

## **Community Perception of the Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Program for Surrendered Insurgents in Malam Sidi Camp, Gombe State**

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### **Abstract**

Most often issues of public concern and safety are met with solutions from government through government formulated policies. These policies seek to address issues around public safety especially protection of lives and property. One of such government policy on violent extremism is the creation of a deradicalization and rehabilitation camp in Malam Sidi in Gombe State. This paper addresses the perspective of what those who are affected by the policy think about government's solution to the problem of violent extremism. Using key informant interviews and purposeful sampling, the paper discovered that the public knows little to nothing about what goes on the camp where the deradicalization and rehabilitation of surrendered insurgents is taking place. The work is guided by the system theory and recommends that policies that seek to resolve issues need to be accepted by the people it directly affects. Therefore, the government needs to realign the drawing board to include the community members in the processes of decentralizing and rehabilitation these surrendered violent extremist.

**Keywords:** Community, Perception, Policy, Deradicalization, Rehabilitation

### **Introduction**

The war against the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East has continued to become highly dynamic and complicated. As part of efforts to put in place and to ensure or address the suffering of the people in the North East region and in line with international best practices, the government of Nigeria decided to initiate measures and frameworks that would help address the plight of the people within the North East region of the country. These measures are meant to help restore and ensure a return to civil authority and by extension improve the living condition of the people for the overall goal of peace within the region.

One of such important frameworks is Operation Safe Corridor (OPSC) Deradicalization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration Camp (DRR) located in Malam Sidi Kwami Local Government Area of Gombe State. The camp is specifically and specially designed to help deradicalize and rehabilitate repentant Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) surrendered or repentant members, who are referred to as Clients at the rehabilitation camp so as to avoid discrimination and stigmatization.

The Operation Safe Corridor initiative is the resultant of a National security meeting held in September 2015, to encourage willing and repentant Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa province (ISWAP) members to drop arms and embrace peace. The most important primary objective of the initiative is to ensure that the operation i.e. OPSC would help to deplete the fighting forces of BH and ISWAP in the bush. The purpose of the initiative was therefore, to provide of facilitate easy access and passage for the surrendering insurgents to security agencies for subsequent deradicalization and rehabilitation to prepare them for reintegration back into the society. For the sole purpose of actualizing this initiative high powered committee was convened by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation and Chaired by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) in 2015, DRR camp OPSC was operationalized in Gombe by 2016 (The Client, 2019).

## **Literature Review**

### **Yemen's Deradicalization Initiatives**

The Yemeni government has had a complex and changing relationship with Islamist jihadists. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, thousands of Yemenis were believed to have traveled to Afghanistan to participate in the fight against the Soviets (Boucek et al, 2009). Arab-Afghan fighters from Yemen and other Arab states were allowed to return and resettle within Yemen by the Yemeni government. Their expertise was subsequently used by the regime in containing various internal conflicts within Yemen.

The return of jihadists to Yemen also caused problems for the regime. These jihadists brought 'with. Recent years have been marked with increased conflict in Yemen between the government and these groups: A number of al-Qaeda members are believed to originate from Yemen. In the past decade, Yemen has experienced a significant number of terrorist attacks on its soil targeting both western interests and Yemen's economic and tourism sectors.

There have been numerous attacks to include bombings of hotels, killings of western tourists, killings of U.S. citizens working in a Yemeni hospital and attacks targeting the U.S. embassy in Yemen. Maritime terrorism in Yemen has included the bombings of a U.S. warship in 2000 and a French commercial ship in 2002. These attacks, coupled with the 9/11 attacks in the United States, brought increased international pressure for the Yemeni government to take action against radical extremists inside Yemen. As a result, Yemeni security services arrested and imprisoned large numbers of both active and suspected extremists throughout Yemen.

Yemen was one of the first countries to initiate a program designed to deradicalize jihadists using religious dialogue. The foundation of this approach was that extremists held ideologies that fueled terrorism and these ideologies could be successfully debated and moderated to reduce terrorist activities. The basis of the program was to convert imprisoned jihadists' ideologies from a radical, militant understanding of Islam to a moderate and peaceful understanding (Birk, 2009). Yemen's deradicalization approach through ideological debate has been implemented in a number of other countries. Although Yemen's initial approach was only partially effective, Yemen's program provides an example of what factors may allow for success and what may lead to failure in a deradicalization program.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh decided to establish a committee to engage in dialogue with extremists in hopes of changing their "dangerous beliefs which could translate into violent extremism." (Boucek et al, 2009). In September 2002, the Yemeni government appointed Judge Hamoud al-Hitar to lead the Committee for Religious Dialogue. The Dialogue Committee consisted of Judge al-Hitar and five other religious experts (Willems, 2004). The aim of the committee initially was to bring about dialogue with returning fighters from Afghanistan and other people who held ideological views outside of the norm (Watkins, 2005).

This committee focused on security detainees suspected of being involved with Islamic extremism and the program relied on voluntary participation. The main issues debated within the dialogue were the legitimacy of the Yemeni government, the permissibility of killing non-Muslims, and the appropriate utilization of jihad. The dialogue between the committee and jihadists was based on the Quran and Sunna and the purpose of the dialogue was to convince the jihadists to recognize the Yemeni government's authority, respect the rights of non-Muslims, and refrain from violence within Yemen (Johnson, 2006).

Judge al-Hitar based his dialogue program on the idea of mutual respect between the Clerics and the detainees. Actual debates on beliefs did not occur until the clerics had won the respect and trust of the detainees (Brandon, 2005). At the initial meeting between the committee and the detainees, Judge al-Hitar addressed the criticisms of the detainees who questioned the legitimacy of the clerics and the role of the state in the dialogue process. Upon gaining the agreement of the detainees to participate in the dialogue, Hitar and the detainees agreed to an agenda and specific guidelines to follow for the dialogue (Boucek et al., 2008). Dialogue sessions usually occurred between the cleric and a group of three to seven.

These sessions lasted for several hours. Some reports indicate the sessions occurred outside the prison in a neutral setting (Worth, 2008). Other reports also stated that the dialogue sessions occurred within the prison. A neutral setting is important in putting the detainees on equal footing with the Clerics and is more conducive to building mutual trust and respect. Each group was also told of positive outcomes and successes of other groups (Sultan, 2004). Clerics challenged the detainees by stating if the detainees could provide a convincing argument on the legitimacy of their jihad, then the clerics would join them but if they could not, then they must renounce their view (Taarnby, 2005). Judge al-Hitar and the other religious clerics asked detainees to use the Qur'an to justify the killing of innocent civilians and when they were unable to do so, the clerics would then show the detainees numerous passages within the Qur'an advocating nonviolence (Brandon, 2005).

According to Judge Al-Hitar, most of the detainees had memorized the Qur'an and were familiar with Islamic rules, yet they misused the rules. Clerics found that the hardcore detainees who had spent significant time in Afghanistan were more difficult to engage with in open dialogue (Tarnby, 2005). Prisoners were told upfront that if they agreed to renounce violence that they would be released through an amnesty program (Johnsen, 2006:2). However, this amnesty did not extend to prisoners who had already killed people in terrorist attacks (Boucek et al., 2009). Participants were also required to sign a pledge not to conduct terrorist attacks within Yemen (Worth,

2009). Some effort was made to find employment for the former detainees and some participants were given jobs within the Yemeni security services (Willems, 2006).

As of June 2005, Yemeni officials declared that Yemen was 90% free of terrorists and advised they had released 364 rehabilitated detainees (Johnsen, 2006). Yemen supported the success of the program by indicating that some of the former detainees had cooperated with the Yemeni government by providing information leading to the capture of both hidden weapons caches, and also other radical Islamists. One example was the killing of a top Al-Qaeda commander in Yemen after a tip-off from a former detainee (Brandon, 2005). Some reformed extremists have become government informants and others have become mediators between the government and the at-large extremists (Worth, 2009).

An obvious disengagement factor seen in the Yemeni program was the physical factor of imprisonment. The Yemeni government targeted not only those who had fought in Afghanistan but other Islamists who were deemed to hold "dangerous beliefs" (Boucek et al., 2009). However, one problem with this method is the potential for radicalization. Many program participants were arrested and detained without charges, which led to increased resentment towards the government. A major disengagement factor seen in the Yemen program was the changing of ideologies among many of the participants. The dialogue sessions also brought about an internal conflict within the group over ideologies and tactics.

Some of the released detainees who had participated in the program began to speak and debate with others in an attempt to change their ideologies supporting violence and terrorism. The dialogue sessions with the committee changed the degree of insulation from larger society for many of the detainees. At the initial meeting, many of the detainees questioned the legitimacy of the Ulama and of the Yemeni regime. Judge Al-Hitar's approach towards dialogue and his willingness to engage in frank debate did much to establish legitimacy for the clerics involved in the program. Detainees also objected to certain government laws; policies and treaties.

Judge Al Hitar provided copies of disputed documents and opened them up for debate (Johnson, 2009). One major criticism of the program is that many of the participants had been arrested and imprisoned due to suspicions of their involvement with extremists and many had not committed any crimes in Yemen or been charged with any offenses. A number of participants felt they had been imprisoned unjustly and forced to participate in dialogue to obtain their freedom (Boucek et al., 2009). A former participant in Yemen's program disclosed that all the prisoners knew that Judge Al Hitar could secure their release and therefore, they curried favor with him (Fink et al., 2008).

Some of the released Participants advised no real dialogue or exchange of ideas ever took place (Birk, 2009). Other former participants mentioned that the program was not so much of a re interpretation of Islamic ideology but more of a bargain between the extremists and the Yemeni government as long as the extremist did not conduct attacks within Yemen, they would be left alone (Worth, 2009) Little effort was made in attempting to reintegrate released detainees back into society. The Yemen government did not provide social support to detainees and made minimal efforts to support detainees eventually released. Some participants were promised employment or other assistance upon release but then received nothing (Boucek et. al., 2009).

The government also did not maintain any adequate surveillance of former prisoners' activities. Prisoner passports were not confiscated and no provisions were made to prevent them from traveling abroad. Yemen did not track recidivism rates among the released detainees and the government closely guarded the identities of released program participants (McGregor, 2006). Judge Al-Hitar, the head of the dialogue committee, was also the focus of a number of criticisms. Although the Yemeni government claimed the committee was comprised of a number of "respected Islamic scholars," Judge Al-Hitar appeared to be the sole public representative of the committee and some alleged that no other Cleric took an active role in the dialogues due to differences of opinion with Judge Al-Hitar (Birk, 2009).

Another criticism of Judge Al-Hitar was his declaration that Yemeni participation in jihad within Iraq was legitimate (Birk, 2009). Judge Al-Hitar, along with several other judges and Clerics in Yemen, believe that according to sharia, jihad is permissible against occupiers of Muslim lands. A further controversy was his possible link to Al Qaeda. In February 2006, twenty-three Al-Qaeda jihadists escaped from a Yemeni prison. The escape was made via a tunnel that went from the prison to the women's section of a local mosque from which Judge Al-Hitar preached. There was also evidence of assistance provided from the Political Security Office, Yemen's internal security service. In December 2005, Yemen's deradicalization program was deemed a failure due to high recidivism rates and the committee was shut down.

Sources within the Yemeni government stated that the government felt the program was a failure due to the number of former detainees who returned to violence after their release. At least eight of the released prisoners left Yemen to fight in Iraq and a few have been implicated in suicide attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq (Johnsen, 2006). However, the presence of Yemeni fighters in Iraq does not necessarily prove a failure of ideological-based deradicalization in Yemen. Judge Al-Hitar and other Yemeni clerics did not dispute the legitimacy of jihad in Iraq. Yet, the reoccurring terrorist attacks within Yemen reflect its continued problem with Islamist extremists.

Yemen was one of the first states to implement a program of debate and dialogue to change ideologies of imprisoned Islamist extremists. Although Yemen's deradicalization program achieved limited success, Yemen's program provided a significant change to the counter terrorism efforts in many states. A number of other states have built on Yemen's individual focused approach and formed their own programs to counter extremism. Yemen recently re implemented its deradicalization initiatives in mid-2008. However, the likelihood of its success is doubtful if the shortcomings of the previous program are not addressed (Johnson, 2009).

### **Methodology**

Data was gathered from both secondary and primary sources. The primary sources include key informant interview (KII). For this research work, quotations, textual and verbal expressions, the use of narratives, emotions, experiences, perceptions, body languages as well as opinions expressed from interview was analyzed. Also, the discussion of oral interview findings is deemed appropriate in interpreting responses from the interviews, tape-recorded, transcribed and or jotted down. This allows for greater freedom and expression, which implies that participant responses can be more complex than a mere yes or no answer. Here, the relationship between the researcher and participant was often less formal, but responses were more elaborate and in

greater detail than in a quantitative research. Where responses were shallow, the researcher probed further and tailored participants to provide the relevant information.

Qualitative data was also generated through the use of key informant interviews (KII). The researcher conducted in-depth interview with leaders across the selected communities within Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states. This represents the states that are most affected by the conflict. The interview method was designed with the definite aim of obtaining certain information as primary source of data extracted directly from key informants' interview (KII)

Using purposive and snowball sampling, a total 28 members of the public holding leadership positions in the various communities where the Clients have been reintegrated into were interviewed. Therefore, a total of 8 people were interviewed in Adamawa State and a total of 8 people were also interviewed in Yobe state. In Borno state, 3 communities were sampled because they have about 80% percent of the reintegrated Clients and a total of 12 people were interviewed in Borno State. Therefore, a general total of 28 people were interviewed across the three states.

#### KII Respondents in BAY States

S/N		BORNO	ADAMAWA	YOBE
1	Community leaders	3	2	2
2	Women leaders	3	2	2
3	Religious leaders	3	2	2
4	CJTF	2	2	2
5	SEMA STAFF	1	-	-

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

Also interviewed in the communities are 24 randomly picked community members who were affected by the conflict and who have friends or family members who are members of the affected communities or family members of Clients?

#### KII Respondents for Random Sampled Community Members

S/N	Name	Location
1	Bukar Modu	Bama, Borno State
2	Zarambe Mustapha	Bama, Borno State
3	Zaraye Mallam	Bama, Borno State
4	Yafana Modu	Banki, Borno State
5	Yakura Bukar	Banki, Borno State
6	Safiya Yasa	Banki, Borno State
7	Kaltuma Abdullahi	Dikwa, Borno State
8	Shettima Jugudum	Dikwa, Borno State
9	Ramat Hana	Dikwa, Borno State
10	Idris Masoyi	Gujuba, Yobe State

11	Hassan Abdulkadiri	Gujuba, Yobe State
12	Ali Gana	Gujuba, Yobe State
13	Lawan Gana	Buni Yadi, Yobe State
14	Ali Kyari	Buni Yadi, Yobe State
15	Adamu Dala	Buni Yadi, Yobe State
16	Dahiru Sani	Madagali, Adamawa State
17	Gambo Abubakar	Madagali, Adamawa State
18	Ahmadu Imam	Madagali, Adamawa State
22	Yahaya Garba	Michika, Adamawa State
23	Esther Peter	Michika, Adamawa State
24	Yakubu Yaza	Michika, Adamawa State

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

Also interviewed in Abuja are 5 personalities and experts in the Deradicalization and Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Nigeria such as;

Respondents for DRR Specialist

Others interviewed also include staff of 4 Non-Governmental Organization and members of the international committee who are also part of the deradicalization project in Nigeria.

The last category of key informants interviewed are reintegrated Clients in Borno state.

Respondents to KII for Reintegrated Clients

S	Name	Designation	Location
1	Umar Migele	Reintegrated Client	Banki, Borno State
2	Abatch Umar	Reintegrated Client	Banki, Borno State
3	Bukar Modu	Reintegrated Client	Bama, Borno State
4	Zarambe Malum	Reintegrated Client	Bama, Borno State

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

It is also important to mention here that there are those who were interviewed and categorically mentioned that their names or portfolios should not be mentioned. These specifically include states and local government officials from Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. These they attributed to the fact that they could not speak for their principals and neither have they been given permission to speak on such topics. Secondly, for fear of their safety because of the sensitive nature of the research, they mostly preferred to speak off record. However, their responses and concerns were taken into consideration. Also worthy of note and mention is the use of pseudo names to protect the identities of the Key informants and especially the reintegrated Clients.

What does the public think about the program?

- i. Are you aware that there is a program to rehabilitate and deradicalize the surrendered or repentant Ex Boko Haram members?

Key informants interviewed within the communities revealed that they are well aware that a program for surrendered Boko Haram members was going on in Gombe. However, they were quick to mention that their information about what happens at the camp was quite shallow because they were told that the camp exist but they have never been there and therefore do not know what happens at the camp. Civilian JTF

members however mentioned that they were aware of the program and some of their leaders have visited the camp.

That the CJTF have been assisting in receiving and reintegrating the graduated Clients alongside the community leaders for special monitoring. The community members complained that they are not being properly carried along as they accused the community leaders of being corrupt in terms of benefits that accrues to their communities. It is interesting to note that while the communities in Maiduguri, which has the largest share of the returning Clients, were more favorable and knowledgeable about the Clients; those in Adamawa were more resentful and dismissive of the program. The key informants in Adamawa expressed a lot of concerns about issues that have to do with trusting the Clients to live within their societies. In Yobe state most of the respondents kept on complaining about the continuous and reoccurring attacks by the Boko Haram members who they felt were not to be trusted even if they repent. It was obvious that while members of the society were aware of the program, they were not comfortable with the return of the Clients to their societies especially in Yobe and Adamawa states.

- ii. In your opinion, is the deradicalization and rehabilitation program working?

Community leaders interviewed in Borno and Yobe states mentioned that they would rather remain indifferent as to whether the good of the program is outweighing the bad, but it is a government program so they cannot say anything because they were not consulted before the program was started. As for their counterparts in Adamawa state, the interviewees did not support or even believe that the Clients would change and were more aggressive to the entire idea of even having the entire program. In their opinion if the government was to rehabilitate the Clients, they cannot stop it but they do not want them to be returned to their communities. The government should find somewhere to keep them.

- iii. Do you support the continuation of the program or otherwise?

On this question, most of the community members showed a nonchalant attitude because they feel that their opinion didn't matter because the government will always do what they want and their opinion didn't matter. As for the community and religious leaders, they felt that even though they were not very conversant with the program, the government can get them more involved. They suggested that their involvement can help in changing the narrative to suite those of their societies. Interestingly members of the civilian JTF were more favorably responding to the continuation of the program because they have noticed an increase in the number of those who are coming out to surrender and denounce membership of the dreaded sects. Members of the Civilian JTF especially in Maiduguri also mentioned that they have not been having issues with the Clients they have reintegrated so far.

### **Professionals in Deradicalization and Rehabilitation**

Respondents here complimented the effort of the government for initiating the rehabilitation and deradicalization program. This they mentioned is because this is one of the most accepted ways to contain and address the issues related to violent extremism. In other words, they feel that it is only because the program is strange and new to the society that is why it is not gaining acceptance. Secondly the respondents mentioned that the communities and the entire Nigerian public have to also not be carried along to be able to give the program the needed acceptance it deserves.



However, of great concern to these professionals is the strange nature of the Military leadership of the camp.

They expressed fear that part of the issues militating against the program is the presence of the Military in the process. They feel that you cannot be at the fore front of eliminating the terrorist (hard power) and at the same time deradicalizing and rehabilitating (soft power) them all at the same time. In their opinion the process should be civilian led and supported by the military and the other way round.

Respondents also mentioned that the military nature of the camp has also made it very difficult to carry the communities along and this is largely responsible for the information gap between the communities and the camp as the case may be. The atmosphere is one of fear because the conflict is still ongoing. The communities see the soldiers and are afraid to cooperate for fear of intimidation and this scenario creates mutual suspicion among community members. The respondents feel that a completely home grown, localized and civilian led process may gain the camp some form of acceptance and with time the communities and the entire country will understand the process.

### **Reintegrated Clients**

Though the location and where about or locations of the reintegrated Clients is not for general knowledge because of the high security situation and ongoing conflict, the researcher was able to through snowball sampling method and referrals stumble upon four of them. They were two in Banki and another two in Bama. During the informal interaction, the respondents were happy to see the researcher and were full of appreciation for the role the camp has played in their life. Interestingly, two of the respondents are currently trading in vegetable and are doing very well as traders in the market. One of them owns a large provision store where he has even employed a staff to assist him.

The last person was able to secure a job with a local NGO and is helping in counselling and the teaching of carpentry work in one the Internally Displaced People (IDP) camp. The former Clients explained that they are doing well and are adjusting fine even though they had a very difficult beginning. However, they went further to mention that some of their colleagues are not faring as expected due to rejection and for others their families have even collected and sold out the starter packs that have been issued to them. The respondents were grateful to the government for the opportunity that was given to them and encouraged that the government sustains the program.

### **Discussion of findings**

It has become imperatively important that discussion and research into the deradicalization and rehabilitation program in Nigeria be deeply understood. This is because it is generally a new and interesting concept, which is highly complicated. These concepts are also referred to as a soft power approach or the Non-Kinetic form or approach and also what is generally referred to as part of the asymmetric warfare. The world over, the general definition of the concept of war is constantly being adjusted to embrace the further complicated nature that war is slowly gravitating towards.

The entire concept of the deradicalizing and rehabilitating of surrendered or repentant ex-fighters or militants or Ex-Boko Haram members is a general concept been used all over the world by countries that have suffered a similar threat situation of violent extremism e.g. Saudi Arabia, Yemen etc. The general maxim is that “you can kill a man but you cannot kill an idea”. What this statement refers to is that, it does not make sense to continuously put yourself in harm’s way in trying to attack and kill someone who has already be erroneously indoctrinated to believe and put himself and his life on the line for an idea he/she believes to be the truth. These category of people believe that dying is the ultimate sacrifice to pay for what they believe. This is why even the hard power approach which entails the use of weapons to eliminate them, continuous to see a never ending circle of violence.

The Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Camp Malam Sidi in Gombe State is a novel project of the Federal Government of Nigeria which is domiciled in the Defence Headquarters and under the leadership of the Military. One of the uniqueness of the program is the joint operation which involves the Military and nineteen (19) other ministries, departments and agencies of government and other professionals. The major mandate or purpose of the camp is to further strengthen the efforts by the Military in the North East by providing a soft approach. The soft power or non-confrontational is also a way of ensuring it depletes the ranks of the Boko Haram fighting men by providing a “Safe Corridor” for the surrendered militants to be reoriented and be given another chance at life.

The current issues around public opinion of the deradicalization and rehabilitation of these surrendered Ex-Boko Haram members also referred to as Clients to help avoid stigmatization. The concept is still new and closed because of the sensitive nature of information and the fact that the conflict is still ongoing. However, the recent statistics of improvement in the number of defectors to embrace the program has been relatively impressive and encouraging. On the strength of the increase in the number of defectors, it may be right to insinuate that the program seems to be playing the exact role for which it was created because the number of insurgents/fighting men has been depleted.

In other words, though there have been hitches especially during the reintegration, the graduated Clients have been reintegrated successfully in their communities. This is evidenced by the interviews of the Civilian JTF who assists in monitoring them. It is therefore probable to conclude that the deradicalization and rehabilitation of religious extremist may be a positive addition to safe options for violent extremists’ groups. Although it may be difficult to conclude on the level of repentance or sincerity of the defectors, the Civilian Joint Task-force alongside other security agencies are responsible for putting an eye on the reintegrated Clients and they have reported that the former Clients have been at their best behavior after their reintegration.

Another angle to it is that the Clients are even afraid to return to the sect for fear for being taken as possible spies for the government. This in itself becomes a deterrent to the former Clients as they know that going back to the bush may result to their death. Finally, it is important to mention that the deradicalization and rehabilitation program in Nigeria is not without its challenges. However, these challenges especially in term of the general public’s awareness of the program has to be addressed accordingly.

Raising awareness and community ownership and participation in the program would greatly improve the programs acceptability.

### Conclusion

The work majorly focused on public opinions about the deradicalization programme within the communities of the BAY states. Findings are thus summarized as follows;

The relationship between the camp and the members of the communities of return and the general public as the case may be does almost not exist. Evidently from the interviews conducted there seem to be disconnect between what goes on in the camp and what information the public has at its disposal. This is because information is only shared on a need to know basis. The activities in the camp are generally shielded from the public domain. This makes acceptance of the programme itself difficult and by extension the public finds it difficult or does not accept that the repentant insurgents have genuinely repented and changed to be responsible people.

### Recommendations

- i. Strategic communication and constant enlightenment and engagement with communities and members of the public must be further encouraged.
- ii. Community inclusion in decision making processes on countering violent extremism.
- iii. Improve means of measuring the success especially through community engagement in the process especially for feedback and monitoring processes.
- iv. The community members must understand that deradicalization programs are an addition to the counter insurgency efforts and not a final solution.

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