



NATIONAL CRIME RESEARCH CENTRE

Fighting Crime through Research



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Crime is a threat to the safety and security of persons and property in the country. Crime affects population cohorts differently. Crime victimization manifests itself in varying degrees of physical, psychological and financial harm or distress. The National Crime Victimization Survey was undertaken to map and analyze the trends of crime victimization to inform policy interventions in the country.

The survey sought to establish the prevalence and typologies of crime victimization in Kenya; establish factors contributing to crime victimization in Kenya; establish the *modus of operandi* of perpetrators of crime victimization in Kenya; establish the consequences of crime victimization in Kenya; and identify the existing interventions and their effectiveness in addressing crime victimization in Kenya.

This survey was anchored on lifestyle and routine activities theories to explain crime victimization in Kenya. The adopted a descriptive study design and was undertaken in 47 counties in Kenya in December, 2022.

Sample respondents were drawn at the household level in respective sampled study sites. The sample size was computed using the Kenya National Population and Housing Census 2019 statistics. The actual sample respondents for this study involved 5112 members of the public comprising 2856 males and 2256 females drawn across the 47 counties of the Republic of Kenya.

The Key informants were sampled purposively drawn from the following institutions: National Police Service, National Government Administrative Officers, County Government Administration Enforcement Directorates, Probation and After Care Service, Department of Children Services, Judiciary, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, National Intelligence Service, Kenya Prisons Service, Public Health/Health Institutions, Kenya Wildlife Service, Kenya Forest Service and Private Security Regulatory Authority/Agencies.

The survey utilized interview schedule with both open and closed-ended questions administered in a face-to-face interaction to collect data on the study subject matter. Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant interview guides were used to collect information from select individuals in the criminal justice agencies and other sectors.

Qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were utilized. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences and the information is presented in frequency and percentage tables and figures. Qualitative data was analyzed by way of interpretation of responses obtained from key informants along the study themes. All information from the analyzed data is presented thematically based on study objectives.

Key findings

Prevalence and typology of crimes victimization

The study established that 50.7% of the study respondents had been direct victims of crimes in the last one year. The most prevalent crimes experienced in the last 12 months were house breaking (28.5%), general stealing (26.6%), theft of stock (20.7%), burglary (12.9%), stealing from a person (16.6%) stealing from a building (12.8%), robbery with violence (9.8%) and theft of farm produce (4.3%) amongst others.

Victims of crimes

The main victims of crimes in the localities were women (77.4%), men (57.3%), youths (36.1%), elderly persons (26.5%) and children (20.0%).

Factors that make some people more vulnerable to crime victimization

The following were identified by respondents as factors that make some categories of persons more vulnerable to crime victimization than others. Vulnerabilities occasioned by economic status (75.8 %), gender (49.4%), age (41.6%), lifestyle (36.8%) social background (17.3%), literacy status (11.6%), and marital status (6.2%).

Risk factors contributing to crime victimization

From the study findings, the main underlying factors contributing to crime victimization were unemployment (81.0%), availability of alcohol, illicit drugs and substance of abuse (69.9%), idleness (63.5%), poverty (52.6%) weak law enforcement (32.6%), youth peer pressure factors (32.5%), corruption in the criminal justice system (22.3%), illiteracy (20.2%), physical environmental factors such as the absence of street lighting and bushy farm plantations (20.1%), gender vulnerability factors (16.9%), ignorance of the law (12.8%), local community harbouring criminals (9.5%)

Institutions for reporting crime victimization

In the last 12 months, (63.6%) of the respondents reported their crime victimization to various

institutions, whereas (36.4) did not report crime victimization.

The following were the institutions where crime victimization was reported: National Police Service (92.3%), National Government Administrative Offices (72.8%), Nyumba Kumi and community elders (43.5%), family (11.6%), hospitals (5.6%) and religious institutions (3.6%).

The following were reasons why some victims of crimes did not report crime victimization to relevant agencies: corruption in the criminal justice agencies (41.5%), challenges related to proof and threshold of evidence (21.1%), ignorance of the law (15.3%), intimidation by perpetrators (14.9%), delays in the administration of justice (6.2%), lack of reporting mechanisms in the locality (3.9%), reporting offices are located far/inaccessible (3.7%), poor relationship between the public and the Criminal Justice System (3.1%), shielding/concealing of perpetrators (2.9%) and bureaucracy in the criminal justice system (2.3%).

Time, month and season of occurrence of crime victimization

On occurrence of crime victimization in the locality during the day, (32.0%) of the respondents said that there is no specific time of the day for crime occurrence, (22.6%) indicated early night hours (between 7:00pm -11.59pm), while (20.9%) pointed out late night hours (1:00am – 3:59am), whereas (9.6%) flagged out midnight (12:00am - 12.59am) as unsafe hours in terms of crime victimization.

On the day of the week when crime victimization mostly occur, (52.0%) said no specific day (crime victimization can occur any day of the week), (16.2%) Saturdays, (9.5%) pointed out Sundays, and Fridays (8.4%).

On month of the year when crime victimization mostly occur, it was reported that (48.1%) of crime victimization mostly occur during the month of December, (34.7%) said crimes have no specific month of most occurrences.

On seasons of the year when crime victimization mostly occur, it was reported that that crimes occurred during (36.4%) rainy season, (31.5%) said crimes have no specific season of occurrence, (24.0%) pointed crimes victimization occurs mostly during dry seasons and (7.4%) indicated crimes mostly occur during festive seasons.

Consequences of crime victimization

The following were the consequences of crime victimization: loss of property (84.3%), public

mistrust/fear (58.8%), slow economic development of an area (52.2%) death (40.2%), disability due to injuries (37.4%), loss of employment, livelihood and income (37.3%) and increased poverty levels (37.1%), psychological distress (32.0%); emotional distress (22%) amongst others.

Victims of crime support services

The following were mentioned as support service available to victims of crimes. Majority of the respondents mentioned avenues for reporting crimes (79.7%), arrest, prosecution, and sentencing of offenders (54.2%), provision of treatment /medical services (38.3%), arbitration of dispute (12.0%), tracking/recovery of stolen properties (8.6%), compensation and financial support (4.9%).

The following were recommended as support services to victims of crimes that needed to be prioritized. (72.9%) timely arrest, prosecution, and sentencing of offenders; enhanced investigation of crimes (66.2%); easing the process of reporting crimes (48.7%); provision of treatment /medical services (35.4%) and tracking/recovery of stolen properties (33.1%), compensation and financial support (29.1%), restoration of property (16.0%), and provision of psychosocial support (13.9).

Key policy Recommendations

1. National Police Service and other Security Agencies should undertake Crime Victimization Risk Analysis, Prediction and Early Warning

This study found out that over 50% of Kenyans had been victims of various crimes in the last one year – pointing out to the prevalence of crimes in the country. To address crime victimization, the National Police Service, other security agencies and stakeholders in crime discourse in the country should undertake regular crime victimization risk analysis, prediction and early warning through multi-agency intelligence, surveillance and mapping of crime hotspots and perpetrators. Crime victimization risk analysis and prediction should be a standing agenda for all County Security and Intelligence Committees. This should also be incorporated into the County Government's County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).

2. Build Public Confidence in the Criminal Justice System Agencies

The study found out that some Kenyans did not report to formal authorities for being victims of crime for various reasons. Among the key reasons given out as to why citizens did not have confidence in the Criminal Justice Agencies included: nothing will be done after reporting,

corruption within the criminal justice stakeholders, intimidation by perpetrators, delays in the administration of justice, challenges in presenting evidence, mistrust and fear of the criminal justice agencies amongst others. It is a fundamental responsibility of the criminal justice system to safeguard the interests of the victims in order to promote confidence in the criminal justice system. As such, these agencies should promote public confidence by fostering transparency, effectiveness, reliability and competence in the execution of their mandates as regards reporting crimes, investigation of crimes, arrest of crime perpetrators, prosecution, sentencing, disposal of cases and offenders.

3. Strengthen Nyumba Kumi initiative and Community Policing

There is need to strengthen the Nyumba Kumi initiative and other community policing forums which play important complementary roles in crime prevention. This study found out that Nyumba Kumi was rated highly among institutions where citizens reported crime victimization. This brings to the fore the need to strengthen citizen participation in crime and security management at the grass root levels through proactive community policing engagements.

4. Address women vulnerability to crime victimization

This study found out that women were the likely victims of crime victimization. The higher rates of fear expressed by women are thought to reflect a broader concern of women vulnerability to particular types of perpetrators and crimes, including intimate partner violence, theft, sexual assault, physical assault and family violence. There is need therefore for, for information, awareness creation for women and girls in addition to men and other on vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly on crime risks and crime hotspots and avenues for redress including the Police Hotline Numbers: 999, 112, 911 and Child Help Line number 116.

5. Institute sustainable Economic and Social Protection Programmes to Empower Vulnerable Groups

Unemployment, poverty, idleness are undoubtedly serious developmental challenge in Kenya – and were mapped out as some the key factors contributing to crime victimization in the country. There is need therefore for the National and County Governments to implement sustainable economic and social protection programmes such as hustler fund, enhanced funds

transfers to the vulnerable and long-term interventions such as employment opportunities, skills development and business start-ups for youths and other vulnerable groups in the society.

6. Provide Psychosocial Support and Welfare Services to Victims of Crime

This study found out some of the consequences of crime victimization included disability due to injuries, loss of employment, livelihood and income, psychological distress emotional distress. It is imperative that victims and survivors of crime get mental health and psychosocial support. Section 14 of the Victim Protection Act, 2014 provides that victims of crimes should be assisted to deal with physical injury and emotional trauma.

7. Undertake Public Awareness on the Victim Protection Act,2014

The finding of this study indicates lower levels of public awareness on the provisions of the Victim Protection Act, 2014. There is need to undertake public sensitization on Victim Protection Act, 2014 that has robust safe guards to address victimization. State and non-state actors can play a complementary role in civic awareness creation on provisions of the Act.

8. Implement Environmental Design Strategies in Addressing Crime Victimization

Physical environmental factors such as the absence of street lighting and bushy farm plantations were identified among factors contributing to victimization in Kenya. These challenges can be addressed by combining synergies of at all levels of the National and County Governments by initiating crime prevention through environmental design strategies like street lighting, installation of CCTV cameras, planned developments, and clearing bushes in both rural and urban areas, amongst others.