with Chair of Board, North Eastern Girls High School, Garissa, March 2009.

8. Conclusions

Since 9/11, an increasing proportion of US foreign aid has been channelled through the US military. In Africa, where over 20% of US assistance is reportedly controlled by the military,[320] this is justified by the perception that "weak" and "fragile" states and "ungoverned" spaces pose a threat to the security of the US. In the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the provision of humanitarian and development assistance has become an increasingly important part of the military strategy by the US and its allies to gain the support of communities where they are militarily engaged. What distinguishes the humanitarian and development activities of CJTF-HOA in Kenya's North Eastern and Coast provinces (and elsewhere in the Horn of Africa) is that they are implemented in a non-kinetic environment, where the US is not militarily engaged, with the exception of occasional Special Forces operations in Somalia itself. These "hearts and minds" projects in Muslim communities are part of a regional counterterrorism and stabilization strategy, but they also reflect the growing engagement by the US military in the provision of humanitarian and development assistance, a trend that is being advanced in the newly-established US Command for Africa—AFRICOM.[321]

Assessing the impact of CJTF-HOA's hearts and minds activities is complicated first by the changing objectives of the Task Force. The objective of influencing the attitudes of target populations has, over time, become conflated with more ambitious objectives to counter terrorism and violent extremism, and to enhance security and stabilization through improved governance. Second, CJTF-HOA's projects in Kenya's North Eastern and Coast provinces were small, scattered, and under-resourced, and it is difficult to disentangle the impact of these projects from other CJTF-HOA activities, such as military-to-military support and the operations of US Special Forces in the region. Third, the US military and the communities that are recipients of its assistance have different perspectives on issues of security, stabilization, and developmental needs. Further, the communities themselves are not homogenous. This said, it is possible to draw out some tentative conclusions.

In assessing the CJTF-HOA hearts and minds activities, it is useful to distinguish between their tactical and strategic impact. From a US military perspective, the hearts and minds activities have, tactically, helped the US military to establish a limited presence in a region and among populations that have historically been considered a threat by the Kenyan state and a current risk to the US government. Familiarity, political lobbying, outreach by CJTF-HOA and other US government agencies, and a continuing local demand for external assistance means that the initial hostility towards the US military by northern communities gave way to a more pragmatic and tacit tolerance of the presence of CA teams. In theory, this presence enables the US military to build connections and networks and acquire knowledge about the population that may augment intelligence, help to influence local leadership or to facilitate a military intervention, should the need arise.

Some of the assistance provided by CJTF-HOA did meet local needs and was popular among some communities. In many respects, the hearts and minds projects are no more inappropriate, poorly coordinated, or unsustainable than many other aid projects.

However, from a strategic perspective, the experience of CJTF-HOA in Kenya illustrates the limitations of using foreign aid as a tool for countering insurgency, terrorism, or violent extremism.

First, while people pragmatically accept the assistance provided by CJTF-HOA, and want more, there is no evidence that the US has been winning people's hearts and minds. Communities and their leaders remain skeptical about the purpose of CJTF-HOA's mission and dubious about the utility of the assistance that the Civil Affairs teams and others associated with the Task

[320] "More Money for the Military," *Africa Confidential* 51, no. 3. (5 February 2010): 9-10.

[321] Bachmann, "'Kick down the door.'"

Force provide. Attitudes are influenced by factors beyond the scope of aid projects, such as their faith, the relationship between the target population and the Kenyan state, the broader impact of US foreign policy, and events in Somalia. In a context where US foreign policy in Afghanistan and the Middle East is perceived as an attack on Islam, a strategy that aims to win both "hearts" and "minds" can appear to people locally as an attempt to directly influence a Muslim community's faith and beliefs.

Second, these aid projects have had no discernible impact on overall security and stabilization in the area of operations or the wider region. The projects are too small-scale, discrete, and poorly targeted to have such an impact. In fact, security in Kenya's northern borderlands has deteriorated over the past three years. This is partially as a consequence of US and Western policy towards Somalia and the "Global War on Terror."

Furthermore, while the hearts and minds projects have not improved security, some communities feel more insecure due to the presence of CJTF-HOA, which they fear may attract extremist violence. CJTF-HOA and communities in northern and coastal Kenya have different perspectives on what constitutes a security threat. Simply put, while CJTF-HOA is concerned with threats to state security, people locally are more concerned with "human security," that is, the predatory and coercive nature of the state, crimes and drugs, environmental change, and inter-tribal or inter-clan violence that day-to-day impact on their lives and livelihoods. The limited scale of CJTF-HOA's assistance underscores people's understanding that the assistance is linked to the counterterrorism interests of the US and Kenyan governments, rather than their own well-being or security. CJTF-HOA's aims of stabilization and conflict prevention have nothing to do with reducing the threat to local populations, but instead focus on potential threats to the US that arise from relations between these "suspect communities" and the US.

Third, the limited scale of the assistance means that it contributes only marginally to economic development and does nothing to tackle underlying conditions that may give rise to radicalization and violent extremism. Some of the CJTF-HOA projects have filled a gap in assistance to North Eastern province and Lamu, particularly in the education sector. This has helped increase school attendance, particularly among girls and the marginalized like the Boni. However, it does little to alleviate underlying causes of poverty; it's also unclear whether this support can have a long-term, sustainable impact on the education sector.

Similarly, there is no evidence that the CJTF-HOA aid projects have helped to extend the remit of the Kenyan government in "ungoverned spaces" in its northern borderlands. The concept itself is simplistic and ignores the existence of local governance institutions. The idea that education or health projects can help to extend the reach of the state assumes that "ungoverned spaces" are the result or function of a lack of state presence, in particular infrastructure or the provision of basic services. The political manipulation of aid projects by politicians to consolidate new administrative districts or to mobilize constituency support illustrates how building infrastructure by itself contributes little to tackling a governance gap.

An argument has been made that the US should increase its foreign aid to coastal Kenya, to earn goodwill and increase the legitimacy of the Kenyan government and "to increase the price terrorists need to pay to buy local assistance and acquiescence."[322] However, the words of a "moderate" influential religious leader in Lamu underline the fact that aid alone cannot buy influence:

> The projects are useful, but if their purpose is to win the hearts of the people this has not been achieved. They build faith on one side and destroy it on the other. What they are doing to our brothers in Afghanistan and Israel affects all of us.[323]

[322] Harmony Project, "Al-Qa'ida's (mis)Adventures," 70.

[323] Interview with a religious leader, Lamu, February 2009.

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